

Do Ray

DECEMBER



is news of the month '76

for is and rt members only

DECEMBER "NEWS OF THE MONTH".

Contents

- 1) National Secretary's Report.
- 2) Quarterly Branch Reports (Indianapolis and Madison not received).
- 3) On Using the Workers Power Review.
- 4) On the WP letters page.
- 5) EC Statement on the Declaration of a Faction.
- 6) Some Observations on WP, from Seattle.
- 7) EC Outline of the Ongoing Southern Agrica Campaign.
- 8) District Ctte evaluation of the New Jersey Conference.
- 9) Four Documents on the Resignation from the RT of Micheal L.
- 10) List of newly published Special Bulletins.
- 11) Business Reply Form for Feedback on WP (Use It!).

#####

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Saturday, 11th. December 1976.

PERIPHERY BUILDING. The campaign to extend the periphery of the I.S. has continued over the last month in most of the branches. We have had a whole series of quite modest successes, particularly around the issue of South Africa, and we are coming to the stage where our branches will be in a position in the New Year to integrate the building of a political periphery into the ongoing work of the branches and fractions. This process should put us in a position to grow in size in the spring. At this point in time our recruitment is consistantly slightly smaller than our losses, though it should be understood that many of the new recruits are workers. It is a good measure of the set-back we have had over the last period that the recruitment drive we initially envisaged for this fall will not be feasible until next spring.

There is a report in this edition of the "News of the Month" on the conference which was held in New Jersey last month. In some ways it seriously failed to meet its objectives, but the lessons that were learned there may be useful for other branches later. Certainly the format and method of the conference will bear repeating in other districts as the periphery develops.

The circulation of WP continues to creep up slowly, too slowly, from a base which was small, too small. Every member of the organisation and each working unit of the organisation will have to put more effort into this element of our activity. There is a general feeling in the organisation that the content of WP is improving, though we still have some way to go. That is the consensus we get from the feedback on the paper. We believe the regular Workers Power Review will further improve things. The first edition is out this week and it is an excellent and serious magazine section which should be very useful. The editor and all the other comrades who worked on the new project deserve congratulations. But we need feedback on it and more feedback on WP itself. With the business reply form we have included again in this edition of the news, it won't even cost 13¢ to let us know your views on the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.

INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES. This week-end sees national meetings which are of vital importance to three of our main areas of industrial work. Both the CWA and UAW are holding national fraction meetings and in the IBT our members are heavily involved in a national council meeting of the TDU (Teamsters for a Democratic Union). This council meeting comes at a time when the TDU has succeeded in

establishing its chapters in several major cities of the Mid-West and West Coast. The geographical and company networks that arose out of the contract campaign and suffered the inevitable post-contract slide, are also being re-developed. In short in the teamster union there is slow but steady progress and this is now being reflected by small-scale IS recruitment. Both the UAW and CWA committees are using their national fraction meetings as a way of setting a new course after a period of great difficulties and set-back. In telephone there is the first breath of a response to the upcoming contract and the fraction will be focussing in on this. Having weathered the severe storm of the massive attacks of the International union, which followed our initial success, the fraction is now in a position to stop the retreat and use the contract and local issues to start moving forward again. The auto work is in a different phase. The lack of movement around the recently completed contract represented a real set-back for us. This requires the firm re-establishment of local perspectives, the development of South African solidarity work in the plants, some modest but clear preparations for the UAW convention elections and the serious organisation of a national fraction. Despite the contract setbacks we now have members in auto in four cities where we didn't have members before the campaign.

The postal work is still suffering from the fact that we have so few people on the inside to take advantage of the conditions which the massive employer offensive has created. The R&F paper which is edited by one of our comrades is still receiving an excellent response in a couple of dozen cities but we still haven't been able to make significant progress in turning this response into solid R&F organisation or recruitment. This is partly due to the fact that our overall weakness has forced us to establish the centre of this work in the Bay Area, and even there our base is not large. The comrades there have done excellent work but recognise the problem themselves, they are therefor encouraging the creation, over a period, of a new centre in Chicago.

The most exciting area of work at the moment is in steel. With less than two months to go to the presidential election our members are heavily involved in the Sadlowski campaign. As we expected ~~was~~ this campaign is attracting an impressive layer of rank and file militants and our involvement in Gary, Cleveland and Pittsburg ~~has~~ brought many of these militants into contact with the IS. It is already clear that we will come out of this campaign with some new USWA members, a much larger political periphery and some ongoing rank and file organisation, particularly in Pittsburg. It is also clear that given our small and relatively inexperienced fraction, we will not reap all the advantages we could. As we approach the date of the election, the use of WP by non-steel comrades will be a vital component in getting the most out of the overall campaign.

FILMS. One of the real lessons of the periphery campaign is that the use of political films, in several different ways, is an invaluable ~~XXXXXX~~ weapon in the struggle to develop our political periphery. Given other areas of work, not all branches will be able to emulate ~~the~~ the impressive film series that Seattle reports on in its branch report, but running some films rather than routine and dull forums should be tried by all branches. Similarly in any fair-sized workplace where our members have a base and there are many black workers, our comrades have shown in Detroit that living-room showings of the Last Grave film can be very useful. Again it should be stressed that this innovation does not end with the completion of the periphery campaign.

RED TIDE. There is little need for a long report on the RT, not because it is unimportant but because the centre-fold articles in the last edition of WP give a good impression of the success of the convention they have just held. This convention was doubly successful given the fact that only weeks

before the Red Tide had lost its national secretary, a comrade who had played an indispensable role in the original creation of the RT as well as its move to the Mid West (see other documents on this question, below). While it is still the case that the Detroit RT is in advance of the other branches, its latest activity was a debate with one of the famous Detroit ~~gangs~~ gangs, it is also now clear that there can be stable branches in Chicago, Cleveland and Pittsburg. When resources permit conditions are good for the spread of the RT to other major Mid-Western cities.

SOUTH AFRICA Further on in this edition of "News of the Month" is a document on the next steps in the development of our South African campaign. Our original approach to this question had been to do propaganda on a limited basis. Forums, the Last Grave film, literature, WP coverage, posters, buttons, etc. The reason for this modest approach was two-fold, first to test the water of working class reaction to the issue before proceeding and second to avoid throwing our organisation, which is still severely stretched, into another all-out campaign. The reaction, particularly amongst black workers now forces us to take the next steps into some agitational work (already there has been an anti-GM demo in Detroit and a successful action against Krugerands in NY). It has also become clear that despite our continuing problems (problems note...not crisis) it is obvious that the organisation is now ready to move more seriously on this campaign.

FINANCES All members should be aware that the organisation is not in good shape financially. It costs literally hundreds of thousands to run a national organisation with strong fractions and a weekly newspaper, and dues and the income on WP fall dramatically short of covering our expenses. At this point we are not able to say exactly how we can finance our operation after the end of January, and this situation makes the limited fall fund drive which is about to end fantastically important. All branches must fulfill their quotas as soon as possible, so far we have only got about 15% in and there is only a couple of weeksXX to go on the original timetable. By sheer necessity the spring fund drive will have to be for tens of thousand of dollars. Perhaps it won't come as such a shock if people are warned in advance. It is an interesting ~~xxxxxx~~ observation that the combined tax rebate our members will be receiving in spring would probably go a good way to filling the quota.

BRANCHES The quarterly branch reports contained in this and the last edition of the "News" give a fair impression of where our branches are at in terms of strength and internal morale. Things are improved, virtually every branch (and most of them have been visited by an EC member in the last month) report that they are over the worst in terms of their slump. There is still no room for complacency, but barring unwanted factionalist developments in the present internal political fight, it should be possible if we continue along the lines put forward by the last NC to make a total break with the past demoralisation and stagnation in the New Year.

In one vital branch however, things are still at a low-ebb. That is Chicago. We have started the process of sending new people there and have named an interim organiser, but the problems will not be solved until we have a new permanent organiser and another dozen members in the branch. In St Louis we have a branch in severe decline. The branch has been weak for some time given the fact that we have had to move several experienced members from there in the last year and the remaining members have not been very successful in getting into industry. The present crisis which calls into question the very existence of the branch was precipitated by the resignation from the IS of the branch organiser. We have sent a leading member of the NC to investigate and help in the situation.

FACTION FIGHT A faction has been formed in our organisation (see EC statement, below) which calls into question the whole long-term strategy of the organisation. It would be wrong to comment here on the politics of the minority, we have already organised a series of meetings and special bulletins to enable both the majority and the minority to do that, but it should be made clear that the differences we will be debating and resolving at the end of January are very basic. This faction is not based on this or that issue or even on the sum of very serious problems we have faced over the last year but on a challenge to the whole strategy of the organisation for ~~the~~ this decade. The possibilities in this situation for an extremely disruptive internal fight are therefore very high.

Already the result of the premature creation of a faction has been to stall the periphery campaign in some branches and just two months before the completion of the Sadlowski campaign, the steel fraction, or rather some sections of it, are being hampered to some extent in their external work by internal differences. This rot must be stopped now and it is the responsibility of all members to play a part in that.

We are well aware of the problems and frustrations that exist in the organisation, if people go back to the documents of the October NC they will see that ~~we~~ we are at least beginning to take on some of these problems. But the problems will only be solved by a constructive approach to the debate and its solutions. Negativism and disunity will cripple the I.S.

NEXT STEPS The NC meeting at the end of January will not spend all its time resolving the faction fight. It will also have the responsibility of charting, in some detail, the course of the organisation in concrete terms for the year 1977. The EC has already started a process of consultation with many other leading members of the organisation and has been out in many of the branches on a "listening:" expedition to get some more input on the development of our new year perspectives. We would also welcome, during the course of this factional debate, contributions to the discussion which are not based on the factional divisions but which speak to the concrete development of our next steps as an organisation. In other words our discussions must include taking the first steps which were outlined in the meeting of the last NC and turning them into a fuller program for the organisation over the next year.

Glenn Wolfe,
December 9th, 1976.

ATLANTA BRANCH REPORT

The Atlanta Branch is just beginning to get on its feet. The most pressing problem for the branch is getting jobs. Most have gotten keep-alive jobs, but none yet in priorities. Some possibilities have appeared, but none yet solid enough to produce results. The branch has set up a jobs committee to track down all of the places that we would want to get hired at, to keep tabs on where applications are being taken and where hiring is taking place, and to make sure that everyone is notified of this information. We are attempting to make sure we miss no opportunities that are available.

We are also looking into some possible areas now.

1. Sadlowski. There is one medium-sized steel mill here. We want to do some work on the Sadlowski movement here and have a real possibility because one of our members is a former steelworker with credentials in the Sadlowski movement.
2. P.O. We are intending to put some real effort into the P.O. to try to make contact and recruit from the outside, as we have done elsewhere.
3. Hospital. Two of our members have gotten jobs at the big city hospital. The union is AFSCME, and it is part of the city workers local. We already have some potential collaborators there -- two women who are members of a local radical collective, and who are stewards at the hospital. It is not certain that they will work with us, and without them it would take us much longer to get anything going.
4. Gary Tyler is a possibility. There is apparently no ongoing Gary Tyler committee here at present, although obviously the OL is here and will probably try to raid us if we start. The exec is considering the question. In any case we will wait until the first of the year before starting anything.
5. J.P. Stephens boycott. This is something we planned to look into and possibly get involved in. J.P. Stephens is the second-largest textile manufacturer in the country. The attempt to organize its work force will be one of the largest attempts to organize the unorganized in decades. But the whole thing is being delayed because the union is putting it off. Apparently the merger of the two textile unions is running into some difficulties. Also, it appears that the ruling against the NAACP because of the Port Gibson boycott has them worried.
6. South Africa. We have the film for late January and we are intending to make a big push for it after the first of the year. We are now beginning to line up collaborators to help us build it. Success here could help us to build Gary Tyler.
7. WP. We are just getting started on sales, and are focusing on the places we are putting political effort into: steel, PO, hospital, committee.

The branch has launched on a relatively ambitious educational program, figuring that we should take advantage of the lull in political activity that exists now. We are now carrying out a program of study of Vol. 1 of Cliff's Lenin. Following it we will have a series on Southern labor. Other topics we have discussed/will discuss include China, elections, Portugal, South Africa.

The women's caucus is just starting to get organized. We see it as playing an important role in the branch, both for our women members and for contacts.

We have begun to develop some contacts, and even though the list is small, recruitment possibilities are excellent.

We are beginning to get our political bearings here and to get some information. The OL and the RU are in decline here, according to our informants. The RU is said to have consolidated its Atlanta and Birmingham operations by bringing the Birmingham group here. The OL is considerably smaller than it used to be and no longer maintains an office in the city . . . though anyone we know knows of, at any rate. Workers' World, the parent group of YAWF, is another group of some size here, but they are pretty irrelevant to us.

BAY AREA BRANCH REPORT Dec. 1, 1976

The branch is on a cautious, gradual upswing. We have gained one member (a comrade from another city who was on a leave of absence) and one other has put his name forward for membership (a long-time IBT contact.) Two others (a student and a leftist Teamster) should join soon, so we should level off around 20. We are just beginning to get a handle on the periphery campaign. Our industrial work is going as well as it ever has, but it is still weak politically. However, everyone in the branch is starting to think politics now, and grapple with the question of how to bring it into their work. There is a healthy discussion going on about how much to orient around the fractions, how much to raise politics through branch events. This is a real step forward.

We are attempting to pitch our politics at varying levels for different people. For our experienced cadre, we have now scheduled the first of a three-part cadre class series on the revolutionary party in the mass movement. We have had internal branch educationals on things like South Africa, China, selling WP, and the NC documents. For contacts with some basic theoretical background, we have a weekly basic politics class series. This has been largely successful, and we should recruit two and integrate others into our active periphery. Also for contacts we held a potluck discussion around "Last Grave", drew a dozen non-members but only one connected with our industrial work. While we have contacts coming to all three of our industrial fractions, we have only begun to use these meetings as forums for political discussion. That is a key task ahead of us.

We're beginning an experiment on a way to reach our relatively huge potential periphery in this area (literally dozens of ex-members, many more sympathizers, and lots of friends from work). We're starting a branch newsletter on the Detroit model, December issue about to be mailed out. Many of these people can help us in one way or another. Also, putting out a very public thing like that forces us to take a hard look at what we are doing politically and whether it serves our periphery building goals.

The job of coming up with a well-rounded branch political life is being taken on primarily by our WP & Education committee. This body was set up in August and has succeeded in stabilizing WP sales, organizing educationals, running classes. One positive step we've taken - overcame inertia and moved to a monthly branch business meeting (instead of every two weeks). This should give us the time and energy to build innovative politically oriented events, appealing to contacts. The old branch meeting format has gone stale. Also, work schedules demanded weekend fraction meetings, so comrades were feeling overburdened. The WP committee will build these monthly events, help fractions organize their educationals, and run classes. Our only plans for December is a holiday fund-raising party. Considering branch social life, it will be welcome.

Our women's caucus is re-building itself, with the help of a transferred comrade from St. Louis. Plans are under way for an IA-Bay Area women's conference in February. This should be a tremendous boost.

At the base of all this, our industrial work is going well. Our Jobs Committee, set up in August, was a notable success. They did a systematic job survey, and built a precision job-hunting machine. The result is four people in a key IBT company. Some may be temporary, but there is a good chance that all will get into a priority local. We recommend this jobs committee set-up for other branches.

In IBT, there is a real TDU chapter now, with dozens of dues-paying members and a 12-person steering committee. At the last meeting Camarata spoke and 50 people showed up. The problems are that our only strong base is in local 278, which is a weak local. Also, no unifying activity

BAY AREA - 2

has been immediately apparent. Finally, we have not won over a core of people to a consistent class struggle view of TDU. However, we are well-positioned in the chapter to do that, and our new jobs and recruitment of a key activist should help that.

Our postal worker was elected steward, and helped start a stewards' council. This has helped break us out of sectarian isolation and position ourselves for doing real mass work. Having the national center here has helped bring people around, but drained a lot of energies. There is a small group of postal workers in a couple locations here who relate to the national paper, and some who relate to our fraction. Our WP sales - 20 at the BMC, 15 at Oakland Main - reveal a tremendous potential. We have only begun to develop a political strategy for postal work.

Our garment fraction is dealing with the union representation election on Dec. 9, the culmination of a year of hard work. At its best, this work has given us valuable experience in mass work organizing. The union is expected to win, and we will begin preparing for a contract fight. We have a couple of recruitment possibilities from the factory and the support committee which we helped build.

An area of work that we may open up is South Africa solidarity in the Black community. We have the advantage of having a number of interested and knowledgeable members and contacts. The strength of the Panthers and middle class Black groups here in Oakland means that there is a lot of awareness of the issue, and more forces in the field already doing something.

Paul

New York-New Jersey District Report

The main activity for the district during November was the east coast conference (see report in WP). The conference was not as large as we had hoped it would be and indicated some serious problems in our work, the shallowness of our periphery etc.. For those who were at the conference, it was a big success. Having a catered dinner worked very well, making the conference more of a major event, and also making it more enjoyable, sociable etc.. The high cost of the conference (\$10 with dinner) kept some people away, requiring more of a commitment ~~from~~ from contacts to attend. Hence the conference is more important as a recruitment rally at the end of a campaign, rather than as a forum to build a periphery. Many contacts who were there were more impressed by the IS and moved closed to joining.

While there is no basic steel in this area, there is metal shops, copper, and canning in NJ. We are trying to work with some student contacts to distribute the supplement at some plants. As of yet we have been able to find no evidence of a Sadlowski campaign in this area. There will be a major fund raising event in NY on Dec 14, but the price (\$25 per person) precludes it from being an event that we can bring people to.

The possibilities of building a Red Tide in this area have taken a giant step forward. One high school student went to the convention in Detroit and joined. We are now trying to build the RT at her high school, and already have made some new contacts. The schools remain quiet this year, so we will be beginning some work around Gary Tyler and Southern Africa.

AFT work has suffered a setback. A fight has broken out in New Directions. Initially this involved some redbaiting of the IS by conservative members of the group (who have leadership of it). This has been defeated. The main fight is over the perspective for the group. The current leaders want to just focus on union democracy and the union elections next spring. We have been pushing for the group to fight around the conditions in the schools now, the cutbacks etc.. The outcome of this fight is unclear at this moment, and so is the survival of the group. The fraction is continuing to have dinner discussions for teachers which are quite successful.

The east coast UPS strike is proving to be a real bummer. It has proven difficult to maintain contact with people and get them to things. We have been having monthly TDU dinners with mostly UPSers there. One UPSer came to the east coast conference and some others are interested in the IS. IN NY we continue to sell enormous amounts of Workers' Power at UPS. We have made several attempts to set up meetings which have failed.

In Post Office, the failure of the Sombrotto campaign may open things up. We ~~we~~ have had some initial success in fighting around the issues of overtime, part-timers and speedup.

In telephone things remain very slow, perhaps at their lowest ebb. The last union meeting had only 150 people at it, one of the lowest turnouts ever. One interesting note; the local president, Dempsey, has been going around holding meetings in various buildings, to discuss the contract. One point he is pushing is the shorter work week. We will be organizing a showing of "Last Grave" for telephone workers in the near future.

Portland is at present preparing a reorganization based on the fact that we now have a full time organizer and that we are smaller in number now than for some time. We have problems in all our areas at work. We have no startling success to report but thankfully no disaster either. The branch has twelve members, there are six friends at the branch and six or eight contacts. Two of the friends are ex-members and we have one friend about to join.

The periphery campaign has meant that we now are more conscious of the need to organize our periphery and set up systematic contact visiting. The first two forums we had, on the elections and the film were not conspicuous successes. We have organized our method of coordinating forums and each member has a dittoed sheet with everyone's responsibilities both in publicity, contact visiting and on the day of the forum. This weekend with Larry's visit we shall check the efficiency of our reorganization.

Workers Power has been reorganized too. We have one person in charge of circulation and one with content. Some progress has been made in contributing articles and stories but sales have improved marginally, if at all.

The two arenas at work which are absorbing most energy in the branch and offer the best hope for expanding our periphery are the community work and the T.D.U. work.

The community work faction has been expanded, one comrade has been added and the friend who is about to join is working with us on this effort. It involves working with the two best known black radicals in town in an effort to expose the director of the local poverty agency. To date there are ten or a dozen blacks consistently involved but only two or three are really potential members. We have picketed the offices of the (PMSC) Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee, the home of Cleveland Gilrcease its director and brought out two editions of "Poor peoples network" a two sided broadsheet which we hope to run into a regular publication on broader issues.

So far, despite some press coverage, six or eight sympathetic T.V. stories and much effort and time spent picketing and collecting signatures, we have failed to increase the numbers involved or mobilize very many people. One member spends a lot of time on the issue and four or five are often involved on one or more days in the week.

The big problem so far has been lack of politics, the campaign being too narrowly focussed, and not raising the issue of the programs themselves (except in discussions with the core of people involved). The problem for us is the old perennial-how are we going to recruit out of the campaign. The two most important blacks involved are close to us personally and respect our political views even when they do not share them. It will be difficult to recruit and integrate them into the branch in the near future.

The T.D.U. work goes ahead but is running into problems. We only have two teamster members and the burden of T.D.U. is quite heavy on them both. At present they are involved in an election campaign in local 162. Neither is a candidate and of the four candidates two dropped out of T.D.U. at a late stage and one of the remaining two failed to show up to take the election address to teamster hall.

The whole strategy of using official channels to distribute our literature as part of our challenge to the bureaucrats has collapsed. As far as the election challenge itself only one of the initial candidates has come through. However another

four or five rank and filers were involved and the post-election strategy has to be worked out to keep that group together. A series of educationals such as that organized by the LA branch is one possibility. The fraction has learned an important lesson over the past two months - action speaks louder than words - and some action was possible a couple of months ago, when a local dropped a Kaiser health plan, leaving several hundred families without medical coverage. An occupation of the local office would have involved many rank and filers, drawn much-needed publicity, and shown us as a group of fighters within the union. We missed the boat, but our resolve to be much more alert to future opportunities.

The women's caucus and the health care group has a number of contacts and have had some successful meetings, but no focus of activity. The problems faced by the women and health care workers is a major item on the agenda of the next exec.

The situation among members who are not part of fractions has not changed since the last report. The same is true of the IAM fraction. Worthy of mention, however is the work of one of our gay members. Advice is necessary about dealing with the Freedom Socialist Party.

The one real success we have to report is an internal one. There was a Portland-Seattle weekend school attended by 24 comrades, and two close contacts. The agenda included discussions on the periphery campaign, Workers' Power, Southern Africa, and Portugal and China. There was also a joint Women's caucus and a joint exec. Coming out of these we pledged to assist each other wherever possible, and have more such weekend schools. We must also use the undoubted talent of both branches much more effectively.

Seattle Branch Report
December 3, 1976

In the last three months, since our last report, the Seattle branch has been actively working toward bringing new people around the organization. We have held many public events. We have held three womens' evenings, a five part weekly film series, and are currently working on a forum scheduled for December 8 on Racism and the Class Struggle and a potluck/holiday event to wrap the whole thing up before the new year.

The film series took much hard work and turned out to be an effective way to put across our politics. Here is an idea of how it went.

Date	Film	Attendance	Talk
Nov. 4	Last Grave at Dimbazi	65	South Africa
6	Last Grave.....	130	South Africa
11	Blow for Blow	65	womens liberation and workers' control
18	Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner	60	No talk due to illness
24	Animal Farm	45	Russian revolution and rise of Stalin
Dec. 2	Finally Got the News and Work	55	Why the Working Class has the power to change society.

After three of these we met with contacts at a tavern across the street about the films and the I.S. To help build for these, besides the usual forms of publicity, we produced a poster and two of our own pamphlets, which we made and distributed. One focused on Africa and the other on Blow for Blow. Each included a very political article about the I.S. urging people to get involved. We distributed 350-400 of them.

Womens Caucus

The womens' caucus held a meeting on Women under Apartheid, one on Women and Bussing, and soon we will have one on Abortion Birth Control and Forced Sterilization.

Occupation

Two branch members were involved in the occupation of a juvenile detention center by indians which was featured in two W.P. articles. We passed out W.P. and Red Tide. The Tide went over big. Some of the occupiers came to Last Grave...

Teamsters

IDU held its first meeting here in many months. 7 non I.S. Teamsters came and heard a report on the tdu convention by a portland comrade. We are working in an election campaign.

Seattle, continued

A new issue of Trunkline, the rank and file operators newsletter for the CWA is coming out next week.

There was a sick out here of postal workers which was written up in WF and the Postal Worker.

Transit Fraction

Work among bus drivers shows much promise. Our comrades are both stewards and are doing good work. We plan to provide more resources to this area of work. Several drivers attend various IS functions, especially the womens evenings and the films.

Regional Meetings

Portland and Seattle comrades got together and helped each other out on a wide range of topics. We had sessions on periphery building, the role of a revolutionary newspaper, South Africa, Permanent revolution, women in South Africa, and the crisis in China. Glenn flew out to see the meeting, gave a national secretaries report, and participated in an enlightening debate on our work around Portugal.

Women get together

Portland and Seattle women met and discussed the state of womens liberation work in the IS. It was viewed as being extremely minimal. The root of the problem, apparent especially obviously by the lack of coverage given to issues involving women in W.P., was seen as being tied to our whole perspective on women. The meeting was not a gripe session in any sense as the women resolved to work toward improving the situation. An article is being prepared for the womens buletin which all members should read and discuss.

Results

Although the two branches only have a couple of dozen members, we have many talents and skills to share. The need to develop more local initiative and to put IS politics at the heart of our work came through each session. We have scheduled another joint meeting and will try to assist each other more in the coming period.

Seattle summary

We have taken the first steps here in getting over the depoliticization that has plagued the organization and developed some new contacts. Now our job is to firm up our work. We want to continue holding many public meetings, improve our existing fractions and begin some new work. We are thinking of starting a new fraction based on IS interventions in strikes and other outbursts of class struggle. We want to find a way to expand our work among women. We are a small branch and can't afford to miss opportunities.

USING WORKERS' POWER REVIEW

I. As comrades are aware, the first issue of the political magazine, Workers' Power Review is included as a supplement in the December 13 issue of Workers Power. Publishing this magazine is a big step forward for the organization. We now have a means of explaining, in readable form, our full politics on the important issues of the day.

The magazine supplement is aimed at the membership and periphery. Full and creative uses of it can provide: an important means of developing the political sophistication of the membership; the basis for political discussion and revolutionary development of our contacts individually or in groups; over time, a collection of analytical and informational articles on issues, events and developments nationally and internationally of revolutionary significance.

II. In order to get the full benefit of WPR, branches/fractions must discuss how to use it most effectively internally and externally. As soon as it is received, each branch exec and fraction steering committee should read it and discuss how to use it. Below are several ways we want the magazine used. Take initiative and we're sure you'll find others.

III. For the membership: Branches are to choose one article per month as the basis for branch political discussions. Buddies to newer members should use all articles as the basis of the regular political discussions.

IV. For the periphery: Special effort must be made to get this issue of WP with the magazine supplement to all contacts. In particular comrades should read the articles, keeping in mind the major political questions in each that could be raised the the contact in question. EG. The TDU article should be valuable to all our trade union contacts, not just Teamsters. The Teamster Branch in Detroit has already had a full discussion of how to use the article with their contacts. Below are the major political points in each article to use as a guide for contact work.

V. Major political points in the articles:

A. TDU

1. The specific conditions in the industry, the employers' offensive and the nature of the IBT bureaucracy laid the objective basis for a militant rank and file movement in the union.

2. A small group of people with a clear strategy can make a big difference.

3. The strength of TDU is its politics (understanding the nature of the employers offensive, the need for rank and file control, the need for rank and file organization and leadership.)

4. Socialists made a unique and central contribution to TDU's politics.

B. Portugal

1. The impossibility of bourgeois democratic stabilization of capitalism - The role of the Socialist Party in this context; social-democracy, what it is, how it acts.

2. Workers' resistance and making Portugal safe for capitalism - socialism of fascism.

3. The Communist Party and Maoist organization in a revolutionary situation.

4. Building the revolutionary party - the PRP and the Otelo campaign, the

GDUPs. The struggle for the GDUPs as part of the struggle to build a mass revolutionary party. How the PRP has built the nucleus of that party.

C. South Africa

1. Apartheid and the role of US imperialism in maintaining apartheid.
2. Permanent Revolution - national liberation and workers' revolution is the same struggle in South Africa.
3. The Black working class is the key not only to the liberation of South Africa, but also to southern Africa in general.
4. The responsibility of revolutionaries in this country - US out - we can aid the struggle in South Africa.

VI. Comrades are encouraged to keep this and future issue of WPR for reference. Extra copies are available from the NO. WPR should be put on literature tables and sold in bookstores at 10¢ a copy.

VII. Feedback: WPR is the property of the entire organization. It will improve to the extent it is taken seriously and used by the organization. This means we must have feedback. All organizers, execs, fraction steering committees must assess and evaluate the magazine and send reports to the Editor (Marilyn). We can only improve the magazine if we get feedback on its effectiveness with members and contacts. Ideas for articles, general criticism as well as criticism of individual articles are welcomed.

Marilyn Danton
For the Editorial Board

WORKERS' POWER LETTERS SCOREBOARD

The letters page is once again a lively and interesting part of the paper, thanks to many comrades who have begun to write in. This should continue--and expand.

It seems that the percentage of non-members writing letters is also rising, but there are no figures on this because I can no longer tell who wrote every letter. This is a good sign.

However, remembering that we only print 5-7 letters per issue, it is still a tiny minority of members who are taking on the responsibility of writing letters. We need to hear from new people.

Unfortunately, we are not really on top of getting letters in that reflect our industrial work. The steel fraction has been very successful with this, but other fractions--like auto--have fallen flat. (This is not reflected in the scoreboard because two letters from members who are auto workers have been printed, but they were organized from the WP staff.)

Some good ideas: the Cleveland branch has a policy of having new members write in, to explain why they joined, or to make some other point. Some of our best letters have come from these new comrades. Other branches should try it.

Use the mailgrams. Give them to contacts. If you need more, let Tom know. You'll have to hand out many more mailgrams than we'll ever get in--as with everything.

Elissa C. for WP

<u>ISSUE #</u>	183	184	185	186	187	188
BRANCHES:						
Atlanta			2			
Austin			1	1		
Cleveland	1		1		1	
Detroit	1					1
Gary	1			1		
Los Angeles				1		
New York				1		
Pittsburgh		1				1
Seattle	1					
Springfield		1				
St. Louis						1
FRACTIONS:						
UAW		1	1			
USW		1	1	1		
CWA						
IBT						
Prisoner	1	1			2	1
Miscellaneous	1	1			1	

Statement By the E.C. on the Formation of the "Left Faction"

On 12/6 the EC was informed by BW and CW that they have organized a faction. They informed us that they are in the process of preparing a document which will be presented to the EC on 12/9. As stated by them, the document will "cover a range of tactical and political questions," including the questions of leadership, priorities, industrialization, the newspaper and mass work. (Since this statement was drafted, the faction document has been published).

Although BW and CW would not discuss the political content under each broad heading they outlined, they did state that their document was in political solidarity with the criticisms made of our organization by the ISGB.

Before going on allow us to refresh the minds of the membership as to the content of these criticisms:

1. Opposition to industrialization
2. Opposition to priorities
3. For an orientation to white collar workers, i.e. teachers, social workers, hospital workers, as a bridge to the industrial working class.
4. For working from the outside and an emphasis on the paper as the vehicle through which to do that.
5. Opposition to the ISUS conducting agitation at this time, and thus for a return to an emphasis on propaganda.

It is not our intent here, to answer these charges. We have already done so in two answers to the ISGB which have already been circulated to the membership, and we will reply to their document. We will also continue to put forward our positions as the political debate develops. Rather, it is our intent here, to inform the membership of the formation of this faction, our assessment of it politically, and how we plan to lead the organization through a difficult time, assuring both democracy and the maintenance of the work of the organization.

First, allow us to say that we consider the formation of this faction to be extremely serious for two reasons. The first has to do with faction fights in general. The nature of a faction fight is to turn an organization inward, risking the loss of external work. Faction fights, by their nature, can scar deeply, focussing on the differences amongst comrades, not the fundamental questions that unify. Often, especially as work is threatened, tempers flare up and we lose sight of who our real enemies are, concentrating more on each other.

For this reason the formation of a faction is extremely serious and should be the last resort of any grouping wishing to affect the politics of the organization--not the first.

Thus we find the organization of the current faction alarming, as its formation seems to be its first course of action, not the last. The particular nature of this faction, with a record of several months of underground organization and at least a partial system of discipline, gives further cause for alarm. The EC attempted in every possible way to avoid the formation of this

EC Statement on Formation of "Left Faction"

faction. It has been obvious to us for some time that underground discussion and organizing has been going on around these politics. We did not intervene even though we knew that such inactivity on our part would mean that some members might be convinced to join the faction without ever really hearing the majority position. We hoped that at least some of the politics would be put forth in a responsible way--the last convention, the October NC and later through internal documents. In fact we circulated the EC response to the ISGB letters to all NC members. We heard not a word of criticism from BW and CW.

And it was our plan to open the organization up to a period of discussion on the questions, to end at the January NC. But that has now been overtaken.

No matter, a faction has been formed. That is their right. It's our responsibility to guarantee the minority faction the right to full and democratic discussion on their ideas. It is also our responsibility to the majority to guarantee that the work of the organization continues. We intend to carry out both responsibilities. The EC also, has a third, very important responsibility, to lead the fight in defense of the organization's politics. This too, along with other national leaders of the organization, is our intent.

It is also our responsibility, in fact, the responsibility of the entire organization to assure that when the debate is concluded we are able to pull together in a comradely fashion and move the organization forward. For that reason, above all, we remind the comrades that although the questions involved are of fundamental importance, the debate must be carried out in a principled and comradely way.

The second reason we find the formation of this faction to be extremely serious is its politics.

We consider the politics to be a retreat to the past. Essentially the politics, in total, represent a turn away from agitation, to a return to the world of left sects, calling to the workers from the outside.

In fact the politics represent a turn to propaganda, abandoning the notion of leading struggle. We are confident that the membership will overwhelmingly reject this retreat to the past and reaffirm the fundamentals of our strategy for party building at this time, in this country.

It is the proposal of the EC to conduct political debate in every branch around these questions throughout the next two months, to be concluded at the NC at the end of January.

We have been in consultation with the majority of the national leadership of the IS, including NC members, faction leaders and branch organizers, and along with them will be organizing a broad caucus to defend the basic political perspectives of the IS. The majority caucus is being organized around the NC answers to the ISGB. We will be holding caucus meetings this Sunday, December 12.

EC Statement on Formation of the "Left Faction"

The document of the minority, which we will receive on Thursday, December 9, will be sent out over the weekend with a response from the majority.

There will be meetings in every branch the weekend of December 18 and 19. The center will make sure that speakers will be available from both the majority and minority. Branch organizers should contact the national office.

Additional discussions will be organized throughout the month of January. There is one prescription on debate--this is in the steel work.

A perspective on the Sadlowski "Fightback" campaign has been adopted by the National Steel Fraction and the EC. Much of that perspective is being challenged by the faction. The Sadlowski campaign runs through February 8, unfortunately the same time as much of the political debate around the faction politics. To reopen debate on our perspective, between now and the January NC would only put a question mark over the work and serve to disorganize the effort. The result would in all probability, cripple the work. We cannot allow this debate to cripple the work which shows signs of establishing a real and solid steel fraction for the first time.

Therefore debate on the overall perspective for steel is closed until after February 8. After that there will be an opportunity to evaluate the campaign.

Relevant documents for this are:

British IS Letter to Canada on Industrialization and ISUS Reply in August "News of the Month."

British IS Letter to ISUS NC on Our Strategy and ISUS Reply in November "News of the Month."

Various documents making up "Special" December Internal Bulletin.

E.C.
6th December, 1976.

Thoughts while reading WP, #186, November 29 issue:

(These comments will primarily focus on one article in order to be as concrete as possible, with more general comments following. Originally I submitted them to the WP staff, but decided to put them out for general consideration, since WP is the responsibility of the whole membership.)

The article that got this going was the contrast between Sadlowski and Eugene Debs, titled "Steelyard Blues." I was excited to read it, both because I've always meant to find out more about Debs and because it seemed to be a good approach to analyzing Sadlowski.

This article was the closest to hitting the mark of how we feel about "militant" union reformers like Sadlowski that I can remember. It was effective largely because Sadlowski himself raised the analogy and we knew it was in the minds of some people we could reach. And we took it on, showing the difference in approach as well as politics. Without being apologetic for being both critical and supportive at the same time, the article takes a supportive stance in encouraging Sadlowski to look at what Debs really stood for and did.

The problems I had came with re-reading the article to figure out how I'd use it best with the people I sell to. I had to consider who the article speaks to, and then it falters. Since this is an attempt to show the contradictions Sadlowski presents, I assumed it was directed to fairly solid supporters who we see as the base (if only the initiators) of a rank and file organization that would be prepared to hold him responsible, if elected; a self-conscious group that can be formed through this attempt at upsetting the Abel machine, whether it's successful this time or not, that's united around basic principles of union democracy, militancy, responsibility of leaders....

In order to convince this group (loose as it may be) some things were missing: How did Debs go from a conservative craft union leadership position to his "bold new plan" that smacks of class struggle unionism? How did the 1894 strike, "Debs' Revolution," fail? What happened after that to get Debs involved in the IWW? What were the results of Debs' commitment and life's work? Who else was affected? What evidence is there that Debs was different from Sadlowski? In short, this article focused on Debs' statements, trying to convince people that might know that Sadlowski doesn't come through (giving a pretty good summary of some specifics) without showing Debs was more consistent. Thus, we fell into the trap of what we criticized Sadlowski for: focusing on the personality, not the carrying out of what was said.

The quotes were excellent, my favorites, but the description was not focused enough to demonstrate that anything came of Debs' great philosophies. Maybe just focusing on one part of the thirty-odd years of his activity, or even what influenced him to come up with his "bold new plan," would have given the reader the idea. This could still be done with follow-up article(s) about the actual movements Debs led, more depth about his organizing efforts and their results, the effects on workers who became convinced to fight back. If this analogy continues to be in people's minds during the campaign, we should take advantage of it, looking at it thoroughly. I cannot offer any contributions on this topic, but there must be someone who knows a lot about Debs and what he did to at least write another article filling in the gaps.

Given that these questions were not answered, I was left thinking that the main point was to address Sadlowski, telling him not to be too cautious. Or maybe

we were telling his supporters that the real problem he has is being chicken-shit? But why, and how can that change? (Obviously, if we think he cannot be influenced, we wouldn't be spending our time building support for him.) Is it just a matter of Sadlowski capturing people's imagination or inspiring them or "acting a little more like Debs?" This is all that is presented to readers as the answer to Sadlowski's cautiousness, in order to get elected. Nothing is presented that shows what workers will gain by electing Sadlowski, what the rank and file movement in the mills should be about, and what would and should happen after the election.

A comment about "maggots" and "garbage": If we cannot say more about the actions, methods and influence of the right wing, or just be more direct about what we mean, we should not use this kind of short-hand which may seem bold but is just disgusting and a cheap use of language to many people we want to reach. It can be different when readers can be given enough information to convince them of how insidious the right wing is or, if we are sure that our readers share a certain basic understanding, we give them a clearer picture and then lead them to seeing that those shocking terms make sense. The readers I speak with--at UPS, at the bus company and my passengers who are open--may easily agree with our analysis of how bad things are. But many of them have serious misconceptions about reactionaries, not seeing how dangerous specific incidents are, missing the general trend being established, largely out of a feeling of powerlessness. In leaving the leadership to "moderates" and/or "centrists" or looking to reformers, they increasingly get demoralized. We all know that, but in a lot of the coverage recently (as WP is getting better at exposés and is covering more angles on how the system is so bad) I've been getting more vague responses from solid readers. Several of them don't want to get every issue--it's too much of a burner. As much sense as I've been able to make of this is that something is missing--in the whole paper as well as particular articles they are interested in.

The something that's missing is not easy to cover in every article. But it should come through if a reader looks at a few articles. The missing element is, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY! That has to be and can be said in different ways, but it has to speak to people's experience to convince them that change is possible, at all levels.

Maybe I can describe the problem by my reactions (and comments from readers I can press on the subject) to our international coverage. We've had some fine features and consistent follow-up on So. Africa and So. Korea lately. But the overwhelming amount of exposé on what is going on and the links with U.S. Govt. and corporations need a balancing with what is and can be done. The G.I. campaign is a beginning, but readers (and members) need as much information and analysis as possible about the problems and limitations, the ways to go beyond them that make sense, a realistic appraisal of the movements involved. One article that I remember is the interview with the Soweto student which began to clear up the confusion about whether the students were getting support from workers for their boycott or whether they were forcing workers to stay home or weren't successful at all. Even though the interview made some sense

("these workers are members of our own families, they know we share the same problem" or something like that), it had to counter a lot of media propaganda that reinforced people's assumptions that these divisions cannot be overcome.

I wish I could make this more concrete, and could contribute material that would answer some of these problems. I'll work on it, since it's important to the readers I'm speaking with that we have as many examples as possible of how people in different situations can overcome their powerlessness and fears, fight back and win. I want to emphasize that HOW, because that is crucial in

convincing others to do it and arming them with other tools, methods, ways of approaching the problem than they may have tried.

We must be more realistic. People we are trying to reach are willing to take risks; when forced up against the wall, they will come out fighting. Just being courageous is not the answer. We have to show them why they should take certain risks now, or at least soon, why they shouldn't be cautious. So far being cautious has seemed more sensible, even if it hasn't produced the results they might like. We're presenting a different approach that nobody, including ourselves, is much good at. How can we be, since it goes against everything we're taught. So we have to constantly deal with the cynicism and failures realistically, somehow convincing people that the results are worth the risks. Nobody wants to be a well-meaning idealist or a martyr, especially a dead one.

I'm going to give another example--UPS coverage. Though I haven't been successful yet in getting letters or specific enough responses out of the readers here, I can say a bit now. WP has had many articles on the East Coast strike, for a long time offering nothing but a variation on the theme: the officials are presenting some demands, the rank and file has demanded certain conditions and nobody knows what's really going on, except that people are out. The one exception was the exciting article about the ranks keeping trucks out of Ohio. That one gave an idea of how to fight the company with some success--it was inspirational in a down-to-earth way, giving people the sense of how real workers can take action. I don't remember any follow-up on that, even mention of whether that tactic has been tried elsewhere or again in Ohio, what were the results and why (especially important and useful if it failed).

The recent UPS articles have had a bit more information plus an important new proposal that could be effective. But that has been repeated so many times it's becoming almost embarrassing. I realize that this is not just the WP's responsibility and the staff is probably as frustrated as I am. My regular buyers have continued to buy, because of other coverage. But the sales have dwindled, because there is nothing new or useful on UPS for those who buy WP only for that. What readers here need to see are specifics about the strike--something that they can identify with and learn from, whether that is through contrasts of the fulying pickets that were organized before from Pittsburgh (I think) and anything that is being tried now, or some analysis that goes into what is happening in specific cities and breaks through this big blur. Maybe this can't be done, but if we're proposing this audacious tactic, we have to do more than state it, over and over again. We have to back it up to convince people it will work and that it can be done, and how. It is clearly in the realm of fantasy for UPS workers in Seattle, but WP should not leave it there, even if it is not possible right now.

--Diane E., Seattle

Next week a perspective on southern Africa work will be published. The highlights of this perspective are summarized here.

It is our analysis that in the coming years, the focal point in the world for national liberation struggles will be southern Africa -- Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. It will be a protracted struggle of years duration. Given the advanced character of the South African working class, it opens the potential for socialist revolution. Even if events do not develop in that advanced a direction, it will still be the most central area of anti-imperialist struggle.

The prop and last defense for white settler colonial rule in the area is American imperialism. Consequently, US imperialism will be involved in every stage of the process. As internationalists it is our duty to support the struggle of colonial peoples, and in particular those revolts directed at our own ruling class. It is the alliance of the workers of the advanced countries with the colonial people's struggle for liberation which is the third camp of socialist revolution.

We will, given our small but real roots in the working class, have to raise the consciousness of workers to support the struggle in southern Africa, to educate on anti-imperialist politics as well as using this to bring our fellow workers to class consciousness and revolutionary politics. In the coming years a movement will develop in this country around the liberation struggle in southern Africa. We will be part of it at every stage of its development. This will of necessity put us back in contact, and in co-operation and competition with other left groups. It will force us to educate our cadres and members on the distinctive politics of the IS on national liberation, imperialism, permanent revolution and the role of the working class and the revolutionary party in these struggles.

We will attempt to become the working class wing of this developing movement, taking these politics into the plants, unions and rank and file groups. Initially we will begin our work by forming Southern Africa Liberation Committees. These committees, like the Gary Tyler committees will allow us to work with broader forces who are receptive to our views on this question but would not necessarily co-operate with an IS/Red Tide initiative. If we succeed in drawing other people into the work, these committees may take on an autonomous life of their own. It is too early to yet predict. The Committees will be based on three central political points:

(1) VICTORY TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. Support and solidarity with all the struggles. We will have in addition a particular orientation to the militant left wing movements -- ZANU, the Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa, possibly SWAPO etc.

(2) US OUT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. No arms, aid, deals or support for the colonial regimes. U.S. corporations out of South Africa. U.S. imperialism is the prop for racist colonial rule.

(3) SUPPORT FOR THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN THE UNITED STATES. For black liberation and all struggles of the oppressed -- one international movement for freedom -- for the workers' struggle in America.

The committees, while oriented on South Africa will also take up Zimbabwe, Namibia or other southern Africa questions as relevant. In some places where existing groups are operating, they will join coalition activities. The Committees will be kicked off in January with a series of well-publicized forums with speakers from ZANU and other liberation groups, as well as speakers for the Committees. The Committees will be set up from these meetings, organizing people in the audience to join and take part in activities, etc. The first meetings of the Committees will follow the forums and be held in late January or early February. The initial activities of the Committees, at this stage of the movement, will be

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

heavily educational -- spreading word and information about southern Africa, showing films like Last Grave At Dimbaza and others, small forums and discussions, slide shows, talking to other groups, high school and community colleges, etc. We will try to recruit to these committees among our industrial contacts and periphery in the plants. The committees will orient to working people, pass out leaflets and raise funds for the movements in southern Africa, in front of plants and in working class communities. We will attempt demonstrations in February or March around two initial targets. The first will be around auto, demanding BIG 3 OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA. The second, on the Krugerrand with targets in the black community and peripherally around banks and which are heavily involved in South Africa (Chase-Manhattan, First National City etc).

We will investigate involvement in NSCAR's National Days of Protest on March 25-26 around the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. NSCAR is holding teach-ins on Friday, March 25 and coalition city-wide demonstrations and rallies on Saturday the 26th. We may attempt to organize high school teach-ins ourselves in conjunction with the Red Tide, and at college teach-ins to try to get the Committees as co-sponsors with Committee speakers, with the aim of recruiting students to the Committee to be involved in off-campus, working class community activity. We will also explore taking part in the Coalition demonstrations on March 25 for the Committees, as well as for the IS and Red Tide.

THE

The IS presence in this campaign will consist of holding our own forums, Workers Power coverage and pamphlets. Much of this will be directed at the people in the Committees as the audience. We will also co-sponsor Committee demonstrations and other demonstrations, as appropriate.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

FACTS AND FIGURES -

EXPENSES - Total cost - \$1167 -- total income - 748 - net loss - \$419.
cost - dinner etc - 639.24; movie-45; projector-21.60; Ch. fare-163;
cleveland fare-112; pittsburgh fare-72; typesetting-35; printing-70;
mailing-10,
income - took in 678 at door, still owed 70. Borrowed rest.

ATTENDANCE - total of around 80, can account for 78.
NYL - 9 members and 7 contacts, one black, one IBEW
NY2 - 9 members and 7 contacts, one latino, one AFT
NJ - 8 members and 6 contacts, one UPS
Boston - 8 members and 3 contacts
Springfield - 5 members and 3 contacts, one UPWA, one AFSCME
Philadelphia - 2 members and one contact
New Paltz - no one.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM - This worked very well. The talks were all well prepared, substantive, and entertaining. Having different types of sessions, talks, films, panels, etc., was important in keeping the event moving along, keeping it lively, and maintaining peoples interest. Having adequate breaks kept the event from appearing rushed, kept it more relaxed.

Having a catered dinner, followed by a major speech, was important to the overall success of the program. It ended the day on a high note, and was one of the most attractive features of the conference. It, probably more than anything else, ensured that contacts who were there, not only learned more about the IS but also had a good time doing it.

The format tended to emphasize the talks, rather than the discussion periods. This worked fairly well, given the nature of the presentations. The discussion periods we did have were not as good as they could have been. This was partly due to the lack of contacts from industry, and partly due to not enough advance preparation for them. Very few contacts talked during the discussions. The biggest problem was probably in the session on racism, our weakest area of work in this region. Again, this was mostly due to the lack of black contacts present.

The main failure of the conference was our inability to get contacts to come to it. The attractiveness of the conference proved unable to overcome the weakness in our work. It made quite clear the very serious problem in this district, the shallowness of our periphery, and its virtual non-existence in many of our industrial priorities.

Even so, we expected to get more people to attend than did. The conference, it appears, took too much commitment of both time and money for those who did not know much if anything about us to attend. Only contacts seriously interested in the IS could be brought. The conclusion seems to be that this type of conference is more useful in moving our existing periphery closer to the IS, more useful for recruitment, than in developing a new periphery. The conference could probably be best planned as the capstone to a periphery campaign, as a kind of recruitment rally, rather than as one event among other during the periphery campaign. Indeed this was partly our view of the conference, and its failure was partly due to the failure of other events in the periphery campaign. For those contacts who did come, it was a big success. They were very impressed with the IS, they learned a lot more about us, many were moved much closer to joining. More importantly, they all had an enjoyable time doing this.

NY/NJ District Committee

EC STATEMENT ON MICHAEL L. RESIGNING FROM RED TIDE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

At the time that Michael L. resigned his leadership position in the Red Tide, the IS EC did not believe it was necessary to issue a statement. Subsequent experience shows that we were wrong. Our failure to lay out what happened, has now led to confusion and some disorientation in the organization. We now wish to rectify the mistake.

1. There were warning signs that Michael was demoralized and was having trouble maintaining himself as a Red Tide leader that go back several months. The IS EC should have been more alert to these warning signs, and should have called Michael in for a discussion with the EC as a whole before Michael had made a firm decision to resign his post. But we did not do that.

In Sept.. the EC decided to begin changing the nature of our intervention into the Red Tide. We removed Joel from RT responsibilities to add Jack who had more time to devote to the work. It was a short time following this, that Michael informed Joel that he had decided to resign his post inside the Red Tide and move to Cincinnati branch.

2. Joel and Michael carried out extensive discussions on the question of Michael's resignation. Jack was also brought into the discussion. During these discussions, Michael emphasized that his decision to move to Cincinnati was final, and not subject to reconsideration. He asserted that there were political problems that contributed to his demoralization, that the Red Tide had failed to establish a common set of political assumptions among its leaders, and that therefore, it had not been able to establish a collaborative leadership. He asserted that he believed all other political problems were secondary to this.

But Michael made it clear that his resignation was not political but personal. He made it clear that he was not willing to discuss any political change in the IS/RT relation or change in perspective and/or personnel on the basis of which he would reconsider his resignation. He stated that he was at the end of his rope, and that he no longer had the emotional reserves to continue making an effort to lead the Red Tide. His resignation was not: "I will have to leave the Red Tide unless this or that change is made, "but rather, "This or that change should be made -- but I will have to leave whether or not the change is made."

Joel continued exploring every conceivable basis on which it might be possible to get Michael to reconsider his decision. The EC believed that the loss of Michael to the Red Tide leadership would critically weaken the organization at a time when it was both expanding in size, and losing the services of other leading cadre. The EC also believed that the loss of Michael would have a demoralizing and disorienting effect on the RT, and that it would set back the task of building a strong leadership at a time when the job was crucial to the survival of the Red Tide.

It was in this context that Joel probed the the personal considerations involved in Michael's decision. Besides arguing that he no longer had the emotional reserves, Michael also argued that living in Detroit kept him away from Ellen -- the Cincinnati branch organizer -- and that the two of them wanted to get together. Joel stated if that was the consideration, it would be appropriate for Ellen and Michael to discuss with the EC the importance of each of their current tasks to the political needs of the organization as a whole, and to discuss various personal options in the framework of the overall political considerations. At this point Michael made it clear that there was one, single, overriding consideration:

he could not go on any longer as a leader of the Red Tide in Detroit and that there was no political accomodation and no personal accomodation that could get him to even consider changing his mind.

3. The EC then decided that continuing to put pressure on Michael to stay on was futile, that we would not succeed. We feared that if we continued the political struggle, we would make it difficult for the comrade to re-establish himself in new areas of work for the organization. Michael warned us that he was about to burn out and be a loss to the movement. So we accepted his resignation and agreed only because we considered his resignation to be based on personal -- not political considerations. If Michael would have presented us with a political basis for his resignation, we would have demanded that he stick to his post and work with us to come up with a resolution to the problem of RT. Even though in our efforts to create a collective leadership in the past we have put pressure on Michael and Frank not to take their political differences to the RT membership.

4. During the discussions with Michael, he denied that the main problems inside the Red Tide were the conflicts between and Frank and the charges of personal and political irresponsibility that had been leveled against Frank. When Michael first told Frank that he was resigning, Frank asked him point blank: "Are you resigning because of your conflict with me?" Michael said: "No". Frank went on to say that he would be willing to move to Chicago if Michael stayed on in Detroit. Michael reiterated that he was not moving because of a conflict with Frank, but because he no longer had the emotional reserves to continue in the job.

5. As feared by the EC, Michael's resignation did have an extremely demoralizing effect on the RT leadership. Many of those closest to Michael saw Michael's resignation as Frank's fault. This was the case for several reasons.

Michael himself played a major role in this. Other RT leaders demanded from Michael a more thorough explanation as to why he could not go on. They worried that if Michael, with his years of political experience and sophistication could not survive - how could they?

In privately answering them, Michael placed a great deal of responsibility for his collapse on the difficulties in working with Frank in the RT. This led to even further demoralization. The organization was losing its main leader and the primary underground reason given was the difficulties in working with the major leader remaining.

Michael's explanation carried weight with much of the RT leadership because of the well known history of conflict between Michael and Frank. Also, well known to the RT leadership was Frank's past positions in opposition to the notion of a disciplined leadership team, his lack of discipline to the leadership bodies he served on and his temper. Many RT leaders had experienced some of the same difficulties in working with Frank that Michael had experienced.'

Seeing Frank as the cause of Michael's resignation is both factually wrong and politically dangerous to the RT. Although much of the criticism of Frank is accurate it is not the reason for Michael's resignation. And, if seen that way can be used to justify a conclusion - that in order for the RT to move ahead Frank must be removed from the leadership.

The removal of Frank from the RT leadership, especially at this time,

when Michael has just resigned, would seriously jeopardize the future of the RT.

Frank is one of the very few of the original west coast RT cadre left. And in many ways has been the guiding spirit of the RT since its move to the midwest. Also, in the opinion of the EC, no political case has been made against Frank, although the difficulty of working with Frank in the past can not be denied.

In the past two months Frank himself has become conscious of the more destructive aspects of his past functioning. In fact, at this point, Frank is playing a major role in building a collaborative leadership team for the Red Tide.

Therefore, when the key to the Red Tide's survival is building a leadership team, which must include Frank, the notion that Frank is to blame for Michael's resignation becomes extremely dangerous to the ability of the RT to develop such a team, and must be laid to rest.

That is why the EC has put out this statement to the NC, clarify the specifics concerning Michael's resignation as National Secretary of the Red Tide.

PLEASE NOTE.....THIS STATEMENT FIRST APPEARED IN A "KEY-LIST" MAILING TO NC MEMBERS AND ORGANISERS. WE RE-PRINT IT HERE FOR ALL MEMBERS BECAUSE MICHEAL L. DISTRIBUTED HIS REPLY TO IT THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISATION. THAT REPLY FOLLOWS ALONG WITH FURTHER CLARIFICATION FROM THE EC AND A BRIEF STATEMENT FROM THE RT EC.

G.W.

REASONS FOR MY RESIGNATION FROM THE RED TIDE

A Response to the EC's Statement By Michael Long

I. Introduction

A statement by the EC entitled "On Michael L.'s Resignation From the Red Tide National Leadership" appeared in the latest "key list" mailing. I consider the EC's statement to be slanderous towards me and to misrepresent the facts of my resignation and related questions of the Red Tide.

I had not originally intended to write a statement on my resignation. I am doing it now, and at such length, because of the EC's numerous statements (both written and verbal) on the question. Specifically, there were false characterizations made in the "Report on the Oct. NC" and now in the three page key list statement.

It is unfortunate that many people cannot be more acquainted with the details of this dispute, and therefore may have some trouble following it in parts. I will try to write with an eye to that problem. However I feel that this response must be made, whatever the circumstances, in part because of today's situation in the IS where individuals are often made the scapegoats for what are political problems. This can simply not be tolerated in a revolutionary organization..

II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RED TIDE IN DETROIT

A. Rethinking Our Perspectives. After a year as the IS Youth Organization on the West Coast, the RT and IS made a joint decision to move the RT to the Midwest. In Septmeber of 1975, we began by Chris and myself moving from LA to Detroit. The first thing obvious to everyone involved with the RT (including the IS EC) was that we all had an incorrect perspective for the RT. Our original view, developed at the RT Founding Conference in the Fall of 1974 was to begin immediately to build a national organization with an independent structure. This mistake hit home sharply when we found ourselves in Detroit, beginning the RT from scratch. There simply was no RT st this point, and you don't build a national organization before you have some real local organizations.

But looking back, we realized that it had also been an incorrect perspective for the year before. We never had enough of a real base to think in terms that we had. Instead of concentrating primarily on building bases of membership and work in concrete situations, we had spent a ridiculous amount of time with "national structures," "national leaderships" and "national perspectives." While understanding the eventual necessity of these, we decided that we had been way ahead of ourselves.

B. Getting Off The Ground Starting from scratch was not an easy task. The RT in Detroit had four members, two of whom had no experience in organizing a RT. Chris and myself found it difficult to know where to begin given our small group's collective experience, lack of roots and sheer size. Both of us had also been demoralized by the collapse of the LA RT branch. For the next period of time,

the RT didn't move. Chris decided to move to another IS branch where he could function. I was convinced by the EC more than once to stick with it.

The RT began to pick up with the arrival of four RTers from the Bay Area in February and one from LA in the Spring of 1976. We had gained the numbers and self--confidence to be able to begin to build. And build we did. In the next few months, the RT began to have success in recruiting working class young people, first whites, then blacks.

C. Disagreements Develop. It was with the growth of the RT that problems began to develop, particularly between Frank (Steve) and myself, on the questions of how to work together as a leadership. I found it impossible to function with Frank as part of a health, political and "collaborative" leadership. I believed that while Frank's external role in building the RT was extremely good, his internal functioning with essentially destructive.

This showed itself in his aversion to working together in planning and carrying out a joint conception of how to run the organization; his desire to take every minor disagreement in the leadership to the "membership" of the RT either formally or informally; and his attitude towards less politically developed members, particularly women. A large number of RT women felt that Frank treated them like dirt, and that he didn't show a concern for developing women leaders. While no one of the RT male leadership was to be congratulated on their performance in this area, it was felt that Frank was in a class of his own. The women felt that his political conduct towards them was unbearable. It was partly in response to this situation that a number of RT women became less active in the RT. Frank functioned as he pleased in the day to day activities of the organization, without any thought to, or responsibility for, the consequences.

D. Brought to the EC. It was at this point that I formally brought these problems to the EC. In meetings with Joel, Mike and Gay in late March of this year, I made it clear that unless they were dealt with, I would not be able to continue to lead the RT. I proposed that a fight be waged both by the EC and myself to put the internal situation in the RT on the right track. I asked that Mike P. be replaced as EC representative to the RT by Joel. I felt that Mike didn't share my views of the situation and that I didn't have his active support. I also said that as organizer of the RT, I could not function without the backing of the EC in my perspectives. If the EC was in favor of my being the RT organizer, then it had the duty to back me up in my work. I wanted the same relationship to the EC that other IS organizers assigned to a particular area of work are entitled to.

The EC's attitude was also clear. They told me that under no circumstances would they allow me to wage a struggle in the RT. They told me that the differences between Frank and me were personal. They believed that though Frank admittedly had some political problems, his assets outweighed his liabilities. They rejected my view of the desired relationship of an organizer to the EC.

The EC proposed an alternative to the plans I put forward. We would set up a new "disciplined" four person EC Sub-Committee to build "collaboration" between Frank and myself. The body was to consist of Frank, Mike, Joel and myself. I was told that things would change and that I should learn to put my faith in EC-sponsored bodies, rather than organizing for my position in the RT itself. I agreed to this and in fact continued to operate in this way until my resignation from the RT.

Without going into detail, it is generally accepted by all that this strategy failed. The Committee did not meet regularly. It did not take on the political questions of the RT. It was not "disciplined" in any sense of the word. It did not "build collaboration" in the slightest. In short, it did not solve any of the problems that had existed. Nothing had changed.

E. Gary Tyler Work Begins. Although I continued to protest to the EC members working with the RT about this situation, things remained the same. But the problem became somewhat camouflaged by the fact that the external work was picking up more than ever before. Not too long after came the Gary Tyler Campaign. For the Detroit RT, this was a mass scale campaign that recruited to us not ones, but tens of members, all back. The question of internal RT functioning was pushed aside as the RT ceased to exist independent of the day-to-day work of the Gary Tyler committee.

It was with the effort to rebuild the RT as an organization out of the GT Campaign that the conflict again arose. The nature of our tasks had shifted to building the RT based on the recruitment we had done. How a leadership could be built with the new members, and how to train and integrate became for me the central questions. It was also at this point that the decision was made to build new branches in other cities. Beginning in July, RTers were moved to Chicago and Pittsburgh.

Building a properly functioning leadership with the correct perspectives was more key than ever before. We had recruited the best people that we could hope to find. But without a healthy internal political life and leadership, how could they be developed on the right basis?

F. Opposing Perspectives. The political differences that had existed before became more exaggerated and new ones came up. Frank and I developed different perspectives for moving ahead. He pushed for building a centralized, national RT leadership and structure. He believed that it was time for the RT to have a resident national EC to give guidance to a national organization.

At this time the RT had and still has at most 40-50 solid members nationally, and this in a naturally unstable youth organization. I felt that what was needed was a real functioning center as an example of what could be done, rather than self-style generals issuing orders to non-existent troops. Given a group of our size, and with the crisis of leadership, the crucial task was to build the real work.

My perspective differed from Frank's. I emphasized that in this period, the key was consolidation based on the Detroit branch.

Here we were already beginning to lose members. I proposed integration of new members through functioning fractions, political education and a health local leadership body. I proposed a federation of local RT branches, attached to local IS branches and bound together both through a RT national committee to meet at regular intervals and the IS national organization itself. My opposition to a central national leadership and structure came both from the historic experience of the RT and the concrete situation in which it now existed. I believed that Frank's perspective was an overblown and grandiose conception, similar to the one that we had mistakenly begun with the RT and had since rejected. The RT's size was not more than it had been when we first began in 1974. The concept of a national perspective of this sort contradicted one of the most important lessons of the RT's history.

Throughout June and July I carried on political discussions with both Mike and Joel about what I have described on more minor connected questions. Their attitude was, that while there were problems, nothing could be done and there was no crisis. After all, we had recruited. Why they asked, wasn't I satisfied with that? I went to Glenn about the crisis of leadership and perspectives in the RT, which I characterized to him as critical. He told me that he was sympathetic, but that I's have to work it out myself.

At about the same time, Frank's proposal for a resident national EC for the RT passed on the Detroit RT exec. Relations grew worse.

In August I left for my vacation. When I returned at the end of the month, I had discussions with Mike on the RT. I told him that I wouldn't be able to continue with it if things were the same as they had been before I was on vacation. Glenn called me in on August 30th and wanted to know who I wanted assigned to the RT, laying out various EC combinations. I replied that I didn't have an opinion one way or the other since the EC hadn't been of help to me in the RT, either individually or as a group. While discussing the RT situation he told me "of course" he understood that the struggle between Frank and myself was political.

I was informed a couple of days later that Mike had been removed from the post of EC representative to the RT and that Jack W was taking his place. I met with Jack to discuss the political questions that I considered crucial in the RT. He said that he wasn't that familiar with the RT and that he couldn't deal with those, just the day-to-day issues.

I met with Joel and went over the entire RT situation. His approach was that I was incapable of "collaboration" and that he couldn't understand why I could be so dissatisfied when the RT had recruited. He said I was projecting my personal demoralization onto the RT.

It became clear to me that while the cast of characters had shifted slightly, the content of their intervention hadn't.

III. MY RESIGNATION:

A. Meeting With Joel, 9/7/76 Based on the history outlined above,

I decided to leave the RT. On Sept. 7th I went privately to Joel to inform him of my decision, and to work out with him the process of my departure. I explained carefully that I was leaving for a combination of personal and political reasons. I explained the political problems of the RT and my inability to deal with them.. I said that I didn't have the EC's support. This had brought me to the point where on a personal basis I could no longer continue at my post. The political situation had taken a heavy personal toll on me. It had made it impossible to continue as the leader of the RT. I told him I would be moving to the Cincinnati branch to function politically in a situation where I could contribute to the IS. I also told him that my reasons for going to that particular branch were personal.

Joel answered that my political characterization of the RT and the EC were incorrect. He said that I was retreating to "personalism" that I couldn't "collaborate" and that maybe the problem was that I couldn't relate to being in an organization composed of "black youth." He also said that if I insisted on leaving against the EC's wishes, both Ellen and I could be subject to expulsion for acting "irresponsibly." Finally, he asked that I stay through the New Year and said that the EC would discuss my leaving.

In response to the request that I stay, I answered that the time for deals was long past. Given the circumstances and their effect on me, I could stay for only a short period of time. For me to say anything else would have been personally and politically dishonest. While personal considerations had made my leaving imminent, I clearly stated that the causes for my personal situation were political. The EC had backed Frank and his perspectives and not me and my perspectives. It was a battle I had fought and lost. No doubt I could have fought it better, but it was done. I was no longer able to continue in that situation.

It was not my position that any time a leader is voted down on a particular issue they should leave their post. However, my situation was one of being continually undermined as organizer over a long period. Rather than continue to function where I couldn't perform, I wanted to be able to make a positive contribution to the IS.

B. Meeting with RT Leaders and Jack W. 9/12/76. It was at this meeting that I first discussed my resignation with RT leaders from different cities. The EC has misrepresented my statements at that meeting. I discussed the reasons for my resignation. While making clear that a large part of my reasons for leaving was the irresolvable conflict with Frank, I was anxious that he would not be considered the only "culprit." I wanted to make clear that while we had serious differences, I placed major blame on the EC, who in the end shared more responsibility for the problems of the RT than Frank as an individual. Above all, it was their responsibility to play the correct role in the RT. It was the EC's duty to plan and carry out that role in a supportive way with the organizer, or to find an organizer with whom they could have that relationship.

Frank suggested that a possible solution might be his moving to the Chicago RT branch. I quickly rejected that offer for two

reasons. First, though the EC characterized otherwise, the problem was one of different perspectives, and in some cases politics, not personalities. Secondly, I was now no longer open or able to risk having the rug pulled from under me again in the RT. I was at the end of my rope.

At no time did I indicate that the differences between myself and Frank were not a major reason for my leaving. What I was not willing to do was to put it solely in that context.

C. Meeting with Jack and Joel, 9/13/76 My final meeting with Jack and Joel together dealt again with the entire situation in the RT. They insisted that if I was leaving I would have to pass on my analysis of the RT and its future. I agreed. After discussing various questions, Jack asked me to outline my opinion of the EC's role in the RT. I outlined my criticisms which I have explained above. Jack said that he hadn't known about the things I described and asked Joel if I had been accurate. Joel said, "Michael is entirely correct."

D. The EC's Perspective. Though the EC had said they wanted to continue discussions with me, they did not initiate them again. On Sept. 27th, I had my last meeting with Jack about his perspectives for the RT. Jack made it clear that he agreed with Frank's perspectives for a national leadership orientation and that he wanted to make Frank "National Chairman." He again rejected my opposition to the perspectives. He also had begun to raise the notion that the central problem of the RT was its lack of "autonomy." In this and other meetings in the RT itself, Jack indicated that this meant that the RT relied too heavily on the IS in its functioning. He also said that the RT should be mainly a high school organization, an idea which had been central to our perspectives since our founding.

Throughout this period, the EC made known to RT and IS members that I was "burned out," "demoralized," and so forth, with no mention of the political causes I had outlined for my resignation.

E. My Statement at the Oct. NC. In response to the statements being made about my resignation and the EC's perspectives for the RT I decided to speak on the RT session at the NC. In my presentation I said I disagreed with the EC's proposal that increased "autonomy" was the key issue for the RT. I believed the question of "autonomy" to be irrelevant because it had no relation to the problems of the RT. The real problem had been a lack of political assistance from the IS, not too much. The EC was dismissing this reality and pulling a "profound solution" out of the thin air to "explain" a situation they didn't understand.

I stated that there was a crisis of leadership in the RT and that the EC's "National" perspective was not realistic for the group. I criticized the EC's often stated claim that the RT could itself change the class composition of the IS or that it was the vanguard of the entire organization. The IS would have to make its own gains in industrial work, not lean on the RT's recruitment out of community struggles. I raised the lack of a perspective for RT involvement in day-to-day IS work.

I said that other problems in the RT/IS relationship were that the RT had recruited blacks and the IS hadn't. This would prove to be a problem in the future if the IS were mostly white and the RT mostly black.

I said that the RT itself was a victim of the IS "Star System" which sets people or sections of the organization up as great heroes and then forgets them when they have their inevitable fall and need help. I stated the reasons for my leaving.

EC supporters on this question had no response except to say that I hadn't raised any of this before and that I was probably just looking for a last minute political cover for my personal weaknesses. Jack W., speaking for the EC criticized me for not allowing consideration of their proposal that Ellen D. (Cincinnati Organizer) move to Detroit so that we could pursue our relationship and thereby stop me from leaving.

F. Meetings with Glenn and Gay In separate discussions with both Glenn and Gay, I was enlightened in days and weeks later as to their further criticisms of my actions. Both admitted that I had raised the political questions before and that the EC had completely failed to deal with them. However their key point was that I hadn't really tried to get the EC to see the errors of their ways. I had "closed up and become hostile." The "evidence" of this was that I had never called for a full EC meeting to discuss my complaints before I reached the end of my rope. I was somewhat incredulous.

I had discussed on numerous occasions my partial and full criticisms with Joel (National Chairman), Glenn (National Secretary), Mike (EC Representative to the RT) and Gay (WP Editor and EC member assigned to RT work). Was I to believe the crucial difference would have been effected if Jack, Marilyn and Kim had been involved? It had never been a question of which EC member I talked to, but the political differences between the EC and myself.

Glenn later said that I could have taken up various fights in the RT even though this had been against the wishes of the EC. The moral apparently being, according to the National Secretary, that you shouldn't honor or trust the voluntary discipline you maintain with the EC. I was also told by both that unless I changed my "attitude towards the EC" I would have problems in the future.

IV. DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER RT MEMBERS.

In leaving I found myself in the difficult position of being responsible for passing on my advice and political analysis to remaining leaders of the RT, while being unable to remain myself. I tried to meet with as many individual RT members as possible to explain my resignation in brief terms. I wanted to give them the chance to avoid many of the mistakes I had made in the RT and to profit from my knowledge of the situation, in particular, and youth work in general. I also didn't want them to be victims of guilt-tripping about their own personal inadequacies when what would be at the issue were strictly political questions.

I did several things. One was to pass on some general political training in the area of Marxist politics. This had always been sorely neglected in the RT and was going to continue to be. I decided I would spend my remaining time in the RT doing something about that problem.

The other was to tell people honestly what I saw with the RT and how they related to my leaving. I discussed the general political questions; at what level the RT should be built, the importance of political training and so forth. I made clear my opinion of the EC's role and reliability in the RT. I laid out my analysis of Frank's role. I didn't share the EC's assumption that the RT couldn't continue without him. The remaining RT leadership would have to examine honestly, based on their experience and mine, whether they thought they could build a healthy organization with Frank.

My concern was that these newer Detroit members, both black and white, be at the heart of the RT leadership. Given the sickness in the RT leadership they hadn't been. If this goal conflicted with Frank's involvement in the RT then Frank should go.

The question later posed by the EC's document, "If Michael with his years of political experience and sophistication could not survive-how could they?" had to be dealt with honestly as I tried to do in these discussions with members of the RT leadership. However it was not the case, as the EC implies, that innocent minded happy RTers were disaffected by my discussions with them. Disaffection had set in as a result of the already existing situation in the RT. RT members had continually come to me with their complaints about the organization and its problems. Many hadn't totally swallowed everything they had been told about their "responsibility" to go on without question.

I made it clear to these comrades that all I could do was to explain the situation as I saw it. I told them that they were the ones who had to make the decisions as to what steps to take, if any.

V. IN CONCLUSION

A. Politics Raised From the Start. I believe that I have laid out the political situation that led to my resignation and at the same time have briefly explained the political situation of the RT. I have shown that I raised my political criticisms with the EC as soon as they arose in the Spring and throughout the history of the Detroit RT. For the EC to say otherwise is falsification.

B. The EC's Concept of "Discipline" It is continually raised in the EC's document that I was unwilling to put my decision in September up for their consideration. This is intended to make a case that I acted in an "undisciplined way." I believe this represents an incorrect view of "discipline."

Neither members or leaders of the IS have the responsibility to continue at their posts "no matter what" in most situations. There comes a time when every individual member must make an evaluation of their personal and political situation and do what they feel is best

on both counts. In my case, I had carried out my responsibilities for an extended period of time, in a situation without political support. I had been promised continually by the EC that things would change, but they hadn't. For me to recognize that I could no longer be effective in that situation was far from undisciplined. It was the intelligent and responsible thing to do. Even Charlie Brown will someday learn not to kick Lucy's football just "one more time."

"Discipline" is now being used in the RT to say to people that if they are really "revolutionaries" they'll do whatever they're told, whether they are politically motivated or not. This can't hold people for any length of time. It's a bureaucratic and voluntarist method and in the end, it just doesn't work. Real political discipline is based on an overall political understanding and agreement.

C. Personal "vs" Political. Another theme of the EC document is that I left for personal and not political reasons. I have shown that in this case, the claim is untrue. However it is rarely the case that someone's personal situation is totally separate from their political feelings, whether or not they can articulate the connection themselves.

This is especially important today for the entire IS to understand. There are many dedicated cadres who feel demoralized and are being characterized as "burned out." The general approach of the EC is to separate personal state of the cadre from their political situation. You can't deal with anybody's demoralization in that way. To find a cure, you must identify the illness. It is also the case that this characterization is used most often by the EC when the people being discussed raise even minor disagreements with the leadership. This is the policy applied specifically to me, but not to myself alone.

D. Sexism Towards Ellen. One idea raised in the EC document, and continually to me since I announced my intention to move and that Ellen and I being together was part of my personal plans, was that "maybe Ellen should have moved to Detroit." Jack made a statement at the full October NC meeting that the EC had wanted to consider this and that I had refused to discuss that "solution." Aside from the fact that this would not have been any "solution" to my leaving, the EC's statements regarding Ellen have been of a clearly sexist nature. Under the cover of making "balanced" decisions for the organization, their statements have served to downplay the importance of her work and her significance as an organizer.

This isn't a question of tokenism for women. There are three (3) women branch organizers in the entire IS today. Ellen is not only one of these three but is also among those at the very top of the list of all IS organizers in achievement, political development, and competence. Her Cincinnati branch is one of the few relatively healthy ones in the organization. Whatever excuses the EC comes up with to justify their statements, their attitude indicates that they don't share the above characterization of Ellen, her work as an organizer or an inordinate concern for the fate of women as organizers or political leaders.

E. Whitewashing the RT Situation. Finally, it's important to realize that this is one of the few times in living memory in the IS when a statement of the EC's scope, detail and length has been published on any individual leader. Other comrades have refused or ignored assignments, or resigned from important posts higher than mine. They have done it for any combination of personal and political reasons. Names are not necessary.

I believe that the EC's three page document on my resignation is no accident or unexplainable excess, but rather is a cover for the real problems of the RT which have yet to be explained by the EC, let alone dealt with. These problems if necessary can be made to seem the fault, or the vindictive hallucinations of the former leaders, particularly because they will not go away by themselves.

This is a political method that is rotten to the core and which in the end will cave in on those who use it.

FINAL EC REPLY

A statement by Michael Long entitled: "REASONS FOR MY RESIGNATION FROM THE RED TIDE---A response to the EC's Statement" is presently being circulated inside both the IS and the RT. It takes the form of a reply to an EC statement on Michael's resignation that went out in a confidential key list mailing to IS NC members and organizers. This reply charges the EC with glander personal scape goating, rotten political method, etc. To clear the air, we will now make both our original confidential memo, and Michael's response available to the entire membership of the IS and the RT.

The reason the EC issued a statement on Michael, to the key list was not to persecute a comrade at the end of his rope, nor even to criticize his decision to leave the RT. And it certainly was not intended to reopen a dispute that can have little other effect than disorientation and disorganization of the Red Tide. We published the statement to explain to the IS leadership, the political basis on which the IS EC was intervening to help head off a factional situation that had developed inside the RT.

Until the time that Michael's reply was circulated, it appeared that our intervention had been successful and that factionalism inside the RT had disappeared. There was no sign of internal factionalism evident at the RT convention. We certainly hope that this interchange - and the discussion it evokes - will not reopen inside the Red Tide, new controversy on the perspectives that their convention just last week adopted with near unanimity.

We do not intend to answer here, all the charges against the EC raised in Michael's statement, Nor do we wish to respond to the attacks on Frank that Michael continues raising irresponsibly and destructively. We understand that when charges are raised and not answered, they sometimes become accepted as truth in the "folklore" of the organization. But we will take the risk, because the other risk is worse. We do not want to bring IS internal debate down to the level of who said what to whom or personal interactions, and enormous temptation in the internal struggles of small groups. We will limit this response to laying out the political context in which the key list statement was published, and specifically answering Michael on three points: personal vs political, sexism, and discipline.

The EC stands by our assertion that even though political problems had contributed to Michael's demoralization, the reasons he gave us for leaving were personal and not political. He told us emphatically - no political motivation, no political change, no new political understanding or direction could convince him to stay. He told us that he was at the end of his rope, and that if he tried to continue on any longer, it would destroy him as a revolutionary. This is why we considered his resignation personal. This is why we felt no need to issue any kind of statement on his resignation. And this is why we never expected that after announcing his own resignation, he would begin organizing, to convince other Red Tide members to carry out the political struggle that he had been unwilling to step for and lead.

The EC statement to the Key list was written after we discovered that our assumptions were wrong. It is our responsibility to take steps toward heading off non-constructive factionalism and personality conflicts inside the Red Tide. Michael, in his own words "tried to meet with as many individual RT members as possible to explain my resignation..." Among other things he told them: "I made clear my opinion of the EC's role and reliability in the RT. I laid out my analysis of Frank's role. I didn't share the EC's assumption that the RT couldn't continue without him." And Michael also argued that the RT should have a federated structure, not even try to be a national

democratic centralist organization. We discovered, in short, that Michael had an alternative program for the RT, - or at least elements of one - and that the Red Tide was beginning to factionalize around this program.

As soon as we discovered what was going on, we took immediate steps to head it off. We considered Michael's program, particularly the campaign against Frank to be totally negative and non-constructive. We argued with RT members that the medicine prescribed by the program would probably kill the patient. The Red Tide, and that it therefore had to be rejected. We urged RT leaders to call off the effort to get rid of Frank, arguing that the old rivalry between Frank and Michael should now be considered a thing of the past. We proposed to leading RT members that rather than organize around each others personal faults, or around imagined and real political differences, they had to set up working collaboration. We tried to find ways to help comrades overcome their own problems and shortcomings - not just Frank but all of them. But we made it clear that we would fight any effort to dump Frank - that Franks continuing leadership role is essential to the health of the RT.

We succeeded in convincing Red Tide leaders to at least give this approach a chance of working. The campaign to dump Frank ended. The RT weathered a major crisis, that for a short time put the very survival of the organization into question.

The Red Tide Convention proved the correctness of our approach. The whole RT leadership spanning four cities worked together smoothly and collaboratively. Little if any tensions were observable. This is not to say that the Red Tide has conquered all of its problems - it still has a long way to go. But the convention did succeed in firming up RT perspectives and it showed that personal rivalries could be subordinated to the development of a national collaborative leadership. We do not believe that anyone in the Red Tide wants to return to the paralyzed situation that the dump Frank campaign had created.

The EC key list statement on Michael merely put in writing what the EC and others assigned to RT work were stating verbally. To put our case in the sharpest way, we believe it was wrong and unprincipled for Michael to act as he did. First he refused to consider any political solution to remaining inside the Red Tide himself - either a political solution in collaboration with the IS EC, or even the decision to organize and wage an open fight. - for his views. Instead, he withdrew from the leadership and then used underground methods to urge a campaign against the other major Red Tide leader - without taking any responsibility for the consequences, and without even publicly declaring what he was doing.

The actual campaign was not organized by Michael. But we believe he intentionally inspired it. Despite any unpleasantness involved, and despite our respect for Michael, we felt it our responsibility to inform the IS leadership the political basis on which the IS EC intervened.

SEXISM: Michael states that the EC position on Ellen was sexist, and downplayed the importance of her work or her role as an organizer and political leader. Nonsense. Ellen's competence or leadership ability has been called into question by no one.

When Michael told us that in addition to his personal demoralization, he wanted the ability to develop his relationship with Ellen which was separated by distance, Joel stated to him that where they live was not just a personal decision of the two of them. As responsible cadres, the organization should have input into the question of what city. We did not even say that

Ellen should move to Detroit. We just raised that as one possibility for discussion. The discussion was not followed up because Michael made it clear that he would entertain no proposal for staying on in Detroit Red Tide.

This is not sexism. When two comrades decide they want to live together - we generally do all that we can to help them overcome political and organizational barriers that keep them separated by geography. But then we have to discuss with them how to carry out their decision in a way that is responsible to the organization. In part, this is a question of specifics, such as timing. But it is also necessary to discuss, what are their political responsibilities, which of the two is more crucial where they are, which is easier to replace etc. This has nothing to do with who is the man and who is the woman. It is a responsibility that a leadership does and must discharge.

DISCIPLINE: Michael presents two points about discipline, both wrong. First Michael argues that the EC is supposed to back up organizers in personal or political disputes within the organization - whether they are right or wrong. This is a cliquist view that demands leadership make political decisions based on personal loyalties. The EC gives none of its organizers the Carte Blanche of automatically backing their perspectives. Michael calls this the "desired relationship of an organizer to the EC". The most the EC can promise any organizer is collaboration and help in developing and implementing perspectives - backing when the organizer is on the right track, and when off the track, keep getting back on.

Michael's second point on discipline is fundamentally an argument against the whole democratic centralist concept of discipline. Certainly it is an old truism that discipline eventually breaks down when comrades are not politically motivated or where there is no overall political understanding or agreement. In fact all loyalty to the organization then breaks down. But it does not follow from this that because a comrade has a political disagreement, large or small, that comrade has the right to say: "I'm not convinced", or "I wasn't motivated", or "I have overall political disagreements" and this automatically relieves the comrade from the responsibility of acting like a disciplined cadre. No, we say comrades are expected to carry out discipline, even when they disagree. The comrade is justified in violating the organization's discipline and should do so only when convinced and correct that what is at stake is more than a political difference - that what is at stake is the revolutionary perspective itself. Within this framework, it is the responsibility of the whole organization - particularly the leadership - to motivate, to encourage, to keep with problems that arise.

STATEMENT FROM THE RT EC

November 24, 1976

A statement by Michael Long on the reasons he resigned from the RT is being circulated among RT members. This statement takes the form of a reply to the IS EC - a reply to a statement that was put out in an IS key list mailing to IS NC members and organizers, and in general, a reply to statements that have been made by IS EC members.

In the next week, the IS EC will re-publish its original statement and will put out a reply to Michael's statement. All three documents will be made available to the IS and RT memberships.

We strongly encourage RT members to discuss these documents in a manner that is not disruptive to the RT. In particular, they deal with issues that only a few months ago sharply divided our organization. In the last months, we have pretty much put these disputes behind us. We have made great progress, as demonstrated in our convention, toward a collaborative leadership with a together perspective.

A healthy political organization will continually have internal conflicts over its present policies and future directions. But it would be sad, if as a result of discussions of these documents, members end up re-living old disputes that have very little meaning for our future.

SPECIAL DISCUSSION BULLETINS.

The next seven weeks will be a period of intense discussion in the organisation around the positions raised by the new minority faction. For this reason we are producing a series of special discussion bulletins, the first three of which are being sent to the branches with this edition of "News of the Month". The contents of these SPECIAL BULLETINS are as follows.

#1

- a) Introduction to a report on the ISGB.....Executive Committee.
- b) A report on the ISGB.....Cal W. & Barbara W.
- c) The international perspectives of the ISGB.....Central Ctte.(ISGB)
- d) The second letter on Industrialisation/Priorities.....ISGB
- e) ISUS reply to the second letter.....Executive Committee

#2

- a) A report on Portugal.....Cal W. & Barbara W..
- b) The reply to the Portugal Report.....Executive Committee.
- c) The PRP and the American Revolution.....Steve Z.

#3

- a) A new course for the I.S.(founding document).....Left Faction.
- b) A preliminary reply to the minority faction.....Executive Committee.

There are four other documents that have already been published which are highly relevant to this whole discussion. The ISGB letter to the Canadian IS against industrialisation and priorities plus our reply to that letter were published in the August "News of the Month". The ISGB letter to our NC on the strategy of the ISUS and the reply of the NC were published in the November "News of the Month".

It should also be noted that the minority faction has declared its intention to publish several other documents on the different sections of its program. The national E.C. has also announced that it will publish, next week, a full rebuttal of the positions of the minority as a follow-up to its preliminary reply which is to be found in "Special Bulletin #3" and which was produced at only two days notice.

WOLFE.