

white community as well. It is in the interest of all people who are struggling for a better quality of life to champion the demands of the Human Rights Agenda in their workplaces, classrooms and communities.

The preservation and enforcement of the Human Rights Agenda would be a qualitative step forward for the Black, women's, and workers' movements here in Philadelphia as well as nationally, especially in light of the increasing racist and anti-worker offensive taking shape across this country. We are now witnessing an increase in unemployment, further attacks on affirmative action programs (like the Brian Weber Case), and a new deadly rise in police terror, to name a few.

A fight-back movement based on a program of demands such as those in the Human Rights Agenda would be a powerful movement centered around our most basic needs. Get a copy of the Human Rights Agenda and join now with those who are struggling for its realization.



WOMEN'S ALLIANCE QUESTIONS MAYORAL CANDIDATES

April 1979

by Sara Murphy

A group of over 200 Philadelphia women met on International Women's Day to put their concerns before the candidates for mayor. A range of issues of particular concern to women were mailed to the candidates ahead of time, and they were asked to respond, then deal with questions from a panel and from the floor.

The issues raised included the need for affirmative action in hiring in all city departments and also affirmative action in upgrading, for minorities and for women. The special concerns of women in such employment included training women for non-traditional jobs and job categories, employing displaced homemakers, and the need for quality day care.

Other issues were the need for great expansion of city health services, particularly in the neighborhood clinics; the need for legislation to end discrimination against women and women heads of households in housing; the need for funded programs to protect battered women and a special rape unit in the

police department; an end to discrimination against gays.

Candidates who attended the forum were Bowser, William Green, Gaudiosi and Klenk, all democrats; L. Green, republican; A. Lieberman of the Consumer Party and Nora Danielson of the SWP. Unfortunately, all the candidates except for Klenk and the Consumer and SWP candidates left very early in the evening and did not see fit to stay and respond to questions from the panel or from the floor.

For the most part the major candidates were perfunctory and patronizing to the large gathering of mainly women. While assuring the audience that they were all for women's equality, for the most part, they failed to address women's actual concerns concretely or seriously. For example, aside from Klenk who sounded downright radical calling for an investigation of sexism in job classification in the city departments, the major candidates tended to reduce the entire question of affirmative action to appointing women to their administration.

Other major weaknesses of the candidates were the inability to address the question of racism, particularly in dealing with the interaction of racism and sexism leading to triple oppression of minority women. And all the promises of social service programs were so many empty campaign promises as not a single one addressed the question of funding and the need to shift the tax burden from the poor to the corporations and the wealthy. Unfortunately, these issues were not highlighted by the Alliance which organized the forum, or by the panel which attempted to sharpen the questions.

Unfortunately for the candidates, the time when politicians could walk into a meeting, pat the women on the head and tell them they would take care of everything, then leave for "more important business" is long past. Women in the city who are active in the struggle for equal rights, such as most of those present, and broader sectors of women engaged in fights for equality on the job, a decent standard of living, and against racism, will be looking for an independent alternative to Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee.