

CARTON 8:22

STRONG IN THE STRUGGLE

MANUSCRIPT DRAFTS, CHAPTER 13

1999

2017/193

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: Retirement: Activism and Writing (Ver 1,
8/4/99) (Sources: 7/28/99 & 5/24/94 interviews, folders with
LB writings)

Trade Union Activism

I retired on disability when I left the Jack Tar, but I worked some for the Black Security Guards, as I said. When Grace and I lived on Third Street shortly after we got married, that's when I got my first Social Security check. I got it first and then she got Social Security.

After I retired I was still active in the trade union movement. I worked with my union and supported progressive labor organizations like the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In the late 1970s (DATE?) all of the hotel workers locals had merged into one local, Local 2, the Hotel and Bartenders and Restaurant Workers Union. (Ask LB to discuss his opinion of this) I was active in the Local 2 Retirees Association, and in 1979 I ran for president of Local 2. We had a progressive leadership. It was headed up by Charles [unclear] vice-president and Sherri [unclear]. The union had been losing members to the unorganized workers. Membership dropped from 24,000 when the locals merged to only 17,000 in 1979. Our ticket won that election, and I got the most votes of any executive board member.

Ch 13 Ask LB any
problems with NABCR
leadership

Did he talk with
Mandela / others?
(NO) Ever?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: Retirement: Activism and Writing (Ver 1, 8/4/99) (Sources: 7/28/99 & 5/24/94 interviews, folders with LB writings)

Trade Union Activism

I retired on disability when I left the Jack Tar, but I worked some for the Black Security Guards, as I said. When Grace and I lived on Third Street shortly after we got married, that's when I got my first Social Security check. I got it first and then she got Social Security.

After I retired I was still active in the trade union movement. I worked with my union and supported progressive labor organizations like the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In the late 1970s (DATE?) all of the hotel workers locals had merged into one local, Local 2, the Hotel and Bartenders and Restaurant Workers Union. (Ask LB to discuss his opinion of this) I was active in the Local 2 Retirees Association, and in 1979 I ran for the executive board of Local 2. We had a progressive slate called Action Thru Unity. It was headed up by Charles Lamb for president, Larry Tom for vice-president and Sherri Chiesa for secretary-treasurer. The union had been losing membership and we wanted to organize the unorganized workers. Membership had dropped from 24,000 when the locals merged to only 17,000 in 1979. Our ticket won that election, and I got the most votes of any executive board member.

I was on the affirmative action committee of the executive board. I wanted to get more black people working in the hotels, and as members in the union. By 1982 we only had 1,379 black members out of a total of 16,000. I was very concerned. I said there was a great need for the affirmative action committee. I tried to encourage young people in the black community, and all the unemployed workers, to seek employment in the culinary industry.

I ran for the executive board again in 1981, along with Jean Damu, a young progressive brother that I knew in the union. In our campaign for the executive board Damu and I pointed out that we had fought for unity and democracy in Local 2. We kept the rank and file affirmative action committee alive. During the hotel strike in 1980 we called on the union leadership to democratize the conduct of the strike and to seek support from other unions. We urged the local to support freedom struggles in South America and Southern Africa. We called on the international to organize workers in fast food restaurants like McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken, and to push for the 35 hour week. We opposed the firings of many minority business agents by the current administration of the union. We wanted a strong executive board, but our opponents was doing everything to split the progressive vote in that election and keep us from winning.

Even though I wasn't on the executive board any more, we kept the Unity and Democracy Caucus going and I still continued on the affirmative action committee. I was also

second vice-president of the Retirees' Association. When time came for negotiations for a new contract for hotel workers I issued a press release: "Trade Unionist Lee Brown's views and report on Local 2 Hotel Workers sent a loud and clear message to the hotel owners in San Francisco. No sweetheart contract. For a good contract, we vote 'yes.' They voted 94% for a good contract. Some workers voted 'no', but the majority voted 'yes.' No takeaways. We will strike again, if necessary. We will not go backwards. They say that we will support the rank and file negotiating committee; we will support the staff of Local 2, for we all learned a lesson in the first struggle for a decent contract.

"They also threatened to take away some holidays: July 4th and Thanksgiving Day. They threatened also to take away the union hiring hall and that made the workers angry. And I repeat they will not go backward, they will go forward. These threatening issues united and made the rank and file much stronger. And these are the issues: We demand a decent working contract around wages, vacation, holidays, meals for all employees including room-cleaners. . . . From my point of view, the hotelworkers are much stronger than they were in the first sdtrike, when they [employers] threatened to take away the hiring hall which is the backbone of the hotelworkers. The real source of the union's power is its rank and file membership. We are united behind the negotiating committee and the staff of Local 2 struggling for a better and a fairer contract in the culinary industries.

Struggles will teach us a lesson. Labor must get involved in American politics. The bosses are scheduled to present before the statewide elections December 13th a bill by Assemblyman Don Sebastiani (R-Sonoma) -- author of the scheme. This scheme is designed to make California become an open-union-shop and a right-to-work state. So, we must fight back and organize a united front. All community members should be encouraged to seek work in the culinary industries. There are many job classifications, briefly, from cooks, food servers, buspersons, bartenders, including dishwashers, roomcleaners, and telephone operators. Now I want to encourage the Black community, in particular, and all unemployed workers to seek employment in the culinary industry. . . . As a former member of the Executive Board and appointee of the Affirmative Action Committee and second vice-president of the Retirees' Assoc. (Local 2), I will continue fighting for a progressive, democratic Local 2 and a strong, fighting, militant union in the culinary industry, for a training program to upgrade and/or promote the workers, [and to support] the rank and file negotiating committee and chief negotiator, Charles Lamb. The rank and file membership has been well-informed through bulletins, leaflets, speeches, newsletters, etc.

"I will repeat: we will not go backwards. We will continue going forward. Local 2 members speak with one voice for trade union unity and democracy. I, Lee Brown, will

remain your brother in struggle until the emancipation of the workers in the United States of America."

Senior Activism

After I retired I had gotten back into the Communist Party. Sam Gold had first asked me to come back into the party. I did go to some party activities, I was a fellow traveller, and that's how I met Kendra Alexander, a sister who became chair of the Party. Kendra impressed me as a sincere person and I had respect for her. We used to discuss about trade unions. She also encouraged me to get back into the party. Although I still had my criticisms of racism in the party, I started going to meetings. By 1979 I was a member and paying dues again, and I paid dues through 1991.

Kendra Alexander put me on the Party's senior commission because they didn't have any blacks on it. One of the people I met on the commission was Billy Allan. I think Billy was the chairman of the commission. I liked Billy. He was honest, he wasn't racist, and I respected him. There was a tribute held for me in 1982 and Billy was out of town but he sent a statement that said Lee Brown "brings to the organized working class movement a dedication, militancy, and clarity needed so much in these complex times, when the class is under such fierce attack by the Reaganites and Reagonomics. He speaks loudly, valiantly and with passion against the twin sources of disunity, redbaiting and racism. No redbaiter or racist will get away with their divisiveness while Lee Brown

is able to get to the floor and rebut that splitting tactic of the bosses. In the senior movement he has made his mark. A vice president of the retirees organization in Local 2, he sends out the call to all seniors to unite and get with it, to beat back the attacks on their rights and needs by Reagan. Onward and upward I say to Lee Brown."

Billy died in 1988. I wrote to Billy's wife, Stephanie, and his family to express my wholehearted sympathy. Billy was very knowledgeable of the trade union movement. He tried to connect the Party with the seniors and the trade union movement. I learned a lot from him.

I was a member of many different senior organizations, including the Senior Action Network, the National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Caucus and Center for the Black Aged in Washington, and Legal Assistance to the Elderly. I was a member of different committees and boards that studied issues and policies and whatnot, and made recommendations and reports. Starting in 1986 I worked on the senior advisory committee of the Legal Assistance to the Elderly, and in 1990 their newsletter published an article profiling my life and my work in the trade union movement.

I was a member of the board of directors of the Senior Action Network but because of health reasons I had to resign. But I continued on the crime committee that met once a month. In 1992 I was nominated for a S.A.N. Senior of the Year Award. They gave a trophy. They also gave me a certificate of honor for volunteer service to the San Francisco community.

In addition to being on committees, for many years I went to the senior rally every year in Sacramento where we would raise issues concerning the needs of seniors. I was a monitor at the demonstrations and I was on the board of the California Legislative Council for Older Americans that sponsored the marches. I would still be going now except that in 1997 I had a heart attack and ^{my doctor,} Dr. Arthur Coleman, told me I had to slow down.

I also wrote many articles and letters to editors about issues affecting seniors. This is an article that was published in the People's World newspaper on May 19, 1984:

As a Black Trade Unionist, I call for an end to the discrimination against Black seniors on a national level. This means all those in senior organizations, retiree groups, community groups, churches, etc. -- minority and white senior elders -- should fight for equality of all seniors.

Black seniors are also suffering as part of the workingclass for being Black, so that means they are doubly oppressed. Therefore, all of us -- seniors and non-seniors -- must work together to bring about equality for all minorities, seniors and especially Black seniors in this country.

Poverty continues to increase for older Blacks. There are nearly 800,000 older Blacks among the poor in the U.S., according to the Census Bureau statistics for the '80's, which are some two of every five Blacks who are 65 years or older. This includes a high number of elderly Blacks who are living below the poverty level.

Black Americans are living in health hazard housing, fire hazard housing and overcrowded housing. Some older Black couples are living on an income of \$4,954. Among older Black women, three out of seven are poor.

Cutbacks in program such as Social Security, food stamps, Medicare, and escort services mean older Blacks will be hit hardest and suffer worse than they already do.

It is the great fear of race in the minds of Americans which is causing crisis and conflicts among citizens in this country, where they suffer from this great fear of racism and people have to suffer. For

example . . . Black senior women suffer doubly from being exploited on account of being part of the workingclass and Black. So, Black seniors are second-class citizens, definitely; because of this, it must be on our agenda to fight for all minority seniors, particularly Black seniors.

As a trade unionist speaking for the grassroots seniors in this country, I know it is Black senior organizations who are representing (and not very well) the masses at the grassroots level. And I'm speaking from the experience of collecting information and personal investigation and scientific research and talking to people well-informed. And I am a member of national senior groups as well as local.

Now is the time for seniors to demand their rights: food, shelter, health care, energy, transportation and decent homes that we can afford. We must demand that no more cuts are enacted in social programs. And this means that seniors must also fight for peace and jobs for all.

My wife Grace helped me to start off writing after I retired. She encouraged me, and she assisted me. She would type up my articles and letters and help me with the writing. My friend Tom Dunphy also helped me. He would interview me and write it down. Both of them also helped me with starting to write my life story. I wasn't no fancy writer, but I tried to express my ideas, what I think needs to be told, because other writers and editors wasn't getting down to the grassroots. I wrote many articles for the Peoples World and I wrote a regular column called "Diary of a Black Trade Unionist" that was printed in the New Bayview News. My articles and letters was sometimes printed in other publications like The Black Scholar.

Housing Issues

Another issue I worked on was trying to get decent housing for all people. When Grace and I lived on Third

Street I worked with the Tenants Union and I was chairperson of the Committee for Fair Rent.

I also wrote about the housing crisis and possible solutions. Here are some excerpts from an article I published in the New Bayview News, May 28, 1981:

As a Trade Unionist I fight for the right of housing for working people in this country. I would also include the seniors, retirees, the disabled or handicapped, and housing especially for the poor and working class youth. Because the young who want to have their own decent place to live cannot find anyplace to live, they are forced to live in overcrowded homes. Mostly these "homes" are a health hazard and a fire hazard. These traps are indecent and immoral. WE NEED HOUSES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT. It is a human right. Houses for people is a basic human right.

In California we are 210,000 housing units short, and that is not including the unliveable housing. By not having adequate houses for the people we have lost over 175,000 jobs in California. . . .

Those who can well afford to get housing get more help, and the poor, working class and low income continue to cry out for a decent place to live. The only thing they ask for is a decent place to live. A place that we can afford. And especially hard hit are our single women with children. . . .

I now would like to present a solution to the housing crisis in the USA as follows: A battle for rent control. Because we have a serious fight ahead. (Rent control law is in serious jeopardy in Calif., if not the whole country.) We need a national rent control law. The poor people are living in worse houses in the central city areas. The landlords only use a small sum of their profits, which they receive from the pockets of their tenants, to patch up the falling down housing, and then use any repair as an excuse to raise the peoples rent. This then forces the seniors and us poor out. The hardest hit are on fixed incomes. Those of us on fixed and slipping incomes have to give up food for higher rents and utilities. . . .

We must act, we must turn talk into action, and form housing committees for immediate action. We can then form community organizations on a block by block basis to do something other than just talk about this problem. Go after your churches, your labor organizations, and your neighbors to form committees. . . .

The NAACP (5/24/94 interview p. 11)

Since my days in Houston I have always been a supporter of the NAACP, and after retiring I continued to be active. I was very concerned about senior issues, housing, and health care. For a while I was the chair of the NAACP's senior citizen committee. Sometimes I had problems with the leadership of the San Francisco chapter of the NAACP, but I always thought it was an important organization and I worked along with other progressive members like Harold Treskunoff to do what I could to support it.

I tried to sum up my views of the NAACP in an article the was published in 1984 in the Sun-Reporter newspaper:

I would like to express my concern regarding the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and my involvement in the association. In 1939 I became aware of the NAACP in Houston, Texas and later became a member of the NAACP Youth Movement in Los Angeles. I was involved in fighting for better roles for black Americans in the motion picture industry. Mrs. Charlotte Bass, editor and publisher of the California Eagle, the major black newspaper in Los Angeles during the Depression, was the Executive Director of the Youth League of the NAACP.

We must continue the fight for better roles in the motion picture industry, television, and other entertainment fields. We must not treat the subject lightly. We have made some gains in the Negro and Hollywood films, but not enough. Hollywood must take a new look at the black American and continue the fight to eliminate the roots of racism in the industry. In the past a number of black films were made which told about the struggle for a better life in the U.S. Several films such as "Home of the Brave," "Lost Boundaries," "Intruder in the Dust," and a number of other films were made but they did not tell the complete story of black people in helping to build America -- that's one reason why we should encourage more people to join the NAACP because the NAACP is the oldest civil rights organization in America.

We should help build the NAACP, help build the people's movement. I acted in the labor movement for over 46 years and sold a number of memberships in our Local 207 in New Orleans. Our union staff and executive board worked very closely with the national organizational branch of the NAACP to maintain rights of organized labor and the field of health, housing, education and jobs for youth and adults and in other areas as well. .

. .

I am a man who is concerned with the struggle of our people and other oppressed people in the fight for a better education and jobs for the youth and all unemployed, concerned in the housing area and public demand for more housing and national health needs and last but not least: peace.

The NAACP must change in order to grow. Some must come down off their high horses and be human! -- respect the rights of the people, regardless of what level they've attained. Those of us concerned with the NAACP and conscious of the struggle in America must learn to relate and listen to each other, because no matter what level, we're all victims of racism in America.

I would like to say to the leadership of the NAACP that we must call upon our friends in labor, religion, and other areas to help secure freedom. The struggle for freedom of black Americans is the struggle for freedom for all America.

Join the NAACP today, not tomorrow, for tomorrow may be too late. First recruit your family into the NAACP, then your neighbors. I feel that this is our duty and our responsibility that we must sacrifice in the cause of freedom. So let it be on our agenda, for time

is

We're going into 1985 and I propose that we study the history of black workers in America and black history in general. We must have knowledge of where we came from in order to know where we're going. I propose also that you become a nation of readers! We have been in a storm in the struggle for liberation of oppressed people in the U.S. And we must become allies with all organizations that fight for freedom for all oppressed peoples in the U.S.

We must also study the history of the NAACP, from the beginning of the Niagara Movement in 1905 to the present. . . .

I remain with you in the struggle, and continue the unfinished march for justice.

Peace and Solidarity Work

When the movement against apartheid in South Africa started I got involved in it. I participated in marches and demonstrations and I spoke at rallies. I went in 1981 to New York City to the Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggle of the People of Southern Africa. I was the representative of Local 2, sent by the president and the executive board. Thousands of people came to this conference.

When I returned from the conference I wrote an~~y~~ article reporting on it. Here is an excerpt from the article, which was published in the People's World, Nove~~m~~ber 7, 1981:

The purpose of the conference was to establish a plan of action to educate and organize the U.S. masses against the racist apartheid regime of South Africa. Apartheid is the racist system of government whereby the white minority (17 percent of the total population) owns and controls over 85 percent of the wealth. The 70 percent Black majority suffer atrocities most North Americans find difficult to comprehend.

The distribution of wealth in South Africa is itself a reflection of how these atrocities are possible. Blacks in South Africa are among the world's most poverty-stricken people.

The declaration submitted by the New York delegation was adopted by the conference delegates; it included the following:

- * To organize mass support in the U.S. for the liberation movement of South Africa;
- * To expose the U.S. government and corporations' leading role in the South African apartheid system;
- * To mobilize the people in the U.S. from the grassroots in the anti-apartheid struggle.

I will report back to Local 2, demanding ongoing assistance to the liberation struggle in South Africa. I urge everyone to fight this system of genocide against South African Blacks.

"An Injury To One Is An Injury To All."

I continued to be active in the anti-apartheid movement, In 1985 I marched in a demonstration with Alameda County Supervisor John George. A photograph of us marching together

was published in the California Voice newspaper. I'm proud that I marched in demonstrations and I helped provide security when Alfred Enzo (sp?) and Nelson Mandela came to the Bay Area.

In an article that the The Black Scholar published in May/June 1981 issue I discussed the different social issues and connected them to the trade union movement, peace, the military budget, and political involvement. My article was called "Views on the Military Budget."

I am writing on behalf of the lower and moderate income worrkers, on how Reagan's military budget affects us as working people. Reagan's interest is not the worker's interest. Escalating the already bloated military budget only robs the people of services necessary for their survival. Senior citizens, retirees, the disabled, handicapped: all standards of living are reduced when money is taken from social programs and used instead for MX missiles. Poor people, youth, single mothers are all victims of a needlessly inflated military budget.

The workers cannot afford to rent decent housing, let alone buying a home; food and utility prices are far more than many people can pay; schools are being closed, denying young people any kind of education. Poor people face overcrowded living conditions with severe health and fire hazards.

Do U.S. workers really know what's happening? I say that Reagan is anti-people. He represents pro-monopoly and pro-military spending, serving the interests of big business and putting profits before the people's well-being. We face tough years ahead. Reagan has given the green light to bust unions in the U.S.A. The resurgence of racism is being used to divide the ranks of labor. The threat of a sub-minimum wage for youth is an attempt to separate young people from organized labor. Unemployment continues to rise as workers are repeatedly bombarded with plant closures and runaway shops; hospitals, clinics and schools are being closed, which not only denies communities of needed services, it also adds to unemployment. The U.S. is in an economic crisis and the people must act now.

Organized labor has the ability to lead in the struggle for the rights of all workers. Trade unionists must participate in coalitions with representatives from

religious groups, senior citizens, youth, community and political organizations. We must build a united front which serves the interests of working people in this country. An enormous military budget and constant threats of nuclear war do not serve our interests.

Trade unions must become the vehicle for workers to struggle in their own interests. Labor's goal must be to organize the unorganized. Unions need study circles and union classes to educate workers on trade unionism and practice unionism, teaching workers trade union consciousness, with a knowledge of trade union democracy.

Free education and health services and decent housing for all people in this country must be struggled for. We must fight for rent control and lowering of utility prices. We must close tax loopholes of the monopolies. We must fight against unemployment, inflation, runaway shops; we must demand jobs for all with effective affirmative action for nationally and racially oppressed people. I feel this is a people's program. And we must not forget those on Social Security and S.S.I.

There is a solution to high unemployment that trade unions can become involved with: workers' fightback is the answer. We can demand more houses for poor and elderly people. Housing increases will create jobs for construction workers throughout the country. Keeping schools open will employ vast numbers of people from janitorial and food service workers to clerical workers and teachers, as well as educating the nation's youth. Keeping hospitals and clinics open also offers an abundance of jobs. Trade unions can fight the devastating effects of plant closures by supporting and participating in public and government joint takeover of closed plants. The time has also come to demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. Railroads can be re-opened in large cities, putting Americans back to work at union wages and working conditions. The possibilities are endless if we organize to stop Reagan's war economy and demand that our needs be met.

It is time to put talk into action. I call upon today's youth to turn out in masses to register and vote for candidates who work for peace and the people's needs. We must become politically conscious by building relationships with one another in all workingclass communities. We must have faith and confidence in one another and strive for peace throughout the world.

I say that labor must be in the forefront of this struggle and call for unity for all organized labor in the U.S.A!

Doctor of the Working Class

I have worked in many organizations and learned many lessons. As a worker and a trade unionist I'm struggling, I'm trying to do the best I can to call up the needs of the people. I have worked and lived in the midst of the workers. I must know everything that I can about working people, the union people, that I work with at the grassroots level. I must try to understand the poor and the masses of the people. I must find the correct approach that I will be able to work with them, and they will help and work together and help themselves and help me. I must win the confidence of working people as I struggle in community service.

It was in July, 1981 that I became a doctor of the working class. I gave myself the Doctor of the Working Class degree. My university is the university of the world, and the people are the best teachers. I feel that through my experience in the struggle I earned that degree. I'm proud to be Lee Brown, D.W.C.

(FN: Lee Brown obtained a Certificate of Registration for an unincorporated non-profit association from the State of California. The association name is "Doctor of The Working Class" with Lee Brown listed as Founder and Director. The registration certificate was issued on July 21, 1981, and is signed by March Fong Eu, Secretary of State.)

APPENDIX?

PHOTOGRAPHS

HONORS and TRIBUTES (inc. PW article, others)

original

Lee Brown Interview 7/28/99

Deaths in the family (Add to chapter on Grace?) --

My mother passed years before I left New Orleans to come to San Francisco. (Sugar Duck was cousin LB stayed with when he came back to New Orleans from Los Angeles looking for his mother.) She died before I went to the penitentiary. She was sick. I remember the doctor called me and my brother and sister into her room. He said, "I can't save her, but I can keep her alive a little longer." She had a slow leak in her heart. He wanted to do something that would keep her alive. "We may be able to help others," he said. I wasn't opposed to it and the rest wasn't either. We may have made a mistake, I don't know. This was when I was working on the barge lines, around 1951, when she passed.

After I got to San Francisco I used to call and talk to Rose on the telephone, talk to the children, Brownie and Rose's other children, Yvonne and Theodore. I went back to New Orleans on the bus one year before Brownie passed, and I spent about five days with him. He drove me around in the car and we talked a lot. Instead of setting in the front of the car I always sit in the back because I didn't believe in using those buckles, putting on the seatbelts. He always

wanted me to talk. He say, "Talk to me, tell me something."
He wanted to know about different things I was doing.

I stayed with my cousin from my father's side; we called her "Sugar Duck." She was the daughter of Joe Reese. She was 60, 70 years old and be strutting all over. We went to the store and she wanted to buy three Irish potatoes. I said, "Cuz, put that back." I got the basket and started to dropping chicken, meat and other things in there. I was gonna stay there a week or longer and I wanted to help out. The lady at the counter looked at me when I pulled out a hundred-dollar bill. She act like she ain't never seen a black man with a hundred-dollar bill.

Brownie had a job driving a water truck, delivering bottled water. He said he liked the job. That was the first time I seen him since he was small, after I got out the joint. I was gald to see him. He was married and had three children, three boys: Donald, Derrick and Darwin (~~Darwin~~3). His wife was named Barbara. I think he was doing good. That was one year before he got drowned. He was 26 years old, I believe. (1978) (check against 1980 visit)

The next year Brownie drowned in the swimming pool in the place where he lived. Yvonne's son found him in the pool late one night. I don't know how it happened, but I thought something was wrong. I ask Rose's brother-in-law to try to find out, but he never found nothing.

When Brownie passed Rose called me, and I went to New Orleans again to go to the wake. Cousin Sugar Duck left the

key with a neighbor. I got there and taken a bath and went to the quiet hour. Sugar Duck was there, and as long as I could look back and see her I felt strong. I knew I wouldn't have no break down. I knew she was there to protect the family if anybody fell out. My sister and my brother was rubbing me on the head and all that. Brownie's wife was whooping and hollering. Sugar Duck carried a bottle of camphor oil. She needed it the next day at the cemetery. Rose's daughter, Yvonne, fell out when they was lowering Brownie down into the ground. Cuz stuck the camphor bottle under her nose, and she come back.

Rose and Moselle have passed, too. Rose died a few years ago. I didn't know nothing about it until my sister sent me the news. Rose had been sick in the hospital. She used to smoke a lot. I think that's what killed her.

Moselle got killed in a automobile wreck. Last time I was passing her cousin's beauty shop on Third Street four or five years ago she called me and told me. I couldn't believe it. That was the second time Moselle was in a car wreck. She and her Uncle Doc was in another car wreck when they was on their way to Florida.

Brownie's wife got married again, but her and her husband separated. She raised the children and kept me in touch with the children. One of the boys come out here and stayed but he was bad news. He was living in Union City and always getting in trouble. That was Derrick. Brownie's youngest son, Darwin, got married, and now he has a daughter

named Calisha Kenyate Brown, my great granddaughter. Her mother, Bobbi, sent me a picture of her. She's five years old now. They say she's a "real Brown." I don't know exactly what they mean by that, but it sounds good.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: Retirement: Activism and Writing (Ver 1, 8/4/99)

(Sources: 7/28/99 & 5/24/94 interviews, folders with LB wrings)

Trade Union Activism

I retired on disability when I left the Jack Tar, but I worked some for the Black Security Guards, as I said. When Grace and I lived on Third Street shortly after we got married, that's when I got my first Social Security check. I got it first and then she got Social Security.

After I retired I was still active in the trade union movement. I worked with my union and supported progressive labor organizations like the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In the ^{late} mid-1970s (DATE?) all of the hotel workers locals had merged into one local, Local 2. (Ask LB to discuss his opinion of this) I was active in the Local 2 Retirees Association, and in 1979 I ran for the executive board of Local 2. We had a progressive slate called Action Thru Unity. It was headed up by Charles Lamb for president, Larry Tom for vice-president and Sherri Chiesa for secretary-treasurer. The union had been losing membership and we wanted to organize

the unorganized workers. Membership had dropped from 24,000 when the locals merged to only 17,000 in 1979. Our ticket won that election, and I got the most votes of any executive board member.

I was on the affirmative action committee of the executive board. I wanted to get more black people working in the hotels, and as members in the union. By 1982 we only had 1,379 black members out of a total of 16,000. I was very concerned. I said there was a great need for the affirmative action committee. I tried to encourage young people in the black community, and all the unemployed workers, to seek employment in the culinary industry.

I ran for the executive board again in 1981, along with Jean Damu, a young ^{PR 15/1/15} brother that I ^{Ken Lee} encouraged to get ^{into} ~~the~~ ~~restaurant work and join~~ the union. ~~(check?)~~ In our campaign for the executive board Damu and I pointed out that we had fought for unity and democracy in Local 2. We kept the rank and file affirmative action committee alive. During the hotel strike in 1980 we called on the union leadership to democratize the conduct of the strike and to seek support from other unions. We urged the local to support freedom struggles in South America and Southern Africa. We called on the international to organize workers in fast food restaurants like McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken, and to push for the 35 hour week. We opposed the firings of many minority business agents by the current administration of the union. We wanted a strong executive board, but our opponents

was doing everything to split the progressive vote in that election and keep us from winning.

Even though I wasn't on the executive board any more, we kept the Unity and Democracy Caucus going and I still continued on the affirmative action committee. I was also second vice-president of the Retirees' Association. When time came for negotiations for a new contract for hotel workers I issued a press release: "Trade Unionist Lee Brown's views and report on Local 2 Hotel Workers sent a loud and clear message to the hotel owners in San Francisco. No sweetheart contract. For a good contract, we vote 'yes.' They voted 94% for a good contract. Some workers voted 'no', but the majority voted 'yes.' No takeaways. We will strike again, if necessary. We will not go backwards. They say that we will support the rank and file negotiating committee; we will support the staff of Local 2, for we all learned a lesson in the first struggle for a decent contract.

"They also threatened to take away some holidays: July 4th and Thanksgiving Day. They threatened also to take away the union hiring hall and that made the workers angry. And I repeat they will not go backward, they will go forward. These threatening issues united and made the rank and file much stronger. And these are the issues: We demand a decent working contract around wages, vacation, holidays, meals for all employees including room-cleaners. . . . From my point of view, the hotelworkers are much stronger than they were in the first sdtrike, when they [employers] threatened to take

away the hiring hall which is the backbone of the hotelworkers. The real source of the union's power is its rank and file membership. We are united behind the negotiating committee and the staff of Local 2 struggling for a better and a fairer contract in the culinary industries. Struggles will teach us a lesson. Labor must get involved in American politics. The bosses are scheduled to present before the statewide elections December 13th a bill by Assemblyman Don Sebastiani (R-Sonoma) -- author of the scheme. This scheme is designed to make California become an open-union-shop and a right-to-work state. So, we must fight back and organize a united front. All community members should be encouraged to seek work in the culinary industries. There are many job classifications, briefly, from cooks, food servers, buspersons, bartenders, including dishwashers, roomcleaners, and telephone operators. Now I want to encourage the Black community, in particular, and all unemployed workers to seek employment in the culinary industry. . . . As a former member of the Executive Board and appointee of the Affirmative Action Committee and second vice-president of the Retirees' Assoc. (Local 2), I will continue fighting for a progressive, democratic Local 2 and a strong, fighting, militant union in the culinary industry, for a training program to upgrade and/or promote the workers, [and to support] the rank and file negotiating committee and chief negotiator, Charles Lamb. The rank and file membership

has been well-informed through bulletins, leaflets, speeches, newsletters, etc.

"I will repeat: we will not go backwards. We will continue going forward. Local 2 members speak with one voice for trade union unity and democracy. I, Lee Brown, will remain your brother in struggle until the emancipation of the workers in the United States of America."

Senior Activism

After I retired I also worked with the black elderly. I was a member of many different senior organizations, including the Senior Action Network, the National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Caucus and Center for the Black Aged in Washington, and Legal Assistance to the Elderly. I was a member of different committees and boards that studied issues and policies and whatnot, and made recommendations and reports. Starting in 1986 I worked on the senior advisory committee of the Legal Assistance to the Elderly, and in 1990 their newsletter published an article profiling my life and my work in the trade union movement.

I was a member of the board of directors of the Senior Action Network but because of health reasons I had to resign. But I continued on the crime committee that met once a month. In 1992 I was nominated for a S.A.N. Senior of the Year Award. They gave a trophy. They also gave me a certificate of honor for volunteer service to the San Francisco community.

In addition to being on committees, for ^{many} ~~26~~ years (CHECK) I went to the senior rally every year in Sacramento where we would raise issues concerning the needs of seniors. I was a monitor at the demonstrations and I was on the board of the California Legislative Council for Older Americans that sponsored the marches. I would still be going now except that in 1997 I had a heart attack and Dr. Arthur Coleman told me I had to slow down.

I also wrote many articles and letters to editors about issues affecting seniors. This is an article that was published in the People's World newspaper on May 19, 1984:

As a Black Trade Unionist, I call for an end to the discrimination against Black seniors on a national level. This means all those in senior organizations, retiree groups, community groups, churches, etc. -- minority and white senior elders -- should fight for equality of all seniors.

Black seniors are also suffering as part of the workingclass for being Black, so that means they are doubly oppressed. Therefore, all of us -- seniors and non-seniors -- must work together to bring about equality for all minorities, seniors and especially Black seniors in this country.

Poverty continues to increase for older Blacks. There are nearly 800,000 older Blacks among the poor in the U.S., according to the Census Bureau statistics for the '80's, which are some two of every five Blacks who are 65 years or older. This includes a high number of elderly Blacks who are living below the poverty level.

Black Americans are living in health hazard housing, fire hazard housing and overcrowded housing. Some older Black couples are living on an income of \$4,954. Among older Black women, three out of seven are poor.

Cutbacks in program such as Social Security, food stamps, Medicare, and escort services mean older Blacks will be hit hardest and suffer worse than they already do.

It is the great fear of race in the minds of Americans which is causing crisis and conflicts among citizens in this country, where they suffer from this great fear of racism and people have to suffer. For

example . . . Black senior women suffer doubly from being exploited on account of being part of the workingclass and Black. So, Black seniors are second-class citizens, definitely; because of this, it must be on our agenda to fight for all minority seniors, particularly Black seniors.

As a trade unionist speaking for the grassroots seniors in this country, I know it is Black senior organizations who are representing (and not very well) the masses at the grassroots level. And I'm speaking from the experience of collecting information and personal investigation and scientific research and talking to people well-informed. And I am a member of national senior groups as well as local.

Now is the time for seniors to demand their rights: food, shelter, health care, energy, transportation and decent homes that we can afford. We must demand that no more cuts are enacted in social programs. And this means that seniors must also fight for peace and jobs for all.

My wife Grace helped me to start off writing after I retired. She encouraged me, and she assisted me, ~~a lot~~. She would type up my articles and letters and help me with the writing. My friend Tom Dunphy also helped me. He would interview me and write it down. Both of them also helped me with starting to write my life story. I wasn't no fancy writer, but I tried to express my ideas, what I think needs to be told, because other writers and editors wasn't getting down to the grassroots. I wrote many articles for the Peoples World and I wrote a regular column called "Diary of a Black Trade Unionist" that was printed in the New Bayview News. My articles and letters was sometimes printed in other publications like The Black Scholar.

Housing Issues

Another issue I worked on was trying to get decent housing for all people. When Grace and I lived on Third

Street I worked with the Tenants Union and I was chairperson of the Committee for Fair Rent.

I also wrote about the housing crisis and possible solutions. Here are some excerpts from an article I published in the New Bayview News, May 28, 1981:

As a Trade Unionist I fight for the right of housing for working people in this country. I would also include the seniors, retirees, the disabled or handicapped, and housing especially for the poor and working class youth. Because the young who want to have their own decent place to live cannot find anyplace to live, they are forced to live in overcrowded homes. Mostly these "homes" are a health hazard and a fire hazard. These traps are indecent and immoral. WE NEED HOUSES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT. It is a human right. Houses for people is a basic human right.

In California we are 210,000 housing units short, and that is not including the unliveable housing. By not having adequate houses for the people we have lost over 175,000 jobs in California. . . .

Those who can well afford to get housing get more help, and the poor, working class and low income continue to cry out for a decent place to live. The only thing they ask for is a decent place to live. A place that we can afford. And especially hard hit are our single women with children. . . .

I now would like to present a solution to the housing crisis in the USA as follows: A battle for rent control. Because we have a serious fight ahead. (Rent control law is in serious jeopardy in Calif., if not the whole country.) We need a national rent control law. The poor people are living in worse houses in the central city areas. The landlords only use a small sum of their profits, which they receive from the pockets of their tenants, to patch up the falling down housing, and then use any repair as an excuse to raise the peoples rent. This then forces the seniors and us poor out. The hardest hit are on fixed incomes. Those of us on fixed and slipping incomes have to give up food for higher rents and utilities. . . .

We must act, we must turn talk into action, and form housing committees for immediate action. We can then form community organizations on a block by block basis to do something other than just talk about this problem. Go after your churches, your labor organizations, and your neighbors to form committees. . . .

The NAACP (5/24/94 interview p. 11)

Since my days in Houston I have always been a supporter of the NAACP, and after retiring I continued to be active. I was very concerned about senior issues, housing, and health care. For a while I was the chair of the NAACP's senior citizen committee. Sometimes I had problems with the leadership of the San Francisco chapter, ~~of the NAACP, like Alex Pitcher (2)~~, but I always thought it was an important organization and I worked along with other progressive members like Harold Treskunoff to do what I could to support it.

I tried to sum up my views of the NAACP in an article the was published in 1984 ~~(2) in New Bayview News (?)~~ *The New Bayview News* *newspaper*

I would like to express my concern regarding the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and my involvement in the association. In 1939 I became aware of the NAACP in Houston, Texas and later became a member of the NAACP Youth Movement in Los Angeles. I was involved in fighting for better roles for black Americans in the motion picture industry. Mrs. Charlotte Bass, editor and publisher of the California Eagle, the major black newspaper in Los Angeles during the Depression, was the Executive Director of the Youth League of the NAACP.

We must continue the fight for better roles in the motion picture industry, television, and other entertainment fields. We must not treat the subject lightly. We have made some gains in the Negro and Hollywood films, but not enough. Hollywood must take a new look at the black American and continue the fight to eliminate the roots of racism in the industry. In the past a number of black films were made which told about the struggle for a better life in the U.S. Several films such as "Home of the Brave," "Lost Boundaries," "Intruder in the Dust," and a number of other films were made but they did not tell the complete story of black people in helping to build America -- that's one reason why we should encourage more people to join the NAACP

because the NAACP is the oldest civil rights organization in America.

We should help build the NAACP, help build the people's movement. I acted in the labor movement for over 46 years and sold a number of memberships in our Local 207 in New Orleans. Our union staff and executive board worked very closely with the national organizational branch of the NAACP to maintain rights of organized labor and the field of health, housing, education and jobs for youth and adults and in other areas as well. .

I am a man who is concerned with the struggle of our people and other oppressed people in the fight for a better education and jobs for the youth and all unemployed, concerned in the housing area and public demand for more housing and national health needs and last but not least: peace.

The NAACP must change in order to grow. Some must come down off their high horses and be human! -- respect the rights of the people, regardless of what level they've attained. Those of us concerned with the NAACP and conscious of the struggle in America must learn to relate and listen to each other, because no matter what level, we're all victims of racism in America.

I would like to say to the leadership of the NAACP that we must call upon our friends in labor, religion, and other areas to help secure freedom. The struggle for freedom of black Americans is the struggle for freedom for all America.

Join the NAACP today, not tomorrow, for tomorrow may be too late. First recruit your family into the NAACP, then your neighbors. I feel that this is our duty and our responsibility that we must sacrifice in the cause of freedom. So let it be on our agenda, for time is running out.

We're going into 1985 and I propose that we study the history of black workers in America and black history in general. We must have knowledge of where we came from in order to know where we're going. I propose also that you become a nation of readers! We have been in a storm in the struggle for liberation of oppressed people in the U.S. And we must become allies with all organizations that fight for freedom for all oppressed peoples in the U.S.

We must also study the history of the NAACP, from the beginning of the Niagara Movement in 1905 to the present. . . .

I remain with you in the struggle, and continue the unfinished march for justice.

Peace and Solidarity Work

When the movement against apartheid in South Africa started I got involved in it. I participated in marches and demonstrations and I spoke at rallies. I went in 1981 to New York City to the Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggle of the People of Southern Africa. I was the representative of Local 2, sent by the president and the executive board. Thousands of people came to this conference.

When I returned from the conference I wrote an article reporting on it. Here is an excerpt from the article, which was published in the People's World, November 7, 1981:

The purpose of the conference was to establish a plan of action to educate and organize the U.S. masses against the racist apartheid regime of South Africa. Apartheid is the racist system of government whereby the white minority (17 percent of the total population) owns and controls over 85 percent of the wealth. The 70 percent Black majority suffer atrocities most North Americans find difficult to comprehend.

The distribution of wealth in South Africa is itself a reflection of how these atrocities are possible. Blacks in South Africa are among the world's most poverty-stricken people.

The declaration submitted by the New York delegation was adopted by the conference delegates; it included the following:

- * To organize mass support in the U.S. for the liberation movement of South Africa;
- * To expose the U.S. government and corporations' leading role in the South African apartheid system;
- * To mobilize the people in the U.S. from the grassroots in the anti-apartheid struggle.

I will report back to Local 2, demanding ongoing assistance to the liberation struggle in South Africa. I urge everyone to fight this system of genocide against South African Blacks.

"An Injury To One Is An Injury To All."

I continued to be active in the anti-apartheid movement. In 1985 I marched in a demonstration with Alameda County Supervisor John George. A photograph of us marching together

was published in the California Voice newspaper. I'm proud that I marched in demonstrations and I helped provide security when Nelson Mandela came to the Bay Area. (CHECK)

In an article that the The Black Scholar published in May/June 1981 issue I discussed the different social issues and connected them to the trade union movement, peace, the military budget, and political involvement. My article was called "Views on the Military Budget."

I am writing on behalf of the lower and moderate income worrkers, on how Reagan's military budget affects us as working people. Reagan's interest is not the worker's interest. Escalating the already bloated military budget only robs the people of services necessary for their survival. Senior citizens, retirees, the disabled, handicapped: all standards of living are reduced when money is taken from social programs and used instead for MX missiles. Poor people, youth, single mothers are all victims of a needlessly inflated military budget.

The workers cannot afford to rent decent housing, let alone buying a home; food and utility prices are far more than many people can pay; schools are being closed, denying young people any kind of education. Poor people face overcrowded living conditions with severe health and fire hazards.

Do U.S. workers really know what's happening? I say that Reagan is anti-people. He represents pro-monopoly and pro-military spending, serving the interests of big business and putting profits before the people's well-being. We face tough years ahead. Reagan has given the green light to bust unions in the U.S.A. The resurgence of racism is being used to divide the ranks of labor. The threat of a sub-minimum wage for youth is an attempt to separate young people from organized labor. Unemployment continues to rise as workers are repeatedly bombarded with plant closures and runaway shops; hospitals, clinics and schools are being closed, which not only denies communities of needed services, it also adds to unemployment. The U.S. is in an economic crisis and the people must act now.

Organized labor has the ability to lead in the struggle for the rights of all workers. Trade unionists must participate in coalitions with representatives from religious groups, senior citizens, youth, community and political organizations. We must build a united front

which serves the interests of working people in this country. An enormous military budget and constant threats of nuclear war do not serve our interests.

Trade unions must become the vehicle for workers to struggle in their own interests. Labor's goal must be to organize the unorganized. Unions need study circles and union classes to educate workers on trade unionism and practice unionism, teaching workers trade union consciousness, with a knowledge of trade union democracy.

Free education and health services and decent housing for all people in this country must be struggled for. We must fight for rent control and lowering of utility prices. We must close tax loopholes of the monopolies. We must fight against unemployment, inflation, runaway shops; we must demand jobs for all with effective affirmative action for nationally and racially oppressed people. I feel this is a people's program. And we must not forget those on Social Security and S.S.I.

There is a solution to high unemployment that trade unions can become involved with: workers' fightback is the answer. We can demand more houses for poor and elderly people. Housing increases will create jobs for construction workers throughout the country. Keeping schools open will employ vast numbers of people from janitorial and food service workers to clerical workers and teachers, as well as educating the nation's youth. Keeping hospitals and clinics open also offers an abundance of jobs. Trade unions can fight the devastating effects of plant closures by supporting and participating in public and government joint takeover of closed plants. The time has also come to demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. Railroads can be re-opened in large cities, putting Americans back to work at union wages and working conditions. The possibilities are endless if we organize to stop Reagan's war economy and demand that our needs be met.

It is time to put talk into action. I call upon today's youth to turn out in masses to register and vote for candidates who work for peace and the people's needs. We must become politically conscious by building relationships with one another in all workingclass communities. We must have faith and confidence in one another and strive for peace throughout the world.

I say that labor must be in the forefront of this struggle and call for unity for all organized labor in the U.S.A!

Conclude with Doctor of the Working Class diploma (5/24/94
interview p 4)

Doctor of the Working Class

I have worked in many organizations and learned many lessons. As a worker and a trade unionist I'm struggling, I'm trying to do the best I can to call up the needs of the people. I have worked and lived in the midst of the workers. I must know everything that I can about working people, the union people, that I work with at the grassroots level. I must try to understand the poor and the masses of the people. I must find the correct approach that I will be able to work with them, and they will help and work together and help themselves and help me. I must win the confidence of working people as I struggle in community service.

It was in July, 1981 that I became a doctor of the working class. I ^{gave} ~~awarded~~ myself the Doctor of the Working Class degree. My university is the university of the world, and the people are the best teachers. I feel that through my experience in the struggle I earned that degree. I'm proud to be Lee Brown, D.W.C.

(FN: Lee Brown obtained a Certificate of Registration for an unincorporated non-profit association from the State of California. The association name is "Doctor of The Working Class" with Lee Brown listed as Founder and Director. The registration certificate was issued on July 21, 1981, and is signed by March Fong Eu, Secretary of State.)

APPENDIX?

PHOTOGRAPHS

HONORS and TRIBUTES (inc. PW article, others)

Black seniors—double whammy

SAN FRANCISCO

AS A Black Trade Unionist, I call for an end to discrimination against Black seniors on a national level. This means all those in senior organizations, retiree groups, community groups, churches, etc.—minority and white senior elders—should fight for equality of all seniors.

Black seniors are also suffering as part of the workingclass for being Black, so that means they are doubly oppressed. Therefore, all of us—seniors and non-seniors—must work together to bring about equality for all minorities, seniors and especially Black seniors in this country.

Poverty continues to increase for older Blacks. There are nearly 600,000 older Blacks among the poor in the U.S., according to Census Bureau statistics for the '80's, which are some two of every five Blacks who are 65 years or older. This includes a high number of elderly Blacks who are living below the poverty level.

Black Americans are living in health hazard housing, fire hazard housing and overcrowded housing. Some older Black couples are living on an income of \$4,954. Among older Black women, three out of seven are poor.

Cutbacks in programs such as Social Security, food stamps, Medicare, and escort services mean older Blacks will be hit hardest and suffer worse

than they already do.

It is the great fear of race in the minds of Americans which is causing evils and conflicts among citizens in this country, where they suffer from this great fear of racism and people have to suffer. For example, in the Addition, Black senior women suffer doubly from being exploited on account of being part of the workingclass and Black. So, Black seniors are second-class citizens, definitely, because of this, it must be on our agenda to fight for all minority seniors, particularly Black seniors.

As a trade unionist speaking for the grassroots seniors in this country, I know it is Black senior organizations who are representing (and not very well) the masses at the grassroots level. And I'm speaking from the experience of collecting information and personal investigation and scientific research and talking to people well-informed. And I am a member of national senior groups as well as local.

Now is the time for seniors to demand their rights: food, shelter, health care, energy, transportation and decent homes that we can afford. We must demand that no more cuts are enacted in social programs. And this means that seniors must also fight for peace and jobs for all.

—LEE BROWN

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1984



NEW BAYVIEW

15¢

Vol. 2, No. 21

MAY 28, 1981 (1)

(415) 467-5007

HOUSING CRISIS

By Lee Brown

I want to concern myself with the housing crisis problems primarily in the San Francisco-Bay Area, but I am relating facts which exist shamefully all over our country.

As a Trade Unionist I fight for the right for housing for working people in this country. I would also include the Seniors, retirees, the Disabled or Handicapped, and housing especially for the poor and Working Class Youth. Because the young who want to have their own decent place to live cannot find anyplace to live, they are forced to live in overcrowded homes. Mostly these "homes" are a health hazard and fire hazard. These traps are indecent and immoral. **WE NEED HOUSES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT.** It is a human right. Houses for people, it is a basic and human right. In California we are 210,000 housing units short, and that is not including the unliveable housing. By not having adequate houses for the people we have lost over 175,000 jobs in California. This is from the record of the Building Association.

In 1937 Section 8 of the U.S. and housing Act as amended, was for low income and poor people to have decent homes. And the workers, low income and poor people are still without housing. This is uncivilized. The people who need these houses must have them. And for a very long time the people did not know much about Section 8.

These people who must have help are just now hearing about Section 8. Those who can well afford to get housing get more help, and

the poor, working class and low income, and poor people are not come continue to cry out for a decent place to live. The only thing they ask for is a decent place to live. A place that we can afford. And especially hard hit are our single women with children.

The community groups, those linked to city government especially, who claim to fight for the building of houses in the interest of low

income, and poor people are not really serving our need when it takes so much of our community effort just to get 3 or 4 housing units. That does not solve the problem for the poor. A lot of people take it for granted that getting the government and landlord lobby to give up 3 or 4 housing units is solving the problem. Because there is racism.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



LEE BROWN

CITY'S HOUSING CRISIS

(3) NEW BAYVIEW - MAY 28, 1981 - PAGE 3

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ism in housing as elsewhere in this exploiting society, people of color pay more for housing and get less. Housing goes up at the rate of at least \$25.00 each 3 months in San Francisco. (This was a Saxe Realty quote) Think of what this means across the country, where in some areas unemployment for Black youth reaches 80%. Black youth is the one group hardest hit by racist government policies.

I now would like to present a solution to the housing crisis in the USA as follows. A battle for rent

control. Because we have a serious fight ahead (Rent control law is in serious jeopardy in Calif. If not the whole country) We need a National rent control law. The poor people are living in the worse houses in the central city areas. The landlords only use a small sum of their profits, which they receive from the pockets of their tenants to patch up falling down housing, and then use any repair as an excuse to raise the peoples rent. This then forces the seniors and us poor out. The poorest hit are on fixed incomes. Those of us on fixed and slipping incomes have to give up food for higher rents and utilities. This means to pay more for the worse housing and you must starve, and you cannot look forward to eating more because you must pay for housing increases and, cannot do without heat or lights for survival.

Now also to discuss Co-ops. Co-ops mean big profits because individuals buy apartments, and hit big by inflation they will not be able to keep them. Especially those again on low and fixed income. This still does not solve the problem. Only Middle income can afford Co-ops. This does fool the low income and poorer workers who scrape up enough money to get a Co-op and end up keeping it maybe 5 months or less. Co-ops housing only benefits the Middle class. Landlord propaganda forces the low income and poor people to buy in and then

be out in months. You lose in 4 or 5 months, you lose everything you put in. It only holds off being kicked out. So for us the low and poor income worker this is not the solution.

I think the people in the various communities should be concerned about studying the housing problem. The only way the housing problem will be solved is by we the people in the housing crisis in the USA. We must act, we must turn talk into action, and form housing committees for immediate action. We can then form community organizations on a block by block basis to do something other than to just talk about this problem. Go after your Churches, your labor organizations, and your neighbors, to form committees.

They have been talking about housing in useless groups since 1937. Now is the time to go beyond the talking stage. We must have action, **DO DEEDS NOT WORDS**, and demand houses to fit the needs of the people. I am determined to succeed in our efforts to obtain decent housing. It is my duty as a Trade Unionist to do all I can to make the law of 1937 work for the people.

Write us at New Bayview if you are concerned about housing. We can work together and share our information, and plan solutions to solve our housing problems, and make decisions collectively.

COPY

VIEWS ON THE MILITARY BUDGET

by Lee Brown

I am writing on behalf of the lower and moderate income workers, on how Reagan's military budget affects us as working people. Reagan's interest is not the worker's interest. Escalating the already bloated military budget only robs the people of services necessary for their survival. Senior citizens, retirees, the disabled, handicapped: all standards of living are reduced when money is taken from social programs and used instead for MX missiles. Poor people, youth, single mothers are all victims of a needlessly inflated military budget.

The workers cannot afford to rent decent housing, let alone buying a home; food and utility prices are far more than many people can pay; schools are being closed, denying young people any kind of education. Poor people face overcrowded living conditions with severe health and fire hazards.

Do U.S. workers really know what's happening? I say that Reagan is anti-people. He represents pro-monopoly and pro-military spending, serving the interests of big business and putting profits before the people's well-being. We face tough years ahead. Reagan has given the green light to bust unions in the U.S.A. The resurgence of racism is being used to divide the ranks of labor. The threat of a sub-minimum wage for youth is an attempt to separate young people from organized labor. Unemployment continues to rise as workers are repeatedly bombarded with plant closures and runaway shops; hospitals, clinics and schools are being closed, which not only denies communities of needed services, it also adds to unemployment. The U.S. is in an economic crisis and the people must act now.

Organized labor has the ability to lead in the struggle for the rights of all workers. Trade unionists must participate in coalitions with representatives from religious groups, senior citizens, youth, community and political organizations. We must build a united front which serves the interests of the working people of this country. An enormous military budget and constant threats of nuclear war do not serve our interests.

Trade unions must become the vehicle for workers to struggle in their own interests. Labor's goal must be to organize the unorganized. Unions need study circles and union classes to educate workers on trade unionism and practice unionism, teaching workers trade union consciousness, with a knowledge of trade union democracy.

Free education and health services and decent housing for all people of this country must be struggled for. We must fight for rent control and lowering of utility prices. We must close tax loopholes of the monopolies. We must fight against unemployment, inflation, runaway shops; we must demand jobs for all with effective affirmative action for nationally and racially oppressed people. I feel this is a people's program. And we must not forget those on Social Security and S.S.I.

There is a solution to high unemployment that trade unions can become involved with: workers' fightback is the answer. We can demand more houses for poor and elderly people. Housing increases will create jobs for construction workers throughout the country. Keeping schools open will employ vast numbers of people from janitorial and food service workers, to clerical workers and teachers, as well as educating the nation's youth. Keeping hospitals and clinics open also offers an abundance of jobs. Trade unions can fight the devastating effects of plant closures by supporting and participating in public and government joint takeover of closed plants. The time has also come to demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. Railroads can be re-opened in large cities, putting Americans back to work at union wages and working conditions. The possibilities are endless if we organize to stop Reagan's war economy and demand that our needs be met.

It is time to put talk into action. I call upon today's youth to turn out in masses to register and vote for candidates who work for peace and the people's needs. We must become politically conscious by building relationships with one another in all workingclass communities. We must have faith and confidence in one another and strive for peace throughout the world.

I say that labor must be in the forefront of this struggle and call for unity for all organized labor in the U.S.A!

SAT NOV 7 1981 PEOPLE'S WORLD 9



Black trade unionist reports

SAN FRANCISCO

AS A Black trade unionist I was sent as a delegate to the Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggle of the People of Southern Africa. As a representative of Local 2, (Hotel and Restaurant Employees) I was one of thousands of observers and delegates from youth, labor, community, religious and civil rights organizations attending the conference in New York City Oct. 9-11.

The purpose of the conference was to establish a plan of action to educate and organize the U.S. masses against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. Apartheid is the racist system of government whereby the white minority (17 percent of the total population) owns and controls over 85 percent of the wealth. The 70 percent Black majority suffer atrocities most North Americans find difficult to comprehend.

The distribution of wealth in South Africa is itself a reflection of how these atrocities are possible. Blacks in South Africa are among the world's most poverty-stricken people.

The declaration submitted by the New York delegation was adopted by conference delegates; it included the following:

- To organize mass support in the U.S. for the liberation movement of South Africa;
- To expose the U.S. government and corporations' leading role in the South African apartheid system;
- To mobilize the people in the U.S. from the grassroots in the anti-apartheid struggle.

I will report back to Local 2, demanding ongoing assistance to the liberation struggle in South Africa. I urge everyone to fight this system of genocide against South African Blacks.

"An Injury To One Is An Injury To All."

—LEE BROWN

COPY

COPY

COPY

From The Library Of
LEE BROWN



In Support
of the
NAACP

by Lee Brown

I am a man who is concerned with the struggle of our people and other oppressed people in the fight for a better education and jobs for the youth and all unemployed, concerned in the housing area and public demand for more housing and national health needs and the last but not least: peace.

The NAACP must change in order to grow. Some must come down off their high horses and be human!—respect the rights of the people, regardless of what level they've attained. Those of us concerned with the NAACP and conscious of the struggle in America must learn to relate and listen to each other, because no matter what level, we're all victims of racism in America.

I would like to say to the leadership of the NAACP that we must call upon our friends in labor, religion, and other areas "to help secure freedom. The struggle for freedom of black Americans is the struggle for freedom for all America."

We're going into 1985 and I propose that we study the history of black workers in America and black history in general. We must have knowledge of where we come from in order to know where we're going. I propose also that you become a nation of readers! We have been in a storm in the struggle for liberation of oppressed people in the U.S. And we must become allies with all organizations that fight for freedom for all oppressed peoples in the U.S.

1970. ...

Heat Up In The Bay Area

July 26, 1985

A spokesperson from the San Francisco Anti-Apartheid Committee said most of the protesters at the rally were demonstrating because they believe "apartheid is a crime against humanity."

He added, "The people of this city and in cities around the country are expressing their outrage at the state of emergency."

Anti-apartheid activist Julianne Malveaux, who was responsible for placing Proposition J on last November's ballot which passed overwhelmingly and will direct the City and County of San Francisco to divest some \$337 million in pension funds invested in South Africa, said, "The time has come for us to put our foot down and say no to U.S. investment in South Africa."

Malveaux added, "Until we put our bodies on the line, we are not involved and are just standing on the sidelines."

A Spokesperson from Congressman Ron Dellums' (D-Oakland) office said the progressive congressman has lent his support to the recent opposition to the state of emergency. In a written statement the congressman said, "The South African government has demonstrated its resistance to change. We can force change if we raise our voices loud enough."

Organizers of the protest pledged more demonstrations until the Reagan administration responds to the group's demands, which are:

- * Break all diplomatic, economic and military relations with South Africa.
- * Oppose martial law in South Africa.
- * Support unconditional freedom of Nelson and Winnie Mandela and all Trade Union and Political prisoners.
- * Recognize the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the African National Congress (ANC) as the representatives of the majority of South Africans.



Demonstrators, including Alameda County Supervisor John George, protested against apartheid and the state of emergency in South Africa.

Photo/Gary Raynaldo

CALIFORNIA VOICE

COPY OF CALIFORNIA COPY



OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

Association 368b

Reg. No. _____

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF

Name & Insignia

UNINCORPORATED NOT-PROFIT ASSOCIATION

I, MARCH FONG EU, Secretary of State of the State of California, do hereby CERTIFY that in accordance with the application filed in this office the ASSOCIATION named below has

duly registered its Name and Insignia
in this office:

Name of Association Doctor Of The Working Class

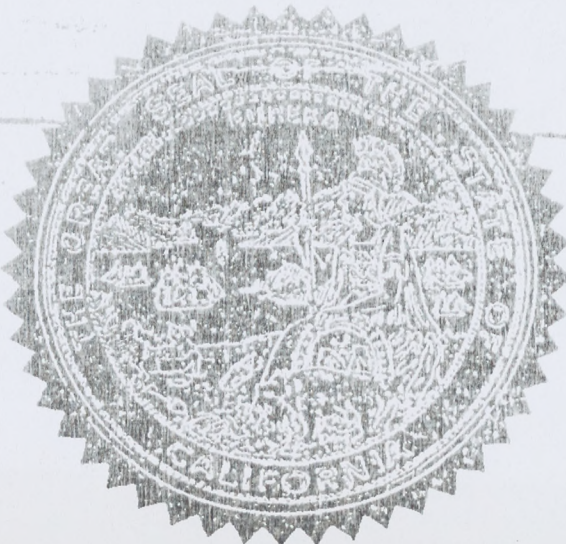
Lee Brown Founder and Director

Address P. O. Box 1031

San Francisco, California 94101

Date of Registration July 21, 1981

COPY



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I execute
this certificate and affix the Great Seal
of the State of California this

day of

21st July, 1981

March Fong Eu

Secretary of State