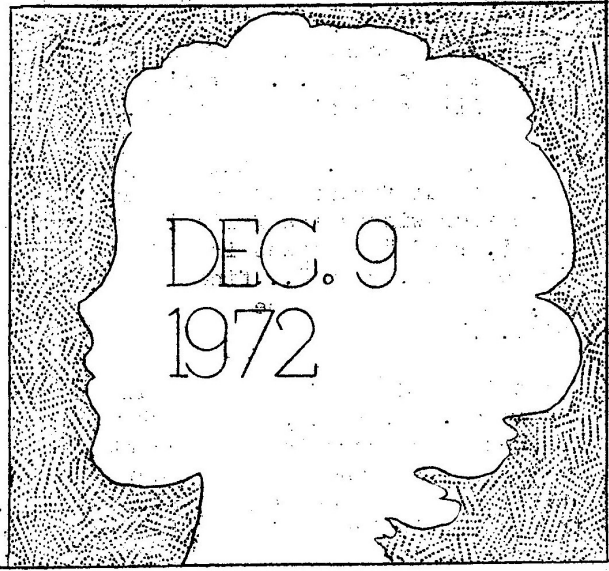
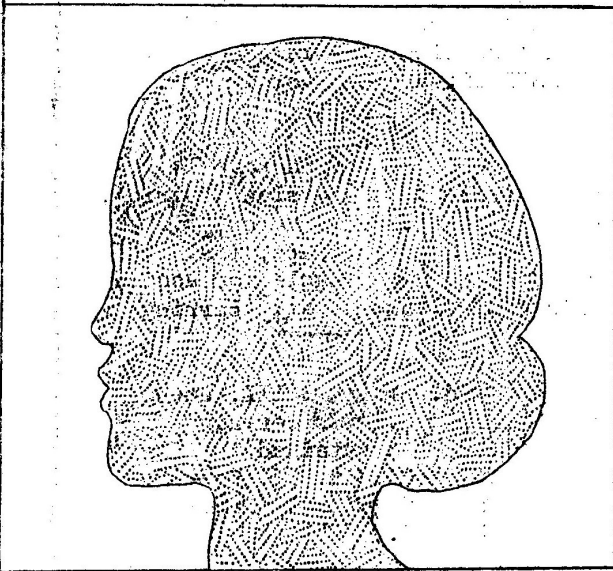
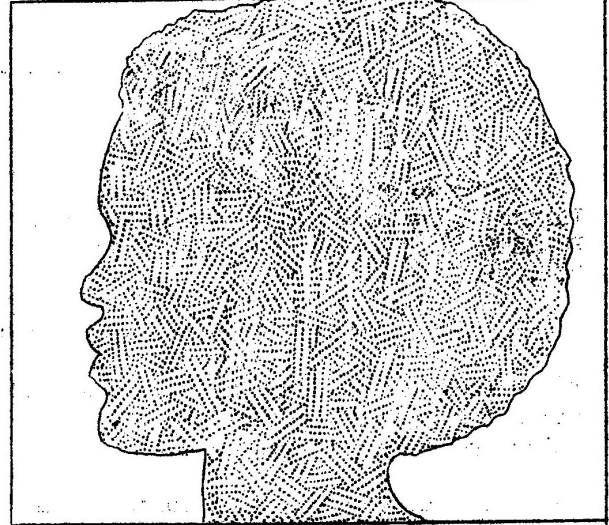
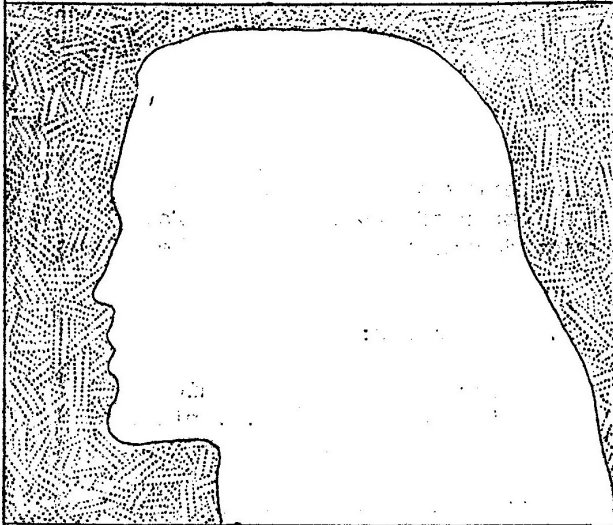
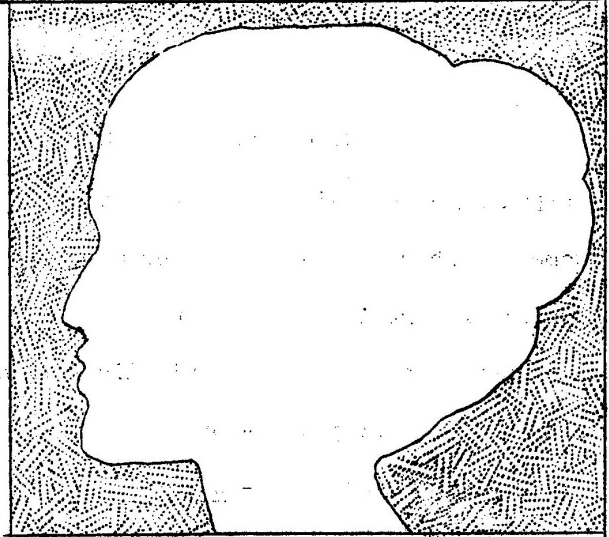


BULLETIN: 34



DEC. 9  
1972

## DOCUMENTS OF THE THANKSGIVING N.C. MEETING

National Secretary's Report - Sy Landy

Women's Liberation - Celia Emerson

Women's Liberation - Lynn Jones

Amendments to Ilene W. Women's Liberation Perspectives Document - Margaret B.

International Proposal - Sy Landy

Press and Publications - Workers' Power - Dave F.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

The enormous output of documents for the N.C. meeting held in Detroit on Thanksgiving weekend forces postponement of a number of items received for BULLETIN publication, including some discussion documents relating to the N.C.

Readers should note the following about the N.C. documents:

The National Secretary's Report was passed, with certain amendments which did not alter its overall thrust. These will be included in the N.C. minutes which are now being prepared.

The Celia Emerson and Lynn Jones documents are offered by their authors as a single document. The Lynn Jones document FAILED; the Celia Emerson document was TABLED by the N.C. pending preparation of a more complete draft and possible counterdocuments; however the final section of this document, a proposal for an I.S. Women's Commission, PASSED with certain amendments which will be detailed in the N.C. minutes.

Of the Margaret B. amendments, parts I, II, and V (pages 1-8 and page 14) were not put forward at the NC and should be regarded as discussion material; the author wishes the following corrections made: on p. 4, paragraph 3, line 5, read "collapses into fascism"; in the following paragraph, last line on page, read "...finds its fullest fruition in the struggle for socialism, thus ceasing to be a struggle for women's liberation per se. Barring this,..."

Parts III and IV of these amendments were put forward. In part III, amendments nos. 14, 16-18, 21 and 22 were accepted by Ilene W. with certain changes which were in turn accepted by Margaret B.; to be detailed in minutes. Nos. 12 and 19 were treated as consistent with nos. 13, 15, and 20, which were voted on and FAILED. (See pp. 8-9.) Part IV, with a change by the author indicated in minutes, was voted on and FAILED.

International Proposal was PASSED; Press and Publications PASSED as Interim Perspective (see introduction to document).

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT - Sy. Landy<sup>1</sup>

This report and the proposed agenda for the NC represent an attempt at changing the role of the NC. It is the expressed intent of the NAC leadership to organize NC meetings in such a way as to create a live, organic, controlling leadership body out of the National Committee. We view the NAC as having all the powers of the NC between its meetings as constitutionally specified. This can only be democratic if the NC is transformed from an intermittent discussion collection, as in the past, into a body reviewing, at the least, the political highlights and directions of its subcommittee, the NAC.

The NAC in its various decisions has therefore attempted to justify its major actions by sharp political statements (1) so that they may be carried out (in action) and a clear test of its line be made, (2) so that the membership in carrying out the position is informed as to what and why it is doing something so that the actions are real and not just form, and (3) so that the NC, Convention and membership can exercise control over the general politics of the organization.

It is our opinion that we have been modestly successful in this attempt and that the actions of the NAC and this NC agenda represent a step forward. We do not assert that the change is yet qualitative and attribute that to the following reasons:

(1) Effectively we have functioned as a NAC and reasonably full NO staff for too short a time for an adequate test--since September. Frequently we have been understaffed as compared to the past; recently the addition of two comrades to office and paper has helped. Further our attempts to professionalize our work, add new equipment, and move to a more efficient office have been bogged down due to circumstances beyond our control. The still existing inefficiency of work severely cuts into time devoted to political discussion, documents, political interventions, etc.

(2) The Convention did not clearly resolve the fundamental questions before the organization. The absence of a commonly agreed upon basic program and methodology creates a tendency for discussions on immediate questions to constantly revert to fundamental questions because the differences are not on the tactical level alone. Additionally, the differences were not only left unresolved by the Convention but sufficiently unclear and imprecise as to cloud serious discussion and work.

(3) The majority itself did not constitute a caucus at the Convention and did not attempt to set up one afterward. Since there are open and acknowledged disagreements in the majority the political direction of the leadership has been far from homogeneous. Given the formal organization of the minority, the tendency in recent days has been for a more unified approach by the majority.

(4) The external situation (dealt with later) has been slow and therefore political conceptions are slow to demonstrate their effect and slow to be

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1. Report PASSED with amendments; see minutes.

enriched by real experiences. So too, the number of internal branch frictions went up (although most have receded at this writing) partially as a result of the character of external work and partially as a result of the lack of political integration of the I.S. This too tended to cut down the net political impact of our stewardship.

Nevertheless, while we take responsibility for the above qualifications, we also take responsibility for a reasonable advance in the political level of our IS work in so far as it is affected by the national center. We believe that the membership is more aware of the political outlook of its leadership and the line of the IS than in the past: in short, which way we are steering. The majority feels that despite its disagreement, it has a strategy embodied in its convention documents and its elaborative work since. We intend to accelerate understanding of this strategy in the organization through motions, documents, and actions. There are no hazy roads to socialism.

## II

The immediate situation we are functioning in is slow-moving. Our remarks on this subject are just intended to be 1) shorthand, 2) within the context of the nature of the whole period as described in the convention resolution, 3) meant to cover that which most immediately pertains to our time in leadership and roughly until the next NC.

The social movements of recent years, under middle class and/or petty bourgeois leadership have tended to recede as movements and a sizeable portion of their leadership elements have entered the Democratic Party where the issues raised in the past have been narrowed and translated into "interest group" politicking.

The working class is generally "conservative." However this "conservatism" is a far cry from the conservatism of the cold war prosperity of the past. Underneath it is growing anxiety, insecurity and enormous frustration not yet at the boiling point. The days of relative prosperity, relatively plentiful jobs, relative freedom from lay-offs are gone. Recognition has set in that times have changed and that any really big gains are ruled out for now. Employed workers are frightened to lose what they have, the unemployed do not see a way to gain employment except through individual luck. Naturally this picture is over general; the working class is not homogeneous and there is a layer of militant workers engaged in combat with the forces that oppress them, but not yet on an independent political level.

For some time now--including the interval we are discussing--the working class has been on the defensive. Even in Europe where the level of struggle has been much more advanced, the conflict is generally defensive. As Capitalism weakens and is subject internationally to more repeated crisis it strengthens its attack on the working class.

In the United States capitalism has been temporarily successful in shifting some of its inflation burden on to Europe and elsewhere. It has secured a higher productivity through speedup etc, restrained wages, passed additional portions of the inflation on to the working class. In short, there-

has been a shallow recovery but no solution to the chronic problems highlighted on the surface by the continued monetary crisis and the heightened competition for world trade. The ending or potential ending of the Vietnam War will alter the situation, economically, to only a small degree.

In addition to the above stated losses by the working class we must note yet others - the isolation and defeat of several important strikes, the development of a large reserve army of unemployed.

In short, capitalism has gained temporary victories in its struggle to maximize the mass and rate of profit at the expense of the working class. The workers have suffered serious defeats but have not launched a massive struggle and have not been centrally and massively defeated. The explosion is yet to come. The workers are angry, frustrated, insecure and they do not realize the tremendous power they have--in concentration, in strategic position, in numbers. They do not even recognize for the most part the tremendous potential for struggle that exists even in their bureaucratized, calcified union movement.

The cutting edge of the attack by the bourgeois state has been the so-called New Economic Policy, Phase II, etc. and in particular the drives toward productivity and speedup--and the pay restraints. Even with part of labor off the pay board the union bureaucracies have been in effective collaboration with the state's attack on workers.

The bourgeoisie has other forms of attack at its disposal which it uses to restrain, defeat, contain and divide the working class...less conscious devices but very effective ones. The world in the last period was marked by struggles of various particular groups seeking democratic rights, independence, economic gain, etc. This took the form of anti-racist struggles, national liberation movements, anti-sexist fights, peasant guerrilla struggles, regionalist movement, et al. The working class did not occupy center stage in these struggles. But the oppression and divisions caused by capitalism remain and affect the working class even more profoundly than other social layers.

Capitalism uses racism to smash blacks and also to exacerbate the divisions in the working class. So too it uses sexism, skilled vs unskilled, employed vs unemployed, low paid vs high paid, workers from one region against another, workers from one nation against those in another.

Additionally capitalism has at its disposal the services of the labor bureaucracy which constitutes a two sided phenomenon in society. It defends the immediate interests of the workers but poorly and also serves as an instrument for disciplining and weakening their struggle. The bureaucracy has not only not led any real struggle against the capitalists or their state-directed attack but has notably collaborated in the attrition of work conditions, in the productivity drives and in the effective isolation of local strikes, both by weak and relatively strong locals thereby insuring division and victory for the capitalists.

The task of revolutionaries is to be the advanced guard of class consciousness--the recognition of the need for socialism through a working class led revolution on an international basis. This involves the recognition that the fundamental interests of the international working class are one and solidarity

is the goal. We seek the unity of the class not on the terms of the labor aristocracy but on the needs and aspirations of the most oppressed workers. Socialists are therefore the best and most consistent fighters for the special and democratic demands of the oppressed. We point out that their aspirations cannot be gained inside the limits of capitalism but that their demands must be wedded to demands for the entire class benefit--and this for their own self interest.

We point out to black workers for example that in the current situation their position is being weakened. The proportion of black unemployed is huge, the percentage of black new hires is receding. In spite of the massive struggles of blacks for equality, more jobs and so forth--so long as there is not full employment, blacks over any extent of time will receive the wrong end of the stick in racist capitalist society. Even the pseudo-promises of the Philadelphia type plans turn out to be ashes. Only through a massive struggle for jobs for blacks wedded to a program of jobs for all can blacks ensure employment. And we socialists fighting along with other workers for these programs point out that they can only be secured and realized through revolution.

### III

Following from this outline, we will indicate the central thrust of our work in the immediate situation. We expect the immediate situation to remain "slow." Underneath the present surface "conservatism" of the workers in general lies tremendous pent up frustrations. American workers in general, when they do move, do so explosively. We cannot predict when this explosive outburst will come, its dimensions, tempo or depth. The upsurge must tend, sooner or later, in the direction of politics since the state power is the motor of the productivity drive, the maximization of profit, the wage level, etc. No serious strike of proportions can be waged without government intervention. Governmental entanglement becomes apparent in every struggle for union democracy.

A central demand for us is the labor party to be based on the rank and file and formed by a convention of labor and oppressed groups. We call for a labor party based upon our full IS program as elaborated in our resolutions. We do not call for a reformist labor party but one with our revolutionary program. This of course does not mean that each time we bring the labor party slogan up we associate it with our entire program--we may frequently push it in relation to a single transitional demand, a cluster of such demands, a cluster of transitional, democratic, and immediate demands. But we try to make the advanced workers aware of our total program advanced against the state and associated with the labor party demand. The centrality of the labor party demand of course does not mean bringing it up mechanically in every situation. We must raise this demand in as concrete a manner as possible seeking to utilize developments in the specific local situation, the labor movement, and in the political arena that can make the conception as accessible and understandable as possible.

1) We do not claim the mass of workers favor such a party now. We do claim such a party is necessary now.

2) We claim that such a party can only be won through the struggle of

workers against the labor bureaucracy and not with it or through it. This holds true even if individuals or slivers of the bureaucracy are pressured to agree to such a party.

3) We demand such a party fight for the rights of the whole class and the oppressed hence we frequently call for its formation by a convention of labor and the oppressed.

4) We call for a "labor" party because we believe the unions in the heavy industries to be the central organized instrument of the class. Calling for individual workers to form a party without pointing to a powerful institutional base--if conquered by the ranks--is frequently pointing to workers' sense of powerlessness. The labor bureaucracy is powerful and cannot be sidestepped; it must be fought.

5) The election period was of course a good time to sharply pose the demand. Nevertheless, without the same constant intensity the demand can be forwarded in our press and work. It can and should be pivoted against the state which will continue to intervene strongly. This political demand should be pushed not only in our general propaganda and work but as fast as the situation permits, in every rank and file caucus we are involved in.

6) Of course there may arise massive strikes which by their nature pose political questions sharply. Under these circumstances we may place the labor party demand far into the background. Our intent is to pose our alternative and our political program; we do not counter mass struggles with an electoral proposal. Even our normal use of the demand should frequently emphasize the non-electoral facets of the attack on the state through the struggle for a labor party.

The themes of our work and demands continue as they are elaborated in our Convention etc. documents. In the factories and unions we press for rank and file caucuses. We press the struggles on shop floor issues and for union democracy under rank and file control. We point out that strong local organization is necessary but not enough; strong national union organization is necessary but not enough. The productivity drive and the union bureaucratization are pushed, intermixed with and defended by the state. The particular demands for industry and union will vary from situation to situation and level to level--our general thrust is common.

In our immediate situation the most likely point for a working class upsurge will be next year when important union contracts come up for renewal. We will develop individual positions on these contracts and in some cases have already begun to do so. At this point we wish to begin our focus in that direction. Although much of our local work will continue to be around issues of working conditions, we wish to highlight one issue because of its particular nature and wish to make it one of our central thrusts: we must push high wage demands.

This takes a central position in our efforts for several reasons:

1) The necessity in the interests of the working class to smash the Pay Board and its 5.5% "guidelines."

2) The bureaucracy is softpeddling wages to avoid the clash, accepting

maximization of profits as a valid goal.

3) The consciousness of many workers in affected industries is not high on this question because of general conditions cited above and the comparative leveling off of inflation at the moment. During the contract period, inflation will accelerate. It is our task to warn the working class and stress the danger as best we can.

A fight for substantial pay hikes beyond the 5.5% line and for escalator clauses, etc. is a necessity. Socialist groups who do not base their lines on objective necessity but on consciousness alone succeed only in tailing not leading.

Much of our efforts in the coming interval will be pointed to the coming contract periods. While we cite the possibility of working class explosion at that juncture we are frankly not sanguine at the moment about probabilities.

Our central thrusts must also be directed toward the questions of class solidarity in the interests of the class and the oppressed. This for reasons cited above. The black question is urgent here. In the immediate situation the attack accelerates on black people. The racism is fanned and stoked by the bourgeoisie, consciously and unconsciously. The frustrations against capitalism felt but not understood by white workers are increasingly being channelled against blacks, fanning the continuing racist attitudes into active hostility and a series of attacks. The state supported racism is real but still veiled; it is not yet pogromist. It wishes to restrain, constrain and drive back but does risk the double-edged sword of race war--just as it seeks to use and couple the unions for now, not smash them.

The liberal bourgeois answer is tokenism, bussing, pseudo-integration, promises of jobs they son't deliver on. They purvey to the black masses a vicarious identification with the few blacks "who have made it" and have the shadow of power. In the current situation this gives little to the needs of blacks and feeds into the initiative now held by the reactionaries. We support the democratic demands of blacks. We defend the blacks from racial attacks. We call for a resumption of the struggle for black equality, under the leadership of black workers, and we pose to black workers through our propaganda the necessity of fighting for real social gains--full employment, education, rebuilding the cities, etc--as counterposed to the false programs which the liberals focus on (and are not backing off from). Programmatically, we push full employment programs such as 30 for 40 now in a central fashion. We will stress the necessity for an alternative road for education. Real and serious education for all to be paid for by corporation taxes. The right of blacks to go to any school of their choice, etc. A quality education program is a necessity for blacks and whites and could appeal to the interests of both. To the extent that such an alternative doesn't exist in popular consciousness the situation is perilous. Our task is to fight for such an approach.

In the current situation we will move to the front the proposal that blacks take the class lead not only on these demands but on formation of a labor party and other questions. This position adopted by us will now be moved into sharp prominence in our press and work. The relative "calm" on the surface of the black communities should not fool anyone as to the potential. We make no predictions as to timing but predict that blacks will re-energize their push in a



vanguard manner under working class leadership. We look to blacks in heavy industrial production to provide a lead in the general factory and union struggles where they are strong and encourage through emphasizing demands such as 30-40 that they link with and help organize the unemployed.

The attack of the bourgeoisie by means of exacerbating divisions and thereby defeating the class must be answered by additional central programmatic demands and strategies. The central themes dealing with how to unify the class response in relation to racism, sexism, employed vs unemployed, regional imbalances, buy American protectionism, discrimination against Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and other Latinos will be dealt with in a document to be presented shortly to the NAC. Additionally, statements on the isolation of strikes, plant closures and declining industries will be offered. Central concentration will be on such demands (aside from those already mentioned above) as high federal minimum wage, equal work, equal pay for equal work, childcare, maternity leave, no layoffs, no forced overtime. Additionally, we will discuss variations on the theme of "spread the strike," no plant closures, organize the unorganized, international union cooperation and joint strike dates.

Naturally, within the more unified thrust we are attempting to distil, we support the particular democratic demands of the various oppressed groups. Independent organization of the oppressed will be interrelated as specified in our central documents.

Naturally the above "central thrust" demands do not mean we will not raise other demands in our programs. They merely are grouped here in order to establish a degree of centrality for our press and general work. In the past what we were pushing as central issues in our "domestic" policy seemed somewhat hazy and vague. This is a first attempt to give our efforts a little more coherence. Next, we must emphasize that it is intended to indicate a course only for the very immediate situation, to be reviewed by the next NC and is based upon this particular interval in the nature of the whole period described in our Tasks and Perspectives. Of course we will give central stress to the Vietnamese War, and our policy on imperialism, Stalinism, etc. We are also conscious of our particular duty in reference to support for Puerto Rican independence.

#### IV

The NAC has attempted to give political leadership in a number of areas. Some of the questions it has taken up that have elaborated political content are:

Passage of a document on SWP Recruitment.  To be separately handled on the NC. 7

Passage of a Women's Liberation Interim Perspective which lapses with the passage of a Perspectives document at this NC.

Interpreted the Convention decision to attach a portion of the Gay Liberation Document to the Labor Document in form not of physical attachment but through a cross reference statement.

Passage of a programmatic statement on the possible peace settlement in Vietnam.

Passage of a pamphlet by Celia Emerson on the theme of Revolutionary Feminism. [To be separately handled on the NC if a delegate desires to raise this.]

Passage of an advisory motion on perspective for the Master Freight Agreement-IBT.

Passage of a position on the Canarsie school question in particular and the race-school question, to a degree, in general.

Passage of an advisory position on an election in Bay Area telephone work.

Passage of an advisory position on the UNC sponsored court suit on retiree vote in the UAW.

V

In general the absence of general political arenas for the IS has tended to internalize the organization to a degree. Recruitment has been slow, very slightly upward. Austin-San Antonio has been formed as a branch. Cincinnati has enough members now for a branch; however some comrades may move. Ann Arbor will shortly be reconstituted as a branch with enough members. The Southern REgional Conference was small in attendance but intensive in political education and a Southern newsletter has been launched. The East Coast Rank & File Conference was a success and the number of blacks attending while not great was higher than ever before.

In general we expect the present "slow" situation to maintain itself well into next year--such predictions of course are risky.

Our primary point of concentration has been industrial. We are participating in quite a number of caucuses. While our work in the factories will be elaborated elsewhere in the NC, we note here that our attempts to secure perspectives from various comrades in various industries has met with some success, but after much pressure. Naturally we understand the load on these comrades but our task is to keep pressuring. Our intent is to systematically review not only the perspectives but the caucus work and particularly the publications. Given the situation we are going to have to review such materials as we have even without full perspectives.

The industrialization of comrades proceeds slowly. There has been no "second wave," only slow accretion. The industrial secretary has prodded and will continue to do so. Comrades have colonized to Chicago and industrialized there. The NAC will shortly establish another midwest city as a priority.

A number of branches on their own and/or through N.O. prodding have established Black and Brown work fractions. The national secretary now proposes a deliberate campaign of high organizational priority to recruit Black and Brown members. We have tried to secure a coordinator for such a national campaign and while unsuccessful at this point there is a possibility in the future. Even without this we will attempt such a push.

P.S. A pamphlet and industrial report are in your packets, separate from this report.

## WOMEN'S LIBERATION

By Celia Emerson

"It is quite true that there are no limits to masculine egotism in ordinary life. In order to change the conditions of life we must learn to see them through the eyes of women."

Trotsky, Problems of Life

The liberation of women is central to Marxism not just because women represent more than 50 percent of the human race, but also because the oppression of women is inextricably bound up with the oppression of the working class under capitalism. The liberation of women calls for a revolutionary transformation of all existing institutions as well as all social relationships. Without the emancipation of women, any working class transformation of society would only be partial and consequently would be distorted. The liberation of women, then, out of necessity calls for the liberation of men.

For the past forty years, Marxist theory has neglected feminism. This has been not only due to the collapse and defeat of the revolutionary feminist movement (of the 1910's and 1920's) but also to the smashing of the revolutionary working class movement in the 1930's. Today, therefore, revolutionary socialists face the task of integrating feminism and Marxism.

For a start, the approach of the IS to the woman question should be based upon the centrality of women's liberation to Marxist theory and not upon the fluctuations of the existent or non-existent women's movement. We must begin a serious evaluation of the causes for the special oppression of women which includes an analysis of such problems as the changing character of the family, women's position in industry, and the problems of women in this particular period.

### The Special Oppression of Women

The origins of the oppression of women are to be found in the first division of labor within the family. In the beginning, in the matriarchate, descent was reckoned in the female line, and motherhood and social equality prevailed. Property was communally owned and distributed; the labor of managing the communistic household was as much a public and socially necessary industry as the procuring of food. Everyone's labor was equally needed, respected and recompensed.

As wealth and exchange increased, money evolved and the first division of labor appeared. The first surplus, and therefore the first commodity, was

cattle, and men owned the herds. An inequality of ownership developed, and a new phenomenon, private property, emerged. "The domestic labor of the woman no longer counted beside the acquisition of the necessities of life by the men," said Engels in Origins of the Family. "The latter was everything, the former an unimportant extra."

The destruction of the primitive commune and matriarchal system was substituted by patriarchy, monogamy (to insure the proper inheritance of the private property), classes, slavery and the state. "The overthrow of the mother-right was the world historical defeat of the female sex," said Engels. "The man took command in the home also, the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude . . . this degraded position of women . . . has gradually been palliated and glossed over, and sometimes clothed in milder form, in no sense has it been abolished."

The history of women since that cataclysmic event has been one of slavery and serfdom, of double exploitation on the job, of oppression as the female sex, of prostitution, legal and otherwise. Because of biology, women are deemed inferior, and because of economics and tradition, they are excluded from participating in public, social production. Women are confined to private domestic labor, leading lives of personal service to isolated families.

At the same time, of course, women live in a class society. As pointed out:

"Although all women are oppressed within the home and subordinate to their husbands, the effect of exploitation on women in different classes is fundamentally different. Consequently the nature of the oppression they experience because of sex is also different. For the women of the ruling class, their oppression as women and the oppression from which they benefit are directly counterposed, and the latter is more dominant than the former . . . For working class women, the exploitation and oppression they experience in capitalist society are not counterposed but complement and reinforce each other. It is precisely their exploited class position which reinforces and protects the exploitative structure of capitalism and it is precisely their exploited class position which reinforces their oppression."

What Lenin called "an entire sex," regardless of class distinction and regardless of whether they are wage earners, is the victim of social prejudice. In both cases women can neither "drop out" nor escape. Female "inferiority" derives from the condition of the majority of women who are excluded from leading full productive lives:

"There is no woman regardless of her station, but in one way or another is a sufferer, a victim in modern society. While upon the woman of the working class the cross of capitalist society weighs heaviest in all ways, not one of her sisters in the upper ranks but bears some share of the burden, or to be plainer of the smudge -- and what is more to the point, they are aware of

if. Accordingly, the invocation of the "Rights of Woman" not only rouses the spirit of the heaviest sufferers under capitalist society, and thereby adds swing to the blows of the male militants in their efforts to overthrow the existing order, it also lames the adversary by raising sympathizers in his own camp and inciting sedition among his own retinue." (Daniel DeLeon's Introduction to August Bebel, Women Under Socialism)

### Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Ideologies

Because of their special oppression, women tend to develop a special consciousness of themselves as an oppressed sex. This consciousness changes with the nature of the class relations in any given time, such as changes in the family and changes in women's relationship to production. The changes brought about by the development of capitalism, especially the evolution of the nuclear family and the entrance of women into industry have conditioned women's consciousness. One historian, William O'Neill, described women's consciousness this way:

"Feminism is, then, best perhaps understood as one reaction to the great pressures that accompanied the emergence of the nuclear family. It was not a rebellion born of ancient slavery but part of a collective response to the sexual awareness deliberately inspired by Victorian society in an attempt to foster . . . an oppressive domesticity. The Victorians taught women to think of themselves as a special class. Having become conscious of their unique sexual identity, however -- a consciousness heightened by their experiences forced upon them by the cult of purity -- they could no longer accept uncritically those role definitions drawn up for them by the alien male." (Everyone Was Brave)

Our of feminist consciousness -- the consciousness of the special oppression that all women as a sex endure -- came the development of a feminist movement and with it various feminist ideologies which challenged ideologies of male supremacy.

In class societies, both rulers and ruled must have a fairly coherent world outlook to justify the existing class society, as well as trying to prove that the existing arrangement is the best possible. These emerge as a whole system of ideas which takes into account a good many facts, but shows the connection between those facts in a false light. That is why Marx when he uses the term ideology in this particular way, calls ideology false consciousness.

Within various movements, competing ideologies exist. Within the working class movement, for example, there are the competing ideologies of social-democracy, Stalinism, and liberalism. Within the feminist movement, there are competing ideologies of reformist as well as revolutionary feminism. (Celia Emerson pamphlet deals with this in greater detail.)

The point here is that because of the special oppressive role of women in the family and in the productive process, an independent consciousness of this special oppression develops.

#### The Independent Organization of Women

Historically, the development of women's self-consciousness has gone along with the development of women's organizations. Not all the women's organizations, of course, are feminist. Only those groups which wish to end the subordination of women in society can be called feminist.

The feminist organizations have, in the 19th and 20th centuries, generally played progressive roles. Not only was the struggle for women's rights progressive (as is the fight of any oppressed group for liberation), but it widened the horizons for greater struggle. Lenin, in A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism, described the process whereby the struggle for national self-determination is progressive. In one section he makes the analogy between the struggles for national self-determination and the struggles of women for legal rights, in this case divorce:

"The condition that makes it impossible for the oppressed classes to 'exercise' their democratic rights are not the exception under capitalism; they are typical of the system. In most cases, the right of divorce will remain unrealisable under capitalism for the oppressed sex is subjugated economically. No matter how much 'democracy' there is under capitalism the woman remains a 'domestic slave,' a slave locked up in the bedroom, nursery, and kitchen . . . only those who cannot think straight or have no knowledge of Marxism will conclude: So there is no point in having a republic, no point in freedom of divorce, no point in democracy, no point in self determination of nations! But Marxists know that democracy does not abolish class oppression. It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced, and that is what we need. The fuller the freedom of divorce, the clearer women will see that their source of 'domestic slavery' is capitalism, not lack of rights. The more democratic the system of government, the clearer will the workers see that the root evil is capitalism, not lack of rights."

The struggles of feminists have in fact improved women's status in society and won basic economic and political rights. Their self organization and activity have raised women's consciousness and galvanized other women into political motion. Finally, the activities of women fighting for emancipation led many to the struggle for socialism.

Marxists, of course, support and welcome the independent organization of women; just as socialists welcome the organization of all oppressed groups fighting to end their subordination. In the same way, socialists should not view the women's liberation movement as counterposed to the struggle for socialism, but rather as enriching and adding to the socialist movement. In fact, as has been stated many times, while women's liberation cannot be realized without socialism, the reverse is also true. The independent organization and activity

of women must begin and continue through the revolutionary period if women are to be emancipated.

The special oppression of women in society is reflected in the revolutionary organizations as well. Even after the Russian revolution Lenin had to admit that on the woman question, "Scratch the communist and a Philistine appears." In order to combat the sexual divisions that exist within Marxist organization, special commissions, committees, etc. had to be created. Almost all revolutionary organizations have had women's sections, committees, etc., to deal with the work on the woman question within the Party and in society at large.

### The Family Today

A perspective on women's liberation must begin with a serious examination of the family structure today and how it is affected by the present crisis in capitalism. The ruling class imposes a parasitical existence upon its wives, but wives of the working class are essential to the preservation of the capitalist system. The woman delivers and nurtures children, the future labor power of society. Her labor in the home helps reproduce the labor power of her husband. The wife assures his domestic needs in the cheapest possible manner.

The wife is also expected to discipline her family to the rhythms of capitalist society. She is to make sure her husband goes to work on time, works hard and doesn't cause trouble. Similarly, her role is also to demand that her children obey authority in school and elsewhere. It is not surprising that employers use housewives to curb the militancy of their husbands, and teachers to turn parent against child. All this makes the family a constant source of conservatism for the working class.

Therefore, the only way in which women can play a truly equal role in society will be through the destruction of the present family institution. Only then, can women, children and men be freed from the rigid sex and class roles imposed on them. However, housewives do not have any social power to effect change; their isolation in the home, removed from playing any productive part, tends to reinforce their conservatism. A crucial role that women workers must play in the destruction of capitalist forms of production must also be in transforming the nuclear family and all social relationships as well. That is also why the pre-condition for women's emancipation is in "the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished." (Engels, Origin of the Family)

The family as the basic institution of society is collapsing as a direct result of the crisis in capitalism. The institution of marriage, for example, is failing. Almost one out of every three marriages end in divorce; for blacks it is one out of two. In the industrial states like California the divorce rate is one out of every two.

The breakup of the family means an additional burden on women. In the major urban areas, one out of every eight households is headed by a woman.

This means greater poverty since women are denied access to better jobs, and do not receive adequate pay in the jobs they now hold. Many of the women suffer poverty from the welfare system. They cannot find jobs, or they cannot take jobs because there is not adequate child care.

The breakup of the nuclear family today is coinciding with the collapse of social services that had assumed some of the family functions, especially schools and recreation areas. Today people have nowhere to go for education or recreation. In desperation they turn to alcohol, drugs and crime.

The destruction of the nuclear family is not always progressive. Trotsky commented that "you cannot abolish the family, you have to replace it." The social chaos which emerges from the present collapse of the family can be used by the ruling class as a pretext for the further regimentation of the working class.

Today the ruling class is debating how best to discipline the future work force. The conservative wing, exemplified by Nixon, believes that the nuclear family is still the best way for the future working class to be disciplined and socialized. That is one of the reasons why he vetoed the child care bill.

On the other hand, liberal capitalists do not believe that the present family institution can best be used to discipline the work force. Especially in the textile plants in the South, "enlightened" employers provide child care in order to get cheap labor and high productivity. If the employers promise child care, it is easier to attract women workers who will work for less. Also in this way the woman becomes tied to the plant where she works, because child care, which she so desperately needs, is provided.

Others are impressed with the Japanese setup. There, in many instances men and women workers live in segregated barracks near their factories. The Japanese woman, due to economic and social pressures, marries late, then leaves work and has children.

Another aspect of the breakup of the family being discussed by the ruling class deals with Black people. Because of the legacy of the slave system, the Black family has been, for the most part, very different than the white. In particular, women have played a more dominant role in the family structure. This leads liberal sociologists, such as Daniel Moynihan, to argue that the matriarchy is the cause of Black poverty and oppression. This theory can be used mainly to attack the militancy of women.

The collapse of the family and the special problems that have arisen with the decay of capitalism has led women to take the initiative in forming various kinds of community organizations. Because of their traditions of independence in the family, Black women have played a leading role in their formation. In the major urban areas these community groups, welfare, tenants, or around issues such as the schools or around child care, these organizations have already been involved in militant struggles.

It is incumbent upon Marxists to take up the issues involved with the breakup of the family and the disintegration of the social services. First of



all we must begin to explain why it is the family is collapsing, why young people are so alienated from their parents, why so many marriages fail. More importantly, we must also provide a vision of the future -- socialism.

In the immediate future, it is unlikely that we can have much influence or impact on the unemployed, welfare, etc. groups. Nonetheless, this should not blind us to their ultimate importance. The movements of the oppressed, of the community groups, will become massive with an upsurge in the labor movement. This is what happened in the thirties, and this is what is happening in Britain right now. The actions of tenants, of community organizations, develop along with the class struggle as a whole.

### Women Workers

The question of a Marxist approach to women workers is central in our strategy for women's liberation. Women workers can be a key in the building of a future successful women's liberation movement.

In capitalist society, women's relationship to the means of production fluctuates. In the past women were used as part of the reserve army of labor; they were brought in to fill new jobs or replace men in times of war, only to be pushed out when the boys marched home or in times of recession. Today, however, it appears that women are no longer marginal to the work force; women are a permanent part of the labor force.

Thirty-eight percent of the work force is female; this represents almost 40 percent of the total female population. In contrast with the World War II and before period, women workers are older, married and have children. This, of course, suggests that women constitute a more stable part of the work force than ever before.

Women still remain on the lowest rung of the work force ladder. They earn roughly 60 percent of what men earn and are kept out of the higher paying and higher skilled jobs. The jobs women hold tend to be seen as extensions of women's work in the home -- secretaries, nurses, domestic workers, waitresses, teachers, etc.

The consciousness of women workers has changed tremendously in the past ten years. Part of the reason is due to the changes in the work force and the impact it has had on the family structure. The crisis in capitalism, and the general attack on the working class has added greater pressures on working women. Finally, the middle class women's liberation movement had an impact on working women. The ideas raised by feminists found receptive ears among women on the job. Today a common statement of working women goes, "I don't know about women's lib, but . . . I want equal pay" (or child care, or whatever).

The consciousness of women is reflected in recent actions taken against sex discrimination and has led to gains for women workers. Jobs hitherto closed to women (usually higher paying) have been forced open. Even though this represents just a fraction of the female labor force (and potential labor

force as well); it nonetheless represents a gain for women. Women have filed thousands of EEOC complaints, sued the government and industry for equal pay and job opportunities, sued the IRS for tax exemptions for child care, initiated suits against offensive advertising (The National Air Lines "Fly Me" ad for example). Whether it is expressed by wearing Levis to work, or organizing informal women's groups at work, working women are beginning to organize and act against their exploitation on the job.

The organization and struggles by working women against job exploitation and discrimination cannot only win gains for themselves, but can effect the consciousness of other sections of the working class. The Ford's sewing machine strike in London in 1969 is an excellent example of that process. There the women originally went out on strike for parity, but in time the struggle broadened to one of equal pay and the extension of protective laws to men (in this case night work). The struggles of these sewing machinists initiated the struggle for equal pay. (It also had the effect of spurring on the English women's liberation movement.) Today, a working women's group in Vancouver, B.C. is leading a struggle to unionize clerical workers.

This is not meant to be a discussion of women in industry. Nevertheless, it is important to stress the necessity of women forming their own organizations of struggle at the workplace, and of women pushing for special demands such as equal pay and job opportunities, maternity leave, and child care. Unless women are so organized and have the will to fight for demands they will be ignored by both the bureaucracy and male workers.

It is at the workplace that women workers can call upon the labor movement to fight for the needs of unorganized and unemployed women, and take up the questions of women's role in the family.

#### The Women's Liberation Movement

The women's movement was reborn in the mid-sixties as a direct result of the changes taking place in capitalist society. Middle class women, trained and educated at the finest schools, were rebelling against their parasitical and non-productive lives. It was their inability to break the sexist barriers to the professions, their frustrations with their marriages and family situations that led them to form the first feminist organization in 30 years, NOW.

The "daughters" of these middle class women, who were attending these elite schools, began to realize that they too were being educated only for a life of alienation like their mothers. Many participated in the civil rights, student and anti-war movements. Their experiences with male chauvinism with those "liberation" movements, led them directly to feminism. These were the women who formed the thousands of women's liberation organizations in the late sixties.

Since 1967, when the first women's groups were formed, great changes have taken place. Many of the ideas raised by the women's movement have been taken up by other women and the more "controversial" issues are being openly discussed in the bourgeois press. The women's movement has had its galvaniz-

ing effect on other oppressed peoples. In many ways, the rebirth of feminism led to the birth of the gay liberation movement.

The feminist movement in America also helped spark women's consciousness in other parts of the world. In many countries, especially in Western Europe, feminists have borrowed American tactics and approaches to the woman question.

Since 1970, the radical wing of the women's movement has rapidly declined. The reasons for its collapse are quite similar to the collapse of the "new left" -- isolation from the working class, lack of a coherent ideology and leadership, and of course, in the most recent period, the entrance of leading feminists into the Democratic Party.

The only women's organizations that continue to grow are the bourgeois feminist ones, especially NOW and the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC). Both call themselves the women's liberation movement; Gloria Steinem can start off her speeches by saying she is a revolutionary and get wild applause. While NOW and the NWPC are middle class feminist organizations catering mainly to the needs of middle class women, some working class and Black women are attracted to them because of the legal gains they have won for women.

The collapse of the radical wing of the women's movement has serious implications. Without the presence of a strong movement, many of the gains women have made can be taken away -- in the recent election the ERA was defeated in a number of states. While we were opposed to its passage, other opponents voted against it not because of protective laws, but because they had been warned of the evil effects of integrated toilets, co-ed wrestling, the draft and the legalization of homosexual marriages. In other states liberal abortion bills went down to defeat. In Detroit, for example, the major group propagandizing for the abortion bill was ZPG. More abortion laws will come under attack in the 1974 elections. We can also expect a continued attack on the working class, which affects women hardest, and a greater attack on those on welfare.

The NOW and the NWPC will continue their strategy of trying to elect more women into political offices. This year NOW is focusing on sexist media and children's books as well. The other feminist groups that do exist are either into health or other self-help collectives or out on farms. Very few women's organizations wish to take up the political struggle for women's liberation.

This does not mean that we cannot work on a united front (of sorts) basis with other feminist organizations in struggles concerning women's rights, such as abortion, extension of protective laws, child care, etc. Such struggles are important, not only for themselves, but also because they can advance women's position in society, and in the fight, women can be moved to fight for socialism.

We continue to give unconditional but not unceritcal support to the women's liberation movement. With out support, we do not ask women workers and the women's liberation movement to subordinate their struggles and demands to the more politically conservative sections of the working class.

However, it should be our perspective that the only way right now to rebuild a strong independent women's movement can only come through the organization of working women, first at the workplace and then linking their struggles with women in the community. The IS should see as its first priority working out perspectives for women's industrialization and a perspective for women's work in industry. Once we get roots in the working class, and are part of building and strengthening working women's organizations, only then will we be better equipped to build the women's movement on the outside.

#### Proposal for the IS Women's Commission

The collapse of the women's liberation movement, combined with the lack of a serious organization for women within the IS has led to a number of problems. First, women (and men) in the IS have not been able to keep informed of developments within the existing women's movement. Also, except on an individual or local basis, comrades have not been kept informed of activities amongst women workers. Confusion exists as to our present positions on such women's issues as the ERA, protective legislation, and so on.

The lack of a serious institution within the IS for women has contributed to the retreat of the IS on the woman question. No women serve on the NAC; only three women are on the NC as opposed to the six women of the previous NC. Workers' Power has had only one article on women's liberation since the convention. (There was a review of Mother Jones' autobiography, and a short piece dealing with national as well as sex chauvinism at the olympics.) There has been little theoretical discussion on the questions of Marxism and women's liberation.

It is not enough to say that women just have to try harder. What is needed is a strong organization within the IS that sees as its major task the development of women in the IS, the integration of women's liberation into Marxist politics, and the establishment of programs and perspectives for women in our industrial work. This cannot be done on an individual basis.

Because of our commitment to women's liberation, it is necessary to have a national Women's Commission of the IS to deal with the various aspects -- internally and externally -- of the woman question.

1. A three person Women's Commission should be set up at the Thanksgiving NC. If the NAC and NC find it impossible to set up the Commission at that NC, they are requested to do so as soon as possible, and to give a progress report to the following NC. This Women's Commission will be responsible to the NC, the NAC, and finally to the convention. It should be pointed out that the Women's Commission should not be seen as "women's work", meaning work less important to the IS than something else. Women's liberation is a primary political question. Therefore, the Women's Commission becomes one of the most important bodies of the IS.

In the beginning, the Women's Commission will consist of three persons, appointed by the NC with one member of the NAC serving on the Commission. (In the future as women serve on the NAC they could be on the Commission.)

This does not mean, however, that women on the NAC automatically are appointed to the Women's Commission.) Two other persons, preferably women, resident in Detroit will be on the Commission. At least two-thirds of the Commission should be women, given the position of women in society and the position of the IS on women.

2. Functions of the Women's Commission:

A. Industrial Work. This will consist of implementation and coordination of women's industrial work in accordance with decisions of the NC and NAC.

B. Black and Third World Women. A priority for the IS is the recruitment of Blacks and other Third World people; this, of course, includes women. In order to work out a serious perspective, we must begin to find out what is happening to Third World women both in industry and in the community, especially welfare and tenants organizations.

C. Coordinating information about the existing women's movement as well as developing perspectives and policies for it.

D. Theory and Education. Regardless of the organization's ability to establish a Women's Commission at the Thanksgiving NC, the NAC is instructed to hire immediately a full-time woman writer for Workers' Power. The hiring of such a writer is considered a top priority of the IS and will only be delayed if no personnel can be found. The woman staff writer and the Women's Commission will solicit articles and features for Workers' Power. There should be a column in Workers' Power dealing with women in capitalist society along with articles about women workers, the women's movement, Black and Third World women, struggles involving welfare and tenants movement, etc.

They will also solicit documents for the Bulletin on the woman question.

They will assign and solicit articles by women for the theoretical journal. This would mean articles on the woman question and on other topics as well. Women should not just write about women's liberation.

They will be in charge of pamphlets on women and the woman question. Top priority should be given to pamphlets on women workers, a basic introduction to women's liberation and finally one for Black and Third World women.

E. Development of Women Leaders in the IS. A great deal of this is covered in point "D". In order for women to develop theoretically, they must begin to write Workers' Power articles, documents, etc. The Women's Commission must also begin to develop women as speakers. One way is for the Commission to organize speaking tours for women in the IS.

3. Women's Caucuses on the Local Level. Each branch should have a local women's caucus. Its functions would be similar to that of the Women's Commission, but on a local level. The local caucuses would keep the Commission informed about industrial and other women's activities.

The caucus would also (a) combat instances of personal as well as institutional male chauvinism, (b) develop women on the local level (This could mean holding special classes such as public speaking classes, encouraging women to chair meetings and discussions, give presentations and public speeches, etc.), (c) instill a women's liberation consciousness in the women (and men) we recruit. The caucus would serve to educate comrades on the woman question (d) to make special efforts to reach wives of comrades (who are not members) and contacts. This becomes more important as we become involved in working class activity. The hostility of a wife to either the trade union or IS work causes great problems and tensions.

## WOMEN'S LIBERATION PERSPECTIVES

By Lynn Jones

With a special thanks to Mary T. for her help on the research for this document.

### INTRODUCTION

It is a logical conclusion of our revolutionary third camp politics that we should be the most consistent fighters for women's liberation. We maintain that no society can claim the title "socialist" as long as any group in that society continues to be oppressed. Thus, to us, achieving women's liberation is a vital and necessary part of the process of building a new, socialist society out of the ruins of capitalist society. "Just as women's liberation necessitates socialism, a society that continues to oppress women cannot be socialist," (IS Tasks and Perspectives, 1970). The continued oppression of women in a society that has experienced working class revolution can only lay the basis for reaction. A democratic workers' state cannot be transformed into a socialist society which guarantees the full development of every individual so long as women's oppression remains. The contradiction must bring that transformation to a halt and thus open the doors to and feed reaction.

We do not believe, and we have seen it proven in the past, that working class revolution necessarily does achieve the liberation of women. We believe instead that women will have to struggle for their own liberation. We believe that women must build their own organizations and their own movement to wage that struggle because ". . . we recognize that a strong women's movement is essential to the assurance that the demands of women's liberation will be a conscious part of a socialist revolution," (Ibid., p. 24). No society, no matter how "good", can do that for them, for part of the very definition of women's liberation is the realization on the part of women that they are especially oppressed by society and the realization on their part that they can and must wage the struggle necessary to obliterate that oppression. Women's liberation means that women themselves redefine what it means to be a woman. It means that women have consciously rejected a definition of themselves made by a society dominated by a male chauvinist ideology.

Furthermore, we understand that the ideology of male superiority is so thoroughly pervasive in capitalist society that it will require a conscious struggle to even begin to destroy that ideology. And the battle of ideas cannot go on in the absence of organization. This society has at its disposal the enormous array of capitalist institutions, the schools, the media, etc. to preserve the hegemony of its ideology -- the ideology of male superiority. There must be built the organizations and institutions to battle that ideology.

"Women cannot be truly liberated under capitalism because 'equality' would simply mean 'equality of exploitation.'" As socialists, we support the struggle of women for liberation because of the legitimacy of the demand here

now. But the full liberation of women requires a socialist transformation of society," (Ibid., p. 23). We always attempt to win women to an understanding of the role capitalism plays in their oppression and we attempt to win them to revolutionary socialism. We continually stress the importance of building a women's liberation movement that is independent of the capitalist political parties, a movement that rejects reformism as the solution to women's oppression.

While we understand that the destruction of capitalism is necessary to achieve women's liberation, we are always for winning reforms for women in this capitalist society. Thus we put forward and fight for reforms. We believe that it is desirable for women to win reforms under capitalism both because such reforms improve the quality of women's lives here and now and because we believe that a women's movement will gain self-confidence and be willing and able to fight for ever more far-reaching demands, including demands capitalism is unable to grant, precisely because of its successes. We believe that it is a self-confident and successful women's movement that will reach beyond the limits of capitalism, not a demoralized and defeated one. We always, while congratulating the women's movement on its successes, point out the shortcomings of those reforms and urge the movement to ever greater and more far-reaching demands.

We place a special emphasis on the role of working class women in general and working women in particular in the struggle for women's liberation because ". . . the thrust of the women's movement must be the demand for women to become equal members of the work force and thus of society as a whole. Furthermore, the atomization of most women makes it unlikely that a strong women's movement can develop without working women, who are the only women sufficiently concentrated and organized to lead an effective movement. And since the liberation of women ultimately depends on the building of a socialist society in which women will be equal and free to control their bodies and their lives, the potential of the women's liberation movement lies in its link-up with the struggle of the working class as a whole," (Documents of the Founding Convention of the IS, 1969). We appeal to working women to struggle against both their oppression as women and their exploitation as workers.

Our main tasks in the coming period are two. The first and by far the most important is to begin to build the organizations in the working class that can actually wage the struggle for women's liberation, the first step in building a strong, on-going women's movement. The second is to carry on propaganda to and about women, both inside and outside the working class.

### INDUSTRIALIZATION

Key to the success of any perspective for building an independent working class women's liberation movement will be the actual presence of the IS among working women. We are, to the best of the author's knowledge, the only national organization that is seriously committed to building such a movement. Thus, the question of establishing a cadre of IS women in the working class takes on tremendous importance. To date, our ability to industrialize women in our priority unions has been unsatisfactory with one exception. It seems that it has



been difficult to find women willing to industrialize and, where we have found them, it has been almost impossible to get groups into our targets.

The organization as a whole, from every appearance, has not taken this question seriously enough. Therefore we request that the NAC discuss the question of target unions/industries for the cities of Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and the Bay Area. The Industrial Secretary is requested to solicit opinions and information from the local Executive Committees involved, to keep them informed of the NAC's progress, and to initiate a nationwide campaign to find women who are ready to industrialize. Local Executive Committees are requested to initiate similar discussions and cooperate with the Industrial Secretary on the above.

#### Women in the Labor Force

In March 1970, there were 31.5 million women in the work force. In the 50 year period between 1920 and 1970 the number of women workers increased from 20 to 38 percent of the total labor force ("Women Workers Today," Bulletin #3119, US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1971, page 1). This phenomenon can be explained in large part by the tremendous expansion of white-collar and service jobs that has occurred, especially since 1940. Women, much more so than men, have flocked into these newly created jobs.

#### Blue-Collar Versus White-Collar

Thus, as Table 1 indicates, we find today that well over 50% of all women workers hold white-collar jobs, whereas only about 1 out of 6 women workers hold blue-collar jobs.

Table 1 -- Employment of Women, By Type of Work,  
1940, 1950, 1969

<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>Percent of Women in Category</u>		
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1940</u>
White-Collar	59.3	51.6	45.1
Service	21.2	22.9	28.9
Blue-Collar	17.1	20.2	20.1
Farm	1.9	5.3	5.8

("Background Facts on Women Workers in the United States," US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1970, page 13 and "1969 Handbook on Women Workers, Bulletin #294, US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1969, page 88.)

These trends have operated somewhat differently for black women. Roughly the same proportion of black and white women are employed in blue-collar work. However, nearly half of all black women workers (49%) are service workers and only 31% are white-collar workers. For white women workers the corresponding figures are 18% and 64% ("1969 Handbook," page 105).

Occupations of Women Workers

The huge increase in the number of women workers and in the proportion of the work force occupied by women has not meant a corresponding increase in the occupations open to women. While the number of occupations open to women has increased, it is still extremely limited. Further, in this period women have not been breaking through into occupations historically considered "unsuitable" for women. Instead, there has been an increase in the occupations of a type already considered "suitable." These occupations are, by and large, either an extension of women's role in the home (cook, waitressing) or a projection of women's role as men's servants (answering men's phones, typing men's letters). The kind of occupations open to women has not changed significantly.

The largest single occupation of women workers and the one that has grown most rapidly since 1940 is clerical work. In 1969, there were about 10 million women clerical workers occupying nearly 75% of all clerical positions (See Table 2). The number of women service workers also increased greatly, reaching over 6 million in 1969. More importantly, most service workers now work outside the private home unlike before. They are no longer an almost completely isolated and fragmented section of the labor force.

The number of women in professional and technical occupations has increased rapidly too. But the number of men in such occupations has increased even more rapidly. As a result, only 37% of all technical and professional positions were held by women in 1969, whereas 45% of all such positions were held by women in 1940 ("1969 Handbook," page 94). The most common professional occupation for women is that of non-college teaching -- 40% of all professional positions held by women. Yet, even in the teaching profession women are not holding their own. There has been a concerted effort to attract men to teaching positions in high schools and junior highs in the last two decades. As a result women have become a minority of secondary teachers.

Table 2 -- Employment of Women, By Occupation, 1969

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of All Women Workers</u>	<u>% of Total Employed</u>
Professional & Technical	4,018,000	13.8	37.3
Non-College Teachers	1,597,000	5.5	69.1
Clerical Workers	9,975,000	34.3	74.5
Operatives	4,489,000	15.4	31.2
Service Workers (Not Private Household)	4,679,000	16.1	59.3

("Background Facts," page 13.)

Most factory workers fall into the occupation "operative." This occupation has declined for women workers so that only 15% of all women workers were operatives in 1969, a decline from 19% in 1950.

As indicated earlier, the most important occupation for non-white women is service work. The second largest occupation group for them is clerical work, followed by operatives. Before World War II about 60% of all non-white women workers were private household workers. World War II forced US capitalism to allow some degree of diversification and the process has been accelerated in the last ten years, but the occupations open to non-white women are still extremely limited, much more so than for white women.

#### Priorities for Industrialization

Even though proportionately fewer women are becoming industrial, blue-collar workers, we still favor industrialization into major industrial unions as the organization's first priority. Movement by women in these industries will have a greater impact on working class consciousness than movement by women in industries less central to the economy. The major difficulty with heavy industry is that women are a small minority of the work force. It will require a long, hard battle to win men to respect and follow women leaders and an even harder battle to win men to struggle for women's issues. But the rewards will be great when these developments finally do occur. The growth of a militant women's movement and the rise of women who are mass leaders in the industrial unions will occupy the attention of the entire working class. To see men in those unions join the struggle for women's issues will go far to legitimize the struggle for women's liberation throughout the working class. Similar developments will not acquire equal importance in less powerful unions or in unions where women are a large minority or a majority of the membership.

We cannot, however, send IS women into situations where they will be isolated from women. And as much as possible we want to send both male and female members into the same union/industry. In this way we can begin to make our work around women's liberation an integrated part of our overall labor perspectives. This will help to break out of the "special compartment" aspect that tends to characterize our discussions of women's liberation now.

#### United Auto Workers/Auto

At this time the UAW is the only union in heavy industry that we have found which appears to offer good possibilities for the industrialization of women. The UAW Women's Department says, "We have projected a figure of 200,000 as the total number of women members in UAW and believe this to be a conservative projection," (UAW Women's Department Report on the 1972 Convention, page 9). The total membership of the union is roughly 1,300,000. Most women members fall into four categories, assemblers, machine operators, inspectors and packers. As of now we have a core of women in the UAW in Detroit. We must now extend our efforts to include areas outside Detroit.

#### Communication Workers of America/Telephone

The CWA, like the UAW, is already a national priority for the IS as a whole. In a letter dated Nov. 1, 1972, the union reports the following: "Our total

union membership for the first quarter of 1972 was 431,875. Approximately 52% of our members are women. In the telephone industry, the number of non-supervisory women workers is 60%. The fact that our membership figure is lower is due to the many companies outside the telephone industry in which we represent workers, the majority of whom are men." The great majority of the CWA's women members are telephone operators.

Our success in getting women into the CWA has been very limited. We do not really have a sizeable group anywhere. In the coming year we must make a concerted push to get more women into the CWA all around the country. As the New York telephone strike has shown, the success of local actions, even of the most determined character will meet with very limited success because of the telephone company's ability to use supervisors and workers from other areas to keep its operations going. Our ability to function on a national scale is crucial here.

#### American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees/ Public Employment

Public employees have experienced a wave of unionization and militancy all around the country in recent years. Their struggles, given their position in the public eye and their sensitive relationship to the capitalist state, have had a large impact on working class consciousness. Further, many of their struggles are an expression of black liberation and, to a lesser degree, women's liberation consciousness. As other IS documents have argued, we expect public employees' struggles to take on a thoroughly political character in this period.

In a letter dated Oct. 31, 1972, the union states that "about 37% of AFSCME's over 550,000 members are women. Approximately 1/3 of total AFSCME membership is black, and the majority of members are in blue-collar work . . ."

Our industrialization into AFSCME is completely inadequate. We have not industrialized many women at all and, to the best of the author's knowledge, we have not industrialized a group, male or female, anywhere. We have no members in the big-city locals, but it is these locals which have proven the most militant and powerful. The locals of university workers, welfare workers, etc. where most of our members are, while often quite radical, are less important in AFSCME nationally and rarely catch the public eye. In the coming year we should make a hard push to get women (and men) into the big-city locals in blue-collar jobs. This will be very difficult with the cutback in government spending, but given the central role we believe public employees can play in a coming working class upsurge we should investigate every possibility.

#### American Federation of Teachers/Teaching

We do not regard the AFT as a priority for industrialization in the same way that we do the UAW, CWA and AFSCME. We do not attempt to persuade members to become teachers or go into teaching. Given a choice between teaching and any other of our priority unions/industries, we encourage the member to go into the other priority. Recruiting teachers is easier for the IS than recruiting other

kinds of workers. We have recruited teachers without having any teacher members in some places. The social milieu and history of the IS are such that many of our members already are or plan to become teachers. There is no need to encourage our members to become teachers.

None of this diminishes the importance of AFT work or of developing perspectives for our work in the union.

Women form a majority of elementary teachers, but unionization is very limited. A considerable percentage of secondary teachers, where unionization is more advanced, are also women. Our teacher members should try to get jobs in the large metropolitan school districts and secondary teachers in particular should try to find openings in working class and/or predominantly Third World schools.

#### Developing New Priorities

If the IS can actually manage to get an industrialization program underway in the areas mentioned above in the coming year, the organization will be doing very well for itself. We should always try to get women into these priorities before looking elsewhere, but one of the unions/industries suggested below might be a suitable alternative if some of our women find it impossible to get into our priorities. The NAC and Industrial Secretary are requested to further investigate the viability of industrialization programs in these unions.

The number and occupations of women Teamsters was not found for this document, but we do know that a significant number of Teamsters in non-trucking operations are women. The NAC should find out what industries the Teamsters represent significant numbers of women in and determine whether any of them are suitable for industrialization.

In a letter dated Nov. 2, 1972, the United Steelworkers indicate a total membership of 1,235,931 in 1970, concentrated in four industry groups -- Metal Mining, Primary Metals, Fabricated Metals, and Machinery other than Electrical. Membership in these four groups constitutes 85.7% of their total membership. On the basis of various data they go on to say that "The estimated total number of women USWA members in all four industry groups is 115,457, or 10.9% of the total Steelworker union membership in these industries, and 9.3% of all Steelworker members in 1970. If the number of women is proportionate in the other Steelworker-represented industries, this figure would approach 135,000. However, this may well be an overestimation because of the concentration of women in clerical jobs where our Union has less than a proportionate membership."

Given the difficulty of finding viable industrialization opportunities in heavy, blue-collar industries, we should find out where these women are and what they do.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers states that about 1/3 or 300,000 of its more than 950,000 members are women ("The Electrical Workers Story," page 14). Their women members work in television, telephone, communications, radio and manufacturing. There are problems with industrializing in

the IBEW. The wide range of industries covered by the union, the small size of many electrical equipment factories, and the IBEW's more than usually rotten policies are probably only a beginning. However, the NAC should look into the possibilities.

#### THE CHANGING CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSCIOUSNESS OF WOMEN WORKERS

In the last 50 years there has been not only an increase in the number of working women, but also a change in the description of the "average woman worker." In 1920, the "average woman worker" was young, age 28, and single. Her most likely occupation was either factory worker or clerk. Today, this "average woman worker" is older, age 39, and married. Chances are that she is either a clerical or service worker.

#### The Age of Women Workers

A woman is most apt to be working today if she is young and has already completed school or if she is a "mature" woman who has no young children (See Table 3).

That a high percentage of women in the age group 20-24 should work is not surprising. For many years women in the United States have entered the labor force in large numbers upon graduation from high school (or earlier). In the past, most of these women retired permanently from the labor force when they married or their first child arrived.

Table 3 -- Labor Force Participation of Women, By Age, 1970

<u>Age</u>	<u>% in Labor Force</u>
16 - 19	44
20 - 24	58
25 - 34	45
35 - 44	51
45 - 54	54
55 - 64	43
65 and Older	10
All 18 - 65	50

("Women Workers Today," page 2.)

Since 1940 there has been a change in the worklife patterns of women. Just as many women enter the labor force upon graduation and leave again to marry or have children. But the "typical" American woman now re-enters the labor force when her children enter school. The return of these "mature" women to the labor force is a vital factor in the increase of women workers in recent years. In 1969, almost 3 out of 5 women in the labor force were 35 or older, and almost 2 out of 5 were 45 or older ("Background Facts," page 2).

Traditionally a much higher percentage of non-white than white women have entered the labor force. The gap has been closed somewhat in recent years as more older white women have gone back to work, but, as Table 4 will show, non-white women are still more apt to work. What is even more significant is the large percentage of non-white women between the ages of 25 and 34 who work, the age group most likely to have young children.

Table 4 -- Labor Force Participation of Women,  
By Age and Color, 1968

Age	% Who Enter Labor Force	
	White	Non-White
16 - 19	43	35
20 - 24	54	58
25 - 34	41	57
35 - 44	48	59
45 - 54	52	60
55 - 64	42	47
65 & Older	9	12

("1969 Handbook," page 21.)

#### Marital Status of Women Workers

A woman's marital status is even more influential than her age in determining the probability of her entering the labor force. In 1970, 53% of all single women, 41% of all married women (husband present), 62% of all divorced or separated women, and 26% of all widowed women were in the labor force (Women Workers Today, page 2).

Since 1940 there has been an increase of 12 million in the number of married women who work. In 1940, only 30% of all women workers were married and 48% were single. By 1967, 58% were married and single women represented only 22% of women workers (*Ibid.*, pp. 23-24). This factor is, without doubt, the single most important in explaining the tremendous increase of women in the work force.

#### Changing Attitudes and Consciousness

Women are no longer an insignificant and unstable sector of the work force -- women are in the work force to stay. More and more women realize that, even if they quit working for a period of time to have children, they will someday go back to work and stay there until retirement. All of which means that women workers are growing increasingly aware of their position in society as workers, and are increasingly willing to struggle as workers. Although the women's liberation movement of the sixties failed to break out of its isolation as a primarily student and middle class phenomenon and

spark organization among working women, it did create a widespread consciousness of women's oppression throughout society. Large numbers of working class women, while hostile to what they perceive as the women's liberation movement and its ideology, nonetheless support many of the demands put forward by the movement.

Evidence of this new consciousness on the part of working women appears everywhere. The media, especially newspapers, carry more and more coverage on the lives, problems and aspirations of working women. The trade union bureaucracies have become increasingly vocal supporters of women's rights and legislation for women. The federal government has initiated studies and taken action on a series of women's issues, including equal pay, child care, and maternity leave.

The sudden interest in working women and their problems is not the result of a happy change of heart on the part of American capitalism. It is instead a response to the struggles that working women have already waged and to the struggles the ruling class fears will break out in the future.

Women workers have been unionizing in increasing numbers in recent years. Black women especially have launched organizing drives. Service workers, especially hospital workers, have fought for union recognition all over the country and especially in the South. In the last three there has even been formed a union of private household workers. Clerical workers, traditionally considered unorganizable, have unionized more than ever before.

Women have also shown an increasing willingness to file complaints of sex discrimination with the EEOC. Since 1965, when the Equal Pay Act was passed, more than \$43 million has been awarded in back pay for sex discrimination ("It Pays to Complain of Sex Bias," Lynn Sheer, Detroit Free Press, May 28, 1972). In addition, many women have filed suits with the Commission to force employers to open up new jobs to women and to force employers to promote and hire women.

#### A STRATEGY FOR IS WORK

In the broadest possible sense our aim is to build an independent women's liberation movement in the working class and particularly among working women. We seek to build a movement that is independent of both the capitalist political parties and the trade union bureaucracy. Such a movement must struggle against both the exploitation of women as workers and the special oppression of women as women. It should fight for demands that are in the interests of all workers and at the same time put forward demands to deal with the special problems faced by women. Such a movement should maintain its separate identity as a women's movement while continually attempting to win the support of all workers for its struggles and itself supporting the struggles of the larger working class movement.

Building a working class women's movement means much more than simply building a movement that puts forward demands and struggles to win them. It means, fundamentally, generating a widespread consciousness of women's oppression inside the working class. That consciousness is not a passive consciousness. It is a consciousness that rejects oppression, struggles against oppres-



sion and, in that process, begins to build a new conception of woman's role in society based on the ideal that every human being has equal value and potential and that society must place no fetters on human development.

Our immediate task is to build organizations of struggle inside the working class. The task of building such organizations should not and must not be left only to the women in the IS. The fight against sexism must be just as much the chore of men IS'ers as the fight against racism is for white IS'ers. Men as well as women members must work to involve women in the caucuses we build and to raise women's issues. If our commitment to building a women's movement in the working class is anything more than a paper commitment, it must be shared equally by all members and not be a question "left to the women."

The question of the exact nature of the organizations we initiate is a tactical question and not a principled one. What is important is not the organizational structure or name, but rather the "content." What we want to build are organizations that put forward women's demands and are willing to fight for those demands even when they are unpopular; organizations that are willing to accept and in fact seek the leadership of women.

#### The Local Formation

In situations where the overwhelming majority of the work force is women, any rank and file group will function like a women's caucus. The overwhelming majority, if not all, caucus members will be women. Shop floor issues and women's issues will be indistinguishable from one another.

Women are a minority in the work place in most cases, however. Here raising women's issues will require a more prolonged effort. Most of the time it will probably be very difficult to form an exclusively women's group as the first formation in the shop. We will find instead that our initial organizing must be devoted to the formation of a broad, integrated rank and file caucus. We insist that women's issues be a part of the everyday shop floor struggles carried out by the group and that the group develop women leaders. The formation of some special women's group will probably almost always be necessary where women are a minority.

Another alternative may be useful. We may find in some cases that it is desirable to form an autonomous women's group even though a broad rank and file caucus is very good on women's liberation. Such a situation would arise if there were a number of women in a plant who would be willing to join a women's group based on a program of women's demands, but would not be willing to accept the full program of the rank and file group. In such a case, we would favor forming a women's caucus based on a program of women's demands. Within that caucus we and other women members of the rank and file caucus would try to win the women over to the full program of the rank and file group, and would recruit individual women to the broader caucus.

We are always in favor of winning women's groups to a conception of themselves as fighters for the interests of all workers and to a program that speaks to the needs of all workers. However, we do not refuse to participate

in or refuse to form women's groups that fail to do so, groups that speak only to women's issues. Our attitude is that we should seize every opportunity to initiate organization and then work within that group to raise the political level.

We do not necessarily regard it as advantageous or necessary that a broad rank and file caucus be the first group we attempt to form. Even in situations where women are a minority we should seek out any possibilities to immediately initiate a women's group. To us, the formation of broad rank and file caucuses and the formation of women's caucuses are not counterposed. We have seen black caucuses in industry, through their struggles around issues of interest to all workers, gain the support of white workers and eventually become transformed into broad, integrated rank and file groups while retaining their original emphasis on black issues and black leadership. Such developments can also occur where the original formation is a women's group. Further, the initiation of a militant women's caucus can provide an example and spark organization among other workers in a plant.

In line with our general labor perspectives, we favor the publication of a rank and file newsletter by women's caucuses. In cases where no special women's group exists but where women workers are part of a broader group, we will attempt to insure adequate coverage of women's issues in a broad rank and file newsletter.

Even though, unfortunately, such events are pretty rare since the collapse of the middle class women's liberation movement, we should try to get women from our work places to help build and participate in women's rallies, marches, etc. To the degree that we are active in or in contact with any women's liberation groups that are planning such events, we should try to get them to put out literature at our work places. If we can get women from the plants to such events, it helps build the kind of ties between the middle class movement and working women that we have always wanted to develop.

Any propaganda around the plant that raises the question of women's liberation is advantageous to us since it offers an opening for us to discuss women's liberation with individuals and in general helps to raise consciousness on the question.

#### Regional Organization

As soon as it becomes possible we should attempt to initiate meetings of women workers that cross union boundaries, meetings of a city-wide or regional character. It will quite likely prove extremely difficult if not impossible to hold together any regularly and frequently meeting organization on a city-wide or regional basis for some time yet. The common identity and common struggle of women workers are still too weak. However, infrequent meetings to exchange information, discuss common problems, and formulate common goals and demands and publicize them will be possible when even a few women's groups exist in an area. We will want to encourage different groups to meet each other informally and lend support to one another through their newsletters and solidarity actions.

Eventually we hope to form on-going city-wide or regional coalitions of women's groups. Our attitude is that such groups are not limited to only union women's caucuses, but rather such coalitions should be as broad as possible. They should include all pro-working class women's organizations regardless of their class character. Groups like welfare rights organizations, welfare mothers, and tenants' unions should be involved inasmuch as their membership is usually heavily female and to the degree that they are concerned with issues of special importance to women and want to participate in women's struggles.

Citywide or regional coalitions should, first of all, provide a pool of resources and offer support to each of the affiliate organizations. Their really important political role comes, however, when they can build support for and initiate local struggles for women's rights and when they can take on state laws that are discriminatory to women and other such issues. We hope that they will launch campaigns for abortion reform, protective legislation for all workers, child care and welfare rights, to name only a few issues.

#### National Women's Caucuses

Another goal is the formation of national women's caucuses in the unions. National women's caucuses would carry the fight for women's demands into all national conventions or other national union activities. They should put forward a program of demands for the purposes of collective bargaining that would include material specific to the union as well as the broader demands outlined later in this document.

In addition, national women's caucuses should call for regional and national conventions of women where all women union members can come together to discuss problems of women in the union and in society at large. Such meetings would formulate policies for the union on a broad range of questions. Our attitude is, of course, that such meetings must be democratically organized and that the policies put forward by such meetings must be thoroughly publicized within the ranks of the union so that enthusiastic support can be won for them from all union members, male and female.

Finally, a real national women's caucus can put out a nationwide publication and maintain communication with all the various local women's groups between its national meetings.

A caucus that can actually carry out such a wide array of activities is obviously still some way off in the future. It will have to be based on the prior formation of solid local caucuses and on widespread sentiment for women's rights within the ranks of the union. But there are steps that we can take even now in the direction of such caucuses.

Certainly we and the rank and file women we are working with should attempt to attend all regional or national union meetings or conventions and put out a call for a special meeting of women at them. Such ad hoc groups should carry to the floor whatever special demands or statement on union policy that can be formulated. Even though it may be impossible to form any on-

going organization, such activities do allow women from various locals who are interested in women's issues to meet one another and further exchange of ideas and information can be established.

A nationwide women's caucus is not counterposed to a broader national rank and file opposition in any sense. In fact, our projection is that any two such groups should completely support each other and thoroughly integrate their work. A women's caucus may even be "officially" connected with the broader opposition. Any national women's caucus, however, should maintain its own independent presence and attempt to mobilize the women in a union to make a fight around specific women's issues.

#### Other Tactics

Finally, there may arise certain issues which it is possible to mobilize a considerable number of women around. For example, when the UAW came out in full support of the ERA and against "so-called protective legislation," it was possible to mobilize a fair number of UAW women to fight for protective legislation for all workers. They were able to force the UAW to back off and at least on paper support that demand. This particular issue may still be coming up in some places.

We should look for any possibility of launching such fights. They publicize the whole question of women's liberation. In some cases it may even be possible for us to initiate some sort of organization out of such struggles, though we realize that many of the women involved will not be won to the idea of organization or to support of women's rights in general. Such struggles can put us in touch with women militants it would otherwise require much longer to meet and can be a big first step towards organization.

#### Black Women

Contrary to much that's said, black women are more, not less, receptive to ideas of women's liberation than white women. All the problems faced by working women as a whole are made more severe for black women by racism. Black women have been politicized by the black liberation movement and in fact have played leading roles in that movement, especially in struggles with the schools and welfare system. The black liberation movement, and their participation in it, have legitimized the idea of struggle for black women.

Thus, not surprisingly, black women are more sensitive, by and large, than white women to their oppression as women and more willing to struggle against it. They have already led many of the struggles for unionization among women workers in recent years. We expect black women to continue to play a leading role in the struggles of women workers and we place a special emphasis on winning black women to the ideas of women's liberation and involving them in caucuses.

Our goal is to build caucuses in which racism is not a problem, caucuses which put forward and struggle over black demands and which have black leadership. Thus, our attempt is to involve both black and white women in the same

caucus. Despite the traditional hostility and suspicion between black and white women, we believe that inter-racial groups can be built. It is on the shop floor, more than anywhere else in society, that blacks and white share common experiences and common experience points in the way of common struggle. We insist, however, that unity not come at the expense of black issues and leadership.

In many situations, including the UAW, CWA, and AFSCME, the great majority of women we work with will be black. We and other white radicals may often be the only whites in a caucus for some time yet. Where this is the case, the question of black liberation essentially resolves itself. The caucus is so overwhelming black in leadership and functions so often as a defender of black rights that independent organization for blacks is not needed.

In any situation where racism does become a problem in a caucus or where a caucus refuses in fact, even if not on paper, to fight for black demands, we advocate the formation of an independent black caucus to carry forward the black struggle and raise all workers' consciousness. We, of course, refuse to remain inside a racist caucus and join blacks in their struggle. We attempt to get the two groups to carry out joint activities on issues of common concern. Our attitude, and the attitude we urge the black caucus to adopt, is one of critical support for the original group, supporting its program and struggles but criticizing its policies on black issues.

In general, we do not urge black women to form a specifically "black women's caucus," but rather a caucus to include all black workers. In some cases such a caucus would, in fact, include most black women of course. Our attitude is that all black workers (and whites who wish to join including, of course, ourselves) should unite to fight racism if a broader formation proves incapable of handling the issue.

#### Bureaucratic Formations

As mentioned previously, the bureaucracies of many of the unions with a significant woman membership have gone into a flurry of activity on "the woman question." There are developments in at least three unions that we should be particularly aware of.

#### The CWA

In June, 1972, the Communication Workers of America held its first women's conference. (It is highly unfortunate that, apparently, none of our women CWA members attended and there was no reportage and critique of this meeting in our newspaper.) The CWA passed a resolution on equal rights at its 34th Annual Convention immediately following the women's conference. In addition, the union indicates that its "activities on behalf of women . . . include lobbying on child care legislation and also on legislation to provide the EEOC with enforcement powers, as well as activities in support of the Equal Rights Amendment. In these areas, we have sought to cooperate with labor unions, civil rights groups and women's organizations such as the National Organization for Women and the Women's Equity League," (Letter, Nov. 1, 1972).

### The NEA

In June, 1971, just prior to its national convention, a women's caucus was organized in the National Education Association, a development of significance to us if and when the NEA and AFT merge. The original caucus meeting was attended by about 125 women. One of its primary organizers was the then NEA President, Helen Bain of Tennessee. (Unlike the situation in many internationals, the NEA president does not stay president for life. In the NEA it has been traditional for the presidency to pass from a woman to a man each alternate year. One of the caucus gripes was that a man is running for president in 1973, a year reserved for a woman.)

Among the issues put forward by the women were the "low pay for women teachers, the lack of women school administrators and the failure of the NEA itself to appoint women to top staff positions," ("Women Educators Aim for Job, Union Equity," by Julie Morris, Detroit Free Press, June 28, 1971).

### The UAW

Perhaps the most impressive display of concern over the "woman question" comes from the UAW. There has existed within the UAW a Women's Department, currently headed by Caroline Davis, which has seen as its role both dealing with questions of concern to women UAW members and involving the wives of UAW men in union activities. The Women's Department was, until recently, relatively quiet and little-noticed. In the past few years, however, with the rise of the women's movement the Department has jumped to the forefront of union activities.

The Department now puts out a great deal of literature and publicity (mostly to everyone except UAW women). It and the entire union apparatus have become very vocal supporters of the various legislative measures "for women". The volume of resolutions concerning women grows at every recent convention, including support for childcare, equal pay, EEOC enforcement powers, etc. But the really unusual aspect of the UAW's response to women's discontent is not its sudden flurry of propaganda -- and its propagandizing is much more well organized than that of most unions.

What is unusual is the UAW's decision to organize its women members, or more accurately the potential women leaders in its ranks, into what amounts to a completely bureaucratically formed national UAW's women's caucus. Thus the union has organized, through the Women's Department, a series of special educationals for UAW women and now holds regional UAW Women's Department meetings on a fairly frequent basis. The union has gone even further and has begun to press local unions to live up to Article 43 of the UAW International Constitution, which states that each local union will have as one of its standing committees a Women's Committee wherever there are women members.

All the Women's Department functions are carried out in a thoroughly undemocratic manner. The union attempts to limit participation to certain hand-picked women, usually potential women leaders. All programs are mechanically imposed by the International. And, of course, several prominent women bureaucrats are vying for power in the union, trying to use the women ranks as a basis for personal advancement.

The UAW and its Women's Department maintain very friendly relations with NOW and several women bureaucrats are NOW members.

### Our Attitude Toward Bureaucratic Formations

We realize that the sudden concern over "the woman question" displayed by many union internationals is a defensive reaction on their part to the women's liberation movement of the sixties and to the discontent that that movement sparked and which they see growing among their own women ranks. They have developed a strategy that they hope will ward off what can only be seen as a disaster in their terms -- the awakening of a militant, mass women's liberation movement among working women.

On the one hand they try to "steal" the issues on which such a movement would be based. So they draft resolutions, coming out for everything "good" under the sun -- equal pay, childcare, maternity leave, upgrading, and on and on. They lack the nerve to actually wage any kind of battle, even the most minimal, to win such benefits as part of a collective bargaining package; instead they lobby in Washington, hoping the federal government will come through for them.

The other side of their strategy is an attempt to put themselves in a position to seize the leadership of such a movement when it does develop. Thus, after decades of ignoring the women ranks and their needs, the bureaucrats are trying to patch up their tarnished image and come out as progressive fighters for women's rights. The internationals add a few women to their staff and make a lot of noise about it. They try to absorb into the bureaucracy the women leaders that emerge in the ranks. They orient toward the most conservative, reformist wing of the women's movement, especially NOW, trying not only to legitimize themselves as supporters of women's liberation, but also to legitimize NOW's politics in the ranks.

In addition, women bureaucrats whose careers have been stunted for years by male chauvinism find in the discontent and wave of sympathy for women's rights in the ranks a perfect vehicle for promoting their own careers.

Regardless of our assessment of the motives behind the bureaucrats' newfound interest in women's liberation, we welcome every attempt on their part to raise women's issues. When they raise women's issues they raise the consciousness of the ranks on the question of women's problems and they lend legitimacy to our propaganda and agitation on women's liberation.

The situation in which we confront the international will vary from union to union. We seize every opportunity to function within bureaucratically organized events. Whenever the bureaucracy calls a conference, a regional or local meeting, an educational, or whatever, that is for women or about women's issues we and whatever formal or informal group we participate in should attend. Our general attitude is that we and our forces should act as a political pole within such events.

We should function in a similar manner inside caucuses, committees or whatever other formations the bureaucracy or women bureaucrats may initiate. Our forces should see themselves as a distinctly organized part of those

formations whose role it is to win the rank and file members of such formations to our conception of the struggle for women's rights.

We never limit our campaign to win women to our politics and our group to the arena of bureaucratic formations, of course, but always continue our organizing on the shop floor. At the same time, we do not reject participation in a bureaucratic formation because of the composition of its membership or its low political level. Even the most bureaucratic group is apt to attract women militants. They see no other vehicle for their discontent. And the bureaucracy has the legitimacy and communications network to attract women that the rank and file still lacks.

A special word needs to be said about the UAW even though this is not the place for a detailed perspective for women in auto. We should participate in all of the UAW Women's Department activities and organizations. The UAW has opened up a forum for us all the way from local union Women's Committees to the regional and international level. We should see our task as essentially that of building an organized political opposition at every level that can eventually vie for leadership and that can transform the bureaucratic shell of a women's caucus into a real one.

Inside bureaucratic formations we attack the policies of the bureaucracy. We point to the many problems facing their women members that they prefer to ignore and put forward our program (as outlined below) for meeting the needs of the rank and file. We criticize their undemocratic and bureaucratic way of "organizing" women and demand that they do away with fetters on rank and file participation and control. While supporting many of the democratic demands they put forward, we point out that such reforms do not really speak to the needs of the rank and file.

We challenge the bureaucracy's strategy to win benefits for women. We point out the inadequacies of lobbying and legislative solutions and demand that the unions take the lead in winning benefits for all women by winning those benefits for their own membership now. We call upon the union to make childcare, maternity leave, equal pay and so on a part of its collective bargaining program and to build support in the ranks and wage a real fight over those issues.

#### A PROGRAM FOR WORKING WOMEN

Two fundamental problems face every woman in the United States today who has or wants a job. The first is sex discrimination in the job market and the second is woman's role as housewife and mother, a role which forces all working women with families to hold two full-time jobs -- one paid and one unpaid. Any program that we put forward to working women must, above all, speak to these problems.

When raising the issues outlined below we should always address ourselves to the broad question of sexism as a phenomenon that pervades the entire society. For example, we point out why it is unfair when men and women compete "equally" for jobs, why it is that women must win demands like preferential hiring and upgrading -- because society denies women equal access to skills and training from birth.



Thus, the demand Equal Pay and Equal Work has no narrow definition. It includes within itself all the demands that must be won in order to eliminate sex discrimination in the job market. It includes the demands that are specific to particular unions. This is the content that we give the demand when we discuss it.

This document raises only those demands of special interest to women. Programs including our demands for the labor movement as a whole have been detailed in both the Tasks and Perspectives and Labor Perspectives documents passed at the convention. The program outlined below is not counterposed to any of the current positions in those documents and there is no use repeating them here and revoting them every time a discussion on some aspect of the labor movement takes place.

#### Equal Pay and Equal Work

In 1969, the median earning of full-time, year-round women workers was \$4,997. Men earned \$8,227. In other words, for full-time, year-round employment, women earned 60% of what men did (Women Workers Today, page 6). This gap in earnings has been on the increase in recent years (See Table 5), although women did make a slight gain between 1967 and 1969, undoubtedly the result of the impact of the women's movement.

Table 5 -- Women's Median Wage as Compared with Men's,  
1955 - 1969

Year	Median Wage		Women's Median Wage as % of Men's
	Women	Men	
1955	\$2,719	\$4,252	63.9
1957	3,008	4,713	63.8
1959	3,193	5,209	61.3
1961	3,351	5,664	59.4
1963	3,561	5,978	59.6
1965	3,823	6,375	60.0
1967	4,150	7,182	57.8
1969	4,977	8,227	60.5

("Fact Sheet on the Earnings Gap," US Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1971, page 1.)

Further, the gap between the earnings of all women workers and those of all men workers is even greater because so many more women than men hold part-time or part-year jobs. Currently only about 4 out of 10 women workers hold full-time, year-round jobs (Women Workers Today, page 4). Between 1950 and 1967 the number of women workers increased by 12.4 million. In that period there was an increase of 70% in the number of women who held part-time jobs, but an increase of only 47% in the number who held full-time jobs.

This tendency for the percentage of women workers who hold part-time jobs to increase so much more rapidly than those holding full-time jobs reversed itself in the sixties when the job market expanded rapidly. Full-time women workers increased by 22% and part-time by 6% (1969 Handbook, page 56). But we can expect the old trend to reassert itself as unemployment rises and the job-squeeze tightens.

A somewhat larger percentage of women workers worked a full year in 1967 (52%) than in 1950 (45%) (See Table 6).

Table 6 -- Work Experience of Women, 1950, 1960, 1967

Work Experience	As % of All Women Workers		
	1967	1960	1950
<b>Year-Round:</b>			
50-52 Weeks			
Full-Time	42.1	36.9	36.8
Part-Time	9.9	10.0	8.2
<b>Part-Year:</b>			
27-49 Weeks			
Full-Time	13.0	14.6	17.9
Part-Time	6.2	6.6	5.1
1-26 Weeks			
Full-Time	15.0	16.0	18.7
Part-Time	13.3	15.8	13.2

(1969 Handbook, page 57. Full-time is defined as more than 35 hours a week.)

The income of non-white women is lower than that of both white women and non-white men. In 1966, the median of non-white women who worked full-time and year-round was \$2,949 -- 71% of the median income of white women -- and this was a vast improvement over previous years (Ibid., page 136). The gap is widened even more by the greater number of non-white women who work only part-time and part-year. In addition, non-white women workers are concentrated in the South where wages fall below the national average.

Women have been steadily frozen out of the better-paying occupations in recent years -- that is, women are being forced out of the few decent jobs that have traditionally been open to them (Refer to Table 1, page 3 and Table 2, page 4). The percentage of women who enter the relatively well-organized and better-paying heavy industries has decreased. Likewise, women have been slowly pushed out of the more lucrative professional and technical occupations.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

Clearly, one issue we must raise is that of "Equal Pay for Equal Work." This is an issue that many women are willing to struggle around, as the tre-

mendous number of EEOC equal pay suits indicates. However, the struggle must be removed from the individualized realm of law suits and become an organized struggle by masses of women.

The definition of equal work as work "substantially the same, requiring similar skills, ability and experience as that performed by men" must be rejected. In our propaganda we should stress the essential equality of all work and attack the whole myth of "women's" and "men's" work. We call for a fight to raise the wages of clerical and service workers as an essential if "equal pay" is to mean anything for the masses of women workers.

#### Organize the Unorganized

In view of the necessity to fight to raise the wages of those occupations where women are most heavily concentrated, we call upon the unions to "Organize the Unorganized." It is always our demand that the unions encourage women workers to make women's issues a prominent feature of their organizing drives. We condemn any attempt on the part of the union bureaucracy to play down women's issues or to interfere with rank and file control of organizing drives in any way. We stress the necessity for women organizers. We condemn the unions both for their failure to organize women workers and for their cooperation with employers in maintaining low wages even where women are organized.

#### Preferential Hiring for Women

According to the official figures in 1970, 5.9% of all women and 4.4% of all men were unemployed. For minority group workers, the figures were 9.3% and 7.3% respectively (Women Workers Today, page 6). Our demand is "Preferential Hiring for Women."

#### Preferential Entry into Vocational and Training Programs for Women Preferential Upgrading and Promotion for Women

In addition, we call for "Preferential Entry into Vocational and Training Programs and Preferential Upgrading and Promotion for Women." Women must win such demands to break the job ceiling that now keeps women from securing higher paying and/or skilled jobs in both blue-collar and white-collar industries.

In the UAW, we demand "Preferential Entry into the Skilled Trades." Although 1/6 of the union's members are women, women are completely excluded from the skilled trades.

Over half of all CWA members are women, the overwhelming majority of them in low paying operator's jobs. Here we not only demand preferential hiring and upgrading into all the currently "male" jobs, we also demand equal starting pay and increases for all telephone company workers.

Our approach is similar in the AFT. We demand that the salary of elementary teachers be raised to that of junior high and high school teachers.

In addition, we call for preferential hiring for women into both secondary and college positions.

The position of women in AFSCME varies widely from place to place. We raise appropriate demands against both the exclusion of women from skilled jobs and the phony job classification used by many state and local employers that terms women "janitresses" and men "janitors" and thereby tries to justify wage differences.

#### Superseniority for Women to Attain Equality

In a period of growing unemployment it is particularly important that we raise demands to protect women's jobs. As we have seen earlier, it is only since 1960 that many women have succeeded in getting full-time employment. As the job market tightens, it will be these women who are laid off, unable to find new jobs. The overall content of our demand on seniority is that we are for "Superseniority for Women to Attain Equality." However, the specific content of the seniority demand will vary with the situation and this is not necessarily our public slogan. We should, of course, raise the demand of No Layoffs as well.

#### Women Workers: A Permanent Part of the Labor Force

The myth that women work just to get out of the home and that women can more easily afford unemployment than men must be destroyed. Women work because they have to.

More and more women are working because they are either the sole support or the major source of income for their families. In 1967, there were 5.2 million families headed by women. About 50% of the women who headed these families worked, and for 1.5 million of such families the woman was the sole breadwinner (See Table 7).

Table 7 -- Labor Force Participation of Women Family Heads,  
By Age, 1967

<u>Age</u>	<u>% of All Women Family Heads Who Enter Labor Force</u>
16 - 24	52.6
25 - 34	61.1
35 - 44	67.5
45 - 54	71.0
55 - 64	57.0
65 & Over	10.7

(1969 Handbook, pages 28 - 31.)

The need for equal pay and equal work is further emphasized by the numbers of families headed by women who live in poverty. About 1/3 of all such

families were living below the federal "poverty level" in 1967 -- and the number is rising.

As we would expect, a disproportionately high number of women family heads are non-white. Some 1.1 million, or 22%, of all women family heads in 1967 were non-white (Ibid., page 29).

Even in those cases where a working woman is married, she often works because it is her salary which keeps the family just above the "poverty level," or allows the family to gain something approaching an average standard of living. In 1969, the percentage of wives in the labor force was highest where husbands' incomes were between \$5,000 and \$7,000 (just above poverty level) and next highest where the man's income was between \$3,000 and \$5,000 (just below poverty level).

The idea that women can afford their inferior position in the labor force bears no resemblance to reality, and it is no justification for that inferior position to begin with.

#### Childcare

The working woman's role as a mother is just one aspect of her double life. In order for women to be able to participate fully in the labor force every aspect of woman's role as mother and housewife will have to be challenged and altered to relieve women of this double burden. Today we are far from the point where working class women are even willing to accept intellectually such an attack on the family, much less actually initiate it. The issue of childcare is important not only because it is a crying need of working women, but also because it is a popular issue which provides an opening to raise the question of the family's role in society.

In 1970, 12.1 million women in the labor force had children under 18. Of these, 4.5 million had children under 6. Three out of ten women with children under six work, 5 out of 10 with schoolage children only. For women with no husband present, 5 out of 10 with children under 6 work and 2 out of 3 with schoolage children only (Women Workers Today, page 2).

Again, a higher percentage of non-white mothers than white mothers enter the labor force. In 1967, there were about 1.1 million non-white mothers in the labor force. Of even greater importance, non-white mothers were more apt to have young, pre-schoolage children. In 1967, more than 1/2 of all non-white working mothers had children under six, whereas only 38% of all white working mothers had children so young. Furthermore, about 29% of the non-white mothers had children under 3 years of age ("Working Mothers and the Need for Child Care Services," US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1968, page 12).

The most recent survey on the arrangements made for childcare by working mothers was completed in 1965 by the Women's Bureau of the US Department of Labor and the Children's Bureau of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The mothers surveyed had 12.3 million children under 14. Of these children, 46% were cared for in the home by a relative or a hired babysitter. An additional 28% of the children were cared for by their mothers. In some

cases the mother watched the child while she worked and in others the mother worked only while her children were in school. About 18% of the children were cared for away from home -- but only 2% of these children were placed in group care centers. The remaining 8% "cared for" themselves -- 4% of them were under 6 (Ibid., page 18).

The Department of Labor estimates that several million children need child care. But, as of 1969, it was estimated that childcare in licensed centers and family homes was available for only 640,000 children ("Day Care Facts," US Dept. of Labor, Women's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1970, page 2). None of the federal or state projects now underway even begin to meet the need and all of them require some fee from the parent.

#### Federally-Funded Childcare

The broad propagandistic demand that we put forward calls for "Free, 24-Hour, Parent-Staff Controlled Childcare Centers, Paid for by the Government." Sentiment for federally funded childcare already exists. A 1969 Gallup poll indicated that 2/3 of the American public favored the establishment of federally funded childcare centers.

In our propaganda we should point out that it is the responsibility of society as a whole to raise children, to guarantee that each child will receive adequate care, education, etc. It is the federal government's responsibility to provide adequate childcare so that all women can acquire the independence that having a job permits. We demand that childcare be free both because providing adequate childcare is society's responsibility and because fees always discriminate against those who need childcare the most, working and welfare parents. Finally, we demand that childcare be available at all times and be democratically controlled by the staff and parents.

We will attempt to win caucuses to our conception of childcare and get the caucus to propagandize around the full demand. Caucuses should call for the solidarity of all workers and especially women workers to build a movement that can effectively present such a demand to the government. However, the demand for childcare (that is, thoroughly adequate childcare as presented in this demand) cannot be won from the federal government until that movement exists.

#### Corporate-Funded Childcare

Therefore in the immediate, actionable sense the demand for childcare will be made on the employer. Caucuses should put forward, as a contract demand "Free, 24-Hour, Parent-Staff Controlled Childcare, Paid For by the Company."

It is important that this demand be one that a women's or rank and file caucus put forward for all workers, not just women. If such a demand were somehow won for women employees only, the employer would obviously attempt every means possible to eliminate women workers. And, of course, childcare is not just the mother's problem, even though it does fall most heavily on women.

A caucus should point out that over the long term there will have to be a struggle for federally funded childcare so that all parents can be assured of adequate childcare. Winning employer financed childcare is an important and necessary victory for the workers hired by that employer. It is also one step in winning childcare for all parents because it sets an example of struggle for others to follow and because it begins to build the mass movement required to achieve greater victories.

#### Abortion, Protective Legislation, and Other Issues

Abortion is an issue that is not central to our union and shop floor work, but one that we will want to raise in caucuses and in our propaganda. We call for "Free Abortion on Demand -- No Forced Sterilizations." In raising both issues, we stress the right of women to control their own bodies.

In the future we must be much more sensitive to the question of forced sterilization than we have in the past. Welfare clients are the commonest victims of forced sterilization, especially Black, Puerto Rican and other non-white women. Our propaganda in general, and especially Workers' Power, must carry more material on forced sterilization in the future.

The importance of protective legislation as an issue will vary from place to place and union to union. Our call is to "Extend Protective Legislation to Cover All Workers." We attempt to win all caucuses to this position, arguing that no worker, male or female, should be forced to lift more than 35 lbs., etc. In those states where protective legislation still remains law we call for a "Fight to Retain Protective Legislation for Women" as well, in conjunction with the demand to extend it to men. It is no advance for women to be reduced to the level of drudgery equal to the drudgery of men.

In our propaganda on this issue we should denounce women's groups like NOW who oppose protective legislation for women, pointing out their anti-working class character. More important by far, however, is the anti-protective legislation stand taken by many union bureaucracies -- done in the name of women's rights of course. We denounce these bureaucrats for betraying the interests of rank and file women.

There are a number of other issues and demands that we may wish to raise in any given union or work place. Company policies on maternity leave are almost always highly unsatisfactory. Our demand is "One Year Paid Maternity/Paternity Leave." In addition we may want to raise other demands in connection with this issue -- "Workmen's Compensation Coverage for Pregnancy," "Paid Maternity and Abortion Expenses," and "Sick Pay for Sick Kids."

Women are often discriminated against directly or indirectly in health and retirement benefits. We demand "Full Health Benefits for Women," "Equalize Health Benefits for Women" and "Full Retirement Benefits for Women -- Extend Benefits to Survivors of All Workers."

We will want to raise the demand "Right to Fire and Grieve Racist and Sexist Foremen" and other issues of this variety.

Our decision as to what demands we want to raise will be based on the particular situation. There will be many other issues for us to deal with beyond those raised here, and many shop floor issues in each different union.

#### Summary

The two issues of "Equal Pay and Equal Work" and "Childcare" are the core of our program for a working class women's liberation movement. They are demands that go to the heart of the problems faced by millions of women workers and would-be women workers. They are demands that must be won in order for the masses of working class women to begin to break out of their double burden of oppression as women and exploitation as workers.

I.S. work for women's liberation will share a common emphasis on these issues, whatever specific formulation may be appropriate in a given situation. In addition to an emphasis on this core program, we will raise broad issues like abortion and other demands specific to the particular union and shop.

#### IS PUBLICATIONS

Our press and publications should stress the importance of building a working class women's movement and our core program for such a movement.

Workers' Power should regularly feature articles on women in the unions, especially our priority unions. Such coverage should include the activities of both rank and file groups and the union officialdom. The paper should occasionally run educational articles on the history of working women's struggles in general and especially women's history in our priority unions as well as other key unions for women such as the garment industry unions. Such articles should not simply report events, but concentrate on an analysis of the position of women in the unions, how it has changed, and how it is changing.

The issues of equal pay and equal work and childcare should be raised in the context of explaining the relationship between women's exploitation and oppression and the nature of capitalist, and why socialist revolution is necessary to achieve women's liberation. We argue that these issues are of overwhelming importance to women today because these demands, if won, would permit masses of women to begin to break out of their oppression and exploitation.

A subject that we have completely failed to discuss, the family, is precisely one of the questions that generates hostility to women's liberation among working class women. Our articles should explain our opposition to the nuclear family, discuss its inability to operate in modern society, and offer a different way of rearing children, etc.

Our propaganda around women's issues should appeal particularly to black women. This means that we should emphasize in many articles the special effects of combined sexism and racism on black women. The leading role of black



women in both women's and black struggles should be stressed. In addition, we should discuss events and issues of particular importance to black women, including things like welfare mothers' struggles, tenants' struggles, women prisons, etc. Furthermore, we have to take on reactionary ideas that are pushed to the black female audience. For example, we should read and take on the ideas presented in popular middle-class-oriented black magazines. And we should take on the idea that women's liberation is somehow anti-black liberation.

We request that the NAC find writers for the following two pamphlets immediately and come into the next NC with at least a first rough draft of the pamphlets.

One pamphlet should be of a theoretical nature, explaining the relationship between capitalism, women's oppression and exploitation, and why socialist revolution is necessary for the liberation of women.

The other pamphlet should consist of a short history of the struggles of working and working class women, concentrating on women in the United States. It should conclude with a section entitled something like "What Working Women Need Today" that would consist of an explanation of our strategy for building a working class women's movement in the broadest outline. It would stress the core program for such a movement as outlined in this document. Again, it should pay great attention to black women.

Both of these pamphlets should be written in simple, readable language for a working class audience. They should avoid using words and phrases that make it clear to all that an organization full of working class women did not write the pamphlet. Before the pamphlet is finally published, the NAC should secure the opinion of at least three industrialized comrades (not necessarily all women) on the readability and appeal of the pamphlet.

Coverage on women has been dismal, completely unacceptable, in Workers' Power recently. For a specific motion on increasing coverage of women's issues, see the Celia Emerson document on "Proposal for the IS Women's Commission."

#### ACTION NOW

The NAC/Industrial Director are requested to give a progress report to the next NC on all those areas of this document that refer specifically to them for implementation. In addition, they are requested to either give themselves or arrange speakers to give reports on women's industrialization and our work around women's liberation in industry. It should include: where do we have women, what is the nature of their political work in each union/industry; and to what degree is women's liberation as aspect of IS work in the organization's industrial work as a whole. In addition, the NAC is requested to secure discussion articles on the special problems of women in each industry/union where we have women and how to solve those problems.

AMENDMENTS TO WOMEN'S LIBERATION PERSPECTIVES DOCUMENT

MARGARET B.

I. THE RADICAL MOVEMENT

1. Page 1, end of paragraph 2 - ...over the movement nationally.  
Insert: That our expectations and predictions were so off the track demands serious reassessment of our theory and analysis of radicalism in general and radical women's movements in particular. (see addenda)  
Insert where appropriate Parts 1, 3 and 4 of "Middle Class Radicalism" by Margaret B.
2. Page 2, middle of paragraph 1 -  
Delete: --far clearer now than in the past ...in a pro-working class direction.
3. Page 4, beginning of 2nd full paragraph  
Delete: The real importance of ... is the real setback for the women's movement.
4. Pages 4-5, beginning of paragraph 4  
Delete: Although serious problems...independent, pro-working class direction.  
Insert: Although serious problems had existed in the radical movement from its inception, it appeared possible to win sections of it to a class program and orientation and ultimately to revolutionary socialism.  
Insert: Many individual women remain who can and should be won over to revolutionary socialist politics, but the potential no longer exists for (any significant section of) the radical women's movement (to be won over to a class program and orientation) - instead of "to go in this direction" as it now reads.
5. Page 17, full paragraphs 1-4  
Delete: Because of the nature of the period ...a stalemate and the group fell apart.
6. Page 28, paragraph 4  
Delete: we put ourselves forward as...of the bourgeois movement.  
Insert: (at end of paragraph) We put ourselves as revolutionary socialists forward as the only consistent defenders of and fighters for the rights and needs of women - counterposing our program and strategy to that of the bourgeois movement which accepts the limits of capitalism and will defend it first against the struggles of working women.  
Page 29, paragraph 1  
Delete: Our line toward ... but socialists as well)  
Insert: To those who politically support either NOW or WONAAC, we say that everywhere bourgeois democratic rights are limited by the exigencies of capital, that the full participation of women in production and society is a prerequisite to real equality, that only the class struggle will go beyond the first and liberate

the resources for the 2nd, that it is working women who will take the lead in bringing the struggle for the rights and needs of women to the class.

### The Radical Movement - Part 2

Insert under III PERSPECTIVES FOR IS WORK-Our Past Work in the Women's Movement: An Evaluation and the Middle Class Women's Movement - Part 2 of "Middle Class Radicalism" by Margaret B.

#### Motivations

The document's discussion of the radical movement appears contradictory at points. While it refers to the inevitable tendency of declassed movements to decline in the absence of a working class movement it refers in other places to the potential of the radical movement, not just a section of it, it move in a pro-working class direction.

While it refers to the contradictory nature of the politics of radical women, it seems to suggest that they, unlike the reformists, might have provided some significant leadership to working class women.

While the document points out the difference between being "pro-working class" and understanding the centrality of the class struggle, it does not conclude from this that we should have placed more emphasis on this than we did - arguing for a class program and placing an emphasis on the role of the working class as a whole, rather than simply on working women as the only stable base for an independent movement. It suggests that the main thing wrong with the Working Women's Organizing Committee was that it didn't orient toward working women. As these were "pro-working class radicals" we should have attempted to win them to our general politics, from which a specific approach toward working women or the radical movement would have made sense, rather than decrying the use of expressions by the women like "as socialists we should...etc."

Finally, the document says that we are the revolutionary wing of the women's movement. While we may have been the revolutionary wing of the radical movement which left open the question of reform or revolution, we are not a wing of the bourgeois movement today. This movement defends capitalism first, is therefore hostile even to radicals, and will not consistently defend or fight for even the bourgeois democratic rights of women. While we may support demands or struggles of that movement, we do not politically support the movement itself. It is not that we are for more than the bourgeois reformists, we are for something different.

#### The SWP

##### 7. Page 9, paragraph 5

Delete: They must however...**impact** on the working class.

Substitute: In fact, it was **the** bankruptcy of the independent radical movement which **laid** the basis for the temporary success of the SWP in its **attempt** to substitute itself for the reformists by organizing **coalitions** that were limited by definition to democratic demands.

### Motivation

It was the SWP that initially tapped the potential for a broad women's rights movement and went on to mislead it. The radicals, sectarian as they were, had been incapable, expelling the SWP from their organizations in a thoroughly Stalinist fashion. That the SWP failed so miserably is as indicative of the impossibility in this period of attempting to maintain a movement independent of both classes - i.e., a radical movement, as much as it is indicative of the SWP's sectarian, manipulative approach.

### II. MIDDLE CLASS RADICALISM - Part 1

Capitalism combines formal equality with economic inequality and hence social inequality. Everywhere the exercise of bourgeois democratic rights is limited by the domination of wage labor by capital. The denial of the bourgeois democratic rights themselves to a particular group is only a reflection of their oppressed or subordinate social position that results from the demands of capital.

Revolutionary Socialists have always supported struggles and participated in the struggles of the working class for formal equality because they lay bare the fundamental conflict - the conflict between wage labor and capital. Yet the question of the oppression of women is not merely a question of formal equality. Lenin and Engels point this out:

"But the Soviet system is the last decisive struggle for the abolition of classes, for economic and social equality.

Democracy, even democracy for those who were oppressed by capitalism, including the oppressed sex, is not enough for us.

"The chief task of the working women's movement is to fight for economic and social equality, and not only formal equality, for women. The chief thing is to get women to take part in socially productive labor, to liberate them from 'domestic slavery'...." Lenin on the Emancipation of Women, p. 80.

"The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary it provides the field on which it is fought out. And, similarly, the peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as the manner, of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels - Selected Works, p. 510. (Emphasis added.)

It has been this notion - that democracy was not enough - that has distinguished the radical women's movement from the reformist women's movement. His-

torically, and today, the form that this has taken has been the call for the abolition of the family. The precise meaning of this has not always been clear. As was noted before, bourgeois democracy opposed on paper the inheritance of rights and property through the family. Yet the radical women's movement, basing itself on this somewhat superficial analysis of the oppression of women under capitalism, has sometimes seen the call for the abolition of the family as a unit of inheritance as the sine qua non of women's liberation. Others have seen the nuclear family as a living arrangement (as opposed to the extended family, some non-blood related communal family, or some other arrangement) as intrinsically oppressive to women. Hence they have called for the Nuclear family as a living arrangement to be abolished. While it would be inappropriate here to discuss roommate and lifestyle preferences, it can be said that such a call is neither democratic nor revolutionary. If it can be likened to anything it can be likened to the bureaucratic collectivist (or state capitalist if one prefers) call for forced collectivization. Engels called for the quality possessed by the individual family as being the economic unit of society to be abolished, not for the abolition of the individual family per se.\*

The best of the radical women's movement (unfortunately never a coherent and consistent tendency) has seen that the full and equal participation of women in production, the prerequisite for her real equality on all levels, demands social responsibility for housework and childcare, which in turn means that this responsibility now possessed to a greater or lesser extent by the family will be abolished. Interestingly enough, even the best of the radical women's movement have placed little emphasis on the full and equal participation of women in production. More emphasis has been placed on social responsibility for housework and childcare. Yet this demand in and of itself is no more than a democratic demand. Like the demand for complete public education, it says that all should have the same opportunity regardless of birth. As a demand of the working class it can be a demand for a greater share of the surplus value, but does not in and of itself challenge the control over that surplus value. As the working class struggles for this demand as part of its entire program it will find that it cannot be completely realized short of nationalization of industry and the banks under workers control, short of socialist revolution, short of expropriating the expropriators.

The struggle for women's liberation per se is itself a transitory phenomenon. Programmaticly it resolves itself in either a reformist (bourgeois democratic) or a revolutionary direction, thus ceasing to be a struggle for women's liberation per se. There are no other programs for women's liberation than bourgeois democracy (which ultimately collapsed into faction) or revolutionary socialism because there are no other class interests than those of the bourgeoisie and those of the proletariat.

A movement cannot chart a course independent of the two powerful classes, yet this was what the women's liberation movement set out to do by definition. As was discussed above, its call for "the abolition of the family" finds its fullest fruition in the struggle for women's liberation per se. Barring this,

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\*The individual family, the private family, the bourgeois family, the patriarchal family, the traditional family--all of these expressions seem to have been used interchangeably in the socialist movement and radical movement without what is meant by ever being clear. If we are speaking of any thing other than the abolition of the bourgeois family as a unit of inheritance of rights and property, the most correct formulation would be that the family as we know it today will wither away.

it finds its own negation as a movement which tacitly accepts bourgeois democracy, thus ceasing to be a movement for women's liberation at all.

## Part 2

The radical women's movement by definition limited and limits itself to demands of special relevance to women. As was pointed out above, this is inherently contradictory. While sections of the Movement were subjectively revolutionary to the extent that the movement had a program at all (and for the most part it didn't, putting forward only ideas and projects) it was one limited to democratic demands. So that while revolutionary socialists supported and worked to build that movement, it was necessary to fight the dominant politics and program of that movement. How one does this is an often disputed question.

In our propaganda, we should always have explained the contradictory nature of the dominant politics of the women's liberation movement, argued for our program and the working class as the only class that would consistently fight for that program--that is as the only class in whose interest women's liberation. We should also, in the course of actual struggle have attempted to win them to a working class program through linking demands that are specifically addressed to the needs of women to those which are specifically addressed to the needs of the working class as a whole.

At a point, it was correct to call on the women's liberation movement to take up agitational campaigns addressed to the needs of working women. However, these should not have been motivated on the basis of working women as the only stable base for an independent women's movement. They should have been argued for in the context of a general class program and working women as the best means to reach the entire working class--the only class that can liberate women. It is only with this understanding that one moves beyond proworking class radicalism.

In the fall and winter of the 1970-71 the bankruptcy of the radical movement (it's nation-wide expulsion of the SWP and attempts to turn its organizations into "cadre" organizations) laid the basis for the temporary hegemony of the SWP. The SWP attempted to substitute itself for the less militant NOW by organizing broad coalitions around a four point program of democratic demands and "mass action". Finding that the action was not mass enough, it dissolved these coalitions into the abortion coalition. While in retrospect we can see that the attempt to organize an opposition to WONAAC was in vain because the organization itself collapsed, the crucial mistake was the political focus of the attempt. While it was a confused one, what stood out was the call for the abortion campaign to be a "women's liberation" campaign and Free Abortion on Demand because this is the only way it will be accessible to working and poor women. While the latter was not incorrect which should have placed it in the context of the argument that everywhere democratic rights are limited by the exigencies of capital especially in periods such as the present, linked it to the call for taxing corporate profits to pay for clinics, the working class as the only class, etc. This would have provided us with a political bridge to the IS and its activities.

It is today apparent that the organizations of the independent women's liberation movement are bankrupt and that there is no strategy for building these organizations. We state this in our propaganda and point out the way

in which the politics of the radical movement paved the way for the hegemony of the reformists. We point out that the way forward lies in the struggle of the working class and that it is working women who will take the lead in advancing the demands of women in the working class movement and in organizing a mass movement women's movement that will challenge the reformists and be uncontent with bourgeois democracy.

In the immediate future we will recruit women's liberationists primarily through educational and propagandistic work--our press, forums, literature tables, etc.--rather than through participation in their organizations and joint campaigns or the like. Branches that have the resources for the latter should be encouraged to do so.

We point out to radical women that revolutionary socialists, while not perfect, have been the most consistent defenders of and most ardent fighters for the rights and needs of women. We seek to win them to our politics and organization as the nucleus for a revolutionary party--without which a revolutionary socialist women's movement will be for nought.

### Part 3

Radicalism in general is by its very nature a transitory phenomenon--both organizationally and politically because it corresponds to neither the ruling class nor the working class. It cannot launch stable organizations independent of the capitalist class nor can it launch a consistent program independent of the capitalist class. There are only two consistent programs: the program of bourgeois democracy (which ultimately collapses into the program of fascism) and the program of revolutionary socialism.\*\*

It is a half-way house. It can develop in response to the failure of liberalism and grow and develop as did the radical movements of the 60s. Yet it can provide no alternative to liberalism. Although it may be against capitalism, it is not for socialism. Although it may be against the rule of the present ruling class, it is not for the rule of the working class.

No doubt sections of these movements were subjectively revolutionary and no doubt the fulfillment of their desires, often so profoundly expressed, required revolution. Nevertheless, the programs of these movements were not revolutionary: they were for the most part limited to democratic demands. While these movements played an important role in challenging the legitimacy of the system and in so doing contributed to the developing consciousness of the working class, they left in their wake only ardent reformers firmly committed to the Democratic Party and a much smaller number (but not at all insignificant number) of revolutionary socialists.

This should come as no surprise to us. It is only the struggle of the working class that has any historical direction; i.e., it is only the working class that in order to defend its immediate needs is forced and able to go beyond the limits of capitalism.

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\*\*Sections of radical movements must make a conscious political break with capitalism and only when the working class struggle is at front and center stage are significant sections ever broken away. In the absence of this, radical movements whither away: individuals and groups moving to revolutionary socialism, the majority sinking back into liberalism.

## Part 4--Radical Women's Movements

Historically, it has only been in periods of a mass working class upheaval that a women's movement has emerged that has been able to sustain itself and grow around a program independent of the capitalist class. While radical middle-class movements have emerged, they have withered away, leaving in their wake only organizations firmly committed to capitalism and limiting the struggles of women to a program of bourgeois democracy. Other than the inevitable impact upon working class consciousness that these movements had and the spawning of some revolutionaries, there has been little continuity between these movements and the emergence of a class movement of women.

William L. O'Neill in Everyone Was Brave describes the process of conservatism that the "feminist" movement underwent in the period of reaction following the Civil War. It reemerged in the early 1890s as a thoroughly respectable movement, with much of the same personnel, ridden of its earlier attacks on the oppressiveness of the system and the nuclear family. While the 1890s saw the greatest industrial depression to that date, the populist risings, and the Homestead and Pullman strikes, the National Woman Suffrage Association pursued its narrow program of state-by-state ratification of the right to vote.

Even in periods of general social upheaval when radical middle class organizations were strongly flavored with pro-working class democracy, international capitalist crisis has left revolutionary socialists as the only defenders of the rights and needs of the masses of women. In such periods, while individuals and groups have been broken away, radical middle class movements as a whole organized around democratic demands, have become not just deficient movements but more movements betraying the class.

With the rise of Progressivism in the early 1900s, "social feminism" (that section of the movement which concerned itself with somewhat broader questions than the "feminists") gained adherents. There were a number of organizations formed around a variety of reforms, perhaps the most significant being the National Consumer's League and the National Women's Trade Union League. The latter was an organization initially of upperclass women to forward the interests of poor and working women. It was a most significant force in the endorsement and building of the September 1909 Triangle Shirtwaist Company Strike, and through this strike its membership and resources increased tremendously. However, by 1912, thoroughly embroiled with Comper's AFL, it reluctantly cut off its aid to the strike of textile workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts when the AFL began attacking the IWW leadership of the strike and attempting to break the strike. Thus as the level of the class struggle rose it was revolutionaries in the IWW and the left-wing of the Socialist Party that were left to defend the interests of working women. While neither the NCL nor the NTUL were initially enthusiastic about the war and continued to agitate for progressive legislation for women, they like all others save conscious revolutionaries sought to avoid activities that might link them to "Bolshévism" and other such evils.

While this is in no way a complete history of the struggles of women in the US, it should be enough to note that radicalism--even the best pro-working class radicalism--cannot provide leadership to the working class.

They are inherently politically and organizationally unstable and in the absence of a working class upsurge go over to bourgeois democracy. Even in the



presence of a working class upsurge pro-working class radicalism is a deficient political approach. It goes over to bourgeois democracy and consequently reaction or to thorough-going revolutionary socialism.

The dynamic of the independent women's liberation movement and the SWP-dominated movement and our role in them must be examined in light of this. We underestimated the importance of revolutionary socialism as the only consistent defender of and fighter for the rights and needs of women and the class struggle.

### III. THE WORKING CLASS

12. Page 2, line 3

Delete: Primarily around job centered issues

13. Page 20, middle of paragraph 2, after "in the struggle for socialism and liberation"

Insert: "The Working Class Movement" Part 1

14. Page 20, after "Where to Industrialize"

Insert: "the Working Class Movement" Part 2

15. Page 20, first paragraph under "Where to Industrialize", line 3

Insert: (Industrialization of women) in order to reach the above mentioned strata must become one of the major...etc.

16. Page 21, line 4 "We believe socialist women...other women."

Change: We believe socialist women have a particular role to play in providing leadership to other women workers, so while we do not oppose women industrializing into situations where they will be isolated from other women for the purposes of carrying out our general perspective, our overall thrust must be to industrialize women into jobs situations where they can be in contact with other women, preferably on the job, but at least within the union local. This is key to carrying out our perspective on convincing women militants to take the lead in a fight to make the unions take up the fight for the rights and needs of women and on politicizing the entire working class on the question.

17. Page 21, second full paragraph, line 10, after "...to reach the militant women in the industries"

Insert: and unions

18. Page 21, after Program and Perspectives: A Working Class Women's...

Insert: "The Working Class Movement" Part 3

19. Page 21, third paragraph, "Because we believe...a major goal

Change: Because we believe women workers in key industries and unions will best be able to provide leadership for the broad strata of women militants, a major goal of our...etc.

20. Page 22, second full para., line 9, after "...not simply equal rights demands

Insert: "The Working Class Movement Part 4

- 21. Page 24, before Male Workers and Socialist Men  
Insert: The Working Class Movement Part 5
- 22. Page 21, at the end of Where to Industrialize  
Insert: The Working Class Movement Part 2A

The Working Class Movement--Part 1

The Emerging Strata of Women Militants

While there have been hesitant steps at organization taken, consciousness and activity around issues of special concern to women is atomized. While cross-union caucuses and women's conferences have been held in Los Angeles, Wisconsin, and Chicago they are largely bureaucratic shells. Individual activity prevails: the filing of complaints with the EEOC, court suits, and one woman campaigns against specific companies.

The fact that consciousness and activity in the working class on the question of the oppression of women is atomized should not blind us to the fact that a strata of women militants is developing. It is to these individuals and grouplets that we look to bring the struggle for women's rights and needs to the unions, to the rank-and-file movement, and to the masses of women. They are the key to the development of a class movement.

Like the emerging strata of working class militants in general, women militants are not a homogeneous grouping. Most significant are black women who have tended to be in the leadership of fights wherever they are: in the CWA, in the AFT, in the postal unions, in new unions in hospitals, services, and colleges, in public aid and in welfare rights and other community-based struggles. Older women trade unionists have played a role in pressuring the unions to take up the demands of women and in some instances have participated in the formation of local caucuses and organizations of men and women. Young white women who were part of or identified with the radical movements of the 60s have played a significant role in the AFT and in other unions in public employment. Finally, women militants, unassociated with any specific institutions have developed through the Black, Latin, and various community movements--often, though, the more political.

There has been much discussion over the question of whether women will move first around questions of the oppression of women, general shop floor questions, union questions, or broader social questions. We have tended to see motion around women's demands per se as the indicator for the potential of a working women's movement. While we expect no movement to emerge that does not have as a central focus the demand for equality for women, it should be clear that women in limited numbers are already moving in response to a variety of questions. This in no way dampens our assessment of the potential for a mass women's movement because consciousness generalizes in more than one direction. We expect working class women militants, regardless of the particular issue that has impelled them into motion, to come against the barrier of the oppression of women, to begin to understand it, and begin to desire to fight against it. (In the same way we expect that those militants who have been impelled into motion as a result of their oppression as women to come to understand and desire to fight against a variety of broader class questions.) It is our task with women militants to convince them of the importance of their role

in the emergence of a mass women's movement and the adoption by the entire working class of a program which addresses itself to the needs of the masses of women. The breadth of concerns of women militants should tell us that it would be a mistake to focus our appeal to them only on this basis. That black women are playing a leading role with respect to class questions in general is testimony to this.

## The Working Class Movement--Part 2

### Industrialization

Our primary route to women militants at this point lies in industrialization. Yet, not all women militants are located in our major industrialization priorities, nor are they all located on the shop or office floor. Organization in these major unions however--UAW, CWA, AFT, AFSCME--will do most to draw out other women militants, by providing both a political and organizational polw, so it is here that we must concentrate our resources. It is clear that our interest in building groups in these major areas is not only to advance the needs of those particular women, but also for the role they can play in the consciousness and activity of other women militants and the ranks and file movement as a whole.

### Part 2A--Industrialization

Industrialization of women cadre in our priority areas has been thwarted by the lack of political clarity on our general labor perspective and on our women's perspective. The discussion of our experience and perspectives in union work has already done much to ameliorate this situation. But given our limited women cadre that lack of a national focus has meant that women who might otherwise have industrialized have not because they were both alone and/or had no idea what to do. The concentration of industrialization of women in one major union on a national scale might do much to encourage further industrialization in other priority unions. It would ameliorate the problem of both isolation and the lack of national experience and hence perspectives for relating to working class women. The NAC and women's coordinator should be directed to discuss such a possibility.

Given the heterogeneity and scattered nature of women militants the importance of establishing a social presence for the IS in order to reach them cannot be underestimated. Our press is the most important tool for this, but its use has tended to be limited by its narrow focus on the activities of ranks and file caucuses on the one hand and international questions on the other. If it is to be a useful tool in bringing into contact with women militants and educating them to the central issues it will have to take up broader social questions and attempt to draw more general lessons from its discussions of rank and file activities, discuss racism, the housing crisis, the activities of NOW and women tradeunionists, etc.

## The Working Class Movement--Part 3

### The Unions and Industrial Organization

As the only institution of the working class it is the unions that we call on to take up the struggle for women's liberation. We believe that the formation of women's caucuses in the unions drawing support from rank and file groups will be necessary to effect this demand.

The approach of the union bureaucracy toward the democratic struggle of women for equality cannot be understood apart from their general strategy of business unionism. While this has been challenged by the "progressive trade" union bureaucrats, it remains the dominant strategy. Such a strategy seeks to make gains for a limited section of the workforce through parleying with the capitalist class. Wages are supposedly maintained through limiting the supply of labor and through increasing productivity at the expense of working conditions. Such a strategy endangers even the better off sections of the workforce and surely cannot win gains for women. To the extent that this section of the bureaucracy has taken any interest in the question of the oppression of women, it has limited itself to contract bargaining demands and the endorsement of legislation. While the progressive bureaucrats have taken a more serious attitude toward the concerns of organized women, often their base, their program is a limited one. While they may call for organizing the unorganized more often than the conservatives, their basic strategy is to rely upon lobbying in the legislature for progressive legislation and supporting Democrats to protect the interests of unorganized women. They take little more interest in the unemployed and housewives than do the conservatives. The situation of unionized women workers is conditioned by the fact that the vast majority of women workers are unorganized and the majority of women housewives, underemployed, or unemployed. This is a fact which many women unionists are well aware of and the volatility of this issue should not be underestimated.

Because the progressive trade union bureaucrats are the only organized political tendency fighting for the rights and needs of women or calling for the independent organization of women is tied most fundamentally to a critique of their strategy.

#### The Working Class Movement--Part 4

##### The Nature of the Period

The fuller participation of women in society has always been linked to the expansion of the economy. Only the Russian working class was able to defend and advance the rights of women in the face of international capitalist crisis. Thus today, in a period of economic decline the future of the masses of women is intimately linked to the future of the entire working class. The objective conditions which make even limited gains possible only through massive struggle face the masses of women just as they face the entire working class. So the central ideas of the transitional program take on ever greater importance to the struggles of the masses of women.

#### The Working Class Movement--Part 5

##### Shop and Local Union Organization

While women militants will look to the unions at this point as a means to spread the struggle through its visibility and direct contact with other militants, their relationship to rank and file organizations will be somewhat different. In some cases individual militants and groups will develop in the context of general rank and file organization (especially where the workforce is integrated). Here we will encourage women militants in the context of our general program for rank and file organization (outlined in MacKenzie) to take the lead in pressing for the organization to take up the needs of women in the industry and union. Whether or not and at what point this means organizing a women's caucus in the organization cannot be predetermined. Socialists must be

cognizant of the social relations of men and women that tend to force women out of activity and call on rank and file organizations to take measures to overcome them.

Where individual militants and groups develop separate from general rank and file organizations, while building these groups among women workers we attempt to educate them to the activity of the general rank and file movement and encourage them to solicit the support of other groups for their program. As has been said, our conception of class unity is not a narrow organizational one but rather a programmatic one.

Central to any fight in the unions or attempt to affect the rank and file movement will be the organization of women on the shop floor and in the union local. Such organization will initially cohere in different ways in different situations. It would be a mistake to press for the organization of a group solely around women's rights when that does not appear to concern the women, or to drop the question because it does not appear of concern and organize a group solely around general shop and union questions. Our program for the organization of any group of workers is based on an analysis of the objective situation facing them in their industry and the role of their unions. We attempt to elaborate a strategy for overcoming this situation and with women militants we point out the role that they have to play in the unions and in the rank and file movement. How and when we do this is a tactical question based on an assessment of the consciousness of the workers and whether or not we will be understood by anyone. There is no point in an organization's adoption of a program which no one save for the IS'ers can defend. Nor is there any point to IS'ers building and participating in workers' organizations if they do not attempt to cohere and educate a layer of far-sighted leadership. In many instances we can put forward steps which some workers will agree are necessary, but for reasons less broad than those we put forward. The struggle is still advanced, while more advanced militants are educated to the broader tasks of the movement. Forces are developed that can intervene when questions become more critical and most workers begin to understand the needs for "30 for 40", a program addressed to blacks, a labor party, or whatever.

Even more than working class militants in general we will find that women militants are short on the skills necessary to call and hold democratic meetings, form organizations, intervene in unions, write leaflets, etc. Such training will be an important function of ISers.

### The Working Class

#### Motivation

I have tried to describe here a broader strata of women militants and the dynamic of the role that I think they will play than is taken up in the document. The document's focus on women in key industries and I add unions is placed in the context of reaching this broader strata. Women are for the most part not found in basic industry, auto and electronics (the latter light industry) being the most significant exceptions. So while the women that we reach here may tend to be more political and in a position to play a more significant role, their significance lies in their ability to present themselves as a pole to other women militants who can in turn reach out to broader sectors, who can in turn etc. It is black women who are the most significant section of this strata, so central efforts must be made to work with and reach them.

Delete "primarily around job center issues" because women militants are and will be responding to a variety of questions: racism, housing, the schools, prices, welfare, etc. Women militants on the job and in the unions will ultimately have to present themselves as a pole to these women and we through our press must as well take up these questions.

On industrialization, I have here again attempted to place this in the context of a broader strata.. The concentration in one major union on a national scale is suggested at least temporarily to overcome the isolation and confusion that women have encountered attempting to industrialize--main blockade to industrializing. Whether this is viable needs further discussion. Comrades have been unsatisfied with the traditional listing of CWA, UAW, etc.

Our call for the organization of women workers makes no sense outside of the recognition that the present strategies and organizations of the progressive Trade Union Bureaucrats are wrong. So the call is placed in this context.

The significance of the transitional program in this period is elaborated on, simply to strengthen the document's discussion of it from the point of view of the needs of women.

Finally, a section is added on organization of women on the shop floor and Local Union organization. Much of this is implicit in the document, but collected here for the purpose of clarity. A distinction is drawn between what our program is and how we present that program...a distinction often lost in the organization.

IV. THE SELF-ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST WOMEN AND THE IS

Page 18, paragraphs 3-4

Delete: The lack of coverage in Worker's Power...of this retreat. But without the pressure...back into indifferences.

Page 19, bottom

Delete: and we encourage and support their self-organization.

Motivation:

The fact that the women's caucus has "collapsed" is no sign of retreat on the part of the IS with respect to questions concerning the oppression of women. It is a sign that it was not a viable grouping for either dealing with the subordination of women in the organization or external work. Nor is the lack of coverage in Worker's Power, since there was no more before than there is today. The organization has not retreated.. It has simply not made significant advances in the training and education of the entire membership and in the development of theory and perspectives. The latter is true for a host of questions, but shows itself more seriously with respect to women because of the deficiency of the tradition in general.

Women in the IS have the right to form their own "organizations" as does any group. Whether or not the IS encourages and supports their self-organization (exactly what is meant by this is not clear) is contingent on the purpose of this self-organization. The implication is for the purpose of ending the subordination of women, yet it suggests no program for doing this. In the

absence of a series of measures to be taken by the organization, and the organization of a group to fight for those measures, such a group flounders, as it has in the past and will do in the future.

## V. THE FAMILY

### 8. Page 8, first para., line 10

Change: the class society that bolsters up the family structure

To: the class society that determines the character of the family structure and women's position in it.

### 9. Page 19, para. 3, line 9

Delete: by which we mean not only equal rights...underlies women's oppression

Insert: by which we mean not only formal equality, but also real social and economic equality through the full and equal participation of women in production and society and the social responsibility for housework and child care. This means the withering away of the family as we know it today.

### 10. Page 19, para. 4

Delete: But conversely a classless society...unified classwide struggle under the leadership of the revolutionary party.

Insert: A central task of the worker's state and especially working women will be the achievement of the full participation of women in production and the social responsibility for housework and childcare. This will lead to the withering away of the present family structure. This process is integral to the development of freely willed relationships characteristic of a classless society.

We seek to build an international revolutionary socialist women's movement under the leadership of an international as a crucial force in this process. Today we support and call for organizations of working class women and seek to win them to our program and ultimately to the leadership of the revolutionary party.

Such organizations will play an important role in winning housewives, unemployed, and middle-class women to the revolution.

### 11. Page 28, para. 1

Delete: Because of the role...is the exploitation of the working class. The destruction of the bourgeois family...of the bourgeois state.

#### Motivation:

The document refers to the private, the bourgeois, and the nuclear family interchangeably. The references are unclear, the implications of some could be wrong. I have changed the formulations where possible to somewhat less controversial ones and deleted those that demanded a full substitution. By way of explanation I have written "The Bourgeois Democratic Revolution, The Family, and the Position of Women." Less controversial references are made to the family in "Middle Class Radicalism". I do not believe that the NC can take up a theoretical discussion at this time but would like the issue left open.

## INTERNATIONAL PROPOSAL - Sy Landy

The I.S.-U.S.A. as a Marxist revolutionary socialist organization has committed itself to the building of a revolutionary party in America. Concomitant with such a struggle in the U.S. must be the fight to build a new international. Socialism cannot be built in one country and the working class and its tasks are international in character.

In an internal situation in the United States where a revolutionary group is based upon an overwhelming number of whites and few blacks the danger of errors of chauvinism is great. So too an organization based on one segment of the working class, i.e., a national segment, runs the larger danger of being nationally chauvinist. The grosser and more obvious dangers of such isolation can be more easily avoided than the subtle more insidious ones. We recognize that this is true even more for a revolutionary organization based in the heartland of imperialism.

In the present period the interpenetration of capital throughout the world has set up the potential for an even more profound linkage of workers in various countries in response to this phenomena.

The need for an international is an objective fact. As is generally true, now the subjective possibilities lag far behind. Never the less the task placed upon revolutionary leadership is not to wait "until times change" but to fight to the extent possible to achieve every step necessary for the formation of a true World Party of Socialism.

Unfortunately we recognize that an international is not a very immediate possibility. This of course is affected by the relatively small size of the groupings we consider fraternal, but this in itself is not the decisive criteria. A number of the groups we have relations with have increasingly participated in the living class struggles and have significantly altered their compositions in having both larger numbers and larger proportions of advanced workers in their ranks. The dynamic to the left of the mass Social Democratic and Communist Parties lies in their hands in at least a few countries and their potential for growth and leadership seem large.

More decisively, there is an absence of a common general world outlook and program. Unfortunately as well there has been little discussion and argument over these questions between the groups. We have fundamental theoretical differences over which there is little dialogue.

We of course believe that international forums, bulletins, joint actions and discussions are important. We also believe that in the future, a closer-knit federative body may be a step forward. However, as internationalists we believe that the world party should be democratic centralist in character. This demands the existence of a leadership which has proved itself so profoundly in the class struggle that the various sections look to it for guidance in a real way and not just through formalism. No section, group or body of leadership has yet come near achieving this. This is not only true of the groups we are associated with, but of the pseudo-internationals--The United Secretariat of the Fourth International ostensibly under democratic centralism is a collection of warring groups following their own national lines and differing in theory and



practice as to how to best achieve hegemony over the petty bourgeoisie. The Healyite International Committee is centralist but hardly democratic. Confined largely to English speaking countries and under the complete control of Healy it bears out Marx's contention about the second repetition of history as being farce. The bourgeois British Empire in its heyday was far from funny.

With all this said and done it is still necessary to work toward the creation of an international, consciously and deliberately. Arguing that building one's national party is the best contribution while engaging in essentially peripheral work internationally raises the suspicion that the international work is to a degree face saving rather than integral.

## II

The conferences sponsored by I.S.-G.B., I.S.-U.S.A., and Lutte Ouvriere-- and this year by L.O. alone--serve the valuable function of a general forum for a variety of tendencies. While the formal discussions have been relatively unproductive, the auxiliary discussions between various tendencies, informally, have been promising. However the basis for invitation is highly loose, seeming to center around general propositions like commitment of the groups to proletarian, Marxist, revolutionary politics, general anti-Stalinist, anti-capitalist politics and dedication to the building of revolutionary parties. Our quarrel, at this stage, is not the relative looseness of the political basis for attendance but the fact that even these are so vaguely interpreted that the conferences attract groups stretching from good rich soup to lean hard nuts.

Secondly, the discussions are pitched to fall between two stools, sort of a mixture of "middle level" analysis and group reports and peripheral cross criticisms. Consequently the discussions rarely touch upon the real fundamental disagreements and agreements. Neither do they discuss concrete projects of international cooperation which could lead to closer and more profound ties.

## III

1. We will continue to attend the L.O. conferences should they be maintained but will not co-sponsor them under the present ground rules.

2. We call upon the British I.S. both because of its relative strength and our areas of agreement to formalize the present sessions for international fraternal representatives they have initiated at the end of their annual conference. We suggest the agenda might include such topics as the "Russian" question, the question of permanent revolution and the national struggles, the question of international program. A second type of discussion we propose is on "practical" questions of cooperation. This could feature proposals for joint work on international labor cooperation, international defense cases for political prisoners, coordination viz a viz penetrating the so-called Socialist countries, etc. Naturally, votes only bind those who agree to collaborate.

3. We believe that the facilities for international contact work should be expanded and not only in the more frequent exchange of documents and letters.

It is necessary to send travellers to various areas of the world. British IS has done this to some extent in Europe but given their resources we think it could be made more coherent, deliberate and extensive. It is urgent that we not confine our work to metropolitan countries. Naturally as an act of international solidarity we expect that the comrades, whether they be from us, British IS, or others will make available information on the other groups and set up contact. Of course, we are not for "non-aggression" pacts and we expect that each group will communicate its evaluation of the others as objectively as possible.

4. We believe that the British IS should issue an International Bulletin containing documents from conferences, programs and basic theoretical and perspectives documents from the various groups. This should be mimeo and in French and English, initially, with the submitting groups responsible for translation. Inclusion and non-inclusion can be left up to British IS at this point.

5. The American IS commits itself to sending a traveller to Canada to aid in the creation of a fraternal revolutionary group there. We have failed to carry out our internationalist duties in this respect. The recent past events in Quebec, only a short distance from us, should have demanded a response from us. In the coming year a responsible comrade will have to go there, based upon a preliminary political perspective for which our leading committees will be responsible. We recognize that the finances and loss for a time of an experienced cadre is serious, but it is necessary.

6. We have ephemeral contacts with certain Latin American groups. Through correspondence and exchanges we should attempt to develop these. When and if these ripen a trip may be possible, but given the sparseness of contact and resources this is not yet on the agenda. Comrades going to Latin America on their own are expected to contact us and see if their trips can be made politically productive.

7. We have a particular responsibility to aid in the development of a revolutionary cadre party in Puerto Rico and the N.Y. Branch which is active amongst Puerto Ricans should pay heed to developing leads for us on the island. Even a correspondent for W.P. would be a big step forward.

8. At this juncture we do not define the range of groups we wish to participate with in conferences, bulletins, joint work, more narrowly than L.O. does. We however expect the British IS at its conference to be stricter in its interpretation of the general propositions as we will be in our efforts. We do not view intellectual elitists nor groups committed to "deep entry"--burial--in Social Democratic or Stalinist Parties as people we think it serious to discuss with in the context of those discussions being fruitful for the creation of a revolutionary international. Specifically, we have nothing in common with the Labor Committees or the Revolutionary Socialist League (GB) and see no reason for their presence at politically directed conferences. At this juncture we are indifferent to the attendance of the Bordigist comrades from Italy but are doubtful that discussion with them is too meaningful.

9. We take steps to publicize our International Bulletin amongst our members and make it available to sister groups overseas. The IS leading committees shall take the opportunity as occasion arises to place their editorials in various issues.

10. We make an effort to have the function of International Secretary be performed on a part time basis either through reallocation of work in the N.O., possible addition to the office complement or through the services of a non-staff comrade under the directions of our leading bodies.

11. The forthcoming Theoretical Journal should view as part of its duties engagement in comradely polemic with international tendencies over important questions. Workers Power: (in relation to this see DP Workers Power Proposal to NC).

12. The NC instructs the NAC to present a document on the International Scene to an NC prior to the next Convention. This document which we regard as being of fundamental importance must receive intensive organizational discussion prior to its presentation at our next Convention. That this be a discussion at our next Convention is also hereby mandated. The NAC shall be responsible for initial document(s) and counter proposals being solicited. The NAC shall instruct the branches to hold discussions on such documents even prior to the normal pre-convention discussion period. Buttressing, contributory, etc. documents and discussion pieces or collateral subjects--e.g., the "Russian" question etc. are welcomed and necessary but the NC makes no determination at this point as disposition of such documents other than their circulation to the membership and, as desirable, the interested public. The NC instructs the NAC to outline the International Document in enough detail to indicate its scope and coverage to prospective writers.

Concrete attitudes on the political nature of a new international should flow from and be included in the International Document. Consequently, this document is of necessity limited and general in character. A more serious strategical and tactical document should await the decision on the proposed International Perspective.

## PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS: WORKERS POWER PERSPECTIVES

Dave F.

### INTRODUCTION

This document is presented to the NC as a step toward establishing a basic political perspective for the development of our newspaper, which is the most important external publication of the IS. The document reflects the very limited experience and expertise of the author, and should not be taken in any way as a technical blueprint. For this reason the document stresses "fundamental questions", i.e. the basic character and tasks of the newspaper. A discussion of such a question is necessary at this time because the content and usefulness of WP cannot be substantially improved until basic goals are established by the NC and the editorial board clearly mandated to carry them out. Among other things, any discussion of expanding the size or frequency of the publication is a complete waste of time until the political aims of the newspaper are not only established by the leading bodies but also accepted and internalized by the membership which carries the burden of financing and distributing it.

The perspective put forward here takes as its starting point the section of the Tasks and Perspectives document which briefly discusses the role of the newspaper as "the most important vehicle for...developing a widespread reputation and social presence for the IS and its ideas" through popularizing our social program and the strategy which flows from it (T and P, Ron T., p. 25). What must be accomplished in the next period is to develop a structured set of priorities for the press to carry out in order to accomplish its task of popularizing, elaborating, and concretizing our view of the period and the strategy for working class action, and the road to building a revolutionary socialist party.

I regret that this document has been completed only at the last minute (its original date of completion was to be Nov. 1), a fact which is due to the great difficulty experienced in trying to formulate the problems I see as being most crucial. Under the circumstances, it is not possible for comrades in disagreement to submit counterposed perspectives or amendments. For this reason it would be essentially undemocratic to request that the NC give final approval at this time. I propose instead that the document be discussed as an interim progress report and guidance to the NC, that it be voted on as an interim policy with full understanding of its tentative character, and that the editorial board be instructed to produce a more finished perspective for the next NC (it should be noted that the current draft has not even been discussed by the editorial board). If this motion is passed as a provisional guidance motion, I will attempt in the next few months, among other things, (1) to organize a supplementary discussion on various questions of format, style, and packaging which often come up and on which the E.B. should present a clear attitude, and (2) to present to the E.B. some motions to begin moving the over-all style, format and balance of the paper in a direction aimed to carry out the political perspective, on an experimental basis (this includes use of color, clearly defined sections of the paper, etc.)

## SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION AND ITS PRESS - SOME BASIC IDEAS

It is a commonplace that our goal is to make WORKERS POWER a "revolutionary workers' paper" - a paper which is focussed on the struggles of the working class both in the shops and throughout society. Our newspaper, like the organization as a whole, cannot be politically effective unless it becomes rooted in the life of the working class and begins to overcome the isolation of revolutionary socialism from even its advanced layers.

In capitalist society, all the mass media and established press are organs of the ruling class and proponents of bourgeois ideology. A crucial task of the socialist movement is to create a workers' press in opposition to the press and propoganda machine of the bourgeoisie. From this standpoint socialists participate actively in and help to initiate a wide variety of workers' publications, including the broad radical press, trade union press, and rank and file publications. All of these provide various important openings for the propogation of revolutionary ideas and can help to increase the self-confidence and independence of the working class.

This, however, is only the beginning and does not (as comrades sometimes seem to think) provide any perspective for the press of the IS. We insist on the paramount necessity of an independent revolutionary press, in which revolutionary ideas and politics can be put forward, explained, discussed and debated with the utmost clarity and precision - not in order to separate the revolutionary organization from the working class movement, but in order to crystallize a revolutionary wing within it and to win leadership on the basis of a revolutionary program.

WORKERS POWER, the public organ of the IS, must become this kind of vehicle for revolutionary politics. In particular, WP is the primary vehicle on a national scale for disseminating and winning an audience for the views of our political tendency - i.e. revolutionary third camp socialism. It is this which fundamentally distinguishes our press from any other kind of labor or radical publication. The point is that the basic task of WP as a propoganda vehicle for IS politics and program cannot be adequately carried out (for reasons discussed more fully below) by any other newspapers including those in which we play a leading role.

For a revolutionary organization with roots and a social presence inside the working class movement, the newspaper is the primary vehicle for the contact between the organization and the class. In particular, the newspaper at one and the same time (1) serves to educate the revolutionary cadre and most advanced layers of the class on the basic ideology and world view of the organization, and on the political line taken toward major events of the day, (2) arms the vanguard elements with the program and strategy through which to reach broader masses on a more elementary level, through concrete exposure of the conditions of life, work, etc. As such the revolutionary paper serves as a weapon for the politics of the revolutionary organization inside the working class, and expects to be judged by the advanced workers on the basis of the clarity and above all the honesty with which it presents those politics.

For the IS today, the importance of this kind of newspaper may be partially obscured by the fact that we have only a minimal presence inside the American working class, and are only beginning to develop such a presence (on a modest scale) through the dual process of industrialization and cohering political perspectives on industrial work. The smallness of our presence, which makes distribution on a mass scale impossible, leads some comrades to the viewpoint that we need a paper geared primarily or exclusively toward the immediate needs of caucus and contact work. This viewpoint is expressed in proposals for a paper focussed around immediate conditions facing masses of workers in the factories and capable of generating an enthusiastic broad response, together with generalized "revolutionary propaganda" around which to recruit the most radical.

Such a conception, which may appear attractive at first sight, is unfortunately not a proposal for a serious political newspaper. At this stage of development, most workers - even the radicalized layers - do not accept or see the need for an organized political response by the entire working class to the new period or sharpening capitalist attack. Without such an understanding, workers are prepared to engage in militant response to immediate conditions (struggles in which we aim to play an important role) but not to join the IS or any other revolutionary grouping. The decisive task for our paper, then, is to put forward and explain our views of the meaning of the capitalist offensive in order to help cohere and attract in our direction the stratum of workers (relatively small today, but which we expect to grow rapidly) open to a discussion of political strategy flowing from their immediate struggles.

It is crucial that we approach the problems of WP from this standpoint, rather than starting from the abstract need for "a paper for masses of workers". As Trotsky explained in 1935:

What is a 'mass paper'? The question is not new. It can be said that the whole history of the revolutionary movement has been filled with discussions of the 'mass paper'. It is the elementary duty of a revolutionary organization to make its political newspaper as accessible as possible to the masses. This task cannot be effectively solved except as a function of the growth of the organization and its cadres who must pave the way to the masses for the newspaper - since it is not enough, it is understood, to call a publication a 'mass paper' to have the masses accept it in reality. But quite often revolutionary impatience (which transforms itself easily into opportunistic impatience) leads to this conclusion: The masses do not come because our ideas are too complicated and our slogans too advanced. It is therefore necessary to simplify our program, lighten our slogans - in short, to throw out ballast. Basically this means: Our slogans must correspond not to the objective situation, not to the relations of classes, analyzed by the Marxist method, but must correspond to subjective appreciations (extremely superficial and inadequate) of what the 'masses' can or cannot accept. But

what masses? The mass is not homogeneous. It develops. It feels the pressure of events. It will accept tomorrow what it will not accept today. Our cadres will blaze the trail with increasing success for our ideas and slogans which prove themselves correct, because they are confirmed by the march of events and not by subjective and personal appreciations.

a mass paper is distinguished from a theoretical review or from an organ of cadres not by the slogans but by the manner in which they are presented. The cadre newspaper unfolds for its readers all the processes of the Marxist analysis. The mass paper only presents its results basing itself at the same time on the immediate experiences of the masses themselves. It is far more difficult to write in a Marxist manner for the masses than it is to write for cadres.

From this standpoint it is clear that for Trotsky, the problem was to popularize the Marxist program by drawing the lessons of the class struggle - not to reflect the current level of that struggle, nor to derive the program and political line of the newspaper from the existing level of consciousness or an assessment of "what the masses are ready for". In short, for Trotsky a "mass paper" was defined not by the size of the audience, per se, nor by watering down one's program, but by the manner in which the ideas and the program are presented in the press. Our goal is to make Workers Power a mass paper in this sense.

At the same time, as Trotsky also emphasizes, it is critical that the "slogans", the program, be put forward in a manner that makes them accessible to at least a stratum of the working class - at the very least, to those workers with radical or subjectively revolutionary consciousness or impulses. In this respect - the manner in which the revolutionary press advances its ideological and interventionist propoganda - it is engaged in a process of interaction with the working class which reflects the ongoing work of the organization.

At present, WORKERS POWER ought to be aimed at a fairly specific audience - not at the "average worker", nor at the "Communist cadre" which, unfortunately, has not yet been built, but at the emerging advanced layer discussed in Tasks and Perspectives, roughly, a layer which is looking for strategic ideas and conclusions. The audience will not be restricted to this group - it will range from our own membership and the radical milieu to advanced sectors of all movements engaged in struggle, but the press will emphasize the tasks facing the advanced workers, will be aimed primarily toward this layer, and will attempt to win other social groups to a strategy for revolution based on our program for the workers' movement.

At this point, it should be frankly acknowledged that WORKERS POWER has not been particularly successful in any respect: as a "mass paper" or a "paper for cadres," in putting forward a coherent program or in presenting whatever political analysis and conclusions it does contain to an advanced stratum of working class militants. Various comrades have pointed to aspects of the problem: the length of articles, their style and vocabulary,

the absence of a whole range of crucial articles and coverage, etc. The problem, however, is more fundamental than any of these things. At this point, the newspaper lacks even the most rudimentary conception of a basic set of slogans and demands to put forward consistently as the action line and fighting perspective of the IS. In the absence of even this minimal perspective, it is little wonder that each article in the paper appears as a thing-in-itself with no relation to the rest of the paper, and that the editorial board staggers indefinitely from issue to issue trying to gather an appropriate spread of miscellaneous features to fill the required number of pages on schedule. It is also unsurprising that the bulk of the membership finds the resulting product to be of little political use and generally not worth the trouble required to distribute it.

In the last several months, several improvements have been made. A start has been made in publishing educational articles (see below). A staff of writers resident in Detroit is being built up, and as a result Labor in Brief and International Report have been improved and systematized, and the writing of line articles on major questions has been facilitated, while the Editor has been freed for the job of editorial direction and writing. In terms of layout - a political question - an editorial page has been established giving our line prominence and emphasis. Most important, the paper has politically improved, in that it has begun to express more than the generalities of our belief in rank and file struggle - WORKERS POWER has begun to give prominence to the labor party question, the necessity for a unified response to the capitalist attack, etc. These improvements represent a bare beginning in the work that must be done. \*\*\*

#### WORKERS POWER AND THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE IS

As an ideological weapon, the primary role of WP is to express in popular form those aspects of our "fundamental program" which define the IS as a distinct political tendency. This includes, in particular, revolutionary opposition to both reactionary social systems in the world and to all imperialist war camps, the conception of working class leadership of the struggles of oppressed peoples and nations, and the necessity of a world revolutionary party to group together the most advanced layers of the working class.

The best recent example of what is meant by the "role of WP as an ideological weapon" was the series of educational articles on elections under capitalism, which used the concrete experience of the election process to explain the class character of bourgeois democracy, obviously without any attempt at theoretical completeness. (For the immediate future, one of our priorities should be to get a series of articles of the same type discussing the Russian Revolution and its degeneration, the rise of Stalinism and the nature of the bureaucratic collectivist system today).

It should be noted that part of the problem of the newspaper at present is that articles of this type, which are among the most difficult to produce ("it is far more difficult to write in a Marxist manner for the masses than for cadres"), rarely appear. The main reason for this is that

\*\*\*see paragraph (left out by mistake) at end of document



with only a couple of exceptions, the most experienced leaders of the IS who are competent to write them almost never write for the paper. This is one example of the fact that the IS does not take the problem of presenting its ideas in its newspaper as seriously as other socialist groups do.

As an organ of political intervention and analysis, the newspaper must abandon its scattershot, "miscellaneous-feature" approach and confront the task of serving as an organizing tool of the IS. This means that both the nature of our coverage of events, and the audience to which the analysis is directed, must be carefully selected from the standpoint of introducing the politics and program of the IS to those movements and layers of the population in which it is most critical that socialist ideas and leadership begin to develop.

The most important immediate concrete tasks we face are:

1. The most overriding necessity is to begin to present in clear popular form our over-all view of the period as developed in our documents. This entails an explanation of why the post-war boom and prosperity is over and what lies ahead for the working class as a whole. We stress that the present situation finds the workers' movement thoroughly unprepared for the tasks that will confront it, and put forward our strategy with a clear statement of its urgency. There should also be explanatory educational articles on the nature of the permanent arms economy and its role in post-war capitalism, etc.
2. An absolutely critical priority, in which we have been completely deficient, is to place emphasis on the questions affecting the most exploited and oppressed layers of the population, of which the black movement is the most important. Both on a national, and on a regional and local level, coverage of black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, and other oppressed groups' struggles (prioritized in their general order of importance) must become a primary focus of the paper. It is important that our coverage of the struggles of these groups run ahead of our actual activity and recruitment there - the press must play the role of an active vehicle for gaining footholds within these layers by making contacts with the most conscious elements.

In addressing ourselves to the struggles of black people and other oppressed communities, working class and specially oppressed women, etc., the primary concrete task of the press is to popularize our program and put forward a clear strategic perspective to which we openly seek to win the most advanced sectors of the movement. The key to this is to give expression to those key points in our overall working class program (Tasks and Perspectives and Labor Perspectives documents) which emphasize the needs of black and brown people, women, etc. We raise the demands on the labor movement with respect to the special needs of these groups as put forward in the Labor Perspectives document, as well as the demands we advocate for black and third world and women's caucuses. While counterposing ourselves politically to all forms of nationalism and separatism in these movements, we make clear that we apply our program to the issues facing

oppressed groups from the standpoint of their struggle against oppression. This should be the context in which we discuss issues like the busing and job quota controversies, the Canarsie struggle, etc. This is the only way in which we can overcome the current character of WP as an obviously "white" newspaper, which constitutes a huge barrier to developing contact with black, Puerto Rican and Chicano struggles through our press.

With respect to oppressed layers, we stress the importance of winning over the advanced, potentially revolutionary and working class sections of the oppressed. Therefore we emphasize the aspects of our program that call for the oppressed to take the leadership of the class struggle (particularly with respect to black workers) and to link their demands to social demands on behalf of the whole class.

3. The next priority is to direct ourselves in a more specific sense to the organized sector of the working class, especially in basic industry. In the US at least, this sector is the most powerful potential vanguard force and will be the largest source for revolutionary cadre. To the organized workers, particularly the developing leadership of the rank and file struggle against the union bureaucracies, we must advance our social program, our view of the nature of the period and our strategy for working class action. To a certain extent we have begun to do this - in an uneven way - in recent articles discussing the defeats of isolated strikes and the need for united action to defend such strikes. Every issue of WP must put forward a central line and program of action for the current phase of class struggle. Rather than simply calling for and supporting rank and file struggle, our newspaper must put forward a political line which can begin to serve as a pole of attraction to crystallize a revolutionary wing inside the rank and file movement. Furthermore, it is of central importance to us that the advanced workers begin to recognize this revolutionary strategy as that of the IS as a political organization - even though they do not yet accept its conclusions.

(NOTE: Our view of how to build a revolutionary wing of the labor movement is one of the basic strategic conceptions which differentiate us from other political tendencies. Thus it would be appropriate here to discuss the question of how our differences with these groups should be handled in our press. However, since this question has recently been a highly controversial one out of proportion to its real importance, it is taken up separately below.)

It is important here to clarify the role of WP with respect to our direct involvement in the rank and file movement in the unions. Rather than simply reflecting the militant slogans of the moment, our paper should carry articles, written by comrades active in the struggle or assigned by the fractions to write for the paper, which provide politically sympathetic coverage of rank and file activity and place it in a general perspective. (The editor and industrial secretary should coordinate the assignment of such articles to the factions, so that the paper can begin to reflect our industrial work more fully.)

Coverage of rank and file industrial struggles is extremely important for us. It is essential, however, that this coverage of such activity place the given struggle in a broader context. If, for example, we cover a struggle for an elected steward system in a union, we must discuss what impels the militants to initiate such a struggle, its significance in terms of resisting the attack on the workers, a strategy to win, etc. This does not mean that industrial articles must be long features or repeat generalities - quite the opposite - but rather they should not simply reflect the existing struggle but aim toward political conclusions. Such political analysis has been almost totally missing from our labor coverage in the past, especially (this is particularly ironic) from coverage of struggles in which we have been directly active.

In discussing strategy for the labor movement we emphasize the following key slogans and demands: build a labor party based on our general program, support all strikes as necessary acts of resistance against the NEP, call for a new labor offensive in next round of major contract negotiations, fight speedup and productivity drive, demand jobs for all and 30 for 40 as key tools for black workers and other militants to fight racism and discrimination and take the lead in the class struggle.

In the context of our political strategy for the period, we must take up the political questions which confront rank and file militants in struggle: the role of the courts, the nature of the union bureaucracy, racism and how to fight it, etc.

4. The newspaper as a whole must place major propogandistic emphasis on the need for the unification of struggles around a program of transitional demands which point toward a solution of the crisis facing the entire class. Here above all a simple assertion of the need for revolution is not adequate. Our political perspective for today as expressed in the newspaper must point in a revolutionary direction. Even where the conception of a unifying class program cannot be directly introduced into a rank and file group because of its weakness, the small size of our own presence, etc., the paper can bring this conception to the layer of militants to whom we distribute it.

5. The successful carrying out of the above priorities demands that our political coverage be broadened to take in a whole range of crucial events and issues of national and social importance which at present we largely ignore. A large number of prison and army revolts, political trials, welfare struggles, legislative battles, fiscal crises in the cities, and other events take place which we never mention. We cannot attempt to be comprehensive - we cannot be the "newspaper of record" on the left - but the absence of much of this coverage from our paper gives it a narrow, two-dimensional tone which makes THE GUARDIAN often look exciting by comparison. We should make a major effort to break into these areas of coverage, which is primarily a function of (a) further enlarging and strengthening the national WP staff as resources permit, and (b) urging that branches assign local reporters whose major political responsibility is to provide substantial coverage of such local events (eventually this should lead to separate East Coast, Southern, Southwest, West Coast and other departments).

In a previous document (see the pre-April NC bulletin) I stressed the importance of broader news coverage and the meaning of socialist reportage of events already covered in the bourgeois press. While the over-emphasis on news information in that document was correctly criticised, it is still the case that its importance is much greater than is currently reflected in WP, especially with respect to events that demand our comment.

6. Our international coverage must become more coherent and relevant, not simply "so the workers will read it" but for a number of political purposes. Much improvement has resulted in this area since the initiation of the "International Report", especially in that we have stopped reprinting miscellaneous half-page articles from SW. Nevertheless, much remains to be done here as well.

We see the IS as part of an international class struggle, which poses the need to build an international political tendency around our views in collaboration with our fraternal organizations. The press should, in a conscious way, attempt to play a role in crystallizing the views and perspectives of such a tendency. Thus there are a whole variety of things we should seek to accomplish in our international coverage, including: (a) to publish, publicize and criticize the views and analyses of our international co-thinkers (a substantive report and discussion on the recent international conference would be a start in this direction), and where appropriate to advance our own perspectives for the formation of an organized international tendency; (b) present international questions to an American working class audience, emphasizing the lessons for American workers, as in the case of the British dock strike article; (c) present a clear political line on international developments - the Middle East, Vietnam, Chile, etc.

Part of the function of international coverage in WP is the education of our own membership and the formation of an international political cadre as well as presenting our basic politics to American workers. Needless to say our theoretical journal will be in a position to play an even more effective role in this regard and will partially relieve the newspaper of responsibility for lengthy discussions of various international questions. (NOTE: I have included this discussion of the importance of cadre-oriented as well as "mass"-oriented international articles here because it is a direction in which I hope to move and which will probably be somewhat controversial).

7. Another priority for WORKERS POWER is to become a tool for projecting the organization as a political force and for recruitment. There should be substantial articles covering IS activities and our perspectives, including occasionally reprinting documents in serial form (or, more likely, NAC and NC resolutions dealing with major political questions). One comrade objected to one of the organizational reports in WP, saying that we should observe the "good old American saying that you shouldn't blow your own horn". Unfortunately, nobody else is about to blow it for us, so part of the job of our press is to do just that.

If the newspaper fails to emphasize the task of building the IS as a crucial task flowing from our political strategy, then WORKERS POWER will fail to play any significant role in recruiting advanced workers to the IS. This in itself is sufficient motivation for putting forward an aggressive, self-confident organizational stance.

#### OTHER QUESTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION - SOME TENTATIVE SUGGESTIONS

In this section I take up only a few miscellaneous questions that have come up from time to time and indicate the attitude I think should be adopted for the future.

1. The relationship of WP to other publications and rank and file bulletins in which we play an active role has not been clarified. What is essentially involved here is the role that WP should play in discussing the activities of the rank and file groupings, which of course varies greatly as between a group in which our comrades play a leading role and, for example, TURF or the UNC.

Part of the task of WORKERS POWER is to publicize rank and file movement activities, from a politically sympathetic but critical viewpoint. It is sometimes useful to reprint articles from the rank and file press to illustrate how our perspectives are applied in practice. However, comrades should keep in mind certain essential differences between writing for WP and for other publications. While most articles in a rank and file bulletin will focus on the immediate issues and put forward immediate tactical perspectives (in an agitational sense) WP articles should present these tactical perspectives in an informational way and proceed to explain why methods of struggle beyond the limits acceptable to the bureaucracy are crucial to winning long-term gains, etc. The industrial fractions should put special emphasis on developing skills needed to write for WP along these lines, and the E.B. and industrial secretary should give much more active guidance and help in this area.

2. Questions have been raised regarding the policy of dealing openly in the paper with our differences with other political tendencies. Although neither the question itself nor the amount of space devoted to this in the paper are of primary importance, the differences themselves should be discussed.

Everyone in the IS is agreed that we have no desire to be part of the milieu of sects whose justification for existence is their various positions on questions over which they have split from each other. At the same time, we reject the illusory notion that the IS exists in a political vacuum inside the working class, that the views of other groupings can be simply ignored, etc. If we adopt this attitude we will find that advanced workers often get the impression that sects like the SL and LC are to the "left" of us, exactly the impression that these sects wish to create.

Therefore, WORKERS POWER should respond to major political attacks on the IS and to misrepresentation of our activity in the labor movement, whenever such a response helps to contribute to the clarification of our own ideas and the education of working class militants and radicals. We should also begin to take the offensive against the perspectives of the CP, whose importance far exceeds that of the sect groups.

We must not fall victim to the illusion that the various small groups on the left have no audience or potential impact on the working class. While our attention is not directed toward them in a major way, their ideas will compete with ours for a hearing among the advanced workers and must be isolated and defeated in open political combat.

3. The problem of distribution deserves a fuller discussion which can only be sketched here. At this point, it is well-known that the financial burden of the paper is largely borne by the membership rather than by distribution on a wide scale. Subscriptions are also difficult to get because of the length of time taken to deliver a bi-weekly paper. For the immediate future there exists no fully adequate solution.

However, our perspective is that an upturn in distribution will become possible with the improvement of the paper itself and the general political confidence of the organization. We encourage branches to pick out not only locations where comrades are industrialized, but also places where a more radical work force exists and may be expected to result in better sales. We also project the possibility of a circulation drive in the spring (perhaps with special low rates to facilitate sub sales) in order to broaden the readership in preparation for a long-term goal of beginning publication on a weekly basis.

4. At this time, expansion of the paper and various technical improvements are goals subordinate to improvement in content. The attitude expressed in my motion to the editorial board on publication of sixteen pages on a regular basis (as opposed to the alternative of publishing 20 pages whenever there exists enough physical copy to fill the extra room, which there always is) still holds. Nevertheless, the enlargement of the WP staff and the success of the fund drive, which ensure better control over the character of the paper by the center as well as financial stability, open up the prospects for a qualitative (not simply quantitative) improvement of the paper through expansion. Therefore, the NC gives to the editorial board at this time the following "enabling" mandate:

1. The editorial board is empowered to expand the paper to 20 pages on a regular basis, with use of color, this winter. Such expansion will be carried out on the basis of a discussion on priorities for expanded coverage (I do not want 4 extra pages of miscellaneous features, although a little flexibility for the inclusion of reviews and cultural criticism on a regular basis would be useful). The top priority is expansion of labor coverage, analysis and commentary on major national political and social events, and black liberation news.

2. The E.B. is also empowered to establish a subcommittee to explore

the possibility of a major circulation drive, to be carried out on the same level of mobilization as the fund drive. The NC will be asked for final approval of such a plan if it is desired to propose it.

3. The E.B. is also empowered to add, if necessary, a part-time staff person to ensure regular coverage of women's liberation issues in the paper. This should be carried out even if there does not exist a comrade in Detroit available for the post of overall women's coordinator for the IS. The first priority in this regard will be the implementation of the E.B. motion on the new format for Bread and Roses (i.e. that the column be renewed, but as a column of ideas and perspectives on women's liberation as opposed to news briefs.)

NOTE: The following paragraph was inadvertently left out when page 5 was typed.

At bottom, the failure of the newspaper at present is rooted in the fundamental problems of the organization. The best press and publications perspective imaginable will not bring programmatic and organizational clarity where none exists - at present, the line of the IS is undeveloped, and reflected as a miscellaneous quality in the press. And even the best possible newspaper will be of little use until the membership is convinced politically of the need for aggressive distribution, not only at factories where we have industrialized comrades but at other locations where contacts might be made. Nonetheless, it is fundamentally the responsibility of the leadership to begin the transformation of WP as part of the process of winning the membership to our conception of its nature and purpose.