

INDUSTRIAL BULLETIN

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FOR I. S. AND RED TIDE MEMBERS ONLY

INTRODUCTION

This is the first issue of the INDUSTRIAL BULLETIN, that from now on will be published monthly by the Industrial Department. The articles in the Bulletin will be of two types; articles on our actual Industrial work, and informational articles. The industrial articles will consist of material that can not appear in Workers Power, but not articles of a theoretical nature. They will deal with strategy and tactics of our work and will reflect the political line of the organization. The informational articles will deal with questions ranging from how to deal with the press, Portugal and the unions, to Pension funds. The publication schedule is the following: the bulletin will come out on the 25th of every month. Articles must be submitted by the 15th of every month.

LOUISVILLE UNITED ACTION/CWA

As of this writing The leadership of Local 10310 has decided to hold a new election. Following a good showing by UA in the election, the incumbants showed up with a hand full of hand develivere uncounted ballots. UA made it clear they would fight this crude attempt to steal the election and a few days later the leadership decided to held new elections. Only those already nominated, however, can run. This means UA will still not be able to have a presidential candidate on the ballot.

It is quite likely that although UA will still do very well, that the scales will tip to the incumbants even if only by a few votes. The reason for this is Harold's appearance as a UA speaker at a recent anti-Klan rally. The polarization around busing in Louisville has hit Local 10310 as well as other unions. The fact that a big labor based, anti-busing rally was being organizaed out of Louisville just at this time did not help matters.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that the lesson to be learned from Louisville is to fudge on hot issues like busing or racism generally. Quite the opposite. Louisville is a good example of the correctness of the IS line on busing as applied to our industrial work.

The IS line on busing arived in Louisville just as UA was getting its slate together and beginning to plan for the local elections. The busing line was not popular with IS members, who were somewhat hestiant to raise it. The rapid polarization around that issue in Louisville, however, made it easy to raise the matter of opposition to the Klan led movement against busing. UA was rapidly convinced to be publicaly active in the anti-Klan movement, a movement which was in fact pro-busing by neccessity. Members of UA were not initially pro-busing, some still are not. But the nature of the polarization made it easier to convince some of the leading UAers of the need to take sides, which meant being pro-busing. The fear of loosing some white votes, one early consideration in not wanting to take a firm stand, faded and the need to take sides took over.

Louisville UA became a solid group over a period of time. It started with good personell, which helped a lot. But what seems to have pulled it together is the fact that it waged a series of successful campaigns: four times it defeated a dues increase, once it actually got the local to endorse an anti-Klan rally. Through such actions the group developed self-confidence about its ability to win things and be effective. When UA entered the elections in the context of a city torn by racial striff, it did so with confidence in its ability to win. Even when it became apparent that the group's stand on the Klan and busing would cost it votes, they continued to act in a self-confident manner. The position itself and the fact that the group had withstood all the pressures to back down on ~~this~~ this issue actually helped build the groups self-cpnfidence. Even while its stand on the Klan cost it votes, the toughness of the group undoubtedly won it other votes - even from whites opposed to busing.

The self-confidence of UA showed through in the election campaign it conducted. It did not simply distribute leaflets or send out a mailing. In

LOUISVILLE (Cont')

addition to these, they visited each work place in the morning or a lunch time. Meetings were arranged wherever possible, and the UA candidates talked to the workers about their program. In this way, a high percentage of those workers who were most likely to vote; i.e., those who would come to listen to candidates, were reached directly. Thus, the candidates appeared as real people not just unknown names on a piece of paper. Being able to see the self-confidence of the UAers must have convinced many workers that the UA candidates were credible - that is, could run the union as well or better than the mediocre types that now run it.

UA not only personally campaigned aggressively, but discussed the issues on the minds of the workers with them. That is, they didn't just give set speeches, but asked questions and gave answers. Best of all, in some cases where workers complained of grievances the union wouldn't handle, or of do nothing stewards, the UAers, most of whom are stewards, took the grievances on the spot and filed them right then and there.

Since the first election, UA has come under continuous attack for its position. Rank and filers and officials alike have criticized UA for endorsing pro-busing actions. Harold has been harrassed for his speech at an anti-Klan rally. The planned anti-busing march on Washington, led by IUE local Pres. Ken Casady and endorsed by 55 local unions in Louisville, has further polarized things in Local 10310 as well as elsewhere. The liberal Pres. of the local, Denis Dearing, has endorsed the anti-busing rally. No doubt the incumbants are trying to make the campaign center on the busing issue - even if they are doing so through gossip rather than out front.

In spite of all of this UA has not collapsed or retreated. There is frustration over having to run again. But the groups feels that, even if it doesn't win, it will do well. Through an extremely difficult situation UA has established itself as a major, decisive force in the local.

UAW RAP GROUP

We have set up a UAW rap group for first shift workers in Detroit. The idea behind the rap group was to bring together workers from different locals where we are active and get them into joint discussions with each other. The stated purpose of the rap group is to help the participants become more effective unionists; the assumption is that the participants are militants and fighters. In part, our objective in running these discussions is basic training in the techniques of being fighting unionists; something many of the militants with whom we are working are hungry to get. But our other objective is just as important, maybe more so. We see the rap group as a way of cutting through the local parochialism, and getting workers from different plants to identify as being part of a common struggle and movement. We see this as a precondition for work that goes behind the individual locals, where the rank and file base is actively involved, and not just passively .

In the past , this has been a great weakness in our work. We have attempted various national and regional UAW projects, usually through the UNC. But we have : never been able to get self starting active participation in them from our supporters in the Local caucuses;; at best they have been reluctantly dragged along. Our hope is that the discussion group will help change this.

So far, we have had 2 sessions. It appears that we will be at least partially successful. The discussions have been very lively, with everyone actively participating and learning. So far , the industrialized ISers who have taken part have learned as much as anyone else. It has gone a long way toward building self confidence and skills as union activists. Whip, as group leader has had a lot to contribute in this. A technique that seems most effective is role playing. At the second session, Whip B. and Jack W. played International Reps. , everyone else played angry rank and filers and we went at it. It was very successful. But we learned one lesson. In the futher , before beginning the role playing, a make believe factual situation should be carefully set up. Making it clear why the rank and filers are meeting with the reps and preparing a list of specific incidents that preceeded the meeting, and what the rank and file is there to accomplish. Without, these it was too easy for the reps to run the r&f around in circles. The main strategy for the r&f is to the issues and demands, but these were not clearly enough set up in the first place.

In future sessions, we plan to set up other situations, discussions on the shop floor with timid workers, arguments with foremen, etc. We also plan to go into contractual questions of how to use this contract and how to fight for a better one.

PARCEL PAPER REPORT # 1 OCTOBER 22, 1975

This is a preliminary report on the national parcel paper. Two issues are out now with the third scheduled for the middle of November. The press run of #1 was 4,000 which ran out. The press run of #2 was 6,000 which will shortly run out. The press run of #3 will be 8,000. We still don't know at what point the demand will level out. There is enough copy and interest to continue to put it out monthly.

The response to this paper has been fantastic in most areas. There have been over 200 subscriptions to date. (150 of these were organized by stewards in two cities in Kentucky.) In addition, there are contributions and requests for bundles coming in from all over the country, many of these from stewards. These stewards are passing it on to other stewards they know in other states. The network is expanding rapidly. The two places that the paper was distributed where there hasn't been much response are Chicago and LA. We don't know the reason for this.

One of the best measures of success for the paper is the financial support it has received. It is operating in the black. It will continue to do so even though the expenses will be close to \$500 a month for printing, supplies, and shipping at the 8,000 level press run. We aim toward building up a reserve to use for printing auxiliary flyers, brochures, etc. around individual regional contracts when they come up.

There is a growing network of militant stewards that are beginning to see this paper as their paper. In the midwest many of these stewards tried to organize a contract rejection movement last contract. These people have many years seniority and have been fighting the company for years. They see this paper as the way out of isolation. They see it as the way to organize for a decent contract when the current Central States contract expires (April 30, 1976). They are actively getting the paper out to everyone they know around the country. In addition, we are getting responses from people who have only seen the paper through finding it in a trailer or by an over-the-road driver bringing one copy into the building.

A perspective for the coming 6 months will be out shortly to the fraction. It will center around organizing for the regional contracts coming up in the spring. It will discuss linking the TDC campaign to these contracts, building regional stewards committees and regional rank and file meetings to organize for these contracts, building lasting organization in the union after the contract round, and bringing the best people around the organization.

A and D, Cleveland

Sugar Workers Continue to Make Gains

The Sugar Workers United Rank and File (SWURF) in California locals of the Distillery Workers Int. has been organized now for little more than a year. In this time SWURF has successfully organized a statewide rank and file group which is campaigning for a class struggle union(see Workers Power June 19 for background article).

The key targets for SWURF have been the offices of the 10 local unions which are delegates to the statewide Sugar Council. The council is critical because it negotiates the contracts with the sugar industry. The 74 contract was a disaster for sugar workers. It gave up the cost of living formula for a 1 cent per hour straight increase. The contract was rammed thru despite widespread but poorly organized opposition. Further, this was before the phony sugar crisis, which sent sugar prices and profits soaring. The ILWU Hawaiian sugar workers were able to force their contract to be reopened for a big pay boost. SWURF has been building on the opposition to the contract and is campaigning to reopen the contract. It is currently circulating a petition to get the contract reopened, as well as preparing for the next one.

There are 10 locals in the Sugar Council with election staggered throughout the year. This makes it impossible to win in a big campaign or spontaneous worker anger over a sell-out. Solid organization is required to continue campaigning on a sustained basis and to build a track record that can win over the rank and file.

Because SWURF has done just that it has systematically won elections in the locals. Most recently the Swurf endorsed slate in Mendota(Fresno) swamped the incumbents (See WP 10/17). This was also the first Chicano to be elected President in the local although a majority of the workers are Chicano. The new President was a founding member of SWURF.

SWURF is also active as a rank and file group. SWURF officers lead a large demonstration in Salinas as a way of fighting systematic disciplinary suspensions and discharges at the Spreckels plant. During the period when the old union officers had the local tied up to disqualify the elections which SWURF won, they had allowed the company to move completely unchecked. The recent actions have won back pay for several workers and the reinstatement of one fired worker.

In Clarksburg, management has attempted to get rid of SWURF activists. In at least one case there is evidence that a former union official defeated by SWURF tried to get the activist fired by reporting to the company that he attended a union meeting the day he was off work sick. SWURF publicity and agitation got these management actions reversed.

Steel was the last industrial priority that was set up in the organisation and there is no doubt that at this stage the level of work we are doing reflects this late start. We have an extremely small number of comrades actually working in steel now and only a couple more who have USWA cards but are on lay-off. The possibility of doing any consistent national work at all rests on the fact that we have steel fractions now in four branches with a relatively large number of comrades working around steel and trying to get jobs. This should result in a qualitative step forward in Jan and Feb when we believe jobs will open up again.

The role of the National Steel Ctte, which was set up at convention, has been mainly organisational so far, with the important exception of setting the political line for our work in the RAFT, the Ohio based steel r&f group. We have taken steps to get regular reports from the branches and started providing some minimum guidance and co-ordination for the local work. There is now a steel bulletin, mechanisms for ensuring WP steel coverage, a pamphlet is in the course of production and we are about to set up a systematic steel education program. The ctte is based on Cleveland (where we had a local fraction in operation long before we took on any national work) but also includes the national secretary as a member.

The focus of our work at this stage is Raft, based on one strong local in Youngstown but with a national reputation in the USWA. It is still an extremely sloppy organisation but we have members in it with standing and influence and there is the potential to turn it into a real, national r&f organisation. At this time a debate is going on in Raft about its future and there is a good possibility that out of this debate will come a commitment for a national R&F paper (as opposed to the bulletin coming out of Cleveland which is all that exists at the moment), individual membership and a membership drive and the creation of six local chapters in the four places we have branch fractions plus Youngstown and Connecticut. This would mean that Raft had an organised presence in some of the key steel areas like Chicago and Pittsburg.

The main political question in the union at the moment is the position of Ed Sadlowski, USWA District Director in District 31 (Chicago and Gary), the largest district in the union. Sadlowski, running as a reform candidate beat the International backed candidate in last years election. He won because he organised steelworkers at the base to support him and created the illusion of being part of the r&f. After his election he tried to maintain this stance by turning his campaign organisation into "Steelworker Fight Back" inside his own district. That is where his problems started. Because Sadlowski is manoeuvring into position to run for president he is very keen to have no program which will tie his hands. Certainly a genuine r&f program would cut him off from whole areas of disaffected rightists in the union who he would like to capture. So he is now having trouble with his own supporters who complain that he is never seen in the district, that they only hear from him by reading the Chicago Sun-Times, that he should take a firmer stand on lay-offs and the no-strike agreement and that he should organise a paper for the r&f in the district and spread it in the union. The problem of waning support to his left should not be over-estimated but it exists and provides us with a small opening for pushing a genuine R&F approach, an approach that makes it clear that a vote for Sadlowski for president would be wrong because he is incapable of representing the real interests of the r&f. If a national bandwagon starts for Sadlowski (and he is already working on this, his first national initiative on dues protest largely failed) then our position will definitely be swimming against the stream even though it represents the views of the most advanced

Guide to Portugal work in the unions

The Industrial Committee (IC) and the Portugal Solidarity Committee have discussed ways in which worker comrades can carry out solidarity work in their unions. It was felt that due to the relative apathy in the U.S. working class about Portugal that the best handle for us was the question of union involvement, whether through the CIA or through support to the SP. The Industrial Dept. has initiated research to link the unions we are involved in with the CIA or SP. So far substantial information has been found on UAW and CWA. The Ind. Dept. will send out packets to the local fractions containing info on the particular union's involvement with the CIA-SP.

The purpose of this packet will be to provide facts for leaflets and/or articles for the R&F bulletins. The bulk of any articles or leaflets will be a message from either workers councils, commissions, or unions in Portugal requesting solidarity of U.S. workers with the rank and file labor movement in Portugal. In particular, the message will ask U.S. workers to oppose CIA intervention and to oppose any intervention by their unions on the side of reaction, i.e., the SP, Sixth Government, etc. To repeat, we want the R&F groups to print this message, along with the facts of their union's involvement in the R&F bulletin. Wherever possible we want the R&F groups to put forth resolutions in their locals condemning union involvement on the side of the SP/CIA and calling for solidarity with the councils, commissions, ~~xxxx~~ or whoever it is who sent the message from Portugal. The major points of the resolution will be included in the packet.

Additionally, we are asking the various local fractions to investigate the possibility of solidarity Cabarets or parties to be sponsored by the R&F groups. These would have to be held around December, after the conclusion of the membership drive. These parties/cabarets would be social events, but would raise money for the Portuguese workers movement. They should probably include a short rap on Portugal and a fund pitch. Keep in mind that we are talking about events sponsored by R&F groups, not by the IS - which, of course, will have many of its own Portugal events. For that reason we will be stressing CIA involvement and support to the commissions, councils or unions rather than specific support to the PRP.

None of this is meant to limit or down play an aggressive stance toward involving workers, particularly those we work with in the R&F groups, in IS events around Portugal. On the contrary, we expect that involvement in IS-Portugal events will be a major stimulus for non-IS militants taking interest in getting their groups to do likewise.

Your fraction is to discuss these ideas, the info you receive and to prepare draft articles or leaflets. You should formulate proposals and send them to the Ind. Dept. as soon as possible. If, after receiving your packet you still have questions about how to proceed call the NO and speak to KM or BG in the industrial dept. or to BW on the Portugal Committee.