

(The following was received too late for publication in the WAM Newsletter)

PROPOSAL FOR WORKSHOP ON 30 FOR 40 IN WELFARE

We as members of the Mass. Social Workers Guild (SSEIU Local #509) propose that one of the workshops at the WAM convention be concerned with Welfare and what 30 for 40 would mean for welfare workers and recipients.

1. What could a WAM Chapter do to fight separation:
save jobs, demand equal pay for equal work, maintain identifiable workers and as a result, build alliances with clients.
2. What can WAM Chapters do to fight welfare:
refusal to comply with the Talmadge Amendment, ally with clients to demand that clients receive equal pay with regular workers and the right to union membership, day care, payment for the full time job of raising a family, good training programs and/or good jobs...not employment as scabs for slave labor wages.

These two items are both federal decrees which further the plan to lay off workers in many places -- including welfare offices-- and replace them with welfare recipients who will be forced to work in order to get their inadequate welfare allowances.

PROPOSAL FOR WORKSHOP ON FIGHTING RACISM IN THE UNIONS

We as members of the Boston Welfare Clerks' Union feel that it is very important to discuss fighting racism in the unions at the WAM convention. It is a very serious problem in our union and has kept us from growing and from starting struggles for better conditions. We want to know how other people are dealing with such problems as racist harassment, pay differentials, job security, and the idea that being racist somehow helps the person who is racist. We know our bosses are laughing behind our backs as this racism helps them keep us down.

(THE FOLLOWING WAS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR THE WAM NEWSLETTER).

Frank Rugg -- Report on the Work of the "Detroit 30 for 40 Coalition"

The "Detroit 30 for 40 Coalition", including the Detroit Chapter of WAM, is conducting a campaign to put a 30 for 40 ordinance on the Detroit ballot in November 1973. I think people in other areas can benefit from our experience.

To put a proposed ordinance of the Detroit ballot requires 25,000 signatures of voters registered in Detroit. The signatures must be gathered on a petition containing the proposed ordinance and a request that it be placed on the ballot. The signatures must be gathered within a continuous six month period. The deadline for the filing of the petitions for the November ballot is in July. Since the situation is probably similar in other cities, lesson #1 is to get started early.

Any ordinance we propose should be "legal", to give the government as few excuses as possible for not enforcing it. We got free help in drawing ours up from a couple of lawyers who support 30 for 40. The estimate of our lawyers is that neither a city nor a state can pass laws requiring 30 for 40 in private businesses. This can only be done by the U.S. Congress. We worded our ordinance, so that it would require the city government to publicize 30 for 40 and lobby for it in Congress.

Based on our experience so far, I would recommend that petition campaign be organized before the first signatures are gathered. A campaign of this size is a complicated thing, especially with a "new" issue like 30 for 40. If you have to organize the campaign from scratch during the six months or whatever time you have to gather the signatures, you will probably end up with the same problem we have. We've just gotten the mechanical aspects of the campaign worked out, and the six months we have to gather the signatures is half gone. We have less than 200 signatures out of 25,000. People have been receptive, but our approach to them has been poorly organized.

We sound that we couldn't operate efficiently without an office. People need to know where to get petitions, literature, clip boards and tables for petitioning, as well as general information. An office makes it easier to hold meetings because it is always available and everybody can learn where it is. Meetings can be held at the same place and the same time every week, regardless of whose house isn't available. The office gives the organization a more impressive public presence.

The form of our organization is pretty standard. The steering committee meets once a week and oversees the work of three working committees: Publicity, Office and Finance, and Petitioning Mobilization. The Petition Mobilization Committee was originally called "canvassing", because we thought we could get a lot of signatures going door to door. We soon found that door to door canvassing is very slow and switched to "mobilizations" at shopping centers, Wayne State University and plant gates.

The office has been organized so that any person who comes to work in it can look in a notebook and see what progress other people have made in contacting and involving various organizations. Then, referring to a current list of things to talk to people about, he can start right in calling people on the office phone. It is very important to have a system like this for contacting people and organizations and ~~encouraging~~ encouraging them to participate in the campaign.

The two biggest problems of the coalition are recruiting and fund raising. A lot of money and many people are needed for a campaign this large. An office workers local of AFSCME, a college teachers local of the AFT, and two black clubs have endorsed the campaign, but none of these have given money or participated in the campaigns as organizations. Getting the endorsement of organizations is good, but it is no substitute for recruiting individuals through persistent personal contact and political discussion. We have to convince people one by one to put their time and money into the fight for 30 for 40. There is no easier way. But our chances of success are great because workers need 30 for 40, and most at least passively support it already.

In doing electoral work, WAM has to be particularly careful of the ideas it is spreading. We don't want to make people think that we can get 30 for 40 by voting for it. 30 for 40 will not be won until millions of workers are united and fighting for it on their jobs. It must be emphasized that the main purpose of "electoral work" is to publicize 30 for 40 and to give encouragement and support to people who want to fight for 30 for 40 in the unions, especially the industrial unions. Here in Detroit, we should aim our campaign at auto workers as much as possible. So far, we have not done that, because we think the most important thing is to get 25,000 signatures wherever and however we can, when actually the most important thing is to build the struggle in the plants. Our 30 for 40 election campaign will be a success if it builds WAM. I think it has the