

National Action Committee
Meeting via E-Mail
September 22- October 1, 2005

Attending: Raul Cano, Greg Pason, Antonio Salas and Jim Schaefer

Motion (Salas): To pass the following statement:

FUEL CRISIS OR MONOPOLY MANIPULATION? -- THE PETROLEUM BARONS STRIKE AGAIN

The retail prices of basic fuels and gasoline have reached ever growing crisis levels for the average working class, poor, and even middle class American. In an economy that is largely dependent on petroleum-based products of all kinds, this trend threatens to swamp the American people in a spiral of budget-busting inflation in the prices of most of the necessities of life. This winter, the costs of fuel oil and natural gas may lead to thousands of utility cut-offs and real emergency survival conditions for millions of working and oppressed people.

We are constantly told by the big oil monopolies that there is a "shortage" of this and a delay in oil production and all other phony excuses to justify the price gouging that they carry out against us. The truth is that the energy industry does not even operate according to any "laws" of supply and demand. It is made up of a handful of close knit, giant corporations with interlocking owners that manipulate the "market" to suit their aim of controlling the entire world's energy production, and profit. They, to a large extent, control the US government and push for wars of conquest to gain control and ownership of the world's resources, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq. They even have the cold audacity to take advantage of an extreme disaster like hurricane Katrina to cry "shortage" and increase prices to boost their already obscene profit margins. Temporary price reductions do not change this picture, and are only part and parcel of the manipulation of the market and public opinion.

We of the Socialist Party-USA are fed up. We know that the ultimate solution to the so-called "energy crisis" is the complete social takeover and ownership of the entire energy industry and all natural resources, including petroleum, under the democratic control of the energy workers, the working people in general, energy technology and production experts, affected communities, and the consuming public. But this will take nothing short of a revolutionary upsurge of the people to accomplish.

In the mean time we demand the following as immediate steps, which both deal with the immediate problem and point the way toward a socialist solution:

- * By emergency legislation and federal government decree, roll back gasoline and diesel prices to pre-Katrina levels - the lowest level within the three months before. Roll back prices at all levels, stages, and branches of the industry, not just retail. Do the same for crude oil, lubrication oil, home heating oil and natural gas.
- * Monitor fuel and other petroleum prices and enforce price controls through democratically elected price control councils organized in every area, with power to seize and operate offending fuel outlets and companies. Prosecute price gougers to the fullest extent of the law, especially petroleum and natural gas executives.
- * Declare a national energy emergency and federalize the entire gasoline and fuel industry, top to bottom. Operate it through elected and representative committees, councils and assemblies of workers at all levels of the industry, plus consumer and community representatives. Include union representation and consumer organization representatives. Tap the skills and expertise of working engineers and other energy and fuel experts in and out of the industry, plus lower level, non-politically appointed working employees of the Department of Energy. No inclusion of energy executives or boards of directors of energy corporations. Bring in their staffs, but freeze executive authority.
- * Monitor fuel supply levels through the above kinds of popular representative bodies. End phony "shortages" and market manipulation. Prosecute stagers and reporters of false shortages.
- * Stop the price inflating trading in petroleum futures.
Our energy needs should not be subject to the gambling of speculators.
- * Enforce environmental standards aimed at the energy industry and sharply improve them.
- * Dramatically increases public investment and mandate massively greater private investment in the development of renewable and other alternative energy sources.
- * Promote huge increased investment in mass transportation systems and fuel-efficient vehicles.

The above changes are absolutely necessary to even begin to solve the extreme energy emergency that engulfs us. None of these have a chance of being implemented, however, without the building of massive movements of working and oppressed people organized to demand it. The Socialist Party-USA will be a part of building such movements, and we call upon all popular forces and the whole progressive community to join us. In the end, the energy industry must be the common property of the whole people.

Motion Passed 3 yes (Cano, Salas and Pason) 1 abstention (Schaefer)