

News and Views from Dallas
Dallas, Texas

In my opinion The Militant is the most informative radical publication in America. Your coverage and analysis of the labor movement is unsurpassed anywhere. In terms of political action, however, although in general I certainly agree with your attack on the Democratic Party, the need for a liberal-labor party independent of the Establishment, etc., I feel you are committing a gross error by neglecting any serious discussion of the "Reform" movements inside the Democratic Party, their history, where they are going, etc. Especially I refer to the fact that you seem to totally ignore the California Democratic Councils, the New York Reform Democratic Clubs, etc.

It would also be exceedingly helpful if in addition you would give more coverage on political movements independent of the major parties, such as the Hughes campaign in Massachusetts. Lastly, some attention to movements inside the labor movement for union democracy. I feel that some attention to these subjects would immensely improve the already high educational and informative quality of your paper.

Here is an interesting item you might wish to print: Last month a newscast mentioned the plight of Mrs. Marie Ortiz and her six children here whose house had burned down with all their belongings. It seems that out of a welfare check of \$107 a month, \$74 had been going to pay the rent on the house. Although her rent had

been paid for the month, the landlord decided to cut off the water and gas anyway. (Reason not given). This necessitated the family burning wood in a rigged-up stove to keep warm (it was during a five-degree cold spell). This was what caused the fire.

It was also disclosed that Mrs. Ortiz's husband deserted her four years ago; moreover cancer and an eye ulcer made it impossible for her to work. Some kind person suggested she turn over her children to an orphanage. She replied she did not wish to live without her children.

The conclusion of this particular tale is not quite so sad — a number of people sent substantial charity contributions. But this only causes one to wonder about the number of Mrs. Ortizes who live under the same or worse conditions and suffer similar catastrophes, and go unnoticed by the press and charity-givers. It also leads one to seriously question a system which permits such a situation to ever exist in the first place. Would it not be far better to fundamentally transform the ~~social~~ social conditions which are presently the cause of unemployment, poverty, relief rolls and so forth, than to rely on the sympathy of a few of the rich at Christmas and in "sensational" cases such as this one?

L. H.

Ed Cohen of Washington, D.C. pointed out this letter to me. He thinks it might be identifiable with Oswald — perhaps written ~~by/with~~ for him by DeMorenschild. (There are only 3 people whose letters from Dallas were published in The Militant in 1962-64: this one by L.H., one letter by R.L., and several by Thelma Lucio) As far as I know, no one has checked with the Militant concerning this letter. (I hesitate to do ~~it~~ so by phone or letter because chances are good that I would get an FBI informant.)