

Mike H.

SPECIAL BULLETIN NUMBER NINE

CONTENTS.....

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| a) "Left" Factionalism on Southern Africa | Dave F |
| b) Conversations with the British. | Mark L |
| c) Statement on the Faction Fight. | Winnie |
| d) What is Economism. | Duncan Hallas |
| e) Statement on the Faction Fight. | Craig Z. |
| f) Statements on L'ville and Gary | "Left" Faction |

For I.S. Members Only

February 17th. 1977

A CASE OF BLIND FACTIONALISM -- THE "LEFT" FACTION CRITIQUE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA
by Dave F.

Blind factionalism, like any other disease, has certain symptoms which can be objectively observed and analyzed. This can help us to determine if the disease can still be treated, or has reached an incurable and terminal stage.

I would suggest that one of the symptoms of blind factionalism is the need to find differences on every single area of an organization's work, no matter how far removed it might be from the original questions in the debate. When an opposition feels it is imperative that they differentiate themselves from an organization on everything, regardless of the facts or the merits or the real history of the work they are denouncing, this may be symptomatic of where they feel the logic of their politics is leading them. They have to justify themselves by making it clear they share no common politics with their organization.

A particularly clear example of this symptom (though not the only one) is provided by the "Left" Faction's critique of the IS Southern Africa Solidarity campaign. On the face of it one would not have thought that a debate over the correctness of industrialization and mass work in America, would affect our basic policies in supporting the colonial revolution. Nor would you think that lurking behind our building support for ZANU and Southern Africa Liberation Committees, the "Left" faction would be forced to find yet another act of political liquidation and even an abandonment of Permanent Revolution by the IS.

Yet exactly this has now happened. We are told in the critique of IS Black Work: "Unfortunately, to the extent this campaign (southern Africa) has been carried out, it has been plagued by major political problems." Never mind the fact that comrade Barbara W., while acting as the convenor and administrator of this campaign, never raised a single one of these "major political problems". Never mind that no other member of what's now the "Left" faction ever raised them either. Never mind that the political line of Workers' Power on southern Africa has been identical to that of Socialist Worker and International Socialism. (We are now informed in a parenthetical note that a document is circulating around by Alex Callinicos of the British SWP called "The USIS and ZANU". At the time this is written, no copy of this document has been submitted to us. No doubt it will pop up whenever the "Left" faction loyally gets around to showing it to us).

This reply will not be a full statement of position on Southern Africa. But let's go through the charges the "Left" faction makes. Let's see where the truth lies, and let's see whose politics are degenerating under the impact of this faction fight.

I. THE CRIME OF BUILDING A MOVEMENT

Not surprisingly the first crime we have committed against the masses of southern Africa is that we want to "build a movement" to support their freedom struggle. This is the same Original Sin of movement-building that already led us to sell out steelworkers, auto workers and Teamsters, so why not southern Africa too?

The "Left" Faction makes its own position very clear in its "Make Black Liberation Central to the IS", p.2: "We will not today be building a movement around Southern Africa. Though people are ~~not~~ interested, most are not ready to move. Therefore, our work will amount to a propaganda campaign..." This is followed by a list of suggested activities. All of these are the exact same activities which the Southern Africa campaign has begun carrying out (aside from the name given to the committees, which for the "Left" Faction is a

matter of highest importance). The difference is that the "Left" Faction says it wants to "educate", "raise political consciousness" and "recruit". As if these weren't the aims of the IS southern Africa campaign! As if you can seriously educate and recruit people without presenting yourselves as activists and organizers of a movement!

Of course, the Left Faction's position on everything is that building a movement of workers around anything, in America today, automatically means abandoning IS politics.

II. WHY CAN'T THE "LEFT" FACTION READ?

On p.6 of its critique the Left Faction very profoundly states: "We know from the history of the liberation movements in Africa, no real independence can be won without a revolution based in the working class which will spread the revolution over the entire continent, especially South Africa..."; and then on page 7 they state that the pamphlet by Glenn Wolfe on South Africa is "empty of a statement of how IS politics are relevant to South Africa. Without a clear IS political position, the pamphlet turns out to be useless."

Comrades who want to refer to the pamphlet in question, which I recommend, will notice that the whole last section (Part V) is a discussion of "South Africa and Permanent Revolution". This takes up not one but several aspects of Permanent Revolution in the context of South Africa: (i) the dynamic that turns basic reform struggles into revolutionary explosions; (ii) the question of unifying the black urban workers with other workers and the rural population (see also the section "National Liberation" on p.4 of the pamphlet); and of course (iii) the centrality of South Africa's revolution for the whole of southern Africa. It also concludes with the necessity of a revolutionary party and the fact that neither ANC or PAC are such a party. On the whole it is probably one of the best concise, concrete introductions to the ideas of Permanent Revolution available.

The question is, why can't the "Left" Faction read this? Perhaps they got a defective copy of the pamphlet with pages missing. Perhaps they think that a "clear IS political position" on South Africa should focus on something totally different from Permanent Revolution. Or maybe - most likely - it's just that they don't care what kind of junk they throw out as long as it looks good on paper.

III. "UNCRITICAL SUPPORT" AND CRITICAL CRETINISM

Actually, the theoretical and political heart of the "critique" is the alleged IS policy of "aligning with ZANU on the basis of uncritical support"; and the charge that "we don't have any explanation to our members or contacts of the current anti-working class MPLA government of Angola", which "we built up nearly as revolutionary socialists and who had our uncritical support during the war."

I will get back to the question of ZANU and Zimbabwe, where I will show that the "Left" Faction's blind ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ factionalism actually threatens to disorient them on the whole question of national liberation in Africa. But let's deal first with the charge on Angola, which is purely idiotic.

Our pamphlet "Angola; The Struggle for Liberation", still available and indeed publically advertised, contains a concluding section written by the Workers' Power international editor (the same one who keeps IS politics on southern Africa out of the paper every week.) I will quote what it predicted about the MPLA in January, 1976:

"It will not be long before Angolan workers fighting for wages, jobs and better conditions, collide head-to-head with the U.S.-based and other giant foreign corporations in Angola. If their demands are not satisfied workers will demand these oil, diamond and other companies be seized to meet people's needs.

"That struggle cannot be carried through by the government of the MPLA. Agostinho Neto and other MPLA leaders have already said they will protect foreign investments in Angola.

"This doesn't mean that the MPLA leaders are slaves of the multinational imperialist corporations. Far from it. But MPLA is also not a workers' organization, even though it has huge working class support. In fact MPLA is an alliance of nationalist forces - supported by workers, intellectuals and the urban middle class - whose leaders are trying to balance between the demands of workers and the foreign corporations which dominate Angola's economy."

Besides this, a lengthy internal document adopted by the EC, extensively discussed the social character of MPLA and defined it as a party of national capitalism in Angola.

It is in fact true that since the MPLA victory, Workers' Power has had only one short on subsequent developments suggesting MPLA repression of radical workers' struggles. And in this same period, to my knowledge Socialist Worker has run nothing at all. I am certain the reasons are the same: lack of facts to back it up.

I stand by our characterization of MPLA in the pamphlet, and I am ~~xxxxxxx~~ certain that on some level there is repression of workers and the more or less rapid consolidation of bourgeois privileges. However the facts to prove this are, for the most part, not available with our current sources. Those strikes and small groups which have reportedly been suppressed, including an "Active Revolt" faction inside MPLA itself, are alleged to be \forall sabotage inspired by UNITA or other pro-imperialist forces. No doubt a lot of these charges are bull-shit. But without facts about specific cases, you don't rush into print with unproven accounts from the New York Times which may have been planted by the CIA.

As I said, Socialist Worker seems to understand this. I have not seen the "Left" Faction issue any denunciations of its opportunist coverage on southern Africa. But of course, that's different. The difference being, that the "Left" Faction has no intention of taking responsibility for Workers' Power. Our paper is just something for them to take potshots at.

IV. ZIMBABWE: CRITICAL SUPPORT FOR MUZOREWA?

So far the charges we have looked at from the "Left" Faction consist of cooked-up differences and slanders with no real content. And so many of them are. But not all. When we come to the current war in Zimbabwe we can see there is a real difference beginning to emerge. And potentially a very serious one.

In its denunciation of ZANU the "Left" Faction makes two basic points. Here is the first: "Most serious, ZANU today has been forced into a 'Patriotic Front' with the worst elements of the liberation movement, led by Joshua Nkomo ... There is every chance that ZANU will be forced to sell out (against their wishes) because of their dependence on the front-line governments... Instead of ignoring all of this, we should be explaining why this has happened and how it can be avoided if the liberation movements have a working class strategy." And here's the second: "All the liberation organizations in Zimbabwe (ZANU, ZAPU, ANC should have (our full) support. Zimbabwe is not Angola where phoney 'liberation'

~~xxxx~~ groups existed".

Not so fast, comrades! It is true enough that the divisions among the nationalists in Zimbabwe have more complexities than they did in Angola - or at least, than they did in Angola by ~~1974~~ 1974-75. (After all, for many years in Angola, FNLA and UNITA did engage in some degree of armed actions against the Portuguese, even if they did spend more of their time fighting the MPLA and each other). There is at present no Zimbabwean nationalist organization on South Africa's payroll. However, it is becoming clear that they are "phoney liberation groups" in Zimbabwe as well.

Today, there are two Zimbabwean liberation organizations with military forces in the field: ZANU and ZAPU. They are joined in a military alliance called the "Patriotic Front" (more on this below). The front-line African states have taken a position of clear support to the Patriotic Front. Why? Because it is "led" by Joshua Nkomo? No. It is because the Patriotic Front represents the only liberation army. If you want relations with the freedom fighters, as the African Presidents do, you have to go through the Patriotic Front.

The "Left" Faction also claims we should be giving the same kind of support to a movement known as the "African National Council of Zimbabwe (ANC-2)". This is led by a bishop named Muzorewa, who used to be affiliated with ZAPU and later on with ZANU. ANC was formed in 1974. It really was a forced "shotgun wedding" which the African states forced ZANU to join. Both ZANU and ZAPU were supposed to be dissolved into this new, unified umbrella movement. In reality the merger was stillborn. It flopped basically because the ZANU freedom fighters refused to accept the idea of putting their guns and their future in the hands of leaders who might sell out to the South African-Zambian-American-sponsored "detente".

Today, as a "liberation movement", the ANC is nothing. It has no troops, no guns. Its leader Muzorewa, has spoken to big crowds recently -- but the crowds were chanting the slogans of the Patriotic Front, not of ANC! Let's be clear. Muzorewa, the leader of ANC, is now the black figure that Ian Smith of Rhodesia thinks he can make an "internal settlement" with. Smith said Muzorewa was "the best behaved" of the blacks at Geneva. If the ANC has any future at all, it is likely to be as the Zimbabwean equivalent of FNLA or UNITA. Muzorewa and his "movement" are no longer allowed to operate in any of the front-line countries.

Yet our "Left" Faction wants to give Muzorewa the same kind of critical support we give ZANU and the Patriotic Front. Leave aside that Muzorewa has no fighters to give support to. The truth is that even the African Presidents, whose whole strategy is to balance between national liberation and neo-colonial settlements, have been forced to recognize the unequivocal legitimacy of the liberation army. This in fact means they have been forced to recognize ZANU, the most militant and uncompromising liberation movement which controls the loyalty of at least 80-90% of the forces of the Patriotic Front. Let's face it. The "Left" Faction has put itself squarely to the right of not only the left-wing bourgeois nationalist, Nyerere of Tanzania, but even to the right of Kaunda, the right-wing bourgeois nationalist of Zambia! All because their blind factionalism makes it impossible for them to see what's going on.

And now let me pose another question. According to the "Left" Faction "all this (the Patriotic Front, etc.) can be avoided if the liberation movements have a working class strategy". Comrades, I am dying to learn how the very best "working class strategy" in Zimbabwe would enable the national liberation movements to avoid having to rely on the African states for supplies of guns, for military bases and even diplomatic backing. There is no revolutionary workers' state in the world today to provide these small necessities, unfortunately. The liberation

movements have to maneuver to get all the help they can from these states (Yes, bourgeois capitalist African states like Tanzania!), without losing their freedom of action. And ZANU has been, so far as we can tell, successful in this because it relied at every point on the commitment of the freedom fighters.

And I would also like to know just how, with a working class strategy, a liberation movement can avoid the necessity of making military alliances with other forces, including bourgeois nationalist ones, who are fighting with arms in hand against the same colonial enemy! Let's say that instead of ZANU, it was the Bolshevik Party of Zimbabwe which were leading the struggle. How would this party avoid the necessity of a military alliance with Joshua Nkomo, who has both a liberation army and has the potential to be the vehicle for a western-sponsored sellout? True, the Bolsheviks would not give up their own military and political organization for this alliance. But they would undoubtedly make the alliance -- so that it would not be they who had to take responsibility for splitting the movement and possibly turning the freedom fighters' guns against each other.

Workers' Power, which the "Left" Faction doesn't read, has clearly stated that the Patriotic Front cannot ~~make~~ be a stable alliance or political merger. It was a bargaining bloc at Geneva and a military alliance in the field. As such it is justified both tactically and in principle. Even the Bolshevik Party of Zimbabwe, given the relation of forces ~~it~~ might well make that alliance despite all its dangers. When you get right down to it, the "Left" Faction's critique of ZANU's policies are generally right-wing and sectarian. And they could easily wind up giving "equal" support to the national liberation fighters and the black puppets at the same time.

VI. SURPRISE! LONG LIVE CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA!

The "Left" Faction critiques righteously demonstrates that ZANU's strategy is non-Marxist; it is "for the countryside to surround the city"...and "their publications praise Mao, Kim Il Sung (~~dictator~~ dictator of North Korea), Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh." And they are right. ZANU is certainly ideologically influenced by a very bad lot of Stalinist bureaucracies, as well as the Tanzanian model of single-party national capitalism. And this is certainly a drawback in the liberation struggle today and for the future of an independent Zimbabwe.

Of course, it is also true that the British IS considered our organization to be mistaken during the anti-Vietnam war movement, because unlike the ISGB we did not march under flags of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front - which was a pure-and-simple Stalinist party self-consciously aiming to create a bureaucratic ruling class! But that's for some other discussion.

I must admit, however, that I was stunned to find, several reams of paper down the road, the punch line of the "Left" Faction's politics on southern Africa. On p.4 of "Make Black Liberation Central to the IS", we learn that Workers' Power coverage should include articles on: "Why we support Russian Arms and Cuban troops in Angola or now in Zimbabwe".

Just imagine! The "Left" Faction is against the military bloc of the Patriotic Front, against African states supporting that Front, and above all against ZANU's illusions in Stalinism. But when it comes to Cuban troops going to Zimbabwe -- Right On! The more, the better!

Let's get something straight. The IS is not for Cuban troops in Zimbabwe. Neither is ZANU. Neither is Joshua Nkomo! We are for the people of Zimbabwe liberating themselves. We are convinced they have the army to do the job. And what's more, the more self-reliant they are the stronger and more independent Zimbabwe will be after liberation. We are against their calling for help from

a Stalinist regime whose foreign policy is closely allied with Moscow.

If Cuban troops do intervene, it will not change our basic attitude toward the war. We will still be unconditionally for the victory of the genuine liberation forces as we were in Angola. But to call for Cuban troops, at a time when the Zimbabweans themselves are stronger militarily and more unified than ever, is the height of "Left" bankruptcy.

This is, in truth, the crowning touch of a "critique" which is shot through and through with slanders and idiocies. ~~Butchered~~ Most of this "critique" demonstrates only that the "Left" Faction is unfamiliar with our paper, our public positions and pamphlets, and even basic policy. But there's no point in getting too angry over it. As I said at the beginning, these are only symptoms of a certain political dynamic, which have to be analyzed objectively.

BRIEF POSTSCRIPT

After this document had been completed and typed on stencils, comrade Cal was kind enough to come by the office and drop off a copy of the above-mentioned "ISUS and ZANU", by Alex Callinicos, which has evidently been circulating in the Left Faction for some time. On one quick reading, I will not try to answer it in detail. However, Alex's basic contention in his document is that: "ZANU today, although it is in the forefront of the armed struggle, is also central to the strategy of detente between Vorster and the rulers of Black Africa."

I suspect that Vorster would find this characterization as surprising as I do. The basic argument runs as follows: (i) the Patriotic Front was formed under the pressure of the African states (undoubtedly true, at least in part); (ii) the bourgeois ruling classes of Zambia and Tanzania are forced to maneuver for detente with South Africa (100% true); (iii) the African states have given their full support to ZANU/ZIPA (i.e. the Front) and withdrawn support from Muzorewa's ANC (also true). From this it supposedly follows that: ZANU/ZIPA is a creature of detente. (And by implication, it would also follow that Muzorewa's ANC is less of an instrument of detente than ZANU!).

This is astonishing logic. It implies that the freedom fighters and their organizations are simply puppets on strings pulled by the African states. That the fact that the Patriotic Front parties have the only actual liberation armies, gives them no leverage to use in pressuring the African states. That somehow Muzorewa, with no army, could somehow be more independent of all these maneuvers than ZANU and ZIPA. If that's true, then why did the ANC fall apart after Tanzania and Zambia did everything in their power to make it succeed in the first place? Why didn't the forced merger of ZANU and ZAPU, which Kaunda and Vorster did try to force on ZANU, succeed?

One other thing. Alex quotes from our "Basic Facts and Information About ZANU" to make it appear that we support ZANU's social program for a liberated Zimbabwe. In truth this document, which will be re-issued in public form in the Workers' Power handbook for the Southern Africa Liberation Committees, makes it clear that the road to socialism for Zimbabwe does not lie in a single-party national capitalist state modelled on Tanzania. It lies in the independent organization of the working class and the spread of the revolution to South Africa. That is what will ultimately decide the future of Zimbabwe and for that matter Angola, Mozambique and Zambia. This, however, does not fit into the "Left" faction's conception that in our insane eagerness to "build a movement" around southern Africa, we have abandoned the working class for the flashpots of petit-bourgeois nationalism.

CONVERSATION WITH THE BRITISH - By Mark L.

What follows is a report, some observations and a political critique of my discussions with leading members of the Socialist Workers Party (formerly the I.S.G.B.). The report is necessarily a composite picture, a distillation and should be read as such. Not every off-hand comment is either noted or particularly noteworthy. Instead I have tried to generalize around several basic questions, relying particularly on a six hour meeting with Tony Cliff and a meeting with the SWP's International Committee.

I. Report

THE ROAD TO THE RIGHT IS PAVED WITH AGITATIONAL INTENTIONS.

For the most part the SWPers agreed that industrialization and priorities were crucial political questions only in so far as they flowed from the mass work perspective. The discussion on these questions was simply a rehash of the exchange of letters between their Central Committee and our E.C. It hardly needs to be repeated. What does deserve thorough treatment is their criticisms of our "mass work" perspective.

The SWP argues that our agitational perspective of building the I.S. through leading working class struggle leads us to: 1. an overestimation of our real strength, influence and potential and 2. an accommodation to the political conservatism of working class. They believe this to be true for one reason, we have only 300 members. Why? The argument goes something like this. A tiny group of revolutionaries can only lead tiny struggles, if it can lead anything at all. Any attempt to lead anything 'big': to lead workers beyond our membership and periphery endangers us. To lead "the mass", even a little, means that we must ally, bloc, or collaborate with other forces to our Right. For example, our alliance with Bob Weisman in the CGC or Vince Meredith in UPSurge. Because we represent so little our ability to steer the struggle or organization toward our politics declines in proportion to the size of the thing we are trying to lead. We might maintain a share of the formal leadership but, we can only do this in so far as we don't rock the boat and challenge the politics of our collaborators. Since our goal is leadership we end up capitulating to the politics of our allies. They capture us. We might believe that we are leading but really we end up doing the leg work for some one else's politics, most often the politics of trade union reformism.

Triumphalism is the self-deception that we actually lead. It is a self reinforcing, habit forming and narcotic. We are hooked and crave ever larger doses of self congratulatory illusion mongering. In order to maintain the myth that we are leading we soft peddle our politics, the better able to manoeuvre into positions of leadership. The organizations political practice and eventually its theory move to the right. Our uncritical support of Sadlowski is proof enough.

The alternative to this road to catastrophe is the painful realization that we can be nothing more than a propaganda group, a modest one at that. The SWP will not argue against us doing some agitation, especially if it is on a small scale. Agitation, however, will have little to do with recruiting workers to Socialist politics. Just remember you are tiny, you have nothing to offer but your ideas. Before you can lead you must grow.

"CRITICAL SUPPORT" FOR THE LEFT FACTION

While everyone I talked to was completely convinced of the bankruptcy

of the E.C. and the Majority Caucus, support for the Left Faction was hardly enthusiastic. Even Cliff, a man not known for his reticence, admitted, "I am not sure that Cal and Barbara understand how difficult it is to be a propaganda group." At my meeting with the International Committee people had to be pushed into arguing for the LF. After I had insisted repeatedly that "Jeffries is in America organizing for the Left Faction. You must take responsibility for their politics. You must explain how they are a solution to the problems you or I see in the ISUS.", I was told that I was putting a gun to the committees head! Finally, after some half hearted comments like "Well, yes the LF doesn't have very much to say about "Workers Power", or that their might be some problems with their particular conception of a propaganda group, Chris Harman stated, "We support the Left Faction because they have a more modest and realistic sense of who you are and what you can do." When I told Central Committee member John Deason that I felt that the International Committee meeting had been a joke because nobody really argued the politics of the Left Faction, he insisted that the SWP does not support the Left Faction! This, of course is not true. The point, however is that the attitude toward the Left Faction was not exactly cheerleading.

"JEFFRIES" CONTRIBUTION TO MARXIST ECONOMIC THEORY

No one repeated Jeffries argument about how U.S. capitalism was immune from the world economic system. I doubt if anyone had ever heard it until I asked them if they believed it or why hadn't anyone written something about this amazing discovery. As comrades who have read International Socialist Journal 94 know, the British have a view of the world economy similar to ours. No one held Jeffries position that you can't build a workers group in the United States in this period.

THEIR CONDUCT

Every SWPer I talked to regarded the idea of organizing against the leadership of a fraternal organization as an acceptable policy. Most people would admit that it was a mistake not to have sent a member of the Central Committee to the U.S. before their fraternal criticisms had blossomed into factional struggle. They said that they had been uneasy about the direction of the organization for some time but that their lack of resources had prevented them from sending someone over until now. This was not an error that anyone seemed to be losing much sleep over. The common attitude was - lets not worry about etiquette. Your organization is going down the tubes. It is our duty to save you.

II. WHAT IS REALLY BEHIND ALL THIS?

A lot of Majority Caucus members are understandably bewildered by the behaviour of the SWP. There appears to be a basic incompatibility with what we have always believed (quite rightly in my opinion) to be their excellent work in Britain and their behaviour in relation to us. Unfortunately there is no simple satisfying answer to this. Their behaviour is due to a combination of factors. Briefly:

1. Their opinion of our leadership. It's impossible to calculate the "personal element" in their view of the E.C., but this definitely influences the way they interpret the information they get about us.
2. Our differences over the P.R.P. They are very disturbed about our attitude toward the P.R.P. Here they see a basic weakness in our politics; a connection between our "mass work" perspective and the P.R.P.'s strategy of building broad united front organizations like the SUV, FUR, The GDUP's.

3. The convention opposition. They were horrified by the politics and considerable size of the opposition at last years convention. This was a confirmation of everything hazardous about industrialization - exstudents leading a "right" deviation.

4. Their parochialism. They look at every question through their own experience in Britain. If something is true there they generally assume its true everywhere else.

5. Their conception of international work. As the Central Committee document on international work (reprinted in special bulletin No. 1) states, "Our main task must be to sharpen our intervention in the political and theoretical debates inside the big organizations in other countries..."

Evidently, we are among the first beneficiaries of this bull in a china shop approach.

III. POLITICAL REPLY

The only point worth further argument is the question of "mass work." Not because anything we write can convince the SWP but, because we have to come to terms with the dangers they point.

First, it is important to state that the criticism of "mass work" presented by the SWP is different than that of the L.F. and Jeffries. The LF argues crudely (see page 9 of the New Course document) that to be leading workers who are more conservative than ourselves will necessarily conservative us. Cliff etc., are not quite so foolish as to put forward a position which is fundamentally opposed to the Leninist conception of revolutionary leadership - that it is precisely by leading workers more conservative than ourselves that we seek to raise their consciousness. The SWP argues not against this agitational method but against our ability to carry it out, except opportunistically.

Jeffries, on the other hand presents something entirely different. Its not the political method which is at fault but the nature of the period. A mass work perspective at a time when the U.S. economy is still expanding and when there is little or no radicalization of the working class, would lead to serious political distortions. The conclusion follows the premise but, the premise is utterly wrong.

WHY CAN'T A SMALL GROUP HAVE AN AGITATIONAL PERSPECTIVE?

For the SWP our lack of numbers is what makes the "mass work" perspective so dangerous and a propaganda group conception necessary. This belief is based entirely on the British experience; where the organized working class is Social Democratic, the Communist Party is small but influential and there is a tradition of independent Shop Steward organization. Particularly important is the significance of the C.P. in the Trade Union movement. What this meant (according to the SWP) is that the C.P. was able to sit on or swallow up SWP initiatives, until the organization grew sufficiently. Even today, the rank and file groups the SWP initiated are generally not much bigger than themselves and their periphery. Something like TPC - a small group of revolutionaries leading a movement of workers most of whom are no way near to becoming Socialists in outside their experience. They don't understand how the political traditions of the American working class makes our mass work perspective not just possible but also necessary.

Possible because in a country without "traditional parties of the Left," in a labor movement with little recent history of rank and file

organization independent of the Trade Union bureaucracy, revolutionaries, have a much wider arena for agitation. It is not rare for our members to be in situations in which if we don't give a lead nothing will happen. In this sense the "political backwardness" of American workers can be an advantage.

Necessary, because these same factors make a propagandistic orientation to the "socialists in the working class" irrelevant. Its a formula for isolation. The people who we orient toward, the people who we expect to be interested in our politics are those workers who see the need to fight against their oppression, for "something better" and who are open to the idea that socialism may be that something.

In general, these people come around us as they come to understand that we are the "best militants" not because we are hard workers but because we understand how this system works, who the enemy is and that are for over-throwing the whole thing. Our experience has been that this is not sufficient to either recruit or hold people to the organization (see the October N.C. documents), the point is that it is necessary.

The SWP (as well as the Left Faction) response to this argument is that it is a stage theory. First we lead the reform movement, then we do the socialist propaganda, create a periphery and finally recruit.

It is not. Rather, it is a political method which 1. understands that our ideas make the most sense in the context of struggle and 2. is based on the experience that our success as propagandists - our ability ultimately recruit - has been the greatest where our agitation has been the most effective. Last year our biggest and most important recruitment came out of the TTC and Gary Tyler campaigns.

DOES LEADING REFORM STRUGGLES MEAN THAT OUR LEADERSHIP IS BASED ON REFORMIST POLITICS?

This question is one of the oldest in the Marxist book. Every revolutionary group which has answered "yes" has doomed itself to sectarian isolation. But, an equally simplistic "no" tells us very little. The question is not whether, but how.

Lets take an example from our UAW work. The Coalition for a Good Contract called for a 32 hour work week at full pay. The I.S. along with Bob Weisman (a Local Union President and closet Social Democrat) and a small number of rank and file workers supported this demand. On this political question, a demand, we all shared a common position. Our particular reasons for supporting this demand were different. Weisman wants to create a "Left" pressure on the UAW top brass. The "naive" rank and file workers wanted more leisure time and a guarantee of more job security. The I.S. supported it because we know that if auto workers got active in a fight for a short work week (particularly one which we had helped to initiate) we would be in a good position to bring them around our politics. In other words, we will initiate and lead reform struggles because we see them as a means to an end, not, as the naive reformists do, as an end in itself.

This is where the question of how becomes relevant. There are two considerations here. Both are based on our basic political view that socialism is the conscious act of the working class.

1. Our goal in any reform struggle is to raise the level of working class self activity. Because we are socialists we have no commitment to

to anything but the interests of the workers. We have no respect for the law, the employers profitability etc. We argue that workers should advance their interests by any means necessary. We understand that the most effective strategy in any struggle is the one which mobilizes and relies on the power of the workers themselves. We advance tactics which will utilize that power.

2. Along with this we seek in every way possible to raise the level of working class consciousness. This can mean drawing the simplest lesson like "Blacks are not the enemy, the bosses are", to explaining that "the speed up in the auto industry is the bosses way of making the workers pay for the fact that their system is in crisis", to "we will never be free until working people themselves control society."

By starting with what we share with workers we attempt to draw them to our full politics and to recruit. This is what mass work is all about. It is our method for building the party. To the extent that we influence and raise the level of activity and consciousness of workers in struggle we are leading on our political method.

But what about Weisman? He is no naive type, he has his own ulterior motives. He certainly does and he will compete with us to keep the struggle within certain bounds. We want to collaborate with the Weismans on the for one reason, he can attract workers we can't to something we want to build. He builds an audience for us. This is why we want to be in a common organization. Whether he and his kind were in the CGC or not we would have to struggle against his ideas. There is no Chinese wall between the pure and wholesome rank and file and the corrupt and diabolical "left" bureaucrats. Whether we are in the same organization is a tactical question. Is he, on the balance, building or holding back the struggle? Whether we end up using him or he uses us in fight. One which is unavoidable, unless we want to protect ourselves from him by not leading or even participating in the struggle.

CAN WE DO IT?

"Yes, yes" our British comrades might reply, "we don't disagree in the abstract, but you are too small to do all this. Even you admit that too much of your group was liquidated into the TDC campaign." To this we can only say, we have no choice. You have identified a real danger. We see it too. Your solution might protect us from this danger but guarantees a greater one, irrelevance. Our solution lies in the political development of our membership. Our comrades must be both skilled organizers and able spokespeople for our politics. This requires an organization with a high level of internal discipline, professionalism and commitment; a worker's combat organization, the core of a mass revolutionary party. This is what we are attempting to build. In this we are not simply immodest but completely correct.

A STATEMENT BY WINNIE.

I don't believe we should build a "combat" organization now. This type of movement may be necessary in a pre-revolutionary situation, but not now. Now we must get members & grow, even if they agree with only the basic part of our program; workers (priority & non, students, teachers, housewives (of workers), etc. We can politicalize them in the U.S. There will be some dropouts, but as long as they are exceeded by new & stay-put members (who agree with the basic anti-capitalist part of our program) we will grow. For the next period, membership will be a slow sifting out process. If handled right, some of the dropouts can become part of our periphery. I've faith that we've political knowledge enough to offset conservetizing by them.

We're a small 3000 (plus) member organization now, & talk can't hide it. A "combat" group so small puts us in the guerilla class. We must grow much more to become an "agitational" organization.

Priorities are okay, but must be used with caution & compassion.
hard

We must hit politically at the new Social-Democrats (Stalinists) & the Maoists (now in crisis). We must hammer away at them politically, like the bolsheviks did to the 2nd International. Portugal may become another Chile.

The Workers Power should have more theory because, in the left, that is where we're superior. Sometimes I feel that W.P. is a left-wing rank & file agitational paper. International (particularly European) should have at least — billing with Africa. The piece on Spain in WP #194 is good. The situation in Spain is heating up & soon may surpass South Africa. Also, WP should be priced at 25 cents & have 16 pages, with one theoretical article a week until we can afford a separate theoretical organ. Many articles can be more strongly politicalized.

I still believe the convention is too soon. It's more important to see where we are & where we're going, than rush into a convention with poorly thought out ideas. Theory is our prime superiority, and if we're poor in that we'll remain a sect, if not disappear.

At present, I'm not in any faction, as none hold the above combination of views. I know pot-shots will be taken at me, but that is a chance I must take.

Winnie (Bay Area)
Feb. 9th. 1977.

What is 'economism'?

Duncan Hallas

'Mere militancy'

During the building workers' strike of 1972, IS raised the slogans 'spread the strike' (the leadership of UCATT tried to confine it to a limited number of sites); 'for an all-out national strike'; 'mass picketing of all sites still working and of cement works and other sources of building materials supply'; 'no settlement without reference back'; 'all negotiations to include elected strike committee representatives'; 'no retreat on the £30 for 35 hours claim'; and a number of others of a similar kind. The slogans were criticised by various people as 'economism' and that label was supposed to damn them.

Now these slogans, and similar ones in other disputes, can be right or wrong depending on the situation. It is a matter of judgment and a sensible judgment can only be made on the basis of a serious knowledge of the industry, the state of feeling among the workers at the time, the situation in the unions, the employer's strategy and so on. But what the critics who label them as 'economistic' have in mind is that they are *necessarily* wrong, or at least inadequate, because they are 'not political'. They are 'mere militancy'.

The view was expressed by a comrade in our organisation that the central slogan should have been 'nationalisation of the building industry, the land, banks and finance houses under workers management'. A visitor from another continent advised us that the only correct line was to 'politicise' the strike by setting up 'strike support committees' consisting of members of revolutionary organisations, tenants and building workers to agitate for 'expanded low cost public housing' with the aim of a 'mass intervention' at the Labour Party conference in the autumn. And, of course, there were those who denounced us for not proclaiming that the building workers could not win without a 'general strike to bring the Tories down'!

All these proposals were incontestably political. Whether they had any connection with the realities of the situation is another matter entirely. But the general point is important. It has been raised before. Are we right to put forward concrete, immediate slogans that can actually be adopted by workers in various struggles? Or should we emphasise general 'political' demands which are directed at the Labour Party or the government or whatever? What, in fact, is 'economism' and are we guilty of it?

Lenin and the 'economists'

At the beginning of the present century the leaders of the Russian Marxist movement, particularly Lenin, were involved in a political fight with a tendency in the movement that came to be called 'economism'. Lenin dealt very harshly with the 'economists'. They wished, he wrote, 'to obscure the class character of the struggle of the working class, weaken this

struggle by a meaningless 'recognition of society' and reduce revolutionary Marxism to a trivial reformist trend'.

Were these 'economists' attacked by Lenin because they raised specific 'economic' slogans during strikes? Not at all. They were attacked because they opposed the attempt to create a revolutionary workers' party. 'The talk about an independent workers' political party', stated the 'economists' manifesto (the 'Credo'), 'merely results from the transplantation of alien aims and alien achievements to our soil'. The economists were so called because they advocated 'assistance to the economic struggle of the proletariat' as an *alternative* to building a party (which under Russian conditions meant an illegal organisation).

The economists were *not* syndicalists, contrary to what some people seem to imagine. The French and Spanish syndicalists, the American IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) and others in the early years of the century were opposed to *electoral* political activity but were in favour of the class war and 'no peace with the employers'. 'The working class and the employing class have nothing in common', stated the IWW programme. 'There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few who make up the employing class, have all the good things in life . . . By organising industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.'

In complete contrast, the Russian economists favoured political activity — so long as it was in support of the middle-class and capitalist opposition to Tsarism. 'Participation in liberal opposition activity' was one of the slogans of the 'Credo'. What the economists opposed was not political activity as such, but independent working class political activity.

They were, in fact, a right-wing deviation in the Russian movement, corresponding to the British Fabians, the German Revisionists and the French Possibilists. What all these groups really rejected was the politics of the class struggle and aim of the socialist revolution. The economists, like the revisionists, used the language of Marxism to preach the rejection of Marxism. 'It is difficult to imagine a more logical course', said the 'Credo', 'than the period of development of the labour movement from the "Communist Manifesto" to Bernsteinism'. Bernstein was the German revisionist leader who said 'the ultimate aim of socialism means nothing to me'. Characteristically, the 'Credo' spoke of 'intolerant Marxism, negative Marxism, primitive Marxism' which should 'give way to democratic Marxism'.

What then has economism to do with the debate about which slogans revolutionaries should advance in particular struggles in Britain today? It has nothing whatever to do with it. Modern British economists sit on the Labour front bench and the TUC general council. The use of the term to describe IS politics is plainly fraudulent unless, as is often the case, it is based on simple ignorance.

What is politics?

According to Marx 'the struggle of class against class is a political struggle'; and according to Trotsky 'the class struggle is nothing else than the struggle for the surplus product'. ('That part of the product which goes to the worker's own

subsistence Marx calls necessary product; that part which the worker produces above this, is surplus product' (Trotsky). It might appear then, at first sight, that the economic and the political struggle are essentially the same thing. But Marx distinguished between the two very clearly. 'The attempt in a particular factory or even in a particular trade to force a shorter working day out of individual capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand, the movement to force through an eight-hour, etc., law, is a political movement'.

The distinction, for Marx, lay not in the *demand* but in the *means* of achieving it. All political struggles are, in the last resort, 'economic' because they are always concerned with 'who gets what'. As Trotsky put it, 'politics is concentrated economics'. There is no Chinese wall dividing the political and the economic, a fact that is more obvious than ever at the present time. The distinction made by Marx concerns working-class consciousness and organisation. The political movement, for Marx, is the *class-wide* movement; 'every movement in which the working class comes out as a *class* against the ruling classes and tries to coerce them by pressure from without is a political movement' (the emphasis is Marx's own). The economic movement, for Marx, is the *sectional* movement.

Thus the builders' strike was an economic movement; the strike to free the Pentonville Five, a political movement, a successful *non-sectional* struggle to coerce the ruling class. But the origin of the Pentonville struggle was the Midland Cold Store dispute; a very economic, very sectional, dispute — an attempt to protect the jobs of registered dockers against cheaper labour. The economic struggle led, in this case, to a political struggle and generally speaking this is usually how political, class-wide, actions — other than purely electoral ones — develop.

Marx summarised the matter as follows: 'The political movement of the working class has, as its ultimate object, of course, the conquest of political power for this class, and this naturally requires a previous organisation of the working class developed up to a certain point and *arising precisely from its economic struggles*' (the emphasis is my own). Of course it is necessary for the revolutionary party to take up many political questions that do not arise *directly* from the economic struggle (Vietnam, Ireland, women's rights), but the core of its activity must centre on 'economic' conflicts.

Slogans are not magic

In the great majority of cases economic (sectional) struggles do not give rise to political (class-wide) struggles, at any rate in any immediate sense, although, of course, they have their effect on working class consciousness. Occasionally sectional struggles do spill over into political ones. What makes the difference?

One familiar answer is — leadership. A correct leadership which issues the correct slogans at the correct time will carry the movement forward. Of course, in an important sense, this is true but it is also a one-sided approach. The question of leadership cannot be considered separately from working class consciousness. And this, in turn, depends upon the general economic, and therefore political, situation; upon the heritage

of the past which, as Marx said, presses down on the brains of the living; the balance of power in the institutions of the workers' movement (unions, parties) which can lag behind, sometimes far behind, the consciousness of sections of workers; and upon other considerations besides.

In short, the development of a revolutionary Marxist leadership in the workers' movement and the development of class consciousness are two sides of the same coin. The key questions for Marxists are: *What stage are we at? What is the next step?* As soon as these questions are put the answers are clear. We are at the stage of fighting on the margins of the movement for influence and leadership. The next step is the expansion of that fight into ever broader sections.

There is no magic in slogans. It is not only a question of *what is said*. It is, above all, a question of *who says it*. Three ex-students in a back-room in Billericay can issue a manifesto against the incomes policy fraud with an absolutely correct analysis and absolutely correct slogans and demands. It will have exactly the same effect as the revolutionary manifesto issued at the time of the great French Revolution, in the name of 'the people of England', by the three tailors of Tooley Street. That is to say it will have no effect at all. The *identical* platform issued by the stewards of Ford's, Dagenham, or British Leyland, Longbridge, may have a considerable effect.

How do revolutionary socialists get into the positions, gain the authority, that commands a hearing? By serious, active and persistent struggle on those issues that actually concern their fellow workers, maintained consistently over time. And these issues will be economic issues, sectional issues; issues of conditions, bonuses, gradings, wage rates and, at one remove, union politics. Which means that these militants — and the organisations of which they are part — must have clear answers to all sorts of sectional problems, must be able to give a better, more successful, lead on the concrete, day to day, bread and butter issues, than their non-revolutionary fellows.

The nationalisation slogan

The central political question today is the smashing of the government's incomes policy, thus bringing down the government. This *political* struggle can be carried through only on the basis, in the first place, of *economic* struggles, of *sectional* struggles. No magic general slogans can replace clear, realistic and concrete leadership in these sectional struggles. The central slogans have to arise from these and generalise them.

Is 'nationalise the whatever' appropriate here? It's obviously not much use in the mines or steel! It may have value in certain cases, but it cannot possibly be *central* in most struggles because it is a propaganda slogan directed, in an operational sense, at the Labour Party or the government which is *irrelevant* to the major struggle against 'incomes policy'. That struggle, as pretty well every trade unionist knows, takes place in 'public' and 'private' sectors alike.

From I. S. Journal 56
March 1973.

STATEMENT ON FACTION FIGHT

I apologize for both the brevity and incompleteness of this statement, but work schedule and the political crisis of our organization, which has a time schedule all its own, leave little room for flexibility. However, this is a situation itself which is in complete agreement with the major thrust of this discussion. And that is the fundamental Marxist principle that men and women make their own history, not as they please, nor under voluntary circumstances, but as Marx put it, "under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past."

And what precisely is the nature of the crisis? We are yet another day into a trade union policy which almost buried the I.S. at its strongest point - IBT, decimated the auto fraction, our oldest arena of union activity, and forced us to come up empty handed in rubber, steel, CWA, and our other arenas of struggle as well. Moreover the IS has by almost all standards within the organization, become thoroughly depoliticized, a death scent for any revolutionary organization with aspirations towards having a future with the working class. And in connection with all of this, a revolutionary newspaper which has met a rapid decline in quality, usefulness, and circulation. The newspaper being a most accurate thermometer for a revolutionary organization, Worker's Power has not only exposed the weakest link in our chain but to the very weakness of our strongest link-the strategy for our trade union work. Finally, a feeling of disaffection for and lack of confidence in the national leadership. And what have been the gains from the period through which we have just passed? Simply, the loss of membership, and trade union work that has taken on an at best uneven and inconsistent character as exhausted comrades took a few steps back from what were usually impossible tasks to reevaluate their work. We lost most of the workers from our earlier recruitment campaigns during the last period, while recruiting hardly at all out of that trade union work. And now we are confronted with a faction fight. Yes comrades, a quick glance by the most casual observer tells us that we are in the midst of a thorough crisis.

But what is this faction fight, which is ready to tear the IS apart, really about? And what is the significance of the Majority Caucus formed in defense of the current IS policies of priorities, industrialization and mass work? As Trotsky one remarked, "There are never factions which are chemically pure in their composition. Petty-bourgeois elements find themselves necessarily in every workers' party and faction. The question is only who sets the tone." ("A letter to James P. Cannon", Dec. 15, 1939, In Defense of Marxism) A serious reading of the documents of the Majority Caucus leaves one with the obvious conclusion of their lack of substance. Discussions which rarely leave the secondary issues of priorities and industrialization behind long enough to get at what is fundamental to the problem at hand. And that is the issue of party building. What tactics and strategy are necessary in this period, given the concrete nature of the U.S. trade union movement, the economic crisis of U.S. capitalism, the size of the IS today, and the level of working class struggle which we are involved in, that can carry us forward. In short, comrades, the way forward in the struggle for socialism. It is only within the framework of these issues that priorities, industrialization, and mass work can be discussed. What Trotsky said years ago about the nature of factions is even more relevant for the issues involved in such fights. "It is necessary to call things by their right names."

What is significant about the current discussion is that it is the Left Faction which has set the pace for the debate while the Majority Caucus has been forced into a defensive posture, a united front of the national leadership with various political blocs within the organization, over a defense of current IS policy. That this front is not "chemically pure" is not what is of interest but that it reflects the very weakness of the IS today. A weakness in leadership and of a political understanding of the present period. In spite of the best intentions of some of the better material coming out of the Majority Caucus such as NY document, where the very important issues concerning lack of democratic rights, the depoliticization of the organization, rigidity of perspectives, to name a few, are raised, it is not enough to say that mass work put us in

contact with workers, that our politics have never been more real, that scarcity of resources aside we still need to industrialize in this period, or to quote directly from the NY document: "our quarrel is not with the way the IS deals with its priorities; it's with the way the organization has dealt with its non-priorities." Precisely, it is this type of discussion that leads us nowhere.

What the Left Faction in fact raises is a much more straight-forward point of view about the possibilities for building a workers' movement in this period, where unrealistic evaluation of our size and relative strength within the trade union movement can lead only to disaster. That the Left Faction has entertained some unfortunate formulations such as a general policy against industrialization, the fact is that they raise quite correctly the methodology which a revolutionary organization must utilize in mapping out a strategy for working class activity. Priorities in the face of what? Industrialize with an eye to what possibilities? Mass work in this period? Contrary to many comrades' beliefs, it is not true by definition nor will a quick glance at U.S. capitalism and the trade union movement tell us that mass work is in the agenda. In fact, if there is one lesson that our recent past has taught us is that the political and economic crisis of U.S. capitalism today does not lead inevitably to mass actions. It is no surprise that we discovered an inability to sustain activity in the trade unions, nor that we were unable to hold workers. A fundamental error which we learned in practice if not theory was that in these 3 years of contract rounds the revolutionary party would not relive the 1930's and for very good reasons. It was the CIO riding on the wave of mass working class upsurges which created those possibilities, where a bureaucracy was already being formed, but in a relatively young trade union movement, where the possibilities of the moment were great for workers. And today, an attitude that we can erase 40 years of defeat from the minds of workers, and organization of 300 revolutionaries without strong ties with the working class, without mass upsurges, and with a trade union bureaucracy that plays quite a different role in capitalism, that of entertainer for the employer. And it is within this context only which we can discuss what priorities and industrialization means. And comrades, it will take more than our deepest desires to turn our mass work strategy into a workers' movement. That TDC is pointed to as an example that we were right the last year and a half means little. One only needs to take a glance backwards over the wreckage of the last period to know that we were confronted with more questions than answers. And did we recruit out of TDC?

While the response of a significant section of the organization (comprised in the Left Faction) to the problems was not a perfect response, it was a real response that many other members in The IS, many now in the Majority Caucus, would have liked to make but lacked the confidence to do so. In an organization where depoliticization has been so thorough, where the national leadership has carried its trade union policy with bluster and blunder, where lack of democratic and responsive leadership at the top strangled the development of a strong secondary leadership, in short, where a bureaucratic structure acted as a barbiturate on a revolutionary socialist organization making it unable to respond to the failures of the past period meant that any response from either the ranks or layers of the secondary leadership were likely. That the Left Faction struck more quickly at the heart of the problem is as much our misfortune as our fortune, because it took a faction to open things up.

Also, much has been said that the Left Faction's support is from the less experienced and from the more demoralized section of the organization—both industrialized comrades and those who were more peripheral to our work. Well as Marxists, this should be quite obvious to us all. For it is the younger and/or newer members who are in a more fluid situation. Who at first are most susceptible to bluster and blunder but also just as susceptible to the changing situation, the possibilities of the moment when things aren't going just right. And it is among demoralized comrades, where party patriotism has kept them inside the revolutionary organization, where problems to organizational crises are faced most directly and worked out.

C Comrades, while I don't question the good intentions of the members of the Majority Caucus, I do question the intentions of a united front organized around what adds up to be less than the lowest common denominators of priorities, industrialization, and mass work and fail to discuss what is fundamental if the IS is to have a future. Where the only proposals coming forth have been bureaucratic one--a new Central Committee, prioritized branches, etc. At this late date, the trait so common to bureaucratic procedure, the carrot and the stick, acts only to aggravate the crisis in the IS. The time for maneuvering is over in an organization where politics almost cease to exist, where the rank and file become more and more disenchanted with both the leadership and would-be leadership. I believe that a majority of this organization is ready to sit down and work out a solution to the problems confronting the IS, but that majority is kept apart by the Majority Caucus. A caucus formed as a knee jerk reaction to the opening of a long infected wound. Yes, it is the issues raised by the Left Faction which are relevant for the future of our organization. After all, at the end of the day, comrades, what will save the organization is a leadership that is able to respond to crisis both inside and outside the party, without procrastination of the luxury of hindsight for excuses, with an idea of the way forward. And most importantly, a political leadership that has the confidence of its ranks--a leadership built as much on honesty as on vision.

Craig Z.
LA 1/18/77

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT --- THE LOUISVILLE LEFT FACTION

In Majority Faction Bulletin #2, almost a full page is devoted to the Louisville branch and the inactivity or activity of the LF in it. Also, numerous slanders and charges regarding Louisville LF members have been hovering over the organization. This statement is to set the record straight.

TEAMSTER WORK: Over the last year John E. has headed up the local teamster work. He led the numerous attempts to build a local TDC and TDU. These attempts were largely fruitless, but it can hardly be said that he held back the work as has been charged. In fact, 2 LF members, John E. and Christina played a central role in getting out the first issue of the Louisville Lip, our local TDU paper. Christina sells WP weekly at UPS. This is the only sale at a Teamster workplace, and in fact, the only consistent industrial sale in the branch.

BLACK WORK: This has been the area most attacked by the majority and ironically the area in which the most external work has been carried out. (by LF members Bonnie, Fred, and Christina). There have been problems to be sure. At one point there were 8 paper members of the Red Tide. Despite repeated efforts to consolidate the RT, it was never accomplished. The off-on nature of the national Gary Tyler work and the failure of the EC to produce realistic, consistent South Africa perspectives was no help at all. Still, most of these people are in the political periphery of the IS.

It was LF members in our black work committee that pulled off the only forums we've had since October. Now it is the LF alone who have organized the 1st meeting of the local Southern Africa Support Committee.

The Jeffries moody case has been cited repeatedly as our prime sabotage victim. What are the facts? Bonnie and Christina checked out the situation in October and November discovering that the C.P. controlled the defense committee. Our assessment was that the branch should be mobilized for any demos or court proceedings on the Moody case. In the meantime, the committee looked hopeless, so would not be followed up on a weekly basis--- the exec unanimously agreed on this.

In January, a demo was held before the court proceedings began. A majority faction member was in charge of informing and mobilizing the branch for this event. Yet only LF members attended this demo. The information for the subsequent WP article was obtained from the organizer.

WOMENS WORK: It has been charged that Sue, as womens' convenor, has sabotaged the womens' work. When Sue first moved to Louisville in October, there was no Womens work or womens' caucus. Since she has been here, we have had one excellent educational on Revolutionary Feminism, one womens' caucus meeting, plus we have put out a WP supplement on the maternity leave issue and called for a meeting to discuss the attack on working women. Granted the accomplishments are small, but it's an improvement over the situation Sue found when she became womens caucas convenor. In fact, what little womens work has been done, was done exclusively by LF members.

WORKERS' POWER: From October to January one of the majority faction members has served as WP coordinator. He clearly illustrated how the Majority really regards WP. In fact the organizer was the only branch member carrying out consistent industrial sales of WP. In the week since the organizer became WP coordinator, 2 new sales have been set up.

EDUCATION: We've been charged with trying to turn the branch into a study group! This is hardly the case, but we have carried out two things in the area of education. A weekly series on Cliff's Lenin

has been held since November. Only left faction members have given these classes. At each branch meeting since October, a Left Faction member has given the branch educational --- on Revolutionary Feminism, South Africa, Portugal, and Red- Baiting.

We realize this doesn't cover all the charges flying around, but we hope this will clear up the general idea that the Louisville Left Faction members are hopeless splitters, wreckers, and saboteurs.

Bonnie
Christina
Fred
John E.
Sue

STATEMENT ON LEFT FACTION PARTICIPATION IN GARY

Some rather livid accusations are being made against the Left Faction comrades in steel. These accusations include: the Gary Left Faction is sabotaging the work; the Gary Left Faction is secretly sabotaging the work; they are working against Sadlowski; they are not carrying the line; they carry the line but without spirit; they are working to rule; they carry the line without enthusiasm; lack of enthusiasm is incompatible with membership in a revolutionary organization.

To set the record straight, Left Faction members, like other comrades, sell Workers' Power, put up Sadlowski stickers where they work, leaflet for Fight Back, attend Fight Back meetings and assorted Sadlowski social functions, sell tickets to Fight Back functions, wear stickers and buttons, distribute the supplement, and bring steelworkers to IS events.

Taking January as an example, in addition to the above, Tom and Sandy are organizing a group around apprentice demands. Ben was involved in a minor walk out and a petition drive against Work for Relief laws. Ben, Maggie, Kadi and Pat (along with two majority faction members) were involved in the 'civil disobedience' Fight Back leafleting and following protest meeting covered in Workers' Power under the heading "Sادلowski Supporters Arrested." Maggie, Kadi, and Sharon (plus 2 majority faction members) attended the women's luncheon. The list continues but you get the point. Left faction members fully carry out the line, and convince other steelworkers to also support the IS position on Sadlowski.

About enthusiasm. Of course left faction members are not enthusiastic about the line. They have political disagreements with it. But their functioning, even without internal expressions of enthusiasm, is more than "compatible with membership in a revolutionary organization."

So why the accusations? If the real problems of the steel work can be explained by the absence of enthusiasm^m of left faction members, then of course, no political evaluation of our steel line will be necessary.

GARY BRANCH EXEC.

Vote 3 - 1 (David L.)