

International Socialists  
Bulletin # 54 July 1975

Contents:

- Remarks on the NC Slate - SF (L.A.)
- I.S. Response to Baraka Article in Guardian
- Discussion Article on Democratic Centralism;  
and Amendments - Bob P. (Cleve.)
- Perspectives for the Women's Commission -  
Barbara W.
- What's All The Fuss About? - Jack W

WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT

(Reply to "How a Right Became a Privilege")

C. F. from N. Y. has written an outraged letter about an incident that "should become the knowledge of the entire membership nationally." He claims that GW, our natsec, attempted to deny him equal time for presenting to the N. Y. branch a counter resolution to the EC resolution on Bolshevization.

If this were true, C.F. might well have a reason for his anger. But he knows that his document: "What To Do Next In 1975" was never written as a serious resolution to the Convention, and no one, upon reading it, could mistake it for such. He told people he was writing a discussion document, and that's what he wrote.

C. F. wrote a document commenting on, criticizing, and arguing against the main core of the Bolshevization document. He might claim that the purpose of his document was to solicit a "no" vote at the convention, and he was requesting equal presentation time for this purely negative task. But C. F. is too experienced to expect to be taken seriously with such a claim. He knows that when the leadership is committed to an analysis of the period and conclusions, a serious challenge demanding equal presentation time requires an alternative perspective.

So C.F., seemingly with a straight face, calls his contribution a "counter resolution." It's not. Anyone reading it could tell. Even a serious amendment would deserve more presentation time at a branch meeting than a critical discussion document. And C. F. recognizes that serious amendments do not always deserve equal presentation time.

This complaint wouldn't be so serious, but C.F. implies that this is all part of some effort by our new natsec of testing the waters to see how fast he can stalinize the IS. It's a bunch of nonsense -- written for I don't know what purpose. C. F. is a comrade whose experience should make him most critical of a discussion group atmosphere where those who want to discuss automatically receive equal time to those who want to propose. EC members recommended to the branch denial of g equal presentation time for discussion documents. We expected to be overruled. This was not intimidation -- ~~not~~ merely part of our campaign to combat the discussion group atmosphere that continues to linger on in the N. Y. branch.

Jack Weinberg

p.s. I can't resist commenting on the cute reference to Alice-in-Wonderland. If I remember right, Wonderland is the place where what something is called is different from its name, is different from what it is. What C.F. wrote is a discussion document. He named it: "What to Do Next in 1975" (although it doesn't tell us what to do next). And he now calls it a convention counter-resolution. If this were all a joke, it would be quite humorous.

The E.C. has a democratic right to nominate whatever slate it wishes. This includes the right to propose a factional or tendency slate. Let us be clear that this is precisely what it has done. The E.C. has not presented a balanced slate which is, among other things, representative of various legitimate shades of opinion in the organization. The current N.C. therefore has an obligation to contest the E.C.'s N.C. slate and come up with an alternative slate which will encourage collaboration despite differences and thus avoid a factional leadership and a factional opposition. For the same reasons, the N.C. should reject the proposed E.C. candidate membership for M.P. He should be made a full member of the E.C. These are the tasks that the N.C. will confront on July 3.

#### Political Representation

The E.C. slate for the N.C. and E.C. is clearly based on a monolithic conception of leadership. The E.C. is not satisfied with the comfortable majority that it had all during last year; it wants an even larger one. The three comrades being dropped from the E.C. slate for the N.C. do not form a bloc, faction or tendency. All they have in common is that they have often been dissenting voices in the current N.C. No argument is being made as to whether and how those three comrades have failed to make a positive contribution to the organization. The charges that they have held back the turn were vague and unsubstantiated to say the least. Essentially, the E.C. is saying that significant minority views are not entitled to representation in leading bodies. This is clearly shown in their arguments for M.P. being a candidate member of the E.C. His past differences with the E.C. tend to disqualify him for membership in the E.C. Only when he is seen to give unqualified allegiance to the E.C. will he be eligible. It is also shown (if less clearly) in the elimination of individually selected (as opposed to just numbered) alternates to the N.C. Individually selected alternates facilitate political representation since an N.C. member who is not able to attend a given session can select a specific individual from the total pool of alternates. If only numbered alternates can be seated, this becomes a random procedure and not a political one.

#### Functionaries on the N.C.

Ten out of the twenty people being proposed for the N.C. by the E.C. will be E.C. members or will be working for the organization as paid staff or organizers. It will probably end up as eleven out of twenty-one with the addition of the Red Tide representative. This obviously presents a serious problem of political representation and of the type of political activity and organizational experiences that would predominate on the N.C. If the proposal for a disciplined E.C. passes and if the proposal that organizers, and by inference the staff, are political agents of the E.C. also passes, the N.C. might as well be disbanded. The E.C. would begin with a bloc of seven votes; it could then count on two additional Detroit staffers and one branch organizer since one can hardly expect an organizer or staff member to argue one way in the branch and the organization at large and then argue a different way on the N.C. Given the above, N.C. votes would become meaningless.

#### The Question of the West Coast

There is only one member and two alternates from the West Coast on the E.C. slate. We cannot have it both ways--we cannot move towards a truly national organization with a single national political line and then continue to limit political participation on the N.C. for geographical reasons. If it is felt that a certain comrade would make a positive contribution to the N.C. then that comrade should be placed on that body regardless of the geographical area from which he or she comes.

Of course, if two comrades would make a very similar or identical contribution then we would of course place on the N.C. the comrade who lives closer to the center. Unfortunately, we are not frequently presented with such happy choices. Here we must follow the same inexorable political logic that leads us to fight geographical cliques, centralize dues, and so on. This issue is no exception.

#### Candidate Membership on Leading Bodies

This issue has to be carefully discussed on its own merits. It is a different issue from candidate membership for the organization as a whole. I am open on this question. We must discuss what it is supposed to accomplish and how it will do so and reach a decision which should become effective next year (there will be no time for adequate discussion this year). In the meantime, we must resolutely reject the use of candidate membership as a punitive political tool as it clearly so in the case of M.P. Full membership in leading committees is not a piece of candy to be given to boys and girls who behave themselves as candidate members. Presumably, it is to be used to train promising new leaders who have not been yet exposed to certain experiences and knowledge.

#### The Functioning of the Current N.C.

There has been very little collaboration, consultation and discussion between the E.C. and the N.C.'ers such as myself. This is why we cannot take seriously the E.C.'s complaints about the presumed faults of the N.C. The E.C. has in practice regarded the N.C. as either a veto group or a rubber stamp and not as a policy-making body. The fact of the matter is that for most of the time I simply did not know what was going on in the E.C. and what it had in mind; little wonder that I, like others, ended up in a passive role either approving or disapproving what the E.C. had done or was about to do anyway. Once again, in what is now a usual lack of self-criticism, the E.C. has nothing to say about this. It should also be stated that the N.C. has inadequate and incomplete knowledge to judge whether DF and JT should be the ones to be dropped from the EC or whether it should be some other two E.C. members. Information obtained through rumor and gossip is certainly not to be trusted on these matters. This is one key consequence of having a disciplined E.C.

I intend to run for the N.C. because I believe I have a positive working contribution to make to a real decision-making N.C. One of the reasons I want to run is because I believe that I have and will continue to have and put forward views which are shared by a significant number of I.S.'ers; these views deserve a representation which is not provided by the E.C. slate. If nothing else, we may be able to establish that the N.C. is a representative working body.

## IS RESPONSE TO BARAKA ARTICLE IN GUARDIAN

The following statement by the I.S. Executive Committee is in response to an article by Amiri Baraka in the March 5th edition of the "Guardian." A copy of this has been sent to the Congress of Afrikan People and is reprinted here for the information of our members, particularly those involved in work in the black community or in contact through their political work with members of other revolutionary organizations.

The Congress of Afrikan People is presently advocating a left-wing independent candidacy in the 1976 presidential elections. Amiri Baraka, CAP chairman, published an article in the March 5, 1975 issue of the Guardian putting forward a strategy for this campaign. We in the International Socialists welcome this discussion begun by CAP. The main thesis of his article is certainly correct. Under pressure of the economic crisis (depression, inflation, growing repression and the threat of war) mass movements of the working class and the oppressed are again emerging. The left must use every means by which to organize a mass working class movement. Bourgeois democracy presently allows us several means by which to organize, and the elections are one of these. We also agree with Baraka that the left, by and large, lacks a broad social base in the emerging working class movement. And finally we agree that a revolutionary vanguard party can and must be built out of a mass fighting movement of workers and oppressed nationalities; that it cannot be built through sectarian debates and forums, nor through leaflets from campus idealists to workers or oppressed peoples.

The article goes astray, however, when Baraka implies that such a campaign can be a primary means of building a mass workers movement and revolutionary party. Electoral action, properly conceived, can play an important role in broadening movements, deepening their political understanding of the system and its institutions, and shaping their politics. But elections alone will never build durable movements or a real social base.

What could be possible in 1976 would be a propaganda campaign putting itself forward as the advocate of the struggles of workers and oppressed. But a true revolutionary party will only be built out of the struggles. Electoral action can be an important aspect, but it is no substitute.

In 1967-68 at the height of the student-anti-war and black movements, members of IS played a primary role in initiating and building the Peace and Freedom Party. Our aim was two-fold: (1) to further build the anti-war and black liberation movements by using the electoral arena as a forum for organizing broader masses into struggle, and (2) to provide a means to move those existing movements left by putting forward a political alternative to the Democratic and Republican party candidates on a broad social program of immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, opposition to US imperialism and support for the goals of the black liberation movement. This program was made concrete by running leaders of these movements for office: Eldridge Cleaver of the Black Panther Party for president and various anti-war and black leaders for other offices.

The "Free Huey" campaign, the spread of the Black Panther Party nationally, and an intensification of anti-war sentiment were all accomplishments of this effort. We believed this party and campaign was crucial because it was and is our analysis that one of the roles of the Democratic Party historically has been to coopt social movements by putting forward so-called "liberal" candidates like McCarthy or McGovern to pull the bulk of these movements into the liberal capitalist fold under their control.

However, within months after the election the PFP degenerated. The bulk of the membership disappeared, including the most dedicated radicals and revolutionaries. The politics of liberal utopian idealism took over. In part this was caused by the decline in the movements on which the PFP was based. In larger part, this was caused by the fundamentally classless character of the party. Politics, in the final analysis, is nothing but the expression of class interests.

1975 is a radically different period from 1968. The most important difference is that today the world capitalist system is in serious crisis. Gone are the years of stability. This crisis was just beginning in 1968 and now it is full blown. Around the world, governments are racked with crisis. Some old regimes have already fallen, as in Portugal, Unemployment and inflation continue to rise. In a mad scramble for profits the meaning of capitalist class rule becomes clear: Layoffs, plant closures, wage cuts, increasing repression and the ever-growing threat of new imperialist wars.

In response to this crisis a new movement is being born. And here is another difference from 1968. This new movement is just emerging. It is still very weak and small, not at its height. But it has a working class character.

Yet the potential and promise of this movement couldn't be greater for revolutionaries. Because today it is workers who are the backbone and base of this small but growing movement. Instead of middle class students on the one hand, and a politically unclear black liberation movement on the other, it is today industrial workers black and white, women and men, who are being forced to come to a Marxist analysis of capitalism and the need to rid the world of this rotten decaying system forever through united working class action. Out of this movement a revolutionary party that will unite the most conscious workers and oppressed will be built.

If, as we maintain, then that a mass working class movement will not be built through a strategy for a campaign in 1976, does this mean that we are against any campaign at this time? NO. A truly working class campaign that relates to the struggles and consciousness of today and poses real answers to the crisis workers and the oppressed face can broaden the social base of the movement, legitimize the struggles throughout the country, and deepen the movement politically.

Lacking such a campaign, the new workers movement will face a difficult political problem: what to do at election time? Many worker militants and other activists will end up voting for the Democratic Party because they see no alternative.

The Democratic Party is a capitalist party and movements of workers and the oppressed cannot support it. We need a real alternative to counterpose to the Democratic and Republican Party. It is particularly important since we know that the pro-capitalist trade union leadership explicitly makes support for the Democratic Party (or sometimes the Republican Party in the case of the Teamsters) a key part of its strategy. There is now way to build up a movement that can put itself forward as an alternative leadership to class collaboration in the unions without taking the Democratic Party head on.

What this movement really needs is its own political party, which can effectively pose the class questions at election time. A campaign in 1976 could play a role in laying the basis for such a party, and play a progressive role in strengthening the small

workers' movement as long as it is clear on a number of points:

First of all, it is crucial for any campaign to be clear on the Democratic Party. It is not just a case of being against Scoop Jackson, but the entire party as well. This means that should the Democrats decide to nominate Teddy Kennedy which is a possibility, any such movement must be clear on him as well. Likewise, the Ron Dellums, John Conyers, Bella Abzug, and Gibsons cannot be supported as long as they remain in the party of racism, war and imperialism. There must be no support to any Democratic or Republican Party candidate no matter how liberal or progressive he or she might appear.

Secondly, any campaign and candidacy should project the formation of a mass labor party democratically based in actual organizations of the working class and the oppressed. Such a campaign can not build the revolutionary party itself, but can help build the movement out of which the fight for the revolutionary party can be carried through to its completion. Projecting the need for an ongoing party helps to ensure that opportunists will not be able to bring such a campaign and movement back into the democratic party.

Thirdly, in order for such a campaign to be taken seriously by workers and oppressed nationalities, it must have some base in those small but growing movements. That is, it must directly represent the struggles of auto workers, steel workers, teamsters, farmworkers, telephone workers, at their work places and in their unions as well as the left and the struggles of the oppressed. As Baraka himself points out, many of the revolutionaries today lack a base inside the working class, black and white, and any such campaign must directly begin to bring those struggles into it - or it won't be taken seriously by the very people we want to reach and must reach.

The left has been isolated from the working class. It now has the opportunity to end that isolation because the economic crisis is laying the basis for overcoming the anti-communism, reformism and racism and sexism that have been the predominant ideology of workers in this country. We do not wish to organize only the left. That is to capture ourselves, which the left has done all too often, and we fear, will do again. Rhetoric is not enough. The forefront of the program, policies, politics and candidates of any campaign must be integrally related to current working class struggles in the workplace, the trade unions and the community. It must be a working class campaign.

The campaign and candidates must stand on a program that provides a clear class answer to the capitalist class and its policies. It must call for an end to unemployment: the right to a job at union wages for everyone who wants and needs to work, a shorter work week with no loss in pay to spread the available work around to everyone, no plant closures, and if the capitalists insist on closing the plants, the campaign and candidates must demand that the government take them over and the workers run them. The campaign must also put forward a program to end inflation in the form of real price controls, while opposing any and all attempts to control wages. The campaign must also fight against speed-up, on the job harassment, racial and sexual discrimination in all institutions. Lastly, it must also have planks on the right of self-defense against brutal repression, opposition to imperialist wars, present and future, and support to the struggles of the oppressed for their liberation. Projecting such a program the 1976 campaigns could carry the struggles of workers out of the plants and communities, and into society as a whole. It could pose the class questions clearly, and thus help to legitimize the class struggle on American soil.

The IS has much it can bring to such a campaign. In addition to our experience in building the Peace and Freedom Party, we now have a small base in the four industries where we have been concentrating our efforts to build a class struggle rank and file movement over the past 5 years: the UAW, the IBT, the USW and the CWA. In addition we have been active in the AFT and have contacts in other unions. Moreover, we are for a principled united front based upon a program like the one outlined above, and are prepared to work with groups with whom we have severe political differences in the interest of building this campaign and thereby strengthening the workers movement as a whole.

We in the IS will be happy to have discussions with any groups or individual that hold out the promise of a positive left-wing electoral strategy for 1976. We understand that at present there are fundamental differences between ourselves and most of the "New Communist Movement" of which Baraka and the Guardian consider themselves parts. These differences express themselves on the broadest range of questions including even the basic character of the revolutionary party that must be built. But just like a party can never be built out of theoretical discussions, even theoretical disputes can only achieve constructive resolution when they occur in the light of actual struggles and actual social dynamics. We in the IS have complete confidence that the basic outlines of our perspectives will prove correct in the emerging U. S. class struggle movement. We challenge any group that has similar confidence in their perspectives to join together in working toward a working class movement campaign for 1976.

I. S. Executive Committee, June 1975



## DISCUSSION ARTICLE ON EC DOCUMENT ON DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM; AND AMENDMENTS

The I.S. is now facing a new situation, one with many more possibilities for us. With the economic and political climate in the country changing, the I.S. is now an organization that has confidence in itself and can begin to grow. There is beginning to be a real excitement over possibilities of growth in the working class, of new people who are interested in us, etc.

In view of this, I support the EC's attempt to make the organization more serious, and more aware of what its responsibilities are. In the past, when the I.S. did not have much effect, neither did we have too much to lose. Now, as the stakes get higher, so are the responsibilities all of us are taking.

Part of this turn we are taking is going to have to mean increased centralization. If we are to be judged by results, people have got to implement national policies. However, the main purpose of my writing this position paper is to take issue with some of the EC's positions as stated in the document on "The IS, The Revolutionary Party and Democratic Centralism". The EC was "bending the twig", because of trying to compensate for IS past practice. They bent the twig too far, and so I want to bend it back some.

\* \* \* \* \*

### E.C. DISCIPLINE

Much of the reason for the EC's move, not only toward democratic centralism, but also toward a disciplined EC, comes from the IS past. In the past, small differences were elevated to become important questions dividing the organization. The IS could not act, because it would continue to debate the position we should take until it was too late to act decisively.

Now, the EC feels that it is necessary that the EC go to the organization with one position, and fight for it. The EC also wants the NC and other leadership bodies to run on the same type of functioning. Accordingly, the best way to get the members to function in an effective way is for the leadership to all take one position.

This new position, it turns out has one thing in common with the old position. And that is, it has an emphasis on the combat within the organization. Internal differences continue to be very important. Only in the present circumstance, the leadership is all supposed to be of one viewpoint, with hopefully no other organized viewpoint.

One of the reasons that the IS allows members to organize a caucus if they so desire is that unless opposition has a right to organize, then it will just be words in the wind. This does not mean that we encourage caucuses and factionalism. But we do expect differences in a live and dynamic organization like the IS. However, these will not be hard and fast differences. They will not be over basic strategy and principles. Nor would the lines be drawn the same on every issue.

The EC apparently believes that we cannot have a healthy discussion of an issue, unless the entire EC, and hopefully NC is of one viewpoint. This implies that members of the IS are not capable of going into a discussion, hearing different views, then acting on the result, unless only one view is carefully prepared. In effect the EC wants to act as a caucus within the I.S.

The EC internal discipline is also augmented in that in the majority of cases that I am aware of, the EC takes a position before ideas are floated to other members of the organization. But there should be a certain amount of consultation of branch and fraction leaders, NC members, etc., before the EC takes a position which it feels it must fight for. Instead, the EC discusses a question and takes a position. It then informs other leaders of the organization who are supposed to go and convince the rest of the members of the position.

So, besides acting as a caucus, the EC wants there to be no other organized caucuses within the I.S.

Sure, some questions, infact many questions, the EC must decide without waiting for an NC. Some of these require immediate action and cannot wait for consultation. On these, it is right that the EC should be supported by the organization. On other questions, a brief period of discussion before taking a position would be valuable, but the EC is definitely discouraging this type of discussion.

Another problem of the EC internal discipline is that it makes evaluation of a past event difficult. As I stated before, the EC is correct in saying that the IS needs to have an attitude that when an event is taking place, once our position is set, the organization should be working out how to implement the position rather than is it correct. However, there is no reason to have disciplined evaluations of our participation in events that are over. Instead we need to have the fullest discussion of what has taken place.

Another thing that shows the emphasis that the EC places on internal discussion being somewhat of a combat situation is its evaluations of the November and February NC's. Those sessions where the EC positions passed strongly were evaluated as the best, and those where NC members had most questions about NC policies were not regarded as very good. The EC did not think that perhaps its own preparation was inadequate. As the EC sees it, the NC members should be defending the EC proposals in the organizations, and anything that takes away from that is harming the organization as a whole.

In the democratic centralism document, the EC has some references to this same general question of agreement with the EC. For example, on page 14, it is stated that "Consciousness within the revolutionary organization is also uneven. We do not pick a leadership to reflect the ranks, the unevenness of consciousness. Rather we select out the most advanced, conscious elements to lead . . ."

In and of itself, there is nothing wrong with this statement. But it implies something else. It implies that with any important disagreement, some have higher levels of consciousness, and some lower levels. Presumably, this means that the EC has the highest level of consciousness, and those who have disagreements with it, are on a lower level of consciousness. This is false.

Having different opinions within the organization reflected in the leadership does not have to lead to factionalism. It only does if that is what the leadership wants. The purpose of having different opinions reflected in the leadership is precisely the opposite: It is to build unity. How does this build unity? It does so because members know that their opinions are reflected in the leadership and when questions are coming up for discussion, their point of view will be considered before a decision is made.

Similarly, the last paragraph of the document states, "The cadres must win the new members to the positions and leadership of the group, not confuse, demoralize, sow doubts." This is very much like saying that criticizing the leadership is raising doubts about the organization as a whole and weakening it. It may be that there is some legacy from the past of people in the I.S. who would criticize and not really be interested in building our group ( such as RT of 73 and TCT of 72). If this is what the EC means, fine. But if they are referring to the criticisms of many of our comrades now, then they are wrong.

#### CENTRALIZATION

Concretely, the EC is making a couple of proposals about centralization which need to be defeated. One is on the EC appointing branch organizers, and the other is

to give the EC the power to transfer staff (including branch organizers). These measures show that the EC has a distrust of the IS branch members, if it feels that they cannot make these decisions. The ability of the EC to determine the best organizer will diminish, and related problems will grow, as the IS itself grows.

While "ideally" appointing local organizers might work out, there is no basis in practice to show that this will help the organization. An organizer must have the confidence of the local members to be effective. That confidence is not something that can be simply bestowed on from above.

Sometimes it might be desirable for the EC to intervene in a branch to urge it to choose a certain person as organizer. But this is not the same thing as choosing the organizer for the branch. If the EC does not trust branch members to choose their own organizer, how can they trust them to build a revolutionary party and make a revolution. Also, it goes without saying that in exceptional circumstances, such as the RT of 1973, such branches should be put in receivership.

Nor is this an abstract question, even at present. The Cleveland branch would have a different organizer now if its organizer had been appointed. (no elaboration because I understand discussion on this is supposed to be closed.)

Similarly, transferring of local organizers, while it may be desirable, should not be done without the agreement of the organizer her/himself, or at least of the branch. Even revolutionary organizations in the past have used the power of transfer to remove local leaders from their base of support when there was a difference of opinion. Of course, there is no reason that this should be a problem now. But it could be a problem in the future. Furthermore, collaboration with branches involved is vital.

#### DISCIPLINE

There is another kind of discipline besides organizational discipline, and that is self-discipline that comes out of a political awareness of the tasks that need to be done, and the possibilities of doing them. Stress on "chain of command" is not going to bring about the turn toward agitation. It is the political leadership that is going to make the IS take more of a public face.

For example, for a long time, leaders of the organization would write documents, but would write very little for external use. Now that is beginning to change. In addition, Workers Power, which for a long time was not a useful tool, is so good that people actually like to sell it. They like to sell it not because someone exhorts them to, but because they can see the value.

If we are to succeed in becoming more externally oriented, the leadership needs to expand this aspect of what it is doing/<sup>more</sup> than it does the "chain of command."

One thing the EC is quite right in stressing is that if and when we get to be a serious threat, we will be facing equally serious repression from the state. At such time, democracy within the organization will become more difficult (as will centralism). Moreover, in the normal course of growth, conventions will, obviously, get to be more distant from the average member, who will thus exert less influence over the organization. The organization should expect these things to happen, and be prepared. But in critical periods, our comrades will accept whatever discipline is necessary. There is no point in taking some of the steps now that the EC is proposing. They will not make the organization more effective, unless one can argue that control from the national office equals effectiveness.

## CONCLUSION

I fully support the EC's attempt to get the organization to become more serious about what it is doing. However, this seriousness is not the same as all of the organizational measures that they are suggesting.

A document supporting such a position of the leadership body of the IS should have considerably more discussion of some past examples. Most members are not well, if at all, acquainted with what the Bolsheviks did (and to what extent that is relevant because of the different conditions), what the Workers' Party did, or even how the British IS functions. For example, Lenin wrote in 1906, after a mild liberalization of Tsarist repression, "we Bolsheviks have always recognized that in new conditions, when political liberties were acquired, it would be essential to adopt the elective principle."

Of course, it's true that we can get weighted down in "tons of documents". But if our past has taught us anything, it is that we need a certain greater respect for theory, for what has happened and why. We recognize the need for a revolutionary party and the disaster that can occur if one is not built. But do we understand the organizational methods involved?

AMENDMENTS: (These are minor amendments because I support the major thrust of the document -- the role of the I.S. in building the revolutionary party, the need to take ourselves and our tasks seriously, preventing an "old boys" network from developing and bringing in new leadership, especially black and ~~white~~, the need to use the potential of all of our members. I do not feel that these amendments take away from this aspect of the document.)

1. p. 11, first sentence under section on centralism: Delete "The current period demands the speediest moves to tight centralization." (I generally support the moves of the organization to tighten up. The purpose of deleting this sentence is to take away an implication that any and every move toward centralization is automatically correct and that these moves are the top priority of the organization.)
2. p. 13, delete last 3 sentences of first (partial) paragraph beginning "The Constitution should be altered . . ." (Part of the history of the IS is that in the formation of the Workers Party in 1940, one of the reasons for the split from the SWP was that the minority (the W.P.) was unable to make its position known publically. This right of minorities to make known its positions in the public press of the organization is important. As the EC document says about factions, we try to discourage it not by forbidding them, but by making them unnecessary. The organization has been functioning positions must first come up for debate inside the IS before occurring in WP; and as we have seen, publishing minority opinions in WP has not been a top priority for members. Nevertheless, it should remain up to the minority, and the editorial committee, if the minority feels it has something that must be said (something that does not affect our immediate work).
3. p. 14 second paragraph under leadership. Delete everything but the first sentence. Replace with KP's motion of NC: "We seek a leadership which openly represents the range of political differences in the organization and insist that it collaborate."
4. Third full paragraph, p. 15. Add the underlined words to the first sentence. "To create a national staff, comrades should be periodically moved from one branch to another with the approval of the member or the local branch involved."
5. p. 15, last full paragraph, Delete full paragraph. (This paragraph refers to appointment of local organizers by the EC)
6. last paragraph, p. 20; change "The cadres must win . . . etc" so it reads simply "The cadres must win the new members to the positions of the group". (Deletes stuff about "sowing doubts, etc".

Bob P, Cleveland, May 28

ATTENTION! WOMEN'S CAUCUS

This document was written by the women's commission to be the basis for discussion at the convention women's caucus meeting. Please read this before the women's caucus meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Barbara W.

The following document was written to define the role of the women's commission. It is being written to review what has been done in the past, as well as to explain the roles of the women's commissioner, the commission and the women's caucus. This document is also being written to place the women's commission in line with the changes that have taken place in the organization with regard to the turn.

I. The past work of the women's commission.

In January, 1974, a functioning women's commission was established with Barbara W., as women's commissioner, Gay S. and Marilyn D. on the commission. Since then, the commission has accomplished the following:

a) There is now real, and not token women's leadership in the IS. While the women's commission does not see the present women's leadership as sufficient, in the sense that we do not have Black and working class women's leadership, there does exist women who are on the EC, NC serve on branch execs, are organizers and fraction leaders.

b) The women's commission in 1974 initiated the first International Women's Day campaign which was successful in New York, Cleveland, Detroit and Seattle.

c) The women's commission organized the CLUW work. There is a CLUW fraction steering committee, a functioning national fraction with a regular bulletin. Workers Power carried our line on CLUW better than any paper on the left. We were also able to use WP in our work, not only for finding out what is going on, but also in terms of recruiting people and winning people to our point of view. The pamphlet on CLUW was also helpful to our work. The commission was not able to produce the CLUW journal because of the EC and WC decision that would have to wait until the WC and CLUW steering committee was resident in Detroit.

d) The women's commission helped organize the Cleveland and Seattle working women's conferences. It also helped organize our intervention at the Charleston, W. Va., socialist-feminist conference. The women's commission also decided that we would not be able to have an intervention at the NAM called socialist-feminist conference in Yellow Springs because it coincided with our national convention. It was felt that if the IS were to intervene at that conference, we would want our women in industry there; many of the IS women in industry are and should be convention delegates; also we felt the IS convention takes priority.

e) The women's commission developed and others carried the organization on our perspective on an industrial strategy for building the working women's movement.

f) Three pamphlets, International Women's Day, Revolutionary Feminism, and the Coalition of Labor Union Women: What it is and How to Build it was produced and sold to the branches.

Women's Commission perspectives  
page two

g) The women's commission has organized the women's caucus nationally, by holding both NC women's caucuse meetings as well as convention women's caucus meetings. Members of the women's commission have met with the local women's caucuses.

h) Since the 1974 convention, there have been more women travelling and speaking, especially women in industry.

II. The role of the women's commission.

The women's commissioner is elected by the national committee and is part of the national staff of the IS. The job of the women's commissioner and the entire staff is to organize and carry out the policies of the IS, in particular, where women are concerned. The size and personellof the Women's commission may vary, but we wish it to reflet the work of women in the organization, especially women in industry and the Red Tide.

Overall, the women's commission will take a more active approach in terms of the branches: This means greater intervention in our industrial work, CLUW and other fraction work, women as speakers and travellers. Specifically, we will do the following: h<sup>h</sup>

a) a campaign to get more women into our industrial priorities; to establish women leaders in our industrial work; to have the fractions take up women's questions in all aspects of our industrial work.

Over the past year the organization has been discussing priorities as well as a stratgey for building a working women's movement. The women's commission will see that our perspective is implemented in all the branches.

The women's commission will also be working out a perspective on the women question and our industrial work for the next year. This might include such questions as whether or not we will continue to form CLUW committees in our unions; the formation of women's committees; which women's issues should we raise in the upcoming bargaining round etc.

The women's commission will also make sure that the woman question is raised in our industrial publications.

The women's commission will also ensure that women in industry become fraction as well as class leaders.

b)The recruitment of working class women to the IS. We want to recruit Black and other working class women who are rank and file leaders already; we want to recruit through our work in CLUW; we want to recruit working class housewives; finally we want to recruit the spouses of worker members and contacts. This document does not wish to go into detail precisely all the specifics involved in recruitment of working class, Black and other national minority women, nevertheless we see it integrally related to the worker recruitment campaign.

c) continued publication of pamphlets about women. In particular, we will produce an agitational pamphlet on working class women, women's liberation and the need to join the IS; a pamphlet discussing women's exploitation and oppression under capitalism will also be produced.

d) The women's commission plans to organize future working women's conferences.

e)The women's commission will be establishing a closer relationship with the Red Tide. We will be asking that a member of the Red Tide serve on the women's commission.