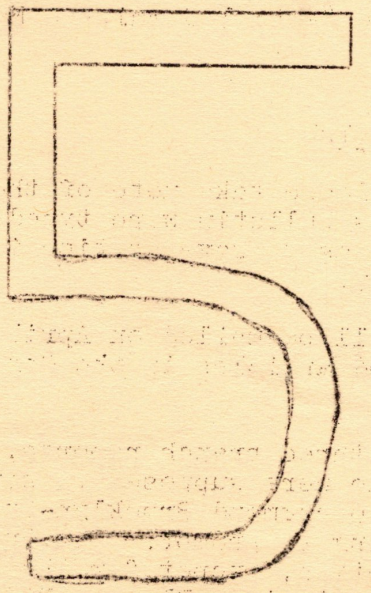
international socialists internal bulletin



MARCH 17, 1978

for is and rt members only

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Comrades will please take note of the fact that several articles in this bulletin were typed double spaced. Please single space so as to save us time in producing the bulletin as well as money.

Bulletin # 6 will be mailed on April 28th. You must have your reports and articles in the Center by Wednesday April 26th.

Except for the three branch reports, none of the branches or fractions who were supposed to send in reports did so. We would like to commend Brooklyn-Queens, Austin and Chicago for being so prompt. For Bulletin #6 then the entire organization, excpet for the above three Branches should have reports in. Please, NO EXPCPTIONS THIS TIME.

BROOKLYN-QUEENS BRANCH REPORT

The primary focus of our branch work is active involvement in CARASA (Committee for Abortion Rights & Against Sterilization Abuse). We are therefore hereby submitting the perspective for that work, drafted by Florence and Barbara, and adopted by the branch in January. CARASA, however, is not our only work: our branch is continuing its forum series, coordinating District intervention at the School for Marxist Education, representing the L.S. (together with a N.J. comrade) in a NYC International Women's Day coalition which is planning a march and rally on March 11, and a comrade is actively involved in a group planning nationwide demonstrations in defense of Lesbian mothers on Mother's Day.

CARASA PERSPECTIVE

OVERVIEW: This brief perspective will sum up our present approach to, and work in, CARASA, and include thoughts for the future. To provide a context for this work, our reasons for working in CARASA are included, as well as our hopes to expand this work beyond CARASA.

A. WHY WORK IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: It is our shared belief that a socialist movement will include, and require, the independent organization of working women. For this reason, the L.S. has always encouraged and often participated in building these movements, through the first abortion struggle, through CLUW and in other ways. Working in the women's movement needs no justification on general principles.

At this specific historical time, a time of economic crisis, the Employers' Offensive is causing a marked drop in the quality of life and consequently a marked increase in feelings of insecurity throughout society. As this happens, many people come to see the family as a source of stability and become receptive to right wing ideas. This is fueling the growth of an increasingly aggressive Right wing movement which is attacking many of the gains of the '60s made by blacks, women, gays, and others.

It becomes crucial to build a movement to defend these gains and to defeat the Right. It also becomes more necessary and more possible to build a conscious political women's movement -- more possible because women are learning the lessons of the past: that they cannot count on the Democratic Party, but only on their own organized strength.

B. WHY WORK IN CARASA: For the women's movement, the attacks on the gains of the '60s have been in several areas: opposition increasing to the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment), the Bakke decision and related setbacks to Affirmative Action job programs, layoffs and high unemployment rates particularly among black women, tightening of welfare requirements and Food Stamp Programs (which particularly impact poor, female-headed families), the Supreme Court ruling that denial of Pregnancy Disability payments is not discriminatory, and last but not least, passage of the Hyde Amendment cutting off Federal funding of Medicaid abortions.

Because the last area has the greatest immediate impact on the lives of women (and threatens to disrupt the lives also of women who do not require Medicaid now, since legal abortion and even dissemination of birth control information are the real targets of the right wing), the efforts to fight back, scattered and limited as they are thus far, have been in the area of abortion rights. Since the right of a woman to control

her body, to decide freely whether or not, or when, she wants to have children is the most crucial right, this is the most important issue to most women at the present time. (This does not imply that other areas, such as organizing women trade unionists, are not crucial, but that if a woman has no control over her body, she becomes unable to make decisions about being in the labor force, caring adequately for her other children, getting off welfare, seeking out apprenticeship programs, etc.)

CARASA consists of both experienced socialist/feminist activists and young women just out of college or new in the job market. Women (and a few men) in CARASA agree that they want to do grass-roots working class oriented organizing, rather than legislative, lobbying or other more organization-oriented and bureaucratic kinds of work. Working in CARASA virtually from its beginning has enabled us to play a role in shaping it, and leading it away from sloganeering toward serious considerations of politics & organizing.

C. WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH IN CARASA:

1. LONG-TERM:

In the long run, the organizations fighting around women's issues, such as CARASA, may become the spearhead of a revitalized women's movement. The long-time activists in CARASA have mentioned this as personal goals and are working in CARASA not just to stop further attacks on abortion, restore Medicaid abortions, and end sterilization abuse, which we all work for, but to rebuild a women's movement. However, there is agreement among these women that the 1960s women's movement failed badly in never making itself relevant to working class women, and that it, in fact, alienated those women. WE DO NOT WANT TO REPEAT THAT.

Therefore, CARASA members are trying to reach out to working class and third world women, in addition to those middle class women whom we reach much more easily. The first step in reaching working class women was to couple abortion rights with sterilization abuse, an issue of greater impact in minority communities than in middle class ones. (Sterilization abuse occurs when women are pressured into being sterilized without understanding that it is permanent and irreversible, without understanding the surgical dangers, without adequate time to think it over -- often when under the stress of being in labor or going through an abortion. Threats of cutting off Medicaid and/or welfare are often involved.)

The second step was to include all Reproductive Rights, issues relevant to working class women as integral parts of CARASA politics: need for quality child care, right to a living wage, pregnancy disability benefits, etc. At this point, the long term orientation of CARASA is toward the working class -- the key question will be whether CARASA can really work within it. Long term, we want women to develop a sense of control over their own lives (through organizing, changing laws, collective work) and rebuild a women's movement, and we want the I.S. to be an important factor in building this.

2. SHORT TERM:

Within CARASA, we want to raise our politics, and recruit women to the I.S. Through CARASA, we would like to meet, raise our politics with, and recruit working class women.

HOW TO DO IT: Recruitment: Given that many CARASA members are

educated, political and eager to work in the working class, there is much interest that we are already building from through our Forum series (which at least 4 women have attended). Raising our political ideas on how to organize, etc. has led us to be considered people to listen to at meetings, etc., and this must be more carefully followed up, so that we work with "contacts", not just random CARASA members. Some CARASA women have set up study groups on Marxist and feminist topics, and we are planning to join at least one of these groups in order to carry on on-going political discussions with them.

Raising Politics: We must continue to focus, in all CARASA meetings, on working within the working class, and we must be the ones who come up with good ideas, experiences and abilities to show results, so that our credibility is a basis for drawing closer to us the enthusiastic political women that are now the forces of CARASA. (This is not easy, since we have fewer I.S. members in CARASA than do other left groups, e.g. the Worker Student Organizing Collective and the American Workers Party; most sects are not there, tho one or two YAWF women appear from time to time. But the non-sectarian atmosphere in CARASA makes it possible for us to work effectively.) The best places to raise our politics are in community organizing and trade union/workplace organizing, and these are the specific areas in which we are working.

Brooklyn CARASA: Most of the members are new to politics, eager for education and for learning how to approach and work in the working class. We will be trying to get women to our Forum series, focusing the group around the working class women in Park Slope, and raising issues. Right now, we will try to have a future activity around International Women's Day, and try to orient to young minority women where possible.

We are exploring getting involved in work against sterilization abuse in the Bronx.

Specific proposals for Brooklyn work: speaking to high school classes of our teacher contacts, a Fulton St. demo and information Fair with tables (as part of an all day event, to bring more people to), emphasizing reproductive rights -- especially linking "choice" to pregnancy benefit rulings, birth control counselling, etc.

Trade Union/Workplace Committee: It was we who suggested the formation of an outreach committee for trade union and workplace organizing, and a comrade is now convenor of this committee. While the committee itself consists of only about a dozen women, several dozen others have indicated interest in working in their unions/workplaces. 3 women have already started working in the publishing industry, in 3 different workplaces, and their work will serve as one example for a general proposal on how CARASA members can approach their co-workers. A number of women work in hospitals, some of them members of 1199, two involved in an 1199 rank & file group at their hospital.

Where CARASA members are also union members, we will encourage them to try to involve the union in supporting CARASA, publishing information in the union newspaper, addressing membership, delegate, and chapter meetings, setting up small "coffee hour" meetings -- seeking to raise issues and to recruit. Where CARASA has no members in the union, we will try to reach the union membership through CLUW, i.e. to find individuals sympathetic to CARASA who will help open channels in each union. We will also try leafletting selected workplaces from the outside. (An additional

possibility might be to send one or more CARASA members into Cornell Labor School's Women's Program to reach activist union women there).

PREGNANCY DISABILITY: Besides the issues of abortion rights and sterilization abuse, other Reproductive Rights issues will be key in approaching women in unions/workplaces. Childcare is one such issue, but the first immediate issue that CARASA has begun taking up, at our suggestion, is Pregnancy Disability benefits. The elected leadership of CARASA has agreed that this is an issue to be pursued and the Trade Union/Workplace Committee has already begun work on it.

(Since the Supreme Court ruled in December 1976 that denial of such benefits is not discriminatory, bills have been introduced in Congress to include Pregnancy Disability under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, i.e. to reverse the Supreme Court decision. New York is one of only a handful of states to have passed a law (August 1977) that makes Pregnancy Disability benefits compulsory where workers are covered for disability benefits (off-the-job injury or sickness). This law provides 8 weeks of payments for normal pregnancies, up to 26 weeks for complications, but is being defied by some unions and being interpreted differently by different union welfare plans, employers, insurance companies, and doctors.)

At our suggestion the Trade Union/workplace Committee will be making a survey of union welfare plan/contract coverage for pregnancy disability and for abortion, including whether or not general disability benefits have been cut since passage of the new law (e.g. 1199 has cut back from 13 to 8 weeks). We have already discovered that this law is being evaded or defied -- e.g. in city worker IBT Local 237 where we have a good opportunity to aid a TDU group's challenge to the local leadership on this issue. We have also learned that the State Division of Human Rights has a backlog of a thousand complaints of non-compliance, and undoubtedly many working women do not know their rights under the law.

There are women in the Trade Union/Workplace Committee who are very open to us (one came to Nancy H.'s forum on "Is Women's Liberation Possible under Capitalism?", another came to I.S. forums 2 years ago and has recommended them favorably to others) and should be worked with more closely. Workplace organizing makes it easier to introduce class struggle ideas than does community organizing. Proposals from this committee on workplace organizing can be brought into the Brooklyn work.

D. BEYOND CARASA: We would like to expand the CARASA work beyond the Brooklyn-Queens branch, into the N. Y. District, and to the national I.S. We are also considering putting together a Reproductive Rights handbook that other branches could use, whether or not their cities have abortion organizations. Comrades in this work should both sell and provide regular coverage for Workers' Power.

AUSTIN BRANCH REPORT

The Austin branch has continued it's steady growth since the last report. Our activities have centered primarilly around southern Africa, Women's work and education because we are not in an industrial area.

SALAC has been organizing around Uni. of Texas investments in South Africa with 2 half hour TV interview programs, one with representatives of the Board of Regents, articles in the student paper and building a coalition with campus groups toward demonstrating at the Regents' meeting April 7. In addition, SALAC continues community education with a slide show and presentation on women's under apartheid, which we are now coordinating with a drive to collect wrist watches for ZANU.

WOMEN'S WORK

We have held a well attended public forum on Backlash in the Women's Movement, our women members were the IS presence at IWY in Houston. We had a dinner discussion with contacts on IWD to raise money for Carol Frye and now that we have more women in our periphery, we plan to react into our women's caucus.

EDUCATION

We have been holding a class series on Basic Marxism. The format is usually dinner or dessert, presentation, discussion, then informal discussion with beer. Topics have included, The Russian Revolution, Bureaucratic Collectivism, State and Revolution, Historical Materialism, The Two Souls of Socialism and Party and Class with Marxist Economics planned next.

In the last period we had one visitor from the National Office (DF), who had to work for his Texas beer and sunshine by appearing as a panelist in two South Africa forums, he contributed to the discussion on Bureaucratic Collectivism, helped with a fund drive garage sale, and met with contacts. All of our national travelers have thrived on work and recreation, and more are always welcome.

RECRUITMENT

We have just recruited our most energetic, politicized contact, Two of our members will soon be less active because of happy personal reasons. Our periphery consists mostly of people who have come around to us and our classes because of South Africa work and our forum on women's movement. In the past we have had some long range contacts who never made the commitment to join. Presently we have begun to be more politically assertive with contacts and this approach appears promising.

CHICAGO BRANCH REPORT

The branch situation in Chicago is quite tenuous and fragile at the moment. As comrades have read in the Jan. 20 Newsletter, five members resigned last month. This has caused a serious disruption of internal branch life, as well as affecting our external work in Teamsters.

There are a couple of promising developements. Most important, is that the iniative for constituting a real TDU chapter here has been taken by our Teamster contacts. Second, we have been able to initiate a study group on Revolutionary Socialist Politics with three leftist/trade unionists. Finally, the upcoming postal meeting and campaign could generate real postal work in Chicago.

The following was adopted by the branch in January:

---we agreed to consolidate the former North and South Side branches into one branch;

---we would meet every two weeks, as the schedule permits;

---BB was elected convonor;

---we adopted a general conception of the format and content of future branch meetings, as follows:

a) that, due to the loss of members, the low level of specific working class activity at this time, and the subsequent need to pull together politcally and organizationally, branch meetings will have a primarily <u>political</u> and <u>educational</u> focus;

b) that, branch meeting presentations and discussions will serve the function of politicizing our members individually and cohering the branch as a unit;

c) that, branch meetings will be used as educational forums to bring contacts to on a regular basis;

d) that, as much as possible, we relate our political/educational branch discussions with our actual working class activity as the best way to learn the politics;

e) that, as necessary, we have "internal" branch meetings to take care of business that would be uninteresting or inappropriate for contacts to sit through and to discuss internal documents;

f) that, where possible, we have informal socializing with beer and wine following the meetings as a means of breaking down the formality and tediousness;

---we briefly discussed our areas of activity, i.e., teamsters, steel, and the upcoming postal campaign. Although we are roughly divided into the various areas of work by virtue of where we are, we do not have coordinated, functioning fractions.

February, 1978

NEITHER ULTRA-LEFTISM NOR CONCILIATIONISM

by Steve Z., N. Y.

A discussion has begun and will doubtless continue within the organization in which charges of "drift to the right" and "sectarianism" are being thrown about. Each side insists the other is distorting, or, at best, misunderstanding the other. The trouble may be that the debate has actually been posed very abstractly, despite the fact that the debate clearly has its source in real life problems.

The issues today, as in the past, have never been: To ally or not to ally with bureaucrats; to run or not to run for office; for "power" or the rejection of power, etc. ... Quite the contrary. I.S. for many years now has been for alliances, for elections, for power. If so, what is the argument all about? It is over the question of HOW to do all these without dropping or even compromising our politics.

To avoid an abstract debate, it might be useful to deal with these questions in dispute as they arose within the I.S. -- every one of them -- at a radically different phase in the class struggle in the U.S. We shall see how the I.S. successfully avoided both the danger of ultra-left self-isolation, as well as the danger of unwitting conciliation to the bureaucracy.

I have chosen a moment in I.S. history, rather than an earlier period in labor history because (1) it was an I.S. intervention in an important labor upsurge which produced for a time a significant contribution to the credibility of the I.S. in the labor movement and the Left; (2) at least half of the organization and all of its leadership were familiar, intimately familiar, with the case; (3) all the questions under current discussion were elaborately dealt with, in writing, in a very concrete way over a period of some 6 years; (4) many of the errors made then were rooted in misconceptions still widely held among us.

My case in point will be the I.S. in the AFT (American Federation of Teachers) during the late '60s and early '70s when, with about a dozen comrades, the I.S. played a significant role in one of the few major mass labor upsurges of the past 20 years.

In the 1960s the labor movement was beginning to stir. This was expressed by a rash of contract rejections by the rank & file, and by a series of turnovers in the labor bureaucracy (Abel, the "reformist", vs. McDonald, in steel, and many others.) We all overestimated both the tempo and depth of this elemental process (see Kim Moody's pamphlet of this period).

But there was one area in which this development was very substantial, and important to the future of the labor movement. This was the huge upsurge in unionization of public employees, and in particular, among teachers. It was not just that the AFT grew from 40,000 to 300,000 in a decade, mainly in the big cities. For still another 1.5 million-member teacher organization was, as a by-product so to speak, converted from a company union into a real independent, if conservative, union: the NEA.

The uniqueness of the upsurge in the teacher movement was attributable to several factors. One of these was the radicalization of the '60s. The AFT was built in large part through the influx of thousands of young blacks responding to the then pro-labor dynamic of the civil rights movement of the time, and by other thousands of white New Lefters deeply committed to the anti-war and black movements through their union movement involvement. As a result, within the AFT, unlike any other union, the confluence of union organizers, anti-war activists and civil rights militants created a situation unique in the labor movement of the time. A vital aggressive new union headed by a member of the Socialist Party, which many in the labor and liberal movements looked to as a source for the rejuvenation of the labor movement. They hoped the AFT would play the historic progressive role that teachers unions in France and Japan had played.

In this situation a handful of I.S. cadres and friends were able to play an important role in building a national opposition caucus including some 200 convention delegates, which could muster up to 35% of the vote on the convention floor. The caucus was able to push through the only anti-war resolution passed by any national union against the wishes of the leadership. We forced the removal of the anti-communist clause from the union constitution. Within this milieu of teacher radicals with a working class orientation, it was possible to raise and carry our politics on opposition to the wage freeze and support for state-wide and national strikes, coalitions with other public employee unions, etc. Even independent political action (IPA) was able to win a third of the caucus. This writer was chairperson of the caucus from 1968 until 1971.

The work gave rise to many problems which were hotly and voluminously discussed by the I.S. ranks and in leading bodies as well. Questions such as: Is it correct to make alliances with reform bureaucrats? Is it correct to vote for them in elections? What is "critical support"? What is our attitude toward secondary bureaucrats, etc.?

1) Alliances with the Bureaucracy: A constant source of tension within the fraction was the charge that the I.S.-AFT fraction was engaged in alliances with actual layers of the bureaucracy itself. We did. Many times. And correctly. But however necessary those temporary alliances were, to help us relate to the militants still under the bureaucrats' influence, we did not rely on the alliance alone to make that bridge possible. Quite the contrary. We actively used the alliances to open up a political dialogue with their ranks. And this was possible then because the balance of forces and state of the class struggle forced the bureaucracy to accept, to tolerate the inevitable tension between cooperation with us and combat, however much they hated us.

An Example -- the WAGE FREEZE FIGHT:

In 1971, the majority of the opposition caucus in the AFT passed into the hands of a group of reform bureaucrats (supported by the CP). In writing the caucus platform, we insisted upon the inclusion of a plank against any wage freeze or controls, despite the fact that the AFL-CIO (as well as the UAW and IBT) were for such controls. The fight in the caucus steering committee took place 2 days before Nixon announced his surprise freeze. After a bitter fight in the committee, we won -- not because we had persuaded the bureaucrats (or the CP), but because they needed us, AND, because we threatened to make a floor fight on the subject in the caucus meeting -- a fight we could

So most of it opted to vote for Selden, recognizing that in deposing Selden, Shanker was pulling the union sharply from the center to the right. This writer urged a policy of critical support to Selden in view of the need to avoid isolating ourselves from the rest of the broad left in the union. Of course we would public explain, in the caucus, why we favored the "left" running its own candidate, and why Selden should not be given uncritical support (as he was by most of the left).

The EC, however, insisted that this course was opportunist and that we had to run our own I.S. candidate. The EC line carried in the fraction, but was not implemented because, being a "premature" anti-sectarian, I, as the proposed candidate, opposed running. The I.S., as a result, ended up advocating abstention, which, while less damaging than running our own candidate, was still unnecessarily isolating.

B) An Abstention

There is no principle which forbids "abstention" under all circumstances. In fact, in a second election, in 1970, we deliberately refused to support the election of an opposition bureaucrat for President. In this case, the "oppositionist" was not only an opportunist as the official candidate, but even ran, centrally, on a plank to the right of Shanker -- i.e. opposed to a merger of AFT and NEA which we supported. Our refusal to endorse this "oppositionist" cost him the election. (For reasons beyond the scope of this article, running a third candidate was impossible).

3) Is it permissible to accept leadership in a local with a major purpose being the expectation we can advance our politics in other political arenas through our local leadership?

A rather well-known incident illustrates that given relatively advanced class struggle and political conditions, this can be an important consideration. If the objective and subjective climate can be sustained, such positions can lead not just to a role in national caucus building (discussed above), but can open up even broader arenas. One example was the St. Louis Labor Peace Conference.

This conference demonstrated both the possibilities and the limits of elected positions.

In June 1972 a conference of 1000 union officials was called by the anti-war union bureaucrats, among them Emil Mazey (UAW), Jerry Wurf (AFSCME), Harold Gibbons (then chief of IBT Central States), Harry Bridges, and others. The meeting was open only to union officials delegated by their organizations. The program of these bureaucrats was, of course, not ours. But we participated and would have been active in it had the bureaucrats not been frightened by their own audacity in even a limited stirring up of the ranks. For, at the meeting, as a local president, I put forth a motion calling upon the union leaders to organize local job actions and propaganda aiming at a national job action by their own members. The motion was passed by a 2-1 vote, to the astonishment of the UAW's Mazey in the chair (and, admittedly, to our own amazement as well). Of course, after 2 hours of counterattack by Bridges, Wurf, etc., the bureaucrats got the motion repealed. But a second conference was never attempted.

well have won.

So critical support in this case did not mean raking over the bureaucrats' past (though in the Selden case, see below, that was absolutely necessary, as it would be if Patrick should run for office in the UMW in the future). In this case, critical support of our allies meant actively fighting for our own program within the coalition.

In short, it was the political climate in the teacher union which permitted us to run the risks of the alliance; which permitted us to hope that we could use them more than they us; which permitted us to feel confident that we could reach the militants behind the bureaucracy. In fact, in this case, we were proven right. For when Nixon acted 2 days later, imposing a freeze, our bureaucrat allies had to, and did, lead a floor fight at the convention against the freeze. That is, for the moment, we made them fight alongside us, on our terms.

Actually, the problem of alliances is just a special case of our general principle of the United Front -- a tactic misunderstood by both opportunists and ultra-lefts. The first rule of the United Front is the need to give expression to the working class need and desire for unity, but to do so without surrendering our political tasks. This we do by retaining our right and practice of defending our program within the coalition or United Front. In general, however, we understand, unlike the sectarians, that to get alliances on such terms it is necessary to have some forces. Otherwise there is no need for our "allies" to accept us, and it is impossible for us to be anything but politically subordinate to them.

In discussing alliances, reference is often made to Engels' epigram "Better one mass movement than 1000 correct programs". But surely this entirely correct epigram is often misunderstood. Engels can not have meant to deprecate program. (See his and Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program -- the program of a merged mass socialist party in Germany). What Engels meant was to warn against the tendency of sectarian self-isolation by substituting ourselves or counterposing ourselves organizationally to a mass movement lacking a sound program. What he meant was the need for active comradely intervention and support of such mass movements, not the abandonment of programmatic intervention.

2) Support Reform Bureaucrats in Elections?

In the AFT, in the period described, it was repeatedly necessary to give critical support to the election of a reform bureaucrat. And we did. But it was by no means automatic.

Two special cases could have some particular interest for us today:

A) In 1974 Shanker decided to eliminate the last representative of social democracy from the AFT leadership by deposing the then AFT President, David Selden (anti-war, DSOC). Selden decided to run anyway.

The left was by this time too weak to pose a credible alternative to both candidates.

Needless to say, the I. S. was criticized for this intervention from the right and from the left. The SWP and others called us ultra-left because our proposal endangered the bureaucratic coalition and so violated the rule of the alliance, etc. The ultra-left attacked us because we didn't call for an immediate general strike against the war.

To have gone to the conference, like the SWP, and kept silent about our differences would mean we had become prisoner of our elected office, which got us to the meeting in the first place. And to have gone to the conference without a base (in this case, the climate in the country and union made it possible to get local endorsement of our policy) would have made it impossible to raise our politics without certain defeat at the instigation of the International union and other red-baiters, at the next election, or even sooner.

Yet it is precisely this danger of being prisoner of our office in a period like today, a period of low level class struggle, which is ignored by many comrades. (Today, in most AFT locals, where the crisis has generated defeatist moods, our continued leadership in locals could only result in regressive contracts.) As a result, a policy is being proposed to "reach for power" (as if any one among us were or could be opposed to it) under conditions in which only the illusion of power is possible, for the most part.* For power, under current conditions (unlike the AFT in the '60s) can only as a rule be won and kept in practice by dropping our own policies and strategies (like Bakke, and IPA (Independent Political Action), etc.), that is by using the rationale of "wearing a second hat" (to which we will return).

4) Can we accept the leadership of a local without a rank & file caucus? Some comrades believed that to do so was, at all times, a sign of incipient opportunism. They were in error.

The need for a rank & file caucus is the norm, the desideratum, and is correctly a central precept of our politics of workers self-liberation. But under exceptional circumstances, this rule, like all others, can be broken. The AFT was in a period of explosive growth for reasons given above. In this isolated sector of the labor movement, the class struggle was sharply in the ascendance. The 3 million member teacher profession (and many millions of other public employees) were practically overnight being ideologically proletarianized, unionized, engaging in strikes on a wide scale (including state-wide strikes), and establishing close ties to the labor movement.

In such a period, all sorts of organizational short cuts are possible precisely because the struggle situation makes it possible to successfully resist pressure for

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* All of which of course is, once again, not to say we should refuse to run for office. Not at all. But in most cases today (there are obvious exceptions) these can only be propaganda campaigns (which even our IBT documents admit, though they avoid the word like the plague). Indeed, the ISGB (which, despite our differences and grievances, none of us has yet to call sectarian on its own turf, or unable to relate to workers), even the ISGB, in a far more mature situation than our own, runs ISers for office in clearly propagandist campaigns (in which they are delighted to get 10% of the vote).

political shortcuts. That is, the organizational short cuts did not necessitate muting either our politics or our strategy for the union. Quite the contrary, in these special objective and subjective conditions of wide-spread active class struggle, our politics corresponded to the needs and readiness of the mass movement, or at least of large sections of it. That and that alone permitted and at times necessitated temporary deviations from our norm of rank and file group first.

Can anyone say that this is the situation today in the UAW or USWA?

There are few things worse for revolutionists than to be in the leadership when workers are either not prepared to struggle, or are not in a position to do so, much less when workers resist struggle (as is, for example, the case in AFT locals today, all too often).

Those comrades who in those years insisted on rank & file caucuses at all times also ignored an exceptional organizational facet of the situation. They ignored the fact that in the teacher movement most locals are small. There are over 30,000 teacher union locals in the country. In such circumstances, stewards and executive board members, the secondary leaders, could really be the informal rank & file caucus, in a period of upsurge, or in a period in which the union was just in the process of being organized (the actual case throught this period). Not to see this was to confuse form and substance.

But it should be equally clear that in the unions in which we are involved today, and in today's climate, the capacity of the executive board and other secondary leaders to serve as a substitute for the organized rank & file is qualitatively different. (More on this below).

5) Attitude Toward Secondary Leaders: Associated with the fears of ignoring the rank & file was the recurrent hesitation that our work at AFT conventions was too geared to alliances with secondary leaders. This view, too, at that time, represented a mechanical counterposing of rank & file to secondary leaders. It developed out of a failure to recognize that, while in a period of quiescence secondary leaders are, or as a norm become, agents of the bureaucracy, this is not necessarily so in a period of upsurge. In a genuine upsurge the ranks will not only throw up new leaders, but will also convert many actual or potential members of this secondary layer into agents of the ranks! We must expect in a better period to have hundreds of secondary leaders in our movement, not a few of whom will have been secondary leaders long before they came to us. At the same time, precisely because they are or have become secondary leaders we will not keep them after an upsurge unless they become deeply politicized and radicalized.

Uncertainties about this question have been important elements in our IBT work, our work in auto. For a detailed discussion on this, see my Appendix.

ERRORS AND LESSONS

1). The situation in the AFT was undoubtedly exceptional, and some of our errors

arose from the fact that we did not recognize this at the time. As a result, we could not see that this situation in AFT could not long persist unless the rest of the class caught up with it. Why this error?

We did not appreciate the uniqueness of the situation because we believed that the situation in the AFT represented an advanced expression of a more general tendency which was, or would soon, erupt in the labor movement at large. This, in turn, was partly due to our error on the nature of the economic crisis (for which this writer bears a share of the responsibility). It was apparent to us late in the '60s that the U.S. was headed for an economic crisis and the end of the post war boom. What we failed to understand was the long term nature which that crisis could assume both politically and economically. Politically, under the subjective influence of the '60s radicalization, we were all prisoners of a simplistic one to one relation of economics and politics, in practice. With such false expectations we anticipated that the AFT's dynamism, organizational and political, would continue, and even be intensified as the rest of the working class went into motion.

The first dramatic sign that we were in error was the union movement's response to Nixon's wage freeze in 1971. In the AFT, at the insistence of the L.S., and against the wishes of our allies, the union reformist bureaucrats, the left caucus forced a convention floor fight which came within 200 votes (out of 2500) of rejecting the freeze and calling upon the AFL-CIO to respond by united direct action. But the AFT was the only union to move even this far. (Needless to say, for us to have fought as we did was clearly not an error.)

But the response to the "freeze" should have made clear to all of us the need for a reappraisal of our view of the stage of the working class, and of the mechanical nature of our wish-fulfilling view of the relation of economic crisis and worker response. That is, we should have recognized our failure to adequately take into account the role of consciousness in politics. We were slow, all of us, in making this adjustment. (Some of us have still to make it.) And we paid a price for it, as is always the case when one's hopes and expectations are out of phase with reality.

The opposition in the union on a national scale was doomed. The end of the war, the decline and co-optation of the black movement, were not balanced by an insurgent labor movement. As a result, the normally conservatizing and bureaucratizing effect even on good militants of successful collective bargaining (the existence of a contract, and the bureaucratic pressures arising from the need to police it) became dominant. The movement inside the AFT went into retreat. We failed to see it. We didn't know when it was time to accept the end of one period of AFT history and time to shift tactics.

We made a similar error in our work in the N.Y.C. local, the UFT, after 1968. But events forced us to correct this more rapidly, due to the greater speed and intensity of the union's political retreat in New York City.

2) The false analysis of the nature of the period, and the unrealistic expectations which follow, were also responsible, at least in part, for leading some L.S. comrades into a number of ultra-left postures within the union. The chief of these has already been referred to above in the EC proposal to run an independent candidate in the 1974 elections.

(Today we see a 180 degree turnabout, with many comrades making the opposite error -- from an ultra-left insistence upon our own candidate and refusal of critical support to a reformist, to a policy in which critical support is so defined as to be uncritical in practice.)

IN SUMMARY, despite our errors, recognized and unrecognized, our AFT practice was never characterized by: illusions of the alleged monolithic character of the bureaucracy (we ought not to rewrite our own history); elections or no elections; alliances or no alliances; power vs. the fear of taking power. On the contrary, in most cases we were FOR electoral office; For alliances with reform bureaucrats; For power, in short. But without dropping or compromising our politics.

Our work in AFT shows that such a course, avoiding both ultra-leftism and conciliationism, is indeed possible.

Given this example of a sustained, non-sectarian intervention in the union movement without surrendering our politics, one wonders how Dan L. can permit himself to label comrades who criticize his methods. To him they are merely comrades who are "in isolation from the working class", comrades whose "ideas lost touch with reality", who had "no experience with class struggle", and who seek only "that imaginary movement which exists only in their minds."

It is this demagogic treatment of criticism, not just of us, but of Al F. as well, which was in large part responsible for our loss of Al.

LESSONS FOR TDU WORK?

The situation in IBT bears many parallels to that of the AFT.

1) Given our minimal situation in the UAW after 7 years, our abandonment of CWA, the slowness of USW work, it is hard to draw any conclusion other than the fact that, like the AFT earlier, the IBT situation is a relatively exceptional one, and not a norm for us at this time. (For we can hardly blame our devoted UAW cadres for their lack of success relative to our IBT cadres.) How unique, whether qualitatively different from the rest of the labor movement, remains to be seen, since an analysis, an in depth study of the situation, has yet to be made.

2) On the Wearing of Two Hats: That there is a danger and even a tendency toward the depoliticization of our work in IBT is hard to deny. As the rationale for this depoliticization we are offered the hardly new theory of "wearing two hats". It is a sound theory. At times we can not do without it. Unfortunately, in practice this theory is being rapidly transformed into one in which the second hat is disappearing if not yet invisible.

This is happening in two stages:

First, much of our politics disappear from our union work directly. (The disappearance of Bakke and IPA was no oversight. Nor was it due to lack of "time",

since our decision to vote for tabling Bakke, etc. was reached long before the convention. It is therefore depressing to note how comrades can be driven to forget or conceal this last fact, a "forgetting" which stems from the pressures for depoliticization today, and the search for "power".)

In the second stage, our politics even tend to disappear from WP. Isn't that the meaning of Dan's argument that if WP and Convoy say two different things, it will confuse workers and cause identity problems for us? So WP must not go beyond Convoy. In fact, that has been increasingly our practice in, for example, WP's treatment of Patrick's betrayal (He didn't actually "break" the strike), or the suggestion in the same issue that bureaucratic infighting was responsible for the miners' defeat.

By contrast, the AFT provided a good example, if not a model, of more correct use of the "two hat" concept. Inside the union caucus we had a prominent ISer raise the issue of IPA, even though we knew it never had a chance of winning -- 1/3 was the best we got. Outside the caucus, we had an even more open second hat. We created a public Socialist Forum, which met during the "free night" of the convention to hear invited socialist speakers (Fisk, Chomsky agreed but was called away).

3) In both periods (and thus in both AFT and IBT) we were operating under the incorrect evaluation of the state of the economy and its relation to working class mobilization.

Of course our toe- hold in IBT, in combination with the trucking employers' counter-offensive will hopefully allow us to play some role in the upcoming freight negotiations in 1979. But we must avoid our past overblown expectations.

"Surely however", it has been argued, "IBT exceptionalism must be seen in the context of an economic crisis far more grave than it was a decade or even 5 years ago. And shouldn't that in turn result in making the IBT situation a less isolated one than our experience in AFT in an earlier period?"

Unfortunately, the experience of the past few years indicates that, on the whole, this is not yet the case. Although none of us is clear on the reason for this, the fact remains that no qualitative change has as yet developed within the U.S. working class. It is the lack of a class response by the workers of Youngstown Steel in the face of their plant closures which is still the norm, not the exceptional response of the miner rank & file (which is not difficult to understand). Just as the capitulatory response of reformist leaders in coal, and of the steel leadership (protectionism) is still the norm. Any further illusions on this score can only have devastating consequences.

We remain in a period of a paralyzed labor bureaucracy which has been able to respond so far only by appearing to move to the left ideologically -- i.e. by an intensification of the reliance on political action which has been central to the labor bureaucracy ever since the 1955 merger of AFL & CIO (and was a key rationale for that merger). This move to the right by the bureaucracy (a move away from direction action) is only obscured by our labeling it "increased politicization". Even Meany has moved this far "left", so that today his differences with DSOC, domestically, are hard to detect.

Nor can the hundreds of DSOC bureaucrats, including several AFL-CIO executive council members, be called "left" in any meaningful sense, given their attitude toward the ranks. It is indeed, within this layer of DSOC that Sadlowski would have been absorbed, in this period, had he been elected (despite his advanced, even Marxist, personal consciousness.)

It is the desperate search for an "end run" around this situation which has generated among us this absolute imperative -- to "lead", to go for power. It accounts for the negative aspects of our work in TDU (its positive sides we are all aware of) -- including our search for court cases which even the TDU ranks are indifferent to (wisely); our treatment of Patrick, the Bakke incident, our failure to raise Independent Political Action, etc. These errors parallel those made by some ISers in AFT, only in a 180 degree opposite direction.

Today, we are still in a period in which building strong local bases must be our primary goal within the union movement. The uneven character of the class struggle can provide plenty of opportunities for modest growth. But, in the absence of such bases, the self-imposed pressure to transcend the limits of our situation and to aim at a struggle for power -- (which we are incapable of realizing in this period of relative rank & file quiescence) can only lead in one of two directions -- either we give up these illusions, or, inevitably, we shall be forced into increasing adaptations in order to "hold on", i.e. into uncritical alliances (if they will have us? do they need us except as agents?), and depoliticized surrender of our politics.

February 1, 1978

APPENDIX: THE PROBLEM OF SECONDARY LEADERSHIP IN THE IBT & UAW

The mechanical misconception of secondary leaders (which played a minor role in our AFT work) also played a role in our teamster work, and an even heavier one in our UAW work.

In the case of our IBT work, it was responsible for the sterile debate at the 1976 I.S. convention around the phony question: Whom do we aim to recruit from our teamster work, the ranks or the secondary leaders, the shop-floor "leaders with a base"? Both sides to the debate were abstract and in error. The main question is not the conservative pressure of the ranks on the union "leaders with a base" which made it difficult to recruit and hold these leaders. The more correct formulation of the problem was the recognition that, in the absence of wide-spread motion within the class as a counterweight, these secondary leaders would inevitably feel the weight of the bureaucracy too heavily. Consequently, lacking our socialist perspective, they would sooner or later capitulate. In another climate of struggle, these leaders are precisely the ones we would want most.

As for our UAW work, the damage done by our mechanistic view of secondary leaders was even greater. For it was in this period (1972-74) that I.S. policy in the UAW was characterized by repeated 180° flip flops on our attitude toward the secondary leaders inside the United National Caucus (UNC) -- people such as Pete Kelly, Al Gardner and Art Fox. (One has only to reread the documents of the time to see this vividly).

At the same time that the EC was pushing an ultra-left line in the AFT elections (see above), the EC pressed a parallel, ultra-left line in the UAW-UNC. It took the form of criticizing the UNC as "dominated by secondary leaders". These individuals -- stewards, committeemen and even local presidents -- under the influence of other revolutionists in the UAW, had broken with the UAW leadership (and remain so to this day). Initially their break came out of a rebellion in the skilled trades. But when that movement died, or went into hibernation, they did not return to the apparatus. This was because in the interim they had become politicized, radicalized. It was failure to take this into consideration that made us label them "secondary bureaucrats", period. That their break with the UAW leadership was genuine was demonstrated repeatedly, long after our infantile misrepresentation of their role. In 1976 they once again led their genuine base in the skilled trades into a bitter all-out opposition (unlike some of the real bureaucrats with whom we collaborated). (The question of the mechanical conception of the role of skilled to production workers is cousin to this misconception about secondary leaders, but is not relevant here.)

This ultra-left position -- the inability to recognize the difference between (a) secondary leaders who represent the ranks, and are loyal to them because, in the main, they have become political, and (b) those secondary leaders who remain part of the bureaucracy (despite appearances and even self-delusions on the part of some of them) -- this inability resulted in our de-emphasizing UNC in favor of a "left turn" to NETWORK in 1974. This writer opposed this turn as ill thought-out and ultra-left. The I.S. subsequently repudiated the NETWORK perspective, in 1976. Unfortunately, once again, the repudiation of the ultra-left error was accompanied by another 180 degree turn toward adaptation to classic secondary leaders who, unlike Kelly, etc., have consistently refused to make a sharp break with the UAW apparatus. The conservatism of this layer was to be expected, given the ranks' low state of combativity, and the long opportunist "opposition" record of these leaders. (Naturally, working with them was not itself precluded -- the question was, "HOW?")

Some Thoughts On Our Perspectives

Three years ago when we embarked upon our turn to agitation, the I.S. was a very different organization. We have accomplished much in those three years. We have become more of a workers organization, we have become more integrated and we have gained enormous experience in the workers movement.

But there is one difference that is unfortunate. We presently lack political cohesiveness. At the outset of the turn we had an understanding of the world, We had a model that connected our day to day activity with our long range goals. This model gave our members great self-confidence. The organization was able to cohere around around common activity and common expectations.

Our experience with reality has shown the weakness of that model. our predictions were only somewhat fufilled. Our expectations were frustrated. We became demoralized and that demoralizaton led to the revolt against our politics by the left faction.

The failure of our former perpspctives a has led us to make an error in the opposite direction. Because our old model was flawed in many respects we have abandoned having a model all together. There is in the today no common understanding of how our day to day activity is linked to workers revolution.

The organization in turn lacks a common program to cohere around. Lacking such a program there has been a tendency towards the atomization of our work.

The EC has taken a long step towards correcting this in t its document, "Updating Our Perspectives". It has correctly identified the movement for trade union reform as the most important political trend in the working class. The document correctly assessed the need to attach ourselves, indeed submerge ourselves, in that trend.

But one vital question is left unanswered: What key political i ideas make the IS a distinct political trend in the context of the broader movement? The organization needs a set of political ideas that distingush us from competing trends. It is not enough to say we are for revolution.

What we need is a set of transitional demands, a program that can be understood by all members, the newest to the most advanced. This program would be far short of our full program, but it would serve as a bridge to our full program. The transitional slogans would grow out of American reality. They would raise key political ideas.

For instance, unemployment is a key political issue before the American working class. We should make the demand for full employment part of our transtional program. Everyone inside the organization can understand this. Our contacts would identify the IS with this slogan. The organization could cohere around a common approach to the real world.

In 1924 when the Communist Party was still a revolutionary organization, the first issue of the Daily Worker carried a program on its masthead. It read:

Workers! Farmers! Demand
The Labor Party
Amalgamation
Organization of the Unorganized
Land for the Users
The Industries for the Workers
Protection of the Foreign Born
Recognition of Soviet Russia

The IS needs a similar approach today.

The politics of the IS represents nothing less than the future of humanity. This fact gives enormous responsibility. The demoralization of the group has been profound. It is crucial that we shake ourselves out of the current morass. The organization desperately

needs bold initiatives. We must regain our confidence and our party patriotism. We must rekindle our dedication to socialist revolution. Which in America today can only mean dedication to the IS.

-Jeremy G.

ARTICLES ON SOCIALIST POLITICS AND TRADE UNION STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

The following two articles are based on earlier articles that I wrote for the Bulletin. The first of the old articles was entitled "Alternative draft evaluation of our work in steel election campaign", (March, 1977). It was written to contribute to the evaluation of our work during the Sadlowski campaign. (The article was printed up separately at the 1977 Convention, many of our members never saw it, and the discussion on the Sadlowski campaign was never held in the organization.

The second article was discussion and amendments to the Central Committee Theses on the Sadlowski Campaign (see Bulletin with green cover, 4/15/77). The article was submitted to the Bulletin in July, 1977, and was not printed until Feb. 1978. By then, many of the comments were not as applicable, or they were difficult to follow in the form of amendments to a 10-month old "CC theses".

Since that time, new events in our Teamster work have become more important, and some of the older issues that I wrote about have lessened in importance. However, I feel that some of the issues that I raised have yet to be considered adequately. This is especially true in light of the Dec. Central Committee statement, "Bringing our analysis up to date".

My comments refer mainly to the steel industry, which I am most familiar with, and which I can write about in the most detail. However, the politics and approach should be considered as relevant to all of our industrial work.

Therefore, I am submitting the following two articles for publication in the Bulletin.

Bob, steel/tel branch, Cleveland, February 1978

MOTIONS TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE

#1. The IS rejects the idea (stated in Thesis #4 of the April 1977 Theses on the Sadlowski campaign) that merely being open about being a socialist and associated with a revolutionary newspaper will by itself prevent us from "falling prey to opportunism and liquidationism." While the role of the socialist propaganda is important, any deals we make must rise and fall on their own merits.

#2 (amendment to December CC statement, "Bringing our analysis up to date: delete contradictory parts of section C and add:) "In the context of supporting ongoing struggles that we are engaged in, on of the important questions that should be raised is a political understanding of the leaders who we are supporting who have basically bureaucratic tendencies. This should be a minor part of our work that hould not take away from our main theme of support to a struggle, but it is an important part of education for our periphery and members that should be present."

MASS WORK AND THE WORKERS PAPER

The IS presently has a strategy of "Mass Work." The idea is that we want to break down the barriers between ourselves and other workers by co-operating on any level of struggle (as long as it advances the class struggle). By working with other workers closely, we can win their confidence, convince them that workers have power through struggle, and (to quote a 1976 IS document) "open people to our fuller views."

However, this can only happen if Workers Power carries our fuller views. In addition to stories on workers struggles, capitalist crises, and the nature of socialism, etc., *our paper has to convey to our regular readers over a period of time the nature of the labor movement, the labor bureaucracy, and the interrelation between them and the rank and file forces and the socialist forces.*

Put in another way, since our greatest activity is in the unions, and since we are now putting more emphasis on working through the existing structure of the union, now more than ever it is extremely important to ourselves and our periphery that this work be grounded in a real understanding.

Or to put it another way, a revolutionary organization has to understand the difference between principles and tactics. Principles are something that we maintain. Tactics change. In this period, it is important that we change our tactics, and get our hands dirty with various bureaucrats, limited reform struggles, etc. But at the same time, it is important that the reasons why we are participating in a particular struggle, and how we view the people leading these struggles.

Presently Workers Power is our only vehicle to do this, although in the future it is possible that a political magazine might be able to fulfill this role.

I. I am in no way suggesting that WP undertake a major change from its present content, to being one that analyzes labor bureaucrats. In general, the paper's coverage of labor struggles should be to build the struggles -- explain factually what is going on; why it is important for people to participate; relate the struggle to the on-going capitalist crisis, if that is appropriate, etc. To many workers, the simple idea that you can actually win something through struggle is often the key.

However, to our regular readers (in other words, to our members and periphery) we also have to explain the role of the officials who we are supporting.

Besides for providing analyses of different aspects of capitalism, we also have to arm our members and supporters with arguments and an understanding about the forces in struggle.

Naturally, this does NOT have to be done in every article, or in every issue of WP, or even all in one issue. But over a period of time, IS trade union strategy, as opposed to the strategy of union reformism, needs to be brought out.

II. During the fall and winter of 1976-7, our members in the steel industry actively supported Ed Sadlowski, a union reformer for President of that union in an election campaign against a machine candidate. We were correct in doing so because we felt that his campaign would help to open a lot more struggle and rank and file activity in the union.

We did this even though we believed, as our members were told in an internal steel bulletin during the campaign, that even if elected,

"Sadlowski's behavior as a union president will be severely limited by the collaborationist limits and the bureaucratic methods that will be imposed on him. An in the period to come, these limits and methods cannot cope with the fundamental needs of the union's membership.

"This means that whatever his private view, in the final analysis, WE EXPECT SADLOWSKI TO END UP BEING A COP FOR THE BOSS. A strong rank and file movement can pressure a bureaucrat to respond -- especially a left bureaucrat. But as the goals of the movement come into increasingly sharp conflict with the limits of what the boss can afford under capitalism -- even the most left bureaucrat draws the line and uses his prestige to derail the movement." (National steel fraction steering committee perspectives, October 1976. emphasis added)

The above analysis was not meant to be the theme of our participation in the Sadlowski campaign. The main thing we stressed, correctly, was how the Sadlowski campaign could help the steelworkers movement. However, we wanted to make sure that our members were informed of exactly what type of animal Sadlowski was.

Little effort was made to explain this to our close periphery, however.

WP carried a lot of good articles about the campaign, especially considering our small size and lack of roots. A lot of the coverage was simply information and arguments for militants and activists to encourage them, and to help them to convince their fellow workers more effectively. We tried to be a source of campaign news. Also, we had analyses of issues that were connected with the campaign (such as racism, the ENA-No Strike Deal, imports, etc.).

We also carried arguments for strategy and tactics of the campaign to push it forward, & were often critical of Sadlowski's strategy and said so.

But we did not explain (except in one article 3 days before the election) that Sadlowski's outlook was completely different from ours; that we were supporting him despite our belief that in the long run our views and his views would collide head on.

Here is a sample of some of our criticisms:

"Like all union reformers, once in office Sadlowski will come under enormous pressure to compromise. . . Pressure from the membership can counteract and overcome conservative pressures." WP steel supplement (compare to quote on top of this page)

"So far Sadlowski's actions and the Fightback campaign reveal none of Debs' BOLDNESS - DARING. . . . He campaigns under the slogan of "Steelworkers Fightback", but then HOLDS BACK in actually helping Steelworkers to fight back." (Debs article, WP #186)

"But despite Fight Back's opposition to the ENA, their campaign literature PUTS FORWARD NO CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT SADLOWSKI WILL DO about ENA if he wins the election. . . . Steelworkers, however, should not wait for him to do so. Their job is to use the campaign to organize a rank and file movement that puts the heat on Sadlowski to act, and GIVES HIM THE MUSCLE TO ACT WITH." (WP #189)

These criticisms are good. But they do no go far enough. A <u>regular</u> reader of WP would have thought that our main criticism of Sadlowski was that he was not bold enough.

The role of a left bureaucrat under capitalism, as quoted from the internal steel bulletin, was not explained at all in Workers Power during the campaign. Sure, it was not immediately on the agenda. But we cannot wait until it is immediately on the agenda to raise it.

Since WP is mainly useful to regular readers rather than occasional readers, we should have used the occasion to educate our periphery to a socialist view of Sadlowski.

> As has been stated, "Strategy helps militants become better fighters - - it does not convince them to become socialists. And in fact our strategy for a particular industry is the one thing our members generally do talk about with contacts. HOW THAT STRATEGY CONNECTS TO OUR SOCIALIST POLITICS IS THE UNIQUE ROLE OF OUR PRESS." (Oct. '76 National Committee document on WP)

III Another area where we have been active is the Teamsters and TDU. Because of our successes in that work, we have opportunities to affect the real world. This makes it even more important that we (including our members and periphery) understand what we are doing.

I am not real familiar with all the work of our Teamster friends, so I will limit my comments to one incident: the inviting of Harry Patrick to the TDU convention, and its treatment by WP. (I am not going to comment here on whether it was correct or not to invite him, but only on how the organization's newspaper treated it.).

What is at issue is the way in which our members and periphery understand Patrick. I have been a member for a number of years. And yet I do not know what the organization thinks of Patrick. Is he basically someone who is on our side? That is, is he someone who, when the shit hits the fan, will be on the side of the rank and file against the union officials, companies and the government?

Or, when the going gets rough, will he desert the rank and file?

These are important questions. Naturally we will not know with 100% certainty because any person can be won over to another point of view.

But we are Marxists. We understand the importance of studying history. We want to be able to make predictions of where things are going. That is why we try to analyze the capitalist crisis -- to get a handle on how the state of the economy will affect the Fight Back.

We also analyze the Democratic Party. We know that even if you have some "independent" Democrats who are honest and who are concerned about the people, we know that their road is a dead end no matter how good a particular project of theirs may be. This is true even if we are prepared to work on the same project as the Democrat, such as against Police Brutality.

Trade union officials are different from the Democratic Party politicians. The Democratic Party represents the capitalist class. Unions, even rotton ones, are still WORKING CLASS organizations (in more or less distorted form, depending on how bad the union is). Even the worst union leaders still, to some extent have to produce some results for their members, because their unions do exert at least some pressure on them.

With the present economic crisis, it is becoming harder for the union officials to "deliver the goods" (get results) that they must have if they want to control the membership and stay in office. So we have splits in the bureaucracy. Some union leaders, or secondary leaders (such as regional directors, or Local presidents) are moving in a leftward direction, in spite of themselves. So situations arise where their present interests and our immediate strategy coincide. Fine.

A few of these individuals, in the future, may be won to our approach of class struggle unionism. Class struggle unionism puts the needs of the workers before the needs of the capitalist corporations, and understands that there is a struggle between these two classes.

However, as Marxists, we understand that the majority of these left bureaucrats will never adopt the outlook of class struggle unionism.. Right now we are correct to work with them. They are helping, whatever their intentions, to move the struggle forward. We should help them to help it more effectively.

However, we realize that as the class struggle heats up, our present allies will mostly become enemies. But then it will be too late to begin the job of explaining why our former allies are no longer friends. During the course of the present struggles, we have to break as many people as possible from the outlook of the left bureaucrat who may be leading the struggle.

Naturally, there will be severe limits on how much of this we can do. We will not be able to do any of it if we are merely armchair critics who do not become involved in the struggle. But as active participants, we will develop a periphery who will be interested in our ideas. We use WP to help us rap to these people about socialism, black liberation, women's liberation, workers struggles, etc., where it is appropriate.

IT IS TO THESE FRIENDS OF THE ORGANIZATION, as well as our newer members, that WP must explain and analyze the forces behind the very struggles we are involved in.

We don't wait until some time in the future to raise these topics. We need to talk about the issues when they are on people's minds, and when we have contact with them.

HOW NOT TO RAISE THE ISSUE: In Bulletin 2, Part 2 (Nov. 21, 1977) Dan L. of the EC explains why WP carried no criticisms of Harry Patrick when he was a speaker at the TDU Convention, a decision which our members in the TDU advocated. Dan says (p. 8),

> Some of our members are also TDU members. One of our members sells a copy of Convoy to a Teamster. The headline says, "Leader of Reform Movement in the Mines Endorses TDU." Then the same member sells a copy of Workers Power to the same Teamster with the headline "Scab Bureaucrat Pulls the Wool Over the Eyes of Teamster Ranks" . . . this would be confusing to our members and our contacts.

Surely our EC, the leading body of the organization, can come up with a better way to explain the contradictory role of Patrick, rather than the simplistic "Scab Bureaucrat . . ."

In Patrick's case, for example, there are certain things that we should want our periphery to be aware of. In particular, it is his wavering attitude toward the wildcat that had recently taken place.

We are all too familiar with a person who has a real militant sounding attitude until a situation directly affects him/her. If that person who is a leader waffles and refuses to stand with the rank and file, that tells us a lot about that person. These things should not be hidden.

We don't need to criticize the things on which he has changed his mind. If he no longer supports the Democratic Party, but now supports a labor party, Great! If he regrets dissolving the Miners rank and file group Miners For Democracy, and now supports building rank and file groups, good! We want people to change their minds.

WP should explain why we support Patrick speaking at the TDU Convention. It should explain, how despite his lack of support or passive support to the miners' wildcat, we need to co-operate with him and people like him.

IV The Dec. 1977 CC statement, "Bringing our analysis up to date (revised version)" contains the following statement:

> WHAT IS LEGITIMATE, WHAT CAN EDUCATE WORKERS, AND ADVANCE THE MOVEMENT IS OPEN DISCUSSION AROUND REAL ISSUES AS THEY COME UP. But this is entirely different than the sectarian method that knows in advance that new allies are really enemies. We need to understand when people are allies and when, in fact, they are enemies.

Two points should be made here:

1) The role of a leader of a particular struggle is obviously an issue during a campaign or a struggle. This is a real opportunity to educate our periphery and members about the people we support.

2) It is sectarian to consider an ally to be an enemy. However, it is Marxist to understand that a temporary friend is only a "summer soldier" and will desert us. To prepare our members and friends for that is not sectarian -- it is ESSENTIAL.

V What if, someone may ask, one of our temporary friends finds out that WP is criticizing her/him? That person may not want to be "allied" with us any more.

Then that would be too bad. But the whole history of our movement shows that when working with other groups or individuals (such as the "United Front"), the revolutionary forces must be free to put forward their whole analysis.

It would be gross opportunism for us to withhold criticism of an individual simply because of personally alienating them, especially when that person is an experienced leader.

(It may be true, though, that such leaders would welcome the criticism. It gives them a cover against being too closely associated with the socialists. This actually occurred during the Sadlowski campaign, where Sadlowski staffers praised (privately) WP criticisms, and were almost embarassed by the publications of other socialist groups that did nothing but praise Sadlowski.)

VI In the 1940's Walter Reuther made a move to take over the United Auto Workers, a move which was eventually successful. In making his move, he used a lot of left rhetoric. He adopted many of the platforms from revolutionary groups, such

as the demand for no price increases from the auto companies and a demand for them to "Open the Books".

It would have been correct to support the progressive demands that Reuther was raising. But it would have been entirely wrong not to mention the context in which Reuther was raising them, Reuther's real goals and his willingness to sell out the progressive demands when it would suit his needs.

A revolutionary newspaper must analyze these types of situations with its regular readers.

VII I am including two sample articles of how such criticisms could be written. The first is a slightly revised version of an article that I submitted to WP in January 1977. The second was an actual article on the Sadlowski campaign that was published 3 days before the Steelworkers Election in Feb. 1977. (To the best of my knowledge, there has been no article like it for any of our union work since then). The purpose of these two sample articles is to make concrete how I feel that Socialist analysis of a left bureaucrat can be written that does not detract from a struggle.

In summary, though, I must EMPHASIZE that these types of analyses that I am talking about should NOT be the main aspect of Workers Power. Such analyses are an essential part of education that must take place to build a solid revolutionary organization.

But such analyses will not be helpful in a vacuum. And the main way that WP will develop an audience will be to provide facts and arguments that help build struggles. In other words, WP must be part of the struggle, part of the solution

sample article #1: economic crisis, trade union reformism & ed sadlowski 1/77

What is the attitude of revolutionary socialists toward reformers like Ed Sadlowski running for union office? Our starting point is not his personality, but rather the economic crisis of capitalism and the state of the working class movement.

Until World War II, socialists were extremely active in the unions in this country. After World War II, an UNPRECE DENTED SITUATION developed: 25 years of continuous "prosperity". Of course, it wasn't prosperity for everyone. But between 1945 and 1970, there were none of the severe depressions that this country had previously experienced, only "mild" recessions. Economists talked like they had solved the business cycle.

What did all this mean for the unions? U.S. Capitalism was getting fatter and more profitable. They could afford to give bigger wage increases to their workers. Thus, THE UNION LEADERS OF THE 1950'S & 60's WERE ABLE TO DELIVER REAL IMPROVEMENTS IN LIVING STANDARDS WITHOUT REAL STRUGGLE.

The 1970's is a whole new ball game. The US is in the worse economic crisis in 35 years. The ruling class wants workers to pay with cuts in real wages through inflation, permanently higher unemployment, cuts in social services, and attacks on working conditions through "productivity" drives. To defeat this attack (AND THIS IS AN ATTACK -- the corporations are going to be more desperate in their drive to maintain profits), we will have to FIGHT BACK.

SOCIALIST ANALYSIS: Even during the height of the prosperity, revolutionary

socialists were predicting (correctly) that capitalism by its very nature would lead again to crisis. In addition, we argued that workers' living standards would be one of the first victims as the corporations attempt to maintain their accustomed (multi-million dollar) profit levels. We know that when the crunch comes, the government, the laws, and the courts as well as the Democratic and Republican Parties will all be on the side of the rich, to insure the existence of THEIR system. (One example already is the New York City fiscal crisis. Paying off the debts to the banks takes top priority, so thousands of city workers have been laid off, and wages of the rest have been frozen.)

Workers are going to have to develop their own organizations of the rank and file. The needs of working people for a decent standard of living and security must be put ahead of the need of the rich for extra millions, even if that means the system must be changed.

THE ROLE OF TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY: Right now, most labor unions are led by officials who have a contradictory position. On the one hand, they have high salaries and expenses, so they live more like management than the people they represent. One of their jobs is to enforce contracts, and they often enforce contract against their own members more than against the companies!

On the other hand, trade unions are working class organizations, about the only mass working class organizations in the country. Because of their position representing workers in a working class organization, trade union leaders, even rotton and conservative ones, are part of the working class and do in some way reflect working class interest. Moreover, in order to maintain their privileged positions, these trade union officials need to produce at elast some results for the members.

BUT ESSENTIALLY THEIR OUTLOOK IS THE SAME AS MANAGEMENT: Companies must be profitable first, before workers can get their wages. Thus in any serious conflict between workers' needs and the problems of the corporations, these union bosses will side with the company bosses. Especially as the economic crisis in this country gets worse, the contradictory position of the union officials will become clearer.

UNION REFORMERS: Among the labor bureaucracy, there are some who want to reform the unions. They want to see a cleaner union, less patronage, and a better shake for the members. Such union reform movements can lead to some definite improvements. But when push comes to shove, most of these union reformers who already have positions up in the labor bureaucracy will still see the needs of the corporations coming first. Thus they will be prepared to sell out the membership if that is necessary to the corporations.

They share this outlook with the old line trade union officials because they do not understand that ULTIMATELY THE STRUGGLE OVER THE ECONOMIC PIE IS THE CLASS STRUGGLE, and that to solve our needs, the workers are going to have to take over the corporations.

There are many examples of this, but the best recent example in this country is Arnold Miller, president of the Mineworkers union. He was elected in 1972 beating Tony Boyle (who was later convicted of murdering his previous opponent). When Miller was first elected, he instituted some changes that made the union more democratic, such as the right to ratify contracts and he lowered his own salary.

But he also dissolved the rank and file group that elected him, the Miners For

Democracy. Immediately this meant that Miller felt he didn't need the organized pressure of the rank and file, even though he still faced the owners and the conservative wing of the union. Last year, when there was a big wildcat strike in the mines, he took the side of the companies and ordered the miners back to work. He was unwilling to stand up to the mining companies, which are subsidiaries of some of the biggest corporations in America, on an issue which to many miners is a matter of life & death.

ED SADLOWSKI, UNION REFORMER: Ed Sadlowski is an honest union man who really desires to clean out the corruption and give the members a better deal. But it must be understood by militants that his limited approach will not basically solve the problems of steelworkers.

Sadlowski's slogan on his main piece of campaign literature is: "Tough problems demand tough leaders." Translated, this means, elect me and I'll solve your problems. Sadlowski sees change from the TOP DOWN. The most important thing to him is whether he gets elected. He doesn't accept the fact that in order to fight against the companies' productivity attacks in the next few years, the steelworkers are going to have to be mobilized from the BOTTOM UP.

While Sadlowski is against the E.N.A. No Strike Deal, he hasn't at all made clear how he would deal with the current negotiations. (One of his slate members said they would do almost nothing in the 1977 basic steel negotiations even if they were elected, because negotiations occur before the new officers take office. This slate member said they would not try to use their enormous prestige, if elected, to mobilize the rank and file to get a good contract.)

A lot of Sadlowski's statements show wavering. Many things are too vague to pin down. He has not made it clear whether his organization Steelworkers Fight Back is to remain in existence after Feb. 8 (the election) as a rank and file organization, or if it is simply an ordinary campaign organization.

As District Director of the largest district in the USWA, Sadlowski has shown a real hesitation to act decisively, claiming that his hands are tied by the machine (almost all his staff is against him). Will he use the same excuse if elected President, because the overwhelming majority of the staff men throughout the country oppose him.

Sadlowski often refers to Philip Murray and John L. Lewis as labor leaders he likes to be compared to. Well, Murray (first Pres. of the Steel Workers, 1936-1952) is the one who organized the Steel Workers union from the top down. Union members never had the right to vote on contracts under him. He traded the right to strike on local problems for . . . the dues checkoff! He insisted that staffmen had to be appointed by himself, not elected by the members they serve.

John L. Lewis (President of United Mine Workers 1920-1960, and first president of the Congress of Industrial Organization,CIO, during the great organizing drives, 1935-1940) was a very strong leader and led some important strikes. But just as important, he ran a dictatorship. He co-operated with the mine companies eliminating hundreds of thousands of jobs in the 1950's. And it was Lewis who brought the murderer Tony Boyle into the machine to be his successor.

These were men who enjoyed their privileged positions, and who were fully willing to co-operate with the companies. If these are the labor leaders that Sadlowski admires, then we are going to have to watch him like a hawk if he gets elected.

CLASS STRUGGLE UNIONISM: There is another approach to unionism, class struggle unionism. Essentially this recognizes that union employer relations is a struggle between two classes, the working class and the corporate or ruling class. This struggle will deepen as the economic crisis gets worse. On our side we have to strengthen workers' self-confidence and organization. We have to fight for solutions to our needs, regardless of the needs of THEIR system. We have the technology; if their system can't solve basic human needs, then it's time for a change.

Many union reformers, including workers supporting Ed Sadlowski, can be won to understand class struggle unionism. In fact many may be instinctive or unconscious class struggle unionists without realizing it because struggle in this country has not yet reached the level where certain critical questions must be immediately faced.

But it will. And when it does, we will need thousands of workers who understand class struggle unionism, not a few leaders who will want to keep things under their control.

(For more on what class struggle unionism represents, get a copy of the pamphlet "Fighting To Win", 25¢ from Sun Press)

STILL . . . SADLOWSKI MUST BE ELECTED: We don't want anyone to be confused by what this article states. We are 100% for Sadlowski's election, and we hope all steel union militants will actively work for his election. Sadlowski's election will open things up for the rank and file by busting up the Abel-McBride machine, and by giving people the confidence that you can actually fight the machine and win. Sadlowski's reform campaign will actually be carrying the struggle forwrd within certain limits. This is why the regular coverage in Workers Power has been stressing a victory for Sadlowski.

VOTE FOR SADLOWSKI, but without illusions. There is no way Sadlowski will adequately deal with the economic crisis. That is something that we as the working class are going to have to do on our own.

(sample article #2)

Why Are Socialist Steelworkers Supporting Sadlowski?

On some occasions, such as last November's Presidential election, this newspaper has argued that working people should not support any of the candidates in an election. This week another critical presidential election is being held —in the United Steel Workers union.

This time, steelworkers who are members of the International Socialists are vigorously campaigning for the election of Ed Sadlowski. We feel that his election would be an enormous step forward for rank and file workers in the USW.

Yet Workers' Power stands for socialist revolution, and Sadlowski is surely no revolutionary. He is a union reformer, who says that the problems steelworkers face can be solved without totally destroying the capitalist system of private profits.

Sadlowski's campaign has not generally encouraged the rank and file to take matters into their own hands, saying in effect, "Elect a tough leader who can do it all for you."

Workers' Power has many other differences with Sadlowski's philosophy and criticisms of the way he has run his campaign. Nevertheless, we are wholeheartedly supporting his victory. The purpose of this article is to explain why.

We take as our starting point neither the personality of the candidate nor his campaign promises; rather we look at the campaign and what we think the effect of a Sadlowski victory will be.

Once in office, the actions of Sadlowski (or any other candidate) will be governed by more than his sentiments or original intentions—good or bad. In office, the course Sadlowski follows will be limited by the situation in which he finds himself, and by the range of options he feels are open to him.

In the 1930's, for example, John L. Lewis, as conservative a "business unionist" as any, ended up playing a very progressive role in leading the massive CIO organizing upsurge.

We support Sadlowski's election because it will advance the interests of rank and file steelworkers.

The personalities of the men on the slate, or their particular personal viewpoints, are not the most important reason for this. The main reason is the greater political power and self-confidence the rank and file stands to gain from their victory.

DIRECT OPPOSITION

As a union reformer, Sadlowski is running for office in direct opposition to many of the worst policies of the Abel machine. He challenges the union's no-strike agreement, supports the right of the membership to vote on contracts, condemns the union's cooperation with management in boosting productivity, calls for a more aggressive union stance in fighting management on the shop floor, and advocates democratic reform of the union, giving more power back to the rank and file.

Practically the entire union staff and most local officers outside District 31 strongly oppose Sadlowski. They understand very well that his candidacy represents more than just a bid for the top office: it is a direct assault on the machine that runs the union, and it is fueled by intense rank and file dissatisfaction with the machine's policies.

That is what makes this election very different from 1965, when I.W. Abel challenged and beat David McDonald for the same office.

Ed Sadlowski

In that election, staff and local officials were divided right down the middle. Abel, then the number two man in the union, joined with other powerful machine politicians to challenge the incumbent because they thought McDonald was too corrupt, too crude, and too incompetent to effectively run the machine. It was not their goal to overhaul the practices or the policies of the union machine in any basic way.

Once the election was over, it was easy for both sides to lick their wounds and reunite under the new president.

This will not be the case if Sadlowski wins this time. Ever since he first ran for District 31 Director, the entire machine has treated him as an outsider and an enemy. The driving force behind his candidacy has not been conflicts within the machine, but rather dissatisfaction of large sections of the union membership.

By putting himself forward as the standard bearer for these rank and file sentiments, Sadlowski has been transformed in only five years from a small-time, maverick union official into a serious contender for the leadership of a large and powerful union.

If Sadlowski is elected, he will meet great resistance from union staff and local officers and from the majority of the International Executive Board.

In office, Sadlowski would probably seek peace with as much of the old machine as possible. He may start to tone down his militancy. And he will probably try modeling himself after Walter Reuther, which would mean replacing the present USW machine with a new one more on the United Auto Workers model.

If it were possible at the present time in history for Sadlowski to build his own "reform" machine, his victory would represent little, if any, advance for steelworkers.

CROSS-FIRE

In 1977, however, a new international union president taking office as the direct result of strong rank and file opposition to the old leadership will be under great pressure to move in a very different direction. If he doesn't he will get cut down in a cross-fire between the old machine and management on one side, and the rank and file on the other.

If Sadlowski takes office, it will be at a time when American capitalism has entered a period of stagnation and decline.

This is a period in which employers have to go on the offensive. They feel increasing economic pressure to attack workers' real wages, working conditions and job security, in order to raise their profits back to the level they feel they need to survive.

Steelworkers feel this attack in various forms, ranging from layoffs to the increasingly arrogant and aggressive behavior of the foremen.

Over time, resentment builds up toward a union machine that fails to provide protection against these attacks. It is this resentment that has made Sadlowski's reform campaign possible.

Steelworkers will take a Sadlowski victory as a signal that the time has come for the union to fight back against management's attack. Militancy and self-confidence will start rising on the shop floor. More militant and aggressive grievers and local officials will be elected and the rank and file will demand more results from those they have elected.

This will mean increasing labor-management conflict. That will make it hard for Sadlowski to make peace with elements of the old machine, who will blame him for whatever worker insurgency develops.

Under these circumstances, if Sadlowski ends up trying to build a UAW-style machine and collaborating with management, he will be cut to pieces, just as Arnold Miller was in the United Mine Workers when he tried the same thing. Miller is now so thoroughly discredited that he is of no use to either side, but the rank and file upsurge his campaign nurtured is continuing.

POST-WAR PROSPERITY

The USW leadership machine as developed during the 25 years American capitalist prosperity llowing World War II. This was e longest and richest period of osperity the world has ever own.

During this time, big employers ere willing—and able—to pay a gh price for peaceful union/ anagement relations. Workers vered by major union contracts perienced the highest rise in real ages and benefits they had ever own.

In return for these gains, union aders agreed to contain militancy d radicalism in the workforce, d to help increase productivity.

The policies of the present union achine were developed and rfected by union leaders carrying it their part of the bargain with anagement. One of the most portant reasons they were able do this was the effect of the post-ar prosperity on rank and file orkers. It destroyed the militancy ey had shown in the great union ganizing drives.

As long as prosperity continued bring improvements in wages nd benefits, membership dissatis-ction with working conditions ould be kept under control. But in e 1970's, American prosperity as turned to economic stagnation. Management has had to put the queeze on and everything is ripe r change.

EMPLOYERS' OFFENSIVE

The more penetrating labor remains s the employers' offensive grows, e more vicious that attack will ecome.

In the late 1920's, for example, merican management went on the ffensive. The unions were unpre ared to fight back, and by 1929, al ut the most highly skilled craft nions were either destroyed or itted.

American unions today are much ronger than those of the 20's. But the years ahead, they will either ave to adopt more of the class truggle methods of their earlier ays, or they will be torn to ieces.

The American working class will ot rediscover these methods in a ay. It will take many struggles—ncluding victories and defeats.

But as the economic crisis evelops, masses of workers will gain learn that they and their mployers have no interests in ommon, that in return for their abor they will get back only what ey are strong enough to win.

Sadlowski's "Steelworkers Fight Back" campaign is only an early nd faint preview of what is to ome. It reflects the beginnings of a new generation of rank and file workers.

The members of the International Socialists believe that our revolutionary socialist politics are the future direction this working class movement will have to take as it develops.

Unless the leaders of this movement confront the question of the capitalist system, they can be manipulated by employers time and again. If you defend capitalism, you must then defend the right of the employers to make a "fair profit."

But during hard times, a "fair profit" comes only through layoffs, speedup, and wage cuts. Pro-capitalist unionists find themselves justifying these employer attacks on the working class and ending up as front men for the boss.

EVERY STRUGGLE

Members of the International Socialists participate in every struggle of the working class that we can. Our goal is to build a revolutionary party by working in the movements of the present, and winning to revolutionary politics those workers who understand the limits of the present system.

We support Sadlowski and the "Fight Back" campaign even though we're sure that its program and method are too limited and too bureaucratic to actually accomplish the goals the campaign sets for itself.

We support the Sadlowski campaign because we believe his victory will strengthen the rank and file and advance the class struggle.

But our loyalty is not to Ed Sadlowski. Our loyalty is to rank and file steelworkers.

As long as Sadlowski represents their interests, we will support him fully, no matter what our specific criticisms may be. But at whatever point Sadlowski comes into conflict with the real interests of steelworkers, we will fight against him just as vigorously.

steelyard blues

DECISION TIME FOR THE UNITED STEEL WORKERS

REFLECTIONS ON TRADE UNION STRATEGY

One of the questions that has always plagued the socialist movement is the relationship between the fight for immediate reforms and our long range goal of workers revolution. In general our attitude has been that we must fight for and win reforms, because without victories, working people do not gain the experience and confidence that is necessary for a revolution.

However, the reforms are not an end in themselves. We do not favor using methods where the lessons of our power are not learned. Some immediate reforms can be won by lawyers and the law, through lobbying and the Democrats , or through the maneuverings of smart officials. Such methods may win a particular reform. But they do so by sidetracking or derailing a movement.

We struggle for reforms. But we do so through methods that will increase the self-confidence and self-organization of the working class, so that we will be BETTER prepared for the future.

I It has been recently stated by the Central Committee (Bringing our analysis . . Dec. '77) our work must be "based on a political outlook, not just on sociology." This, I presume, is supposed to be a more sophisticated way of looking at the world rather than the simple "ranks versus bureaucrats".

Since when have Marxists neatly divided of "sociology" and "politics"? Marxists have always recognized the interrelationship of the two, as well as the interrelationship with the economic base.

However, we have always given primary importance to the relationship to the means of production, and the rank and file has a considerably different relationship to the means of production than does the bureaucracy.

II The CC's "Bringing our analysis . . ." states that election to union office is the indispensable prerequisite" to building a rank and file movement. Further, that for someone who has won once, "losing could cost us valuable time at the wrong time."

This leads us to a very important question: sometimes good rank and file work will help us in building a base for an election. But not always. What happens when the two conflict? What happens when our involvement in a struggle involving activists will hurt our chances in an election?

There is no easy answer to this. But in genera we need to place more emphasis on involving people in activity .

During an election campaign, there are always those who favor a "safe" approach, trying to raise as few controversial issues as possible. Usually their outlook is simply what's the best way to win that particular election. Sometimes the "safe" approach is wrong. Boldness and a fighting attitude may bring in new people into the campaign (as we argued during the Sadlowski campaign last year) that would explain to people why our candidate would make a difference. Sometimes this approach will excite our supporters and get them off their collective ass.

But sometimes the "safe" approach is the better one for winning an election. For us, however, it would be wrong. What we would lose in the long run would more than make up for any gains in the immediate situation.

III We are also told by the CC that "what we will need to hold on to a local is a machine." What is a machine? This is not explained. If machine means an effective organization of activists, then that is right, because a "base" and a newsletter are not enough.

However, "machine" is an unfortunate choice of words, because in normal everyday usage, it has two meanings that we are opposed to:

1) "Machine" normally means a top-down organization where orders come from the top, and the "parts" of the machine do what they're supposed to.

2) Since most machines are not democratic, and the members are not loyal out of a commitment to bring about change, they have another method to maintain loyalty -- rewards. A machine within a union will reward those who are loyal with minor positions so that they can get extra salaries, lost time away from the plant, all-expense paid trips, etc.

IV UNIONS & COURTS Recently we have been using court suits to help our rank and file work. In particular in the Teamster union, but also other cases as well. This is necessary because of the lack of democracy within the unions. In some cases the procedures of the union are so undemocratic and manipulative that if we want to open up the struggle, we have to use the government or the courts.

But let us not confuse necessary tactics with desirability. We have a position. We want to keep the unions independent. The unions are working class organizations. The government is the "executive committee of the bourgeoisie". In general, any time the government intervenes in the unions, it will be to weaken the unions, not to strengthen the unions.

Now it is true there are exceptions. Sometimes the situation in the union is so corrupt (ex: Teamsters) or physically dangerous (Miners under Tony Boyle in 1970), that to proceed without government intervention would be a dead end. It is also true that in the case of Sadlowski in 1973 (when his election was stolen from him the first time he ran : r District Director, and then he won 2-1 on a re-run in Nov. 1974) that things really opened up in the Steelworkers Union. Without his election to District Director in 1974, the 1976-7 campaign would have been impossible.

But the truth is that the government and the courts are already too much into the affairs of the unions. In the 1930's when the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) was passed. This was supposed to be a pro-labor law. This was before the anti-labor amendments in 1947 (Taft-Hartley) and 1959 (Landrum-Griffin).

But even in its pro-labor period, the National Labor Relations Board did very little to help labor. In many cases, for example, jurisdictions of unions were interpreted to favor the companies, because the NLRB had a lot to do with determining who could vote in bargaining elections.

We have to be clear, when we do feel it necessary to resort to some type of government action, to clarify the government's real role. We may find it necessary to use some procedures of the government, but at the same time, as socialists, we must point out that it is only under exceptional circumstances that the government will rule for the rank and file against the union officials.

In fact, sometimes our sole reason for resorting to the courts or government agencies will be either for publicity that we would not get otherwise, or to help break the illusions of some of our co-workers wh do believe that the government will take care of things.

Recently our organization has been discussing the threat of fascism. Unlike some leftists, we do not favor calling upon the government to outlaw or restrict fascist organizations. We do not even favor mass action such as demonstrations or petitions to call upon the government to restrict fascist organizations. We know that once this becomes acceptable for the government to interfere in these type of organizations, it will be that much easier to smash revolutionary organizations.

So we cannot take lightly asking the government to intervene in unions. It is already intervening too much. It will become even easier to move against the rank and file. So in these situations where it is necessary to call upon the courts or some government agency, we must do so carefully, and we must fully explain what we are doing, and why.

V There is one other item that must be cleared up. The Central Committee resolution on the Sadlowski Campaign (Bulletin, April 15, 1977) contains the following statement:

> "We can carry out the approach we have outlined above, without falling prey to opportunism or liquidationism because, as our Sadlowski work showed, our members in industry operate as open revolutionary socialists"

This is an important issues, and the statement is not true. The history of the labor movement is filled with leftists who were openly known as socialists, who considered themselves revolutionaries, and yet who in many ways acted as cover for labor bureaucrats or for a social democratic approach.

One example was mentioned by a member of the EC who in a talk on the Communist Party of the 1930's reported how they made a point of being open CPers. This did not stop them from misdirecting the movement.

Another example is the SWP (Socialist Workers Party) today. They put a high premium on selling their paper, the Militant. Yet this does not stop their members from being the shit-workers for left bureaucrats, and help give those bureaucrats legitimacy.

WE MUST BE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT MERELY BEING OPEN ABOUT BEING A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST AND BEING ASSOCIATED WITH A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY JUSTIFY ANY TYPE OF DEALS WE MIGHT MAKE WITH BUREAUCRATS. Such type of arrangements need a dynamic of their own that will show why they are necessary for the development of the working class movement.

COMMUNICATION AND PARTY BUILDING

Lenin didn't say it all

BARRACUDA & TONI HAWK

INTRODUCTION

Our immediate task as revolutionists is to remove the hold of bourgeois ideology on the thinking of the most forward elements of the American working class and to replace it with the ideas of revolutionary socialism. Since a great deal of research by social scientists and market research specialists has been done on just the problem of changing people's thinking, we can more quickly further our cause by utilizing the work done in what is known as the field of diffusion of innovations. Communication of innovative ideas is a science, the study and application of which would tremendously help us in our present stage of party building.

Communication is the process by which messages are transferred from a source to a receiver. This mean in our case the process by which IS politics is transferred from our members to contacts/workers.

The essential elements of this communication process are:

1) the Source (IS organization)
2) the Message (IS politics)
3) Communication Channels (Workers' Power, TV, etc.)
4) Time
5) Receivers (The Working Class)

THE SOURCE

Within the realms of communication the IS is a revolutionary change agency and all of its members are change agents. A change agent is a professional person who attempts to influence innovation-decisions in a desirable direction. The innovation-decision process is the mental process a worker passes through from first knowledge of IS politics to a decision to adopt or reject it. This also includes the confirmation of the worker's adoption of our politics by his joining the IS.

To move this innovation decision in a positive direction, a change agent (comrade) has to already have or acquire 8 roles. He/shemust be able to:

1. Develop a need for change on the part of workers/contacts.
2. Establish a change relationship with them.
3. Diagnose their problems.
4. Create an intent to join the IS in them.
5. Translate this intent to action.
6. Stabilize new members and prevent discontinuances(leaving theIS).
7. Achieve a terminal relationship with new members.(Make new members politically developed and capable of handling any situation within the shortesttime possible.
8. Must be politically developed.

With the above 8 roles, tha chance of a comrade's success in directing a worker's innovation-decision process is considerable. However, his/her relative success would depend on:

1. The extent of his/her efforts.
2. His/her worker-orientation, rather than IS orientation,i.e, an IS member must ~~hax~~ behave like a worker with IS politics, not as an organiztion member teaching workers what is good for them.)
3. The degree to which IS politics and activities are compatible with the worker's needs at this moment.

4. His/her empathy with workers.

5. His/her homophily with workers. Homophily is the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes.(e.g., teamsters)

6. The extent to which he/she works through opinion leaders in the working class. (e.g., stewards, militants, caucus leaders, etc.)

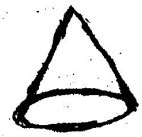
7. His/her credibility in the eyes of the workers.

8. His/her efforts in increasing new members' ability to evaluate existing conditions with IS politics, make decisions and be a part of the organiztion.

9. His/her ability to make contacts with respected workers experienced in the class struggle.

10. Finally, a comrade's relative success is related to the existing structure and conditions within the IS.

The structure of a change agency creates to a substantial extent the conditions within the agency, and influences the capabiltiy and ability of its members to function adequately. The IS as a revolutionary change agency is democratically centered. Democratic centralism,within the boundaries of communication, can be of two types--the first exhibits itself as a horizontal bicycle wheel, with the center representing the leadership, the tires the rank and file, and the spokes communication channels between the leadership and the rank and file. The rank and file perceives the leadership as being on the same level (talking to them). The consequences of this type of democratic centralism are cooperation and unity and success. The second type of democratic centralism can be represented by a cone, with the leadership forming the apex and the rank and file members forming the base and the communication channels forming the sides of the cone. Under this kind of organizational structure the rank and file members perceive the leadership talking down to them. The rank and file members' attempts to communicate upwards to the leadership reflects itself as excessive admiration and hero worship. The outcome of this is enefficiency, a lack of understanding andinitiativeness, and indecisiveness and lack or responsibility on the part of every member of the organiztion. Progress is impossible as members fail to develop change agent roles. A revolutionary change agency can only be successful if it has a horizontal democratically centered structure.



COLLECTIVE DECISIONS

Decisions in a horizontal-wheel democratically centered revolutionary change agency are collective. Collective innovation decisions are decisions made by members of a change agency by a majority vote. Communication is two way. Collective innovation decison-making can be thought of as a series of subprocesses:

1) Stimulation. Stimulation is the subprocess at which a member of the change agency becomes aware that a need exists for a certain innovation within the agency. Up to this time neither the innovation nor the need for change are perceived as important to members of the change agency. Stimulators bring out awareness of the need for change and play an important role in relating the change agency to the outside world. The stimulator's expertise lies in knowing the innovation. He/she is message-oriented.

2) Initiation is the subprocess by which the new idea receives increased attention by members of a change agency and is further adapted to the needs of the agency. Initiators incorporate the innovation into a specific plan of action that is adapted to the conditions of the change agency. Their role involves intimate knowledge of the change agency, including the ability to predict certain consequences of the new idea, once it is adopted.

3. Legitimation is the subprocess at which a collective innovation is approved or sanctioned by those who informally represent the change agency in its norms, beliefs, and values (the leadership). The role of the legitimizer

is mainly that of raising the political level of members, advancing the struggle and screening new ideas for approval. Although legitimizers might sometimes modify new ideas put to them by initiators, they must never censure or kill them. Legitimizers thus give only sanction, justification, and the license to act. They have to be actively involved in the decision-making process, i.e., actively promote an idea for collective approval after giving their own approval. The rate of adoption of a collective innovation is positively related to the degree to which the legitimzers are involved in the decision-making process. Legitimizers have to be monomorphic. That means the legitimizers must exert influence on all issues and topics concerning the change agency. Legitimizers are leaders possessing informal powers with formal positions of high authority. Their effectiveness depends highly on their credibility and acceptance by members of a change agency. Legitimizers have to be open, carrying out no decisions behind the members. In a revolutionary change agency legitimizers must be democratically elected for their abilities and subjected to immediate recall, with no exceptions. Power must never be concentrated in the hands of legitimzers, for such contentrated power has a tendency to grow and entrench itself to the detriment of the revolutionary change agency. The rate of adoption of collective innovations is positively related to the degree of power dispersion in a change agency. The amount of time required for the collective decision-making process is positively related to the power dispersion, nature of the innovation, member participation and the ability of legitimizers to understand and play their roles.

Effective legitimization reflects itself in a high degree of turnover in the leadership. The good legitimzers develop members politically and are then replaced by these developed members who in turn as legitimzers raise the political consciousness of other members. The dynamic cohesion of the change agency is positively related to this circle of legitimzers and development of political consciousness.

4) The decision to act by the members of a change agency is the fourth sub-process of the collective decision-making process. All the facts concerning the issue have to be at the disposal of the members before the conventions. Widespread participation must be encouraged. Opinions and ideas are allowed a free rein in a discussion time period provided. Hopefully the wrong opinions are corrected and right ones voted.

Change agency decsions are binding to members. Member acceptance of and satisfaction with a collective innovation decision is positively related to the degree of participation of members in the decision. Participation is the degree to which members of a change agency are involved in the decision-making process. Participation enhances the static cohesion of a revolutionary change agency. Cohesion is the degree to whic h members perceive themselves to be strongly tied to the change agency.

ACTION

The execution of a new idea by members of a change agency is positively related to the degree of participation in the collective decision process. Through participation, individual members learn that most others in the group are also willing to give their utmost. Participation is a means of revealing to the individual the extent of group consensus and commitment. Since the decision to adopt or reject an idea is more appropriate to the needs of members that participate in reaching such a decision, the binding nature of change agency final decision becomes a reality--a lack of participation affects communication between members and leads to a lack of cohesion in the change agency. It also leads to discontinuance.

DISCONTINUANCE

A discontinuance is a decision by a member to leave the IS. There are two types of discontinuances:

1) Replacement discontinuances. Those in which a member leaves the IS to join another organization or set up a new organization.

2) Disenchantment discontinuances. In which a member leaves the IS as a result of dissatisfaction with its performance.

The first type of discontinuance occurs because the member perceives the organization he joins later as better than the IS. With these kinds of members, we should be glad they are gone.

The second type occurs because of innovation dissonance. Innovation dissonance is the discrepancy between an individual's attitude toward the IS and the overt behavior demanded by the IS. When innovation dissonance occurs, the member attempts to reduce the dissonance by changing his/her attitudes or behavior. The member's attitude normally results because of the inability to bring his/her private and plitical life into equilibrium (e.g., due to lack of appreciation of his/her work by other members, political dissolution, exhaustion, personal problems, etc.) The lack of comradeship and communication between IS members can enclose this member in his/her personal world. This dissonant member has to bring his/her private and political life into equilibrium. Left alone, unable to reach anyone, this is very difficult. The alternative is that he/she has to forget the personal stuff or leave the IS. The Balance theory of tension reduction shows that an individual will attempt to resolve inbalance by taking that alternative which is easiest for him/her to achieve. Hence he/she will leave the organization since the other alternative is impossible. To prevent discontinuance the IS has to be psychologically fused into a unit. Every member must realize that:

1. a comrade is a person with whom he/she has an ideological pact.
2. the IS must be a single unit, theoretically and practically, in order to survive.
3. being a revolutionary socialist can be a life-death question and we have to be able to depend on each other.
4. all kinds of competition must stop. Only by cooperation among ourselves can we excell.
5. we must appreciate and encourage each other's effort. Nobody's else to do it but us.
6. criticising other members who have turned out their best for lack of perfection is stupid.
7. we must learn to listen to comrades and a "Thank you, that was good work" is an absolute necessity in a revolutionary organization.
8. we must get to know ourselves better through social activities.

At the first sign of discontinuance, we must relate on a personal level with the affected member. Give advice, encouragement, and help. Try all our best to allieviate the member's problems. Share the problem, always be there, listen and then talk. Remove dissonance and bring about equilibrium. Create an atmosphere of trust, harmony, and comradeship. Only through this can we exist as a cohesive unit and reduce discontinuance to a negligible degree.

THE MESSAGE (IS POLITICS)

IS politics constitutes the message we have for the working class. As a message it is an innovation that shows the ways and means towards the

socialist revolution. IS politics as an innovation has five distinctive attributes:

1) Relative advantage. Relative advantage is the degree to which an innovation isperceived as being better than the idea it supersedes. It indicates the intensity of reward or punishment resulting from adoption of an innovation. It takes into account the degree of economic profitability, low perceived risk, a decrease in discomfort, and immediacy of the rewards on the part of the receivers. With regard to IS politics and its application, every successful strike we participate in advances the relative advantage of our politics. It is elementary that our major obstacle is the years of bourgeois and capitalist indoctrination, individualism and the hate of socialism ("red baiting") that the working class exhibits. To overcome this it is essential that we utilize every opportunity in the process of struggle (strikes, demonstrations, etc.) to present our message. With regards to red baiting, our members have to show perseverance, explain and agitate when confronted. We have to start from where our co-workers are, i.e., explain that none of us was born a socialist. That there existed a time when we individually held the capitalist values and beliefs. However, in the heat of daily struggle, failures and bourgeois ripoff, we found there existed a methodology (historical materialism and dialectics) for analyzing any historical epoch. That our politics,understanding of any situation, and militancy is the result of the correct application of this method to the preently existing capitalist structure

. The above should go on over a period of time. We have to be able to explain the source of red baiting from our past experience as believers of capitalist values. There are some workers who would agree with everything but becoming a socialist. To them we have to explain that there is nothing in a name, "that a rose by any other name would smell as good." However, we should stress the advantage of being in our organization--and the disadvantage of futile individual action. We should always ask a co-worker what he or she thinks. Then if necessary we should disagree with his/her politics because of the contradictions it presents. These contradictions we can always point out. Soon, he/she will realize that to resolve these contradictions, he/she has to have our politics and join the IS. The relative advantage of our politics, as perceived by the working class, is positively related to its rate of adoption.

2) Compatibility. Compatibility is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of the receivers. IS politics is not compatible with existing values of the working class. However, it is quite compatible with their needs. In order to effectively change the existing values, we have to efficiently use all available communication channels as well as use our politics to deal with the workers' needs at any particular time. This means the presentation of that part of our politics that is directly related to their needs at that moment. We have to be involved with whatever they are doing. Correcting them when they are wrong, encouraging them when they are right and recruiting the most advanced. We should not be disturbed if they choose to ignore our advice--experience will prove them wrong over time. When this happens we should sieze advantage of the situation and explain the reason for failure to everyone concerned. In future, these previously introduced ideas would be of great help to us. The rate of adoption of a new idea is affected by the old idea that it supercedes. The compatibility of our politics as perceived by the working class is positively related to its rate of adoption.

3) Complexibility. Complexibility is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use. How complex our

politics are depends entirely on us. The position we take on an issue should be clearly explained. An IS member should never get trapped in intellectual elitism (for example, using socialist terminology without definition) when talking to a coworker. We should always starat from the workers' problem and needs, when explaining global situations or events. The interrelation of events under international capitalism should not only be stressed, but logically explained. The application of our politics should be explained in everyday words. The complexibility of IS politics, as perceived by the working class, is negatively related to its rate of adoption.

4) Trialability. Trialability is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis. Normally we in the IS do not introduce workers to our politics all at once. We tend to explain that part of our politics which is directly related to the issue at hand. On a limited basis, therefore, our politics can be experimented with by the working class (e.g., during a strike, our position on Health and Safety, etc.) We all know that one day on a picket line by a person is worth months of discussions. The trialability of our politics, as perceived by the working class, is positively related to its rate of adoption.

5) Observability. Observability is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others. The results of IS politics are quite visible (such as when we are involved in a successful job action, or the success of the TDC). To maximize the effect of this result, we have to use all communication channels at our disposal. The idea is to make our success more visible to workers.

The cultural lag theory states that material innovations are adopted more readily than non-material ideas. Therefore when our successes(better working conditions, better union, higher wages, etc.) draw coworkers to us, we still have to spend a lot of time and energy to get them to accept our politics. The observability of IS politics as perceived by the working class is positively related to its rate of adoption.

THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF NEW MEMBERS

To raise the political level of new members, we have to know exactly what their political level is. Every old member should be able to determine this. To improve this political level we have to stress the source of our politics (historical materialsm and dialectics) as a method. Lenin used it accurately in Russia in 1917. It is this view of historical materialism and dialectics as a method that represents the very essence of the relationship between theory and practice. This is the core of Marxism. Teaching someone that 1 + 1 = 2 without teaching them the principle of addition (as a methodology of solving such a problem) is going to get them introuble when they try to solve 2345 + 6789. In short, reading Marx, Lenin and Trotsky is necessary but not sufficient. To be a Marxist they have to be adequate in the use of the method of analyzing any historical epoch that Marx and Lenin discovered. In order not to intimidate new members, it must be made clear that some members use this method better than others. That our best in the utilization of this method are in our leadership. That the goal is to make every member as good as they are. That nobody is perfect in the use of this method and every member of the IS including the leadership always seek to improve themselves. That it is the duty of every member (compulsory) to reach his/her maximum potential in the use of this method.

SECTARIANISM

Sectarianism results from the inability to realize that historical

materialism and dialectics is a method. HOW Lenin used this method to achieve results is essential. Sectarianism reflects itself in the attitude that if Marx and Lenin did not say or do it, it's got to be wrong. Sectarians want to repeat everthing Lenin did in the same sequence. They refuse to understand that Lenin's actions were determined by an accurate use of dialectics (as a method) to analyze his own time and place. That today the time/place has changed and international capitalism with its consequences is not exactly identical with what it was in Lenin's time. Sectarians are very hard to deal with, for they back themselves up with a book. They refuse to understand why the past is necessary but not sufficient. They know not the relationship between theory and practice. To deal with sectarians we need peer pressure and constant explanation of dialectics as a method. They have to be made to understand that because 1 + 1 = 2 does not mean that 3 + 4 = 2.

THE DIFFUSION EFFECT

The diffusion effect is the cumulatively increasing degree of influence upon individuals to adopt or reject an innovation. With contacts, the diffusion effect is very important. Contacts should meet with as many members of the IS as possible. A contact should be introduced to other contacts. Any contact willing to join the IS should be asked to spend a short time with other contacts to influence them to join. This contact should be heavily reinforced by members. The knowledge that Contact A is joining helps Contact B towards making a similar decision. This increases the degree of diffusion effect. The degree of diffusion effect on workers/contacts by peers and IS members is positively related to the rate of adoption of IS politics.

Communication Channels

Introduction

Mass communication channels are usually responsible for a person's hearing about an innovation. Adoption (persuasion) comes about usually because of interpersonal channels.

MASS MEDIA are defined as a source of one or a few people reaching many receivers. Characteristics of mass channels are that 1) They reach a large audience rapidly 2) They create knowledge and spread information 3) They can lead to changes in weakly held attitudes 4) They allow for no feedback and discussion. Example: TV coverage of the war in Vietnam led many people to join the anti-war movement.

INTERPERSONAL CHANNELS are face-to-face interactions between 2 or more people. 1) They are best for the formation and change of strongly held attitudes rather than dissemination of knowledge. 2) Interpersonal channels are a slow way to reach large audiences. 3) They do allow for feedback and discussion. Example: Consider how you were actually recruited to a socialist organization. Did you make the final commitment because of mass or interpersonal channels?

MEDIA FORUMS. A combination of mass media and interpersonal channels is the most effective way of both reaching people with new ideas and persuading them to utilize these innovations. Examples: Showings of "Last Grave at Dimbaza" with discussion afterwards.

Mass Channels

Mass communication channels we can use include A) Television. We want

our ideas to have the kind of validity in a TV culture that TV can give them. We can get news coverage of our events by handing out press releases and talking to TV station contact people before events we want covered. (A media contact is one person we establish a personal relationship with, so that we are not simply another group who wants coverage.) We can get interview programs with our people discussing topical issues, especially on local educational stations. This has been done successfully three times by SALAC in Austin, twice on the educational channel and once on a commercial channel. To maximize the effectiveness of these interview programs, they can be publicized to our potential audience through leaflets, ads, notices in rank and file papers, and telephone calls to contacts. These programs, and news programs featuring us also, should be videotaped for later use in media forums. (See videotape section below.)

B) Radio. News and interview programs can be used in the same way as television above. In addition, sometimes it is possible for an individual or group to get a regular commentary program on a listener-supported station, as a former member of ours has had on the West Coast for years. Many radio stations have talk shows which frequently discuss current issues. We can thus have a free forum by merely picking up the telephone, if we consciously and consistently think of ourselves as revolutionary change agents using every available channel. Radio coverage should also be routinely taped.

C) Films and Videotapes. We are not yet in a position to make our own films for public distribution in the way the farmworkers have done with such films as "Why We Struggle." However, we can hold public film showings of films that further our politics.

D) Newspapers and Magazines With Mass Circulation. We can get news coverage for our events in the same way as for television. We can submit feature articles or ideas for feature articles, and easiest of all, we can write letters to the editor. In order to be printed, letters should be short, concise, deal with one topical issue, and be catchy if possible. The FBI in San Antonio, Texas considered letters important enough and well-read enough that they regularly submitted reactionary letters to student newspapers in Texas during the antiwar movement.

E) Books, Music and Plays. The IS once published a play about Vietnam called MacBird. It was later produced very successfully at an off-Broadway theater in New York. While we may not yet have a Bob Dylan in our midst, we can contribute lyrics to groups likely to use them. The Red Tide has asked musical groups to play for RT events, and we have reviewed political music in our press, so that we can take advantage of what mass music is valid for us and our contacts. Theater groups such as guerilla theater, Theater-in-the-park groups (San Francisco Mime Troupe) have had a great effect on people. We are not professional theater people, but we can encourage and utilize these groups. In addition, both the IS and the RT have successfully used skits and role-playing in education. This should be further developed.

F) Miscellaneous. The Teamster Survival Kit, a packet of TDC information and brochures attached to the loads of over-the-road trucks was a unique, ingenious mass communication channel that filled a need to get the news out about TDC. Other miscellaneous mass channels are bumper stickers, small political stickers to be placed on walls such as those produced by SACC on S. Africa (except they ought to be free to encourage their distribution) and last and most univeraal, graffiti. Graffiti is one of the best read but least political communication channels in America. We could profit by inventing some catchy graffiti for that last remaining bastion of privacy, the bathroom wall. How many times do you see the same rhymes? One of the authors once carried on an anonymous debate over women's liberation on a

restroom wall that was contributed to and read by many of the women in that workplace. IS workers will be surprised at the interst shown in such an enterprise.

Interpersonal Channels

A former National Secretary once said there are some contacts who will come to an event if you tell them about it. Some will come if you give them a ride. And there are [illegible] who will come only if you have them over for dinner beforehand and then give them a ride. We have to make it as easy as possible for them to come, especially at first, when they may feel shy.

You can talk to them over dinner and in the car. And when you take them home you can invite them for a beer or coffee or ice cream and have a chance for some two-way communication with them. Also, it is important that more than one comrade become close to them--the contact does not "belong" to Member X. In fact the contact may be a little intimidated by Member X and it may be important for him or her to know that the IS is made up also of people like easy-to-talk-to Y and inspiring, dedicated Z as well. When the contact joins, X,Y, and Z will have functioned as a team.

Political level: Ask fellow members what they think of the political level at which they were recruited. How many will say they thought it was too low, [illegible], that they were talked to rather than with, that no one asked them what was on their minds?

Interpersonal channels include the vibes at meetings and parties as well as the level of political discussion. An RT member once grinned, "Whenever 3 Red Tiders get together, it's a party." A contact quickly picks up on the fact that members really like each other as people as well as co-workers in the revolutionary effort.

Weekend retreats, summer schools, parties and dinners are formal ways to encourage interpersonal channels. Picket lines also give us time to "walk and talk" to people. The late comrade Anne Draper used to say she never passed up a picket line--a chance to show support with her body on the line, and a chance to talk.

An old socialist tradition we would like to see actively revived in the IS is singing. People building movements, be they ZANU, fascists, or the miners in Harlan County, know that singing cements solidarity like nothing else in the world. Some of our new members don't even know the Internationale. We can start out with old socialist and union songs introduced, say, with their history, at branch meetings, as has been done in Cleveland, so that people will learn the historical importance of songs like Bread and Roses, Solidarity Forever, The Internationale, and revolutionary songs from other countries, etc. Songs can warm up picket lines, rallies, demonstrations, dinners, long car trips to conferences, summer schools. If songs become part of our life, we will soon find we are making up songs ourselves, really good songs, and we will be in demand to make a unique contribution to struggles with our songs, as well as our politics.

MEDIA FORUMS

U Use of Television. We can gather people together to watch network scheduled broadcasts of importance to us--say a special on Zimbabwe, which we can discuss afterward. The above can be done over and over with new people if we invest in or rent video recording equipment. In addition, we need to have regular reviews of both good and bad programming in our press.

Radio. Same as above for TV.

Films, slides and videotapes. We have had small successful film and slide showings for groups who are contacts. We need to expand to films and videotapes of our own demonstrations, forums, educationals, activities, etc. Super 8 film kits are available fairly cheaply to ordinary families to record baby's first steps. Videotape is even cheaper and easier to operate in the long run. In addition, the tapes are ready immediately and can be reused, and in many towns video courses are available very cheaply ($20) from community colleges, cable TV stations, and even some high schools. Equipment can be rented, so there is no excuse for us not to move into the 20th century on this. Since a videotape can be shown on any television set, we can use this means of communicating to distant branches and contacts a real feel for what we are doing. (e.g., How much more effective to show a film of April 26th in Washington than just to tell about it with a few snapshots!)

Cassettes of talks can be used in media forums and can also be loaned to contacts who weren't around for the original talk. Cassettes can also be reviewed by the giver of the talk so he/she can learn how to give the best possible talk. Every talk worth giving at all should be taped.

WORKERS' POWER

The political level of Workers' Power has been the subject of debate in the IS for some time. The following instead will discuss how to make our politics more accessible to the readers of WP; that is, we know the message is nourishing, we want it also to be appetizing.

Put yourself in the place of workers who are seeing WP for the first time. Chances are, it is their first left paper, and they have only been exposed to bourgeois newspapers in the past. Chances are, also, that their consciousness is uneven with respect to class, race, sex, etc. How can WP attract them to our politics? If, as has been said, everything about human interaction is political, then every element of WP should have a conscious political purpose.

Some of the strengths of WP are that it is objective, it has good, reliable news coverage, lots of lively use of photographs, a clear, attractive layout, interesting features, good interview articles, and it does not go about praising the organization in the way most other left papers do.

How can it be improved? Mostly, Workers' Power relates to the intellect, not to the whole person. There are some common ways newspapers use to boost circulation that we could take advantage of.

First of all, WP needs more heart. We have in the past run excellent features such as "Why I joined," which were very popular. We have also run short interview articles with lots of people being interview on one topic. These give readers an idea of the diversity of our movement, and are relatively easy to do on a regular basis. We have several hundred "Why I joined" articles available for starters. Stories about workers and their families and how events and inflation affect them show our readers that we are not just a bunch of single people who have the time and energy to make revolution, but that we are real people who are making revolution because it's the only way for a decent life for those we love.

Workers' Power needs more humor. Anyone who has ever looked over their comrades' shoulders at doodles during meetings knows that we have a lot of people whose artistic talents are quite good enough for cartoons, if only we can get ourselves over the bourgeois bull that you have to be a pro in order to be able to draw. A good cartoon can get a complex idea across quickly and effectively, and it can be guaranteed to be read, while the article beside it may or may not be read. In addition, it takes no artistic ability

to put words onto balloons on photographs of our class enemies. Laughter is a most effective weapon, much underutilized in our press. Political jokes can be adapted from old standard jokes, if we can't come up with new ideas.

We need to have regular features that tie into other aspects of people's lives. If everyone who felt strongly about a TV show wrote just a short commentary on it, and one person took responsibility for it, we could have a regular TV feature, with previews as well as reviews.

Another regular feature that would be popular is a Dear-Abby-My-Foreman-is-Jacking-Me-Around type feature. Genuine serious help could come from the expertise of the organization. We should start with common problems of IS workers until the column triggers real questions. This column could probably best be written by someone who has been an effective steward.

We can revive the feature on upcoming IS events, both to boost attendance and to give a sense of the national organization. Also, coverage on recent events, especially with photos, has always been well-received.

Workers' Power could use a feature on workers' health. At least one person has already volunteered to do it.

Is it a fantasy to think we could have a regular cartoon in the paper? A racially integrated strip, drawn by one person, with ideas contributed by everyone, would do a lot for WP.

Workers' Power should run mini-series of 2 or 3 articles on one subject to sustain interest and boost circulation. Say, a series on occupational health and safety, a series on one particular family during the course of a strike, a comparison or working conditions in one industry in different parts of the country, etc.

Now, WP is an attractive paper, but designs that have grown out of our movement would certainly lend graphical and historical interest to our paper. We should use designs by William Morris, some of the graphics by Kathe Kollwitz, samples of posters and leaflets out of the past, such as May-June in France, Portugal, the CIO organizing drives.

Finally, of course, WP needs more input. Staff should call contacts, tape their comments, run them. When the person sees their words in print they will realize writing is just really talking. Comrades must write. Anyone who doesn't write forfeits his or her right to complain.

The paper needs to take risks and run controversial stuff. The paper doesn't have to take a position on these topics, but it can generate interest and discussion. Why is WP afraid to deal with the question of hookers on the streets of Detroit? This subject raises many issues of interest to us, including women's liberation, sexual relations and the class struggle, people's right to control their neighborhood, crime in the streets, etc. WP's moral censorship is quaint and antiquated, to say the least.

In short, Workers' Power has to appeal to ny facets of the personality of our membrs and contacts. A person has to know that by picking up WP he/she will be enlightened, informed, inspired and evern entertained a little, because socialists are above all human beings and the cohesion in our organization will be reflected in the cohesion of our press.

TIME

Time is involved in the <u>innovation-decision process</u> by which a person passes from first knowledge of an innovation through its adoption or rejection, the <u>innovativeness of the individual</u>, that is, the relative earliness-lateness with which an individual adopts an innovation when com-

pared with other members of his/her social system, and the innovation's rate of adoption in a social system, usually measured as the number of members of the system that adopt the innovation in a given time period.

There are five stages in the time span of an innovation-decision process:

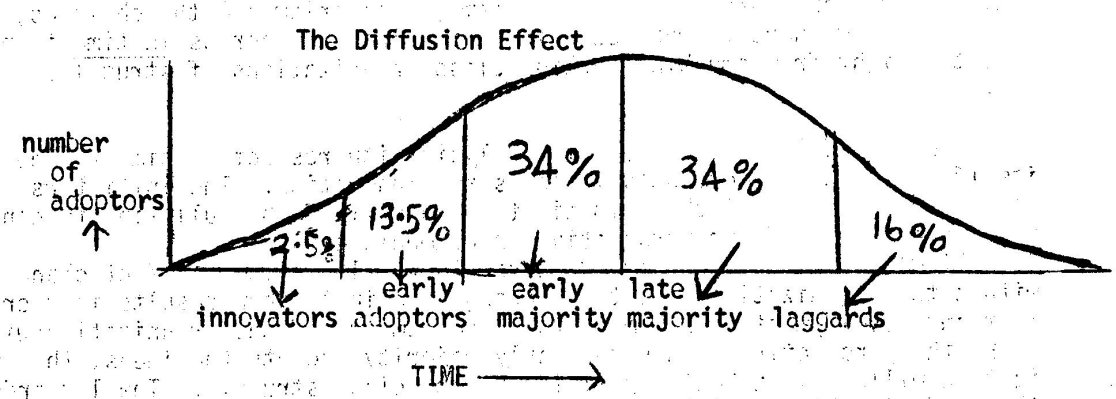
1) Knowledge. Time of the first awareness of a new idea's existence.
2) Interest. Gaining further knowledge about the innovation.
3) Persuasion. Gaining a favorable or unfavorable attitude.
4) Decision-activities. Such a small-scale trials, which lead to a decision to adopt or reject the innovation.
5) Confirmation-reinforcement. The person at this time makes a decision, but may still change his or her mind.

Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual is relatively early in adopting new ideas compared to other members of his/her social system. Five useful adoptor categories are:

1) Innovators
2) Early adoptors
3) Early majority
4) Late majority
5) Laggards

The rate of adoption for a whole system of people, such as a whole society, or say, a whole union, can be characterized. Systems with a more modern outlook will have a faster rate of adoption of any given innovation. (Say, industrial unions in general vs. craft unions in general.)

We can plot the number of adoptors vs. time for a typical innovation:



For a given innovation adoption process, people can be characterized as follows:

Innovators: Venturesome, cosmopolite(they get around).
Early adoptors: Respectable, opinion leaders, successful in the discreet use of new ideas.
Early majority: They deliberate, but adopt before the average member of the group. An important link in the system.
Late majority: Skeptical, pressured by their peers.
Laggards: Traditional, most localite (don't get around) base decisions on the basis of what has been done in previous generations. Frankly suspicious of innovations.

Based on 3000 studies, some general features of early adoptors have been found: They are no different from later adoptors in age. They read more,

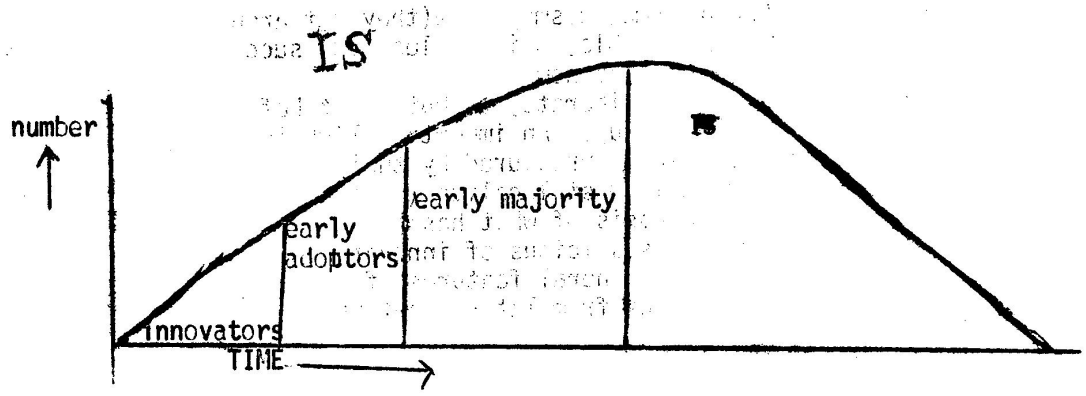
have greater empathy, are less dogmatic, have a greater ability to deal with abstractions, greater rationality, more favorable to change and education, less fatalistic, have higher levels of achievement and motivation, higher aspirations. More social behavior, travel more, have larger units of whatever their work organization is, more change agent contact, greater exposure to mass media communication channels, seek information about innovations more, have greater knowledge of innovations, more opinion leadership, interested in more modern systems, belong to well-integrated systems.

If you reread the above list with the vanguard of the working class in mind, you will see some features you recognize and others which can guide us in our work as revolutionary change agents. For example, it is important to use mass channels when we can--the very people we wish to reach use them.

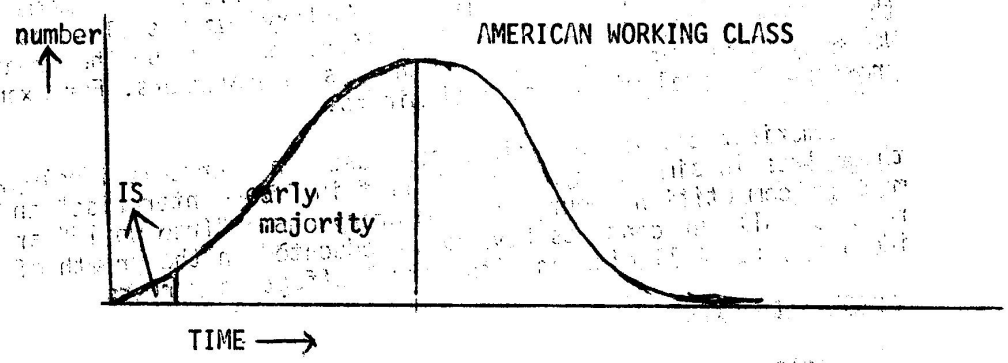
As can be seen from the graph, the more people who adopt, the more interpersonal contacts become a factor in persuading new people to adopt. So we are building for a "critical mass" effect within the working class for our ideas. At this time both in the US and abroad, fascist ideas are also trying for a critical mass effect. But fascist ideas aren't innovative, even though they may seem so to the desperate petty bougeois and racist elements. They are in fact very old, hoary, backward ideas such as racism, sanctity of the family, and so on. They appeal to the laggard group above, that group who looks to the past and is suspicious of innovations. The appeal of right wing ideas to the backward is precisely their familiar backward core dressed up in new rhetoric. If they are the only ideas around, they can pressure the least innovative portion of the working class (the laggards and late majority with respect to innovations) and we could find ourselves outmaneuvered and surrounded. Socialism or barbarism are the choic es, to be sure, and we have to make certain that point gets across <u>in time</u> to prevent the right from crushing working class organizations of <u>struggle</u>.

Now a person could apply this analysis with respect to time to the IS itself, using this document's ideas as the innovation. The initiators are trying by means of the communication channel of the bulletin, to convince the organization of our perspective on communication.

If we convince the early adoptors, they will begin to effect change within the organization. As those changes begin to show results in recruitment and development of new members, more members of the organization will adopt the perspective. When the early majority accepts the ideas, the organization will be in a better position in the class struggle. The laggards, the traditionalists, will say Lenin didn't say it, but when a majority has accepted it, the organization will move forward as a body, creating more innovations as it goes.



Then, under the leadership of the EC and CC, the IS will be consciously in the role of initiators within the working class as a whole, carrying its ideas forward in a spirit of creativity and enterprise to the most advanced sectors of the American working class, and we will find that as ideas reach more people through more channels, both media and interpersonal, the time needed to recruit each additional new member will be shortened, and the party-building process will be both accelerated and put on a firmer footing.



RECEIVERS (THE WORKING CLASS)

Presently our message is not directed at the whole American working class but to a subset of it, i.e., contacts and people in our periphery. This subset constitutes the receivers. Although all contacts are not the same and have different backgrounds, they all share certain attributes as receivers.

Social system

All our contacts are products of the American system with its values, beliefs and norms. American values held by our contacts form unconscious criteria on which their thinking is based. Those values we have to erase are: 1) Equality of opportunities. This myth which has been imbedded in every American postulates that this is the land of equal opportunities. It says that anyone with ability can make it here. That the inequality of conditions in fact reflect not inequality of opportunities but inequality of ability. This myth futher postulates that equality of conditions would lead to a lack of incentive and the destruction of "freedom and civilization." We must develop arguments to show that equality of opportunities do not exist and cannot exist under a capitalist system.

2) Individualism. The American frontier mentality which runs thrugh the vein of this society is the backbone of the myth of individualism. Tied in with the myth of freedom, the summit of which is individual freedom, individualism postulates that one has to make it on one's own. "Pull yourself up by the bootstraps" is the common saying. Any failure (lack of economic prosperity) is due to individual failure (lack of ability). We have to show by simple arguments that workers are deprived of boots, not to say anything about bootstraps. That workers cannot have freedom under a

capitalist system and freedom will come for workers only under workers' control.

3)Materialism. In the US, the supreme goal is to make a buck. One's social status (success) is measured by how much money one makes or has. The acquisition of property is an extension of this. To break this value, we have to show the pitfalls of the credit system which workers get caught in while acquiring property. Here we will meet with the question of "private property." We should be able to answer this by explaining the difference between ownership of the means of production and other property.

4) Mobility. Most people assume this is a mobile society. If your grandfather was a worker, then you will probably go to college and become a factory managaer. Your son will likely be a factory owner so along as you all have the abiltiy. Every generation is believed to move up the great social ladder. We should show that this is not the case for workers. For example, the grandsons of coal miner are coal miners.

Americanbeliefs and values are based on bourgeois ideology and exhibit themselves in simple ways. The belief in "free enterprise" and the "free market" competition, bourgeois democracy and a "free world" are deeply rooted. All our contacts have to be educated on the growth of bourgeois ideology, its fallacies and its actual effect on workers.

RACISM AND SEXISM

Racism and sexism constitute two of the major obstacles we have to overcome in our contacts. Although racism and sexism cannot be overcome in a day, we should make our contacts understand racism and sexism have no place in the IS. It is not enough to point out the way capitalists use racism and sexism to divide the working class and our position against it, we need to explain over and over agian the historic growth of racism and sexism. We must explain why this country was racist and sexist in the past and why under capitalist rule, it will remain so. Every member must know why this capitalist system has to be racist and sexist. The role that women and monorities play in this capitalist system has to be understood, in detail.

Racism and sexism, however, go beyond the rational mind. They permeate the unconscious and reveal themselves in unexpected ways. The only way we can make our contacts understand this is by example. This means as a revolutionary organization we have to deal with racism and sexism in all shapes and forms. As a multi-racial organization of both sexes, we cannot afford to allow any form of racism and sexism in our midst, for they constitute our Achille's tendon.

Presently for black and female members there exists a power vacuum. Little or no power is wielded by the black and women's commissions, which affect greatly their effectiveness. This is reflected in the size of their budgets. There is no black member in the EC and very few black and female members in the secondary leadership, yet black and female make up 10 per cent and 32 per cent respectively of the IS.

The excuse that there are no politically developed black and female members has been worn out from too much use. The way we are perceived by our contacts affects their decision to join us. Our support for female and black liberation and the absence of women and blacks in leadership roles in the IS puts us in a bad light. To remedy this there has to be an or-

ganized formal procedure of politically developing black and female members. Furthermore the leadership has to tell us exactly what constitutes a politically developed member, especially with respect to black and female members: what criteria are used in deciding when a black or female member becomes politically developed? Every member knows that all the members of the EC and CC do not have the same level of political development. We all know there must be a minimum level of political acumen necessary to be on the EC and CC. What exactly is this minimum? The time has come for the leadership to tell the black and female members the length and breadth of this wall of political development. This is necessary for our contacts not to perceive us as just another imitation of the existing bourgeois structure.

OPINION LEADERSHIP

Opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to informally influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behaviour in a desired way with relative frequency. To take advantage of this, we have to bring all our contacts together. Get our contacts to know each other. Over time, we can develop our most promising contacts into opinion leaders. Recruiting one makes recruiting other contacts easier. Also developing contacts among working class opinion leaders e.g stewards helps greatly in keeping the rank and file in our periphery.

INNOVATION_-DECISION PROCESS

The innovation-decision process is a critical process consisting of four stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision and comfirmation. Each of our contacts go through each of these stages. Members should be able to determine fairly accurately which stage a contact is going through. Failure to know this usually lead to losing the contact. A contact at the knowledge stage is difficult to persuade, one at the persuasion stage is difficult to get involved in IS activities. However these stages often overlap and the time spent on one or more stages by contacts is different. The different time is a result of antecedents. Antecedents are those variables present in the situation prior to the introduction of our politics to a contact. Antecedents consists of: 1) the individual's personality characteristics. 2) his/her social characteristics. 3) the strength of his/her perceived need for IS politics. We should be aware of antecedents and respond to the stage/stages our contacts are going through. This will facillitate the rate of our recruitment of contacts.

CONCLUSION

We feel the relative stagnation the IS has experienced in recent years reflects a need to analyze our most important function, that of the communication of revolutionary ideas. Most members feel a need for change, not necessarily in direction, certainly not in politics, but in approach. This document analyzes the situation, and proposes a methodology to deal with it. The complexity of the method cannot be helped, and we suggest that the complexity of Marxist method itself does not decrease its validity, but only corresponds to reality.

The section on communication channels has many specific suggestions because we believe the relative advantage of a systematic approach will be observed when these ideas are experimented with by comrades who seek to improve

our effectiveness in the working class.

We believe that taken as a whole and applied, the document will greatly help us in party building, which will advance the struggle.

A Year in the Shop

This past December the 44 employees of the M. warehouse had the harrowing experience of being expelled en masse by their Teamster local in the middle of contract negotiations. The company took advantage of this situation to fire 18 workers. Within four weeks the workers were able to get into another union, negotiate a substantial wage increase, and secure reinstatement of the 18 with full back pay, including retroactive Christmas hams. This article will analyze the conditions leading up to this unusual event and the lessons learned about shop floor organizing from the struggle.

In the Beginning

About a year ago L. and A. began to work at M. The situation then was one of low union consciousness. No one wore union buttons; few grievances were filed; there had not been any arbitrations in at least six years. The older militants were cynical because of previous sellouts by the union. One worker had been fired for attempting to bring in another IBT local.

There was high turnover (at one point almost half the workers had less than one year seniority) and low morale. Because there was no job bidding by seniority, favoritism was effectively used to divide the shop into shifting, feuding cliques and factions. The workers hated the company, each other, and themselves.

The source of these problems was the sweetheart contract between M. and the Teamsters. There is evidence that the company agreed to let the union come in if they let the company write the contract. In any event the steward, B.'s, completely legalistic approach combined with no backing from the B. A. meant zero representation. Wages were $4.75 per hour. The workers were well aware that other IBT warehouses in the area were making 5.50 to 8.00 per hour and that M.'s Chicago warehouse (UAW) made over 6.00.

On the positive side the workforce was young (mostly in their 20's) and had a large number of semi-radicalized Vietnam vets. The contract was up 12/9/77. It

was clear from the beginning that the low wages and lack of representation would be a good handle for organizing. Later on excessive mandatory overtime and safety hazards due to a major re-modeling of the warehouse played key roles.

What We Did

It was necesary to start small. Some of the things we did didn't even make sense. For example, one Friday the company asked us to bend the contract by allowing them to schedule voluntary overtime for Saturday. Even though we knew that they would force people to work that night if we refused, we voted no. We hurt ourselves, but the incident raised the temperature and people felt good that we had acted collectively to "preserve the contract." Lesson: Tactics are determined more by local history and psychology than by standard rules and techniques.

A group in the shop took advantage of the elections for negotiating committee in March to try to unseat the shop steward. The move was handled in a divisive manner and the shop steward was reelected. However, sensing initiative and organizational skill we decided to key on this group. As low seniority men it was important to develop a closse collaborator. One worker, J., who was elected to the negotiating committee, was shown TDU literature and responded enthusiastically. L. proposed that J. organize another campaign for shop steward with L. as assistant.

In the meantime we gegan filing grievances and encouraging others to do so. When the company forced overtime out of seniority order, eight people grieved it. At the hearingthe warehouse manager, T., who is an open racist, anti-semite, and admirer of Hitler, threatened L. with death, physical harm, and ostracism, in that orger. L. filed NLRB charges, which had a good effect on people. They were impressed that somebody knew how to do it, and it also prevented the company from carrying out its plan to fire L. If we had relied on the union to defend L. he would have been fired in short orger.

A meeting of 10 people was held right after the incident at which a perspective was laid out to use shop floor tactics to pressure the company and the union for a good contract. Contract T-shirts were designed and social activities, such

such as softball games, were planned to build up trust and solidarity. We also wrote up a petition recognizing J. as shop steward.

During the summer we had mixed success with this perspective. The petition got 80% signatures, but the Local refused to honor it. We proposed other ways of pressuring the Local, such as taking a delegation to the Hall or leafletting other shops, but nothing happened. The T-shirts were a big success. Amajority of the workers wore them and they instilled pride.

We tried to pressure the company and the union with grievances, but they just let the grievances pile up. We tried to get the negotiating committee to do contract research, but they were timid and apathetic. At one point frustration over mandatory overtime broke out in an overtime refusal (because J. had a softball game that night!). Fourteen people walked out. This was probably a mistake because it gave the company the legal right to fire whomever they wanted. We lucked out with 14 two-day suspencsions, which turned out to be four-day weekends. This caused resentment among the more conservative workers who had to work extra overtime to make up for our absence. The incident showed that we had a solid core of supporters, but were far from the 2/3 majority we needed to control contract negotiations in the IBT.

We were able to bring six people to the TDU convention in September where our T-shirts attracted a lot of attention. J. was interviewed in the New York Times. But our contacts came away feeling that TDU was for older, high - paid truck drivers, and what could it offer us? This probably reflected the voerall state of demoralization in the shop.

Things got worse. The company chipped away at the contract. They laid off peopel and forced the rest of us to work uvertime. Supervisors did our work. The union refused to come down. Our B. A. died. Several people were fired, although the union saved some of them. Everyone blamed everyone else for the situation. Even our closest supporters turned against us.

But one thing was working in our favor. The bosses are addicted to ex ploit-

ation. They can't resist turning the screw that one last time that forces the wo workers to stick together. This ultimately is why socialism is possible, and it also saved our asses.

The Crisis

Towards the end of November, as the contract drew near, two ideas we had been pushing began to take hold. One was the need for unity above and beyond personal differences. The other was the need to "be organized" independently of the union in the negotiatings,. The negotiating committee came to life and initiated discussions on contract demands and strike tactics. We planned to bring a large group to the next union meeting. When the gegotiations began meetings were held during break and lunch periods. People felt a need to be physically gathered and to talk things through.

Many of the tactics we had propagandized for unsuccessfully were effectively carried out: There was a slowdown; no one volunteered for overtime; every safety violation in the plant was written up; supervisors were harrassed and written up every time they performed union work; equipment broke down.

Strike graffitti covered the vulgarities on the bathroom walls and adorned helmets. We seemed to be approaching the 2/3 strike vote we needed.

Then the Local extended the contract from 12/9 to 12/14 without consulting us. For the overwhelming majority this was the final loss of faith in the union. People turned for guidance to the rank and file leadership on the committee, primarily J. supported by L., A., and otheres.

We voted to retain a lawyer to pin down our right to strike under the bylaws. We were afraid the Local would extend the contract again or break us by refusing strike sanction. Over 2/3 of the shop chipped in $5 apiece.

On 12/10 we received letters saying we were no longer represented by the Local because we had "expressed dissatisfaction" with the way they handled our affairs.

We were never able to determine the basis in law or the IBT constitution for this, but it was certainly a result of the independent organizing we did. We

weren't strong enough to bend them to our will, but they couldn't tame us either. In this stalemate they decided to walk away. They may have been afraid we would intervene in the upcoming local elections because we were planning to go to union meetings, which is unheard of in the local. They were also apparantlyvery irritated at the fact that L. had gone to the Labor Board and that we had hired an outside lawyer. We didn't pursue the matter because the key question was whether we were free to get another union.

At first the workers paniced. They were afraid of firings, wage cuts, and loss of insurance benefits. We werw able to cool people out because we had a clear plan of action: Stay calm, present a united face to the company, consult a lawyer, and get another union as fast as possible. Everyone pulled together and cooperated.

On the next work day, 12/13, we presented a leaflet to the company stating that we were in the process of choosing a union, that we expected the tarms of the old contract to be extended in the meantime, and that we would not engage in any work actions if they complied. It was signed by 42 of the 44 workers. We were prepared to strike if they fired anyone. The company said they would go along, but at the end of the day they laid off 29 workers, in seniority order. Cops and supervisors armed with clubs guarded the plant manager as he announced the layoffs.

We were too stunned to react. The next day, 12/14, 18 termination letters were sent out. The company thought they were rid of the troublemakers for good. They said privately that we were dope addicts and pushers and that they would never take us back.

However, by that night we had selected a new union, District 65 (An independent, general workers union run by ex-CPers based in the N. Y.-N. J. area) and had signed up a majority of the 15 still working. It was the company's turn to be stunned.

Within a week 43 of 44 workers had signed union authorization cards. The company recognized District 65 by a card count, but still refused to hire back

the 18. A contract was negotiated and ratified on 1/6/78.

Victory

We won the following:

* Reinstatement of the 18 with back pay
* $1.54 in money over 3 years, plus 65's hefty cradle to grave benefit plan, retroactive to 12/9/77.
*Job bidding by seniority
*Martin J Luther King's birthday

How were we able to turn around the situation so fast? Basically it was the high degree of self-organization, resilience, and unity we w showed.

The basis of the company's intransigence was their belief that the fired workers were committed to wrecking the company. The key to to our negotiating strategy was to convince the negotiators from Chicago that their labor troubles were due to the bull-headedness and incompetence of the local supervision. They were actually emotionally moved by the sincerity,articulateness,and determination of the committee members. It helped to have a big committee -- the 13 union representatives virtually surrounded their three. Of course, this only worked because the company knew we had the ability to organize slowdowns and overtime refusals and generally to cripple their operation. We offered them a peaceful warehouse -- if they would come across.

On 1/9/78 everyone returned to work. The supervisors were told by their higher-ups that they had to respect the workers, or they would be fired. As the Chinese say, Evertone can change but some people die first. Well, they're really trying. We have been showered with gifts - Christmas hams for the fired workers, company jackets, new lockers and toilets, a microwave oven for the lunch room. More importantly, the company speedily implemented a job - bidding system that will help heal the cliquism that has plagued the shop.

This era of good feelings won't last forever, but it gives us time to establish a permanent shop committee, and work out new norms of labor relations. Instead of one fink steward we will have two stewards, two alternates, a medical benefits rep and a credit union rep. We are also setting up a committee to organize other unorganized shops in the area. There will be many problems and battles

in the future, but one thing is clear -- life at M. will never be the same.

Summary

It was necessary to build a core of activists wihh a concious long-range outlook, even at the cost of polarizing the shop and alienating more conservative workers. This core ranged from one-fourth to one-third of the plant, and was primarily younger men. Certain individuals had to be groomed for leadership and intensively trained.

The key role of TDU and Convoy was in educating this core. It provided a strategy for change which we argued against other "strategies," such as decertification or cutting your own deal with the company. It provided a continuous thread through the ups and downs, although the thread got pretty thin at times.

Key ideas, like "We are the union," had to be repeated over and over again in different forms. As people gained collective experiences they were able to attach them to the ideas and understand what was happening.

Given the history of cliques in the shop it was inevitable that some people would feel excluded by any attempt to organize. We were called many names, J.'s commandess the dopers, the communists, the yellowshirts, TDU. Mistakes we made probably contributed to this, bout on the whole we projected ourselves as the people who were for action and unity.

At the same time as we built a core, we had to appeal to and eventually win over the majority. At different times and on different issues we had it, but it wasn't solidified until the crisis came down. The unanimity of the shop on key issues such as union recognition and willingness to strike to rehire the 18 , was critical in defeating the company.

Besides pushing unity in the abstract we did certain things to build it. We had a weak timid committee of five people with only one solid -- J. Instead of going around it we pumped it up and later added peopel who demonstrated leadership in the crunch. By the time negotiations started we had nine committeemen representing every tendency in the shop from the winos to the reds.

Unfortunately, we will never know what would have happened if the local hadn't expelled us. We don't know how much collusion there was between the company and the local in the expulsion, although we know the shop steward spent hours in the boss' office telling them who to fire. They may have laid off most of the shop on the day before the contract anyway, and we may or may not have been able to deal with it.

We were never able to find an adequate handle to pressure the Local. We weren't even very successful in getting them to come down. We piled on grievances, we walked out, organized round-robin phone calls to the union office, and yet only saw our B. A. about three times during the year. When he came he would settle the grievances and slip out the back. We had some successes but they were small enough that the cynics could discount them. Without clear victories the movement floundered.

Campaining to build a core and campaigning to win over the majority, and javing a sense of timing about what to do when were the foundations of our work. We made lots of mistakes -- we pushed at the wrong times, made utopian suggestions, alienated people unnecessarily, got hung up in dealing with influential and but irrational personalities, handled red-baiting awkwardly, mis-estimated the mood of the workers, mis-estimated the strength of the company, etc. But we did enogh things right to come out on top.

Submitted by A. S. for the N.J. IBT fraction

LETTER TO W.P. ABOUT NAZI COVERAGE

THE FOLLOWING ARTICAL WAS WRITTEN FOR W.P. I OFFERED TO HAVE IT PRINTED IN THE INTERNAL BULLETIN INSTEAD, BECAUSE THEIR IS SOME QUESTION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT IT MIGHT CAUSE HARM TO OUR WORK IN THE "BOAT" "LABOR-COMMUNITY-INTERFAITH COUNCIL AGAINST THE NAZI BECAUSE OF MY ROLE AS A PUBLIC RT/IS. ACTIVIST IN THE GROUP.

IT IS NOT HOWEVER AN AGGREMENT THAT COMRAD SHOULD NOT BE ABLE TO HAVE LETTERS CRITICAL OF CERTAIN W.P. ARTICALS OR COVERAGE PRINTED IN OUR PAPER.

F.R. March 15, 1978

Dear Workers' Power,

The article "Detroit Labor Coalition Demands: Nazis Out" (Workers' Power, February 13) needs to be corrected on certain factual points.

I and many other Red Tiders were at the "Labor Coalition" meeting. There is no doubt that the group was overall a positive thing that all activists and militants should be involved in.

But it is also the responsibility of the socialist press to tell the truth at all times, even when doing so might not be glamorous or endear us to some.

A very militant statement is carried in the article which is unfortunately not true: "Those present vowed that not only will they continue walking their own streets, but they will ensure that the Nazis do not."

This statement implies that a position was taken to physically drive the nazis off the streets. Unfortunately this is not so, even though some of us want to do so.

The consciousness of the meeting was uneven on this question. This was exemplified by what happened when some Nazis were discovered spying on the meeting. On Red Tiders' initiative, a large section of the meeting was ready to give these Nazis a taste of their own medicine.

Two things prevented us from doing so. One was the quickly established 20-man police cordon, the other were a number of "labor" bigshots from the Coalition who ordered us not to make a scene, and held back the anti-Nazi militancy about to erupt.

Our failure to act decisively apparently emboldened the Nazis, who came back to the next meeting of the group on February 20 and stabbed a young white woman member, before escaping back to their own headquarters.

UAW Local President Rinaldi gave a five-minute speech in which he said the "Black Power movement was all wrong." He also praised and gave thanks to the police for their role in the anti-Nazi campaign—the same police who protect the Nazi scum and have arrested and brutalized anti-Nazi militants including myself.

He went on to preach pacifism as a strategy to fight fascism and urged the ocmmunity to be non-violent and ignore Nazi propaganda and provocation.

He got very little applause.

The article made the mistake of portraying Rinaldi as a militant anti-Nazi leader by its unbalanced quoting of his speech instead of the foot-dragging bureaucrat that he really is.

Workers' Power must tell the truth to the working people, not just tell us stories to make us feel good.

Yours in struggle,
Frank Runninghorse
Detroit Red Tide

BAY AREA BRANCH REPORT

In November we worked out a branch perspective which said our fractions were basically healthy and functioning, but that we badly needed to build up a branch life which could provide both solidarity and political discussion and training. We said we would concentrate on having consistent branch meetings, educationals and social events. We also elected a new exec, which could become a functioning branch leadership.

There have been some changes in the situation of the branch. Our industrial fractions have become haalthier, and also busier. Our full-time organizer has resigned, and we are still working out a new system of branch administration, with an exec convenor, and more administrative jobs, responsibility for events, etc. assigned out. Our branch perspective, however, is still along the same lines. None of our fractions has the numbers or political experience to take on a life of its own. We still need a steady branch life to bring contacts to, and to train our members.

The postal fraction is up to its ears, working on a national contract coalition (expires in July) and a local campaign. We now hve three working members, three other members and one non-member in the fraction. In spite of the ½ace of external work, the fraction has mamaged to continue regular fraction meetings with discussion about the campaign.

The IBT fraction's main project is preparing for a June strike in grocery. We are involved in defense cases of grocery workers who have been fired, and in making other contacts in the industry, building a grocery committee in the rank and file group, etc. The last fraction educational on union elections, and a recent informal social event have brought aroung several important new contacts. The fraction is trying to regularize its meetings because of problems caused by the informal set-up that has existed.

Our community fraction has been hurt by the loss of several members and friends, and has not met recently. We are involved in a coalition against the Bakke decision, and one member is involved in a state-wide student coalition focusing on investments in South Africa. In the Bakke work, we recently helped make a fight on the importance of the Bakke case to women, and of the importance of women to the Bakke coalition.

Recent branch events have included an International women's Day party and film showing, and an educational on China. Before that we discussed the group's labor perspectives. Our next meeting will be focused on South Africa.

Participation in meetins, both in giving reports and discussion, has improved. There are continuing problems getting the people who work with us most closely to branch events. We are pitching out meetings at specific groups of contacts. By having consistent, well-prepared meetings and events, we hope that branch members confidence about getting people to come will improve.

David for the branch.