

SPECIAL BULLETIN NUMBER SIX

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For I. S. Members Only

January 7th., 1977.

This document entitled "Towards a Political Solution - The Better Course for the I.S." was written before the majority caucus meeting in Detroit January 1 and 2. Since then the signers and supporters of this document in the N.Y./N.J. area voted in favor of joining the majority caucus on the basis of our political support for industrialization, mass workand agatation, and national industrialization priorities.

In the next issue of this bulletin we will have a fuller explanation of our position and action as well as a list of those members throughout the country who agree with them.

Sam F., N.Y.

Towards a Political Solution--

The Better Course for the I.S.

Discussion Document on I.S. Crisis (Draft)

I. INTRODUCTION

A Faction Fight?

There are times when a revolutionary organization must go through a bitter, all-out, no-holds-barred faction-fight. Sometimes such a fight is worth it all in the long-run, even if it means that during the fight (and for some time after) the work of the organization is hampered, and nearly stops altogether. Sometimes it's worth it even if it leads to a significant split in which the organization loses valuable people and resources and sees some of its hard-won gains go down the drain. And, let's be clear about it: all of this is usually what happens as a result of faction fights in small groups that have not yet built a massive membership and base in the working class. When a force in the organization (either an opposing faction or in the leadership) develops politics which are so at odds with the basic aims and strategy of the organization that they can't be carried out effectively, then one side has to decisively defeat, win over, or separate itself from the other on a politically principled basis. Such has been the case a number of times in the history of our movement, the most recent example in the I.S. occurring in 1973, when the RT faction chose to reject the very tradition and methods on which our politics are based, and went instead, for the politics of sectarianism. It was a nightmare. But we now generally agree that the outcome of that fight was beneficial to the I.S. in the long run.

Faction fights and splits usually are painful and destructive, but they are sometimes necessary, and sometimes beneficial. In such cases, revolutionaries don't shrink from them.

However, there are also other times when, although the problems which cause disaffection are extremely real, and although there's an urgent need for the membership (and leadership) to deal with them seriously and thoroughly, such a bitter faction fight, leading to such terrible (and likely) results is not at all what's called for by the situation. At these times anybody on any side who pushes the fight along rigid factional lines, that is, who tries to "smash" opponents by attacking their weakest points or who seeks to "destroy" the other group by personal attacks on its leaders--has to be blamed for being on a short-sighted, irresponsible and destructive course. In these cases, such actions will not clear the way for a politically correct solution. Instead, they will make it that much harder for the organization to avert an unnecessary disaster.

A careful and open-minded look at the issues raised in the "New Course" document and a review of the present direction and state of the I.S. has convinced us that what we face is the second kind of situation--one in which a destructive faction fight around the Left Faction's conclusions or around uncritical affirmation of the policies of the current leadership would be unwarranted and tragically irresponsible.

B. Where We Stand:

We disagree with most of the conclusions expressed in the "New Course" for the I.S. document. These conclusions just do not follow from the arguments, concerns and criticisms (many of which we share) made by its authors, and would, if adopted by the I.S. as they now stand, amount to major political set-backs to our chances of becoming the revolutionary workers' organization we seek to be.

At the same time, while we therefore see the need to take a strong stand in reaffirming the basic thrust and meaning of the I.S. strategies attacked by those conclusions--notably industrialization and National Priorities (and mass work and agitation if done in a way not to hurt party-building as well), we also see much that is wrong and profoundly disturbing in the ways these strategies are being implemented, and in some of the effects their implementation has had on the organization. After all, the present crisis of the I.S. was not created by the Left Faction (or the ISGB, for that matter). The fact that, in our opinion, the Left Faction's leaders were irresponsible in forming a faction so precipitously (without first trying to bring about a more open discussion of our problems), in no way alters our conviction that responsibility for the degree of stagnation and demoralization in the I.S., indeed even for the very development of such a faction in the first place--must fall largely at the doorstep of our leadership.

It is urgent that we move the discussion as quickly as possible beyond the point of having to decide between the false conclusions of the LF vs. total loyalty to the EC's policies. Current practices have to be re-examined and discussed thoroughly, not in a take-it-or-leave-it spirit for either the LF or the leadership, but in the light of how to truly correct our failings as an organization. This draft outline is put forward with an appeal to comrades on all sides to proceed soberly and non-factionally, so that a potentially correct solution of this crisis can be reached, one which will move the I.S. forward in a coherent and clear political direction.

II. RESPONSE TO THE "NEW COURSE IN THE I.S." DOCUMENT

A. The Left Faction's criticisms point to real problems. The following list identifies symptoms which add up to nothing less than a severe crisis in the health of the I.S.

1. Stagnation of growth and recruitment--we have not increased our size to any extent worth mentioning in the past year, let alone to anywhere near the goals proclaimed last year. Our record of holding and training those new members (workers as well as non-workers) we did recruit has been appalling.

2. De-politicization of the I.S.-- The level of political knowledge and consciousness throughout the organization is far too low. Discussion and thorough understanding of perspectives and strategies in the organization rarely gets beyond "learning the line." Often the underlying motivation and assumptions behind a particular line or perspective are grasped by members in a hazy and confused manner. Sometimes apparent changes in our line or emphasis are not motivated politically and discussed throughout the membership (for example our advocacy of a Black Party or shifting stress on calling for independent Black and

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women's caucuses). Our previous positions, or expectations are rarely re-assessed or critically evaluated (with some notable exceptions such as the auto fraction's CGC evaluation). The flow of information (between the center, the fractions and local branches) vital to the ability of all members to understand and politically assess all the aspects of work done by all the various parts of the organization, is severely restricted. Many members in different parts of the I.S. don't even know what other sections of the organization are doing, let alone developing the ability to evaluate or defend that work. When branch and/or fraction reports are written, they rarely go into the political questions involved in their work, which is one reason why they almost never get discussed.

In the light of this, members must increasingly rely on Worker's Power for their major source of politics. Here too, the concern with making it a major tool for our agitational movement-building has produced a similar de-politicization of its content as well (for more on WP, see pt. 7, below). Whatever the justification for them, there's no doubt that certain organizational practices and institutions have not helped the situation either. The disciplined EC and NC, the restriction of certain discussions to closed meetings of leadership bodies, the prohibition of (or atmosphere of intimidation against) certain other discussions (such as when John Charlton of the ISGB was here and branches could not engage him in discussions on Portugal), when coupled with this general lack of information and active communication, all contribute to the maintenance of a politically passive membership, a weak and unconfident secondary leadership increasingly dependent on the center for political direction, and finally, an isolated and mistrusted top leadership itself.

Can anyone doubt that this depoliticization, eroding as it does the conscious, voluntary shared commitment to our politics which is necessary to sustain membership in a revolutionary group, and is the basis for true bolshevik discipline, is a major reason for our inability to recruit and hold new members? Is it not obvious that this depoliticization has a great deal to do with our having to deal with a "Left Faction" (composed to a significant extent of newer members) that can attack assumptions long considered to be firmly established in the I.S.?

3. There is widespread demoralization in our ranks--In spite of our Teamster successes (and, in ways the LF points out correctly, partially ~~is~~ as a result of them) many of our members in branches throughout the country are either tired, dispirited, or frustrated. Many industrialized comrades do feel burned-out. Again, what the LF says about the effects of the "triumphalist" tendencies of our leadership to place unrealistic expectations and burdens on these comrades is largely valid.

On the other hand many of our non-industrialized comrades feel dispirited and frustrated by the lack of attention, guidance and encouragement they receive from the leadership and, worse by the experience, often, of being regarded as 2nd-class, backward (if not outright "worthless") members.

4. Opportunities Do Pass Us By--or rather, we pass up opportunities to intervene, recruit, or at least establish an I.S. presence in situations and places where the returns to the I.S. in periphery and party-building would certainly be worth the effort. Although we

differ strongly from the LF's advocacy of what, without the anchor of long-range planning and National Priorities, would add up to a scatter shot approach of dissipated efforts, we do think that the I.S. can, and must develop a different view of non-priority work. As matters now stand, the prevailing feeling in the organization towards involvement in activities and arenas outside of our industrial priorities (and outside of special, nationally initiated campaigns such as Gary Tyler, South Africa, etc.) ranges from outright hostility to thorough indifference, to reluctant toleration. With rare exceptions, there is little support, let alone active encouragement from our national and local (which is sometimes worse in this regard) leaderships to comrades and branches outside our main fractions taking local initiatives in these areas. This is a rigid, narrow and short-sighted application of the concept of priorities which actually negates the true meaning of "priorities" ("most important," but not "only worthwhile"). It is self-defeating, because the gains from serious, limited and carefully-controlled activities, aimed at students, independent radicals, and workers in non-priority work--could places could become crucial recruitment sources for cadre that can, in turn strengthen our...industrialization and priority work: This point of course carries still more weight if these students are black or Latin, and still more, if they are of working class origin. But lets not be such workerists as to pretend that only if this last criterion is met does that work have any value. The present IS with all of its industrial work would not exist had such rigid, simple-minded and dogmatic barriers been put in the way of the recruitment of most of our initial cadre (and present leadership). Of course, we understand that resources are limited, and that our main energies cannot and will not be diverted from our industrial priorities, but we must realize that it is this very scarcity of resources, plus our conviction that in this period we still need to industrialize revolutionaries, that makes a systematic concern for such recruitment "feeder" sources more, not less, important.

A most important case of such missed opportunities in current IS work is the crucial area of Women's work. Given the overwhelmingly male character of our industrial priorities, a lack of creative initiative and openness to non-priority work means that we will continue to recruit decreasing percentages of women, and that we will be less likely to be involved in, and even less likely to lead, struggles of working women.

Because of the difficulty (not impossibility) of recruiting women in enough numbers through our industrial work in priority areas, the recruitment of women should be a central goal of our non-priority work. We must search, systematically and consistently, for opportunities to implement our Women's Liberation Perspectives. In addition to propaganda efforts around women's issues (such as abortion etc.) aimed at recruiting women from the various areas discussed above, we should be on the look-out for strikes and union-struggles at places with a predominantly female work-force. The Trico strike for equal pay that the ISGB has been involved with is a good example. We should not have missed the opportunity of finding some way to relate to the 6-week nurses' strike in Chicago.

Similarly if the IS is to truly live up to its commitment to struggle for the liberation of all oppressed groups it must develop a similar and equally serious (even though much more limited in terms of resources) concern for involvement in activities that can result in Latin (mainly Puerto Rican and Chicano) recruitment. Finally, in all our work, we should not let our commitment to Gay Liberation become a

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dead letter.

5. There has been a marked tendency on the part of our leadership to replace leading politically with top-heavy administration and internal discipline.

ALTHOUGH IT IS CERTAINLY FALSE, AND A SLANDER TO THE ORGANIZATION TO CHARGE, AS THE LP DOES, THAT "EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THERE IS NO DEMOCRACY IN THE I.S.", true democratic centralist development in the IS has been distorted by a number of factors. First and foremost among these is the depoliticization discussed in pt. #2 above. Democratic centralism, the highest form of democracy in a combat organization, will tend to degenerate towards its opposite, bureaucratic centralism, to the degree that: it is exercised in (and then, over) a membership that lacks the consciousness to accept discipline out of loyalty to the politics of the whole organization (and hence, to the leadership), and instead accepts it out of a passive deference to the leadership's authority, identification with a clique or, must have it imposed by the leadership by increasingly non-political means.

In the IS, the EC has, (for reasons that may be very laudable, but that's beside the point) found itself substituting itself for national fraction leaderships (CWA, IBT), launching heavy interventions into the decisions of local branches ("kicking ass" it's called) and building a network of EC loyalists throughout the organization in a way that has hindered, not helped, the true development of a real secondary leadership capable of implementing IS political policy with initiative and independence. There has been a policy of "building up" some comrades, and "destroying" other comrades, not on the basis of merit established in open political life, but more often in covert ways--(putting people down behind their backs, giving special attention to others (selected, it's true, in part for their hard work, but also for their loyalty, pliability, absence of criticism, etc.) allowing them a special "pipeline" of information to and from the center of the organization, while other, equally hard-working comrades, who for one reason or another have earned the EC's mistrust, are at best largely ignored.

This faction fight reveals some tragic results of this method of leadership. Several excellent new comrades, initially promoted to positions of local leadership (mainly as branch organizers) on the basis of their promise, but despite their relative inexperience and understandable lack of political depth had been made to act as the boots to "kick recalcitrant" but politically more experienced "ass" in certain branches. This they loyally attempted to do, under great pressure (but little political guidance) from the center. What greater indictment and proof of the un-political nature of this pressure can there be than the fact that a number of these comrades now turn up as signers of a document which totally rejects all the policies of our EC (the good, along with the bad, sadly)?

These practices: of "courtship" of certain comrades contrasted with expulsion threats to others, developing "insiders" vs. a membership with limited access to political information (exacerbated by disciplined EC's and closed NC meetings) occur in a context of a climate ~~xxxxx~~ which already inhibits open political discussion of important parts of our perspectives and political lines (whether on Portugal or on the Sadlowski campaign.) The point here is not to get into whether this or that line is correct or not; nor is it to question the absolute need for discipline and self-restraint in discussions, in o

order not to hinder our external work and hold on to contacts and reweavers. We do not want the bogey of "returning to the talk shop" either, rest assured. But it is precisely our point that real unity in our organization can only be built on the foundation of political agreement achieved by the democratic participation of all comrades from the bottom up. (and then, from the top down, as well). The ironic and sad up-short of going the other way is that now the IS will be forced to become that much-dreaded "talk shop" for at least the next several weeks, to fight for our very survival. We must put an end to political apartheid in the IS before it puts an end ~~xxx~~ to us!.

6. There are right-ward pressures involved in our mass-work--To state this is to point to an objective problem, not to criticize the EC, our industrial fractions or anybody else for that matter. This right-ward pressure has always been understood by Marxists to be a fact of life for revolutionaries attempting to lead or organize workers in a period such as ~~this xxxxx~~ one, where the political programs and consciousness that our efforts focus on cannot yet be revolutionary. Trotsky, for instance, recognized the same tendency when he discussed the trade-union section of the SWP. It has been a necessary and inescapable experience for revolutionaries involved in this kind of work in this kind of period everywhere. To the extent that it means that contact with reality moves revolutionaries to the right of sectarianism and ultra-leftism, such as happened when our initial industrialization forced us to abandon the ~~xxxx~~ "struggle-group" conception, these pressures are all to the good. To the extent that they serve to put us in the same ball park with workers involved in real struggles and give us a chance to be relevant and begin building a base by trying to lead, these pressures are to be welcomed. The problem is for us to know when we're in danger of being pushed too far--into opportunist political practice. Is it when we decide to give critical but unconditional support to a Miller or Sadlowski? We don't think so. What about when we decide to fold our own rank and file organizations into Fight-back, leaving it only to official IS publications (WP and what's happening to that steel pamphlet that was supposed to be produced?) to do so? Such questions need full discussion at all levels of the organization, for our cadre needs to learn and internalize a method for making such political judgements. The truth is that there's no automatic abstract formula that can help prevent us from sliding ~~xx~~ into opportunism. Our ex-comrades in the RSL (and sundry pathetic offspring) thought they discovered it in the magic amulet of The Transitional Program! and rushed head-long into sectarianism. Stalinists and Social Democrats of all varieties don't seem to worry too much about it, so they don't have much of a problem. But we do, and the Left Faction's attempt to deal with it by saying we should abandon mass work altogether is worse than no solution, for a number of reasons to be discussed below. One point to be made to them here though, is that their conclusions against industrialization and mass work ignore the fact that this same problem operates in the other direction as well: Isolation from the class and lack of involvement with its day-to-day struggle exerts a "left-ward pressure" straight towards sectarianism and ultra-leftism, which is one major reason we feel that adoption of their conclusions would be a political set-back for the IS.

Trotsky's prescription for the trade-union of the SWP was not that they should stop doing mass work in the trade unions, but that the party as a whole could and had to act as a political check against this ever-present pressure to the right. The documents that came out of this Fall's NC--notably "Mass Work, Politics and Party-building"--offer

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promising (if overdue) steps in the direction of fulfilling this advice. We wholeheartedly endorse the direction towards party-building (not against mass work, but as an absolutely crucial complement to it) and towards re-politicization these call for. However, we fear that unless the problems in points #2 and #5 above are overcome, these steps may prove to be more "bent stick" rhetoric, in practice turning out to be a broken reed. For re-politicization, periphery-building and party-building--that is, re-establishing the primacy of revolutionary politics, as we continue and even intensify our mass-work and low-level agitations (which, of course, we must do)--cannot be a matter of a mere "campaign" or "turn" to "correct an imbalance." It must become a permanent feature of a fully-democratized--that is, truly democratic-centralist--I.S.

7. There has been a failure to understand and properly utilize propaganda by the I.S.

When, in what is probably an extreme over-reaction to the excesses of our "turn to agitation," the Left Faction rejects mass-work and de-emphasizes the importance of agitation, they commit a serious error, for no revolutionary group will be able to establish itself and grow in the working class on the basis of propaganda alone. When the IS in recent years derided the importance of propaganda, in what was, in part, our over-reaction to the practice of the empty phrase-mongering of sectarian "Trotskyist" groups and New Left commentary and study groups, we committed an equally serious error. For the LF is right to remind us that the IS is still, after all is said and done, basically a propaganda group. This does not preclude mass-work and agitation, but it does mean that, at this point in our development (and in the development of working class consciousness) the overwhelming bulk of our recruitment must be, and, in fact, is (no matter what anybody might pretend) done on the basis of our socialist political ideas (in varying degrees of political complexity). Agitation and mass work enable us to do very good things to help build the workers' movement; they put us in contact with workers, and can even bring them into our periphery; but without propaganda (whether in WP, other publications, leaflets, forums, or one-to-one raps) we cannot complete the job of recruiting to, and therefore building, the IS. This may all seem rather obvious when put this way, but the IS has not been utilizing this understanding in any systematic and effective way for quite some time now. Our obsession with "being a real force," "having a decisive impact," "moving significant numbers of people," etc. has tended to blind us against the importance of putting conscious and systematic effort into the consistent expression and spreading of our unique ~~xxx~~ revolutionary socialist ideas. This is the external side of the depoliticization described in points 2, 5 and 6 above, and is both cause and effect of that depoliticization. It means that we tend to recruit and grow only from those areas where enormous agitational efforts and the protracted grind of movement-building finally yield us tiny handfuls of contacts to propagandize more fully, or else, more easily, but virtually by accident, from contacts made in our unsystematic non-priority work.

WE MUST STOP LETTING THE POTENTIAL AGITATIONAL USEFULNESS OF OUR MAJOR RECRUITMENT TOOLS--pre-eminently WP but also our forums and rallies, etc.--WEAKEN AND UNDERMINE THEIR PRIMARY PROPAGANDISTIC ROLE. That this is precisely what's been happening, and thus is a major cause of our stagnation must be recognized and corrected. It is altogether right and proper to not tie ourselves to any abstract political program

when we put out a rank and file newsletter or leaflet in order to move people towards a desired course of action. But it is a completely, different matter to allow such considerations to cloud and dull (and sometimes crase) the picture that we present of the revolutionary socialist IS at a forum or in the pages of WP. Here is where our unique political contributions must stand out, so that contacts have a way of deciding whether our politics are worth joining. If there's a reason to emphasize the positive aspects of a sadlowski victory in a leaflet to steelworkers, there's equally good reason to give our full position on the MPLA in Angola (a frequent WP reader would have no reason to think we see it as any less of a revolutionary party than the PRP is in Portugal) or ZANU (the frequent WP reader would have to turn to ABC News to find out that it's allied to the bourgeois nationalist & Nkomo) or on Carvalho (our frequent WP reader would know why it was good the revolutionary Left ran him in Portugal, but would not know from us, that he does not exactly represent the ideal of a revolutionary leader). When we criticize the fact that too often (not always) WP tends to be written for the "lowest common denominator," we're talking, not about the readability of its style, which is great, but about its lack of political content.

This has nothing to do with "abstraction" vs. "concreteness," "dullness and difficulty" vs. "liveliness and interest." It has to do with the fact that if we want our readers to know about our politics and to consider joining the IS it's nothing short of scandalous that we're probably the only newspaper in the world to rarely discuss the presence and role of Cuban troops in Angola. The NY Daily News, with a circulation of millions of workers, has no trouble mentioning it and giving its analysis. We seem to.

The same problem exists with many of the forums and rallies that we organize at which we ~~feature~~ feature ~~xxx~~ speakers from other political groups or tendencies with whom we wish to have a united front. Potential IS contacts attending these (on Southern Africa, etc.) have no problem learning what the politics of our guest speakers are all about, but would have to listen with intense concentration to begin to suspect that there's something different, special, unique or superior that the IS (or WP) ~~stands~~ stands for. If our leadership is serious about correcting the distortions caused by our one-sided movement-building mentality, and truly intends to re-emphasize IS-building it will do well to direct its attention at these manifestations of the problem as well.

Finally, we must devote more effort (or more serious efforts) to cast our propaganda net more widely. WP's and pamphlets can be more systematically distributed to bookstores and newsstands, we can have more forums and speakers in communities, schools and colleges, and local branches can address some propaganda leaflets to struggles that are not necessarily in our main priorities--all without significantly cutting into our central priorities. The results--in wider and bigger periphery and recruitment--would certainly be worth the effort. Such activities--although secondary--should not to be confused with our on-going work in the priorities--and nevertheless crucial for us to expand our size and therefore have more U.S. political cadre to lead the next stage forward."

II.-B. THE MAJOR CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY THE LEFT FACTION IN ITS "NEW COURSE" DOCUMENT ARE WRONG AND MUST BE REJECTED BY THE I.S.

Though we share many of the deep concerns about the state of the IS which moved some of our most valuable comrades to form or support the Left faction, and though we agree with them that the current leadership is largely responsible for this crisis, we believe that, in the "New Course" document the LF missed the mark disastrously in coming to advocate the abandonment of industrialization, national priorities and mass work. These three aspects of the political course and methods of the IS are fundamental aspects of our strategy for the creation of a revolutionary workers' party in the US.

1. Industrialization

The EC is absolutely correct in its reply to the ISGB when it cites the particular historical circumstances that made the separation between the Left (let alone revolutionary socialists) and the American working class virtually total for decades. Industrialization in this, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ country does have both a special urgency as well as special potential as compared with the other capitalist nations. Few of the factors that facilitate re-connection between workers and revolutionaries in other countries (such as the maintenance of socialist traditions in some form or other, the existence of massive political parties that, despite their betrayals have served to keep political class identification alive, the absence of virulent anti-communism that exists here, etc. etc.) operate here. On the other hand, some of these same factors, as well as some others, such as the relatively less rigid class lines in cultural terms serve to give industrialization a greater potential for success here? In any case it is far truer here than in Europe? that in order for us to get to do any "inside" work (as the LF puts it) we've first had to "get inside," and will continue to have to do so for quite some time to come.

It has been the tactic of industrialization that has been responsible for the organization to not only to begin to make contact with workers at the center of their on-going struggles (and the seat of working class power), but also to begin to develop a concrete and realistic knowledge of the class-struggle that no observing, theorizing and "intervening" from the outside by itself could ever achieve. The level of our political discussion of labor perspectives is infinitely superior--because it's more concrete and reality-based--in the present IS than those we had at our inception, or than those of other non-industrialized Left organizations, thanks to industrialization. The fact that we've industrialized even makes it much more possible to engage in better outside agitation and propaganda (as was the case in our postal intervention). Rather than ~~not~~ lengthen this document with unnecessary repetition let us just state that we fully endorse the excellent defense and justification of industrialization written by the EC in its reply to the Left Faction document.

2. Priorities

As for the LF's conclusions against priorities, they would have come much closer to hitting the mark if they had focused their attack on the narrow and rigid implementation and interpretation of the meaning of priorities which has been fostered by the leadership. The real-meaning and use of national (as well as local) priorities to guide our overall work, and assist our long-range planning, has been transformed into a set of principles to exclude (or at least discourage) work in different

arenas, or other kinds of initiative and activity. Instead, the LF chose to accept the leadership's definition of "Priorities" and then chose to reject the whole idea outright (and then threw in a rather ridiculous argument against planning to boot; one wonders why they cite the axiom that "Theory is the Guide to Action"). At any rate, as they themselves say (but then contradict, without qualification) any group does need priorities--we add: especially a small group, and especially national priorities, that can give the organization some long-range direction of where (according to the best of our theoretical ability) we should be heading, so we can be there as the action happens, and not have to chase after it from the outside.

More concretely, we see no reason to question the long-range validity of the considerations and analysis that led the IS to identify the industries and the unions (UAW, IBT, USW AND CWA) that for various reasons can be expected to be the arenas for key and leading developments of the US working class struggles. Our ISGB comrades seem to have forgotten the difference between predicting the likelihood of certain developments and trends and prescribing them (very much the way bourgeois critics of Marx do when they accuse Marxism of "seeking to impose Laws on History"). The subjecting our work to such national priorities has several important advantages to our development as an organization--it insures that we have continuity, consistency and discipline in our efforts over time. This is the only way that we will continue developing serious and scientific politics that are not based on passing phenomena, but are built up on actions that can be evaluated, criticized, re-assessed to give us an ever fuller and deeper understanding of what needs to be done. Second, it does mean that, over time, we will be recruiting a cadre of workers whose on-going existence and political work is central to the whole organization, so that the development of a revolutionary workers' leadership in the IS is a real likelihood--much more and much sooner than if we recruited workers peripherally (although we should not expect this to happen as soon as various statements out of Detroit proclaimed last year).

Our quarrel is not with the way the IS deals with its priorities; it's with the way the organization has dealt with its non-priorities (see section II A, pt. 4 above).

3. Mass-work

As with industrialization and priorities, so with "mass work," the LF could and should very correctly have attacked the excesses of the "turn to agitation"--since these (triumphalism, false expectations, disruption of party-building, depoliticization) severely distorted the potential value that mass work should have had for us. (Instead, it ~~x~~ seems to us that wherever some surgery is needed to remove some bad growths from vital organs in the body of IS political practice, the LF leaps in with a machete, seeking to chop away the whole organ. This may be a bad habit picked up ~~xxx~~ from the B.S. (Bending the Stick, that is) artists in our leadership. If the authors of the New Course document persist with this method, they'll leave behind a trail of broken machete knives almost as long as the trail of broken sticks left by the EC. Because, the methods of industrialization, priorities and mass work are, despite the distortion they've suffered, too important and firm to be chopped away so crudely. (For a more sober discussion of the role and implications of "mass work" see pt. II, A6 above.)

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III. TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE IS CRISIS

A. Many comrades who are as convinced of the severity of the crisis as we are, and who are equally convinced that industrialization, national priorities and mass-work are not, at bottom, the causes of our problems, are seeking other explanations for them. Among the factors being discussed are: EC mistakes in having (and fostering) illusory expectations of tremendous success and growth out of our mass work, serious defects in leadership methods at all levels of the organization (from the EC down to the local branch fractions), weakness of our membership (lack of activity, lack of confidence and initiative, "resistance to making the turn," etc.).

We believe that all these factors are worth discussing, but hold that if the discussion remains at such a symptomatic level, we won't be able to pull out of the crisis for long before it recurs. Any discussion which concludes only that "for a time we have to push the wether way" or "a balance must be restored," or that the EC (or future ones) avoid making the same mistakes, or even that the main thing that needs to be done is to replace this or that leader, or even the whole EC, will not only tend to be scapegoating the EC unfairly, but will be missing the point of how such mistakes could end up having such disastrous effects on the membership. After all, even the best of leaderships mis-estimate either the pace of events, or the workers' response to them at times. And it's not as if we've just been decimated by brutal state repression--we've even had some real successes to be proud of! So what needs to be understood is why the widespread demoralization and stagnation in this period that should be offering real hope?

B. De-politicization is the key--it's not that we don't feel that EC practices (by omission as much as by commission) should carry a large share of responsibility (as any central leadership in an organization like ours must carry). In fact, the EC was correct when, last year, they proclaimed "We will be judged by the results!" It's rather that, in spite of all this, the fundamental source and key to all of our major problems lies in a process that pre-dated the current EC. We're talking about the de-politicization that has been especially marked in the IS since 1974 (in reaction to the horrors of the 1973 faction-fight and split) but has probably been a part of our make-up since our very birth as an organization struggling to break away from our roots in the "New Left" student movement of the 60's--with all of its petty-bourgeois flaws: endless abstract "theorizing," lack of discipline, etc.

This de-politicization (described in section II #2 above) has wrought havoc on our ability to maintain cohesion and morale in the face of hard times.

It works around as follows: In an organization that does not develop its membership's consciousness by activity fostering the practice of democratically debating political alternatives, the mistakes that leaders make (and it's inescapable that leaders make mistakes in any organization--even the All-Time Original Bolshevik Party) are very difficult to counter-act in the membership. A membership that, by and large, has been carrying out its activities not with the independent initiative of a truly internaxlized political consciousness, but rather constantly experiences being "revved-up" with the carrot-and-stick combination of: cheerleading exhortations, artificial (because premature) promotions of members to positions of heavy responsibility (unfair to the "lucky" member because she/he is not armed politically

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structured as follows:

1. One full day around our labor perspectives, particularly on our methods of building the rank and file movement--It should include such issues as mass work, the use and importance of agitation, of propaganda, the nature of the "militant minority," united fronts. All of these should be tied to our goal of building an independent rank and file base, and to the principles and methods of Class-Struggle Unionism. In spite of the fact that previous membership conventions have already affirmed IS policy in all these regards, the widespread lack of clarity and confidence on these questions on the part of so much of our membership shows the urgent need to have this discussion.

2. One full day on "Party Building"--Although, as we've indicated above, we heartily welcome the Fall NC documents ("Periphery Campaign," "Mass Work, Politics and Party-Building"), we feel that a fuller discussion towards making the concern of building the IS itself a permanent feature and top priority in all our on-going practice is now required. This discussion should focus on:

- a) Recruitment
- b) Periphery-Building
- c) Workers Power
- d) Political Education and Cadre Training

3. The final day should be on:

- a) IS internal organizational methods and structures, norms and methods of internal political discussions, and role and method of leadership
- b) It should culminate with elections to national leadership bodies.

B. The Special Convention should be seen as the culmination of the discussion period forced on us by the crisis, and should signal its end. It should be clear to everyone that, given the present political turmoil in the organization, a meeting of the N.S. as presently constituted would be totally inadequate for the achievement of this resolution. This current NC was elected on the basis of a very different political alignment in the organization. Nothing short of the full convention with delegates representing the present political concerns of the membership will do the job. To this end, we will be working on specific proposals and resolutions to be addressed to the various sessions. We urge others to do likewise.

C. Initial Specific Proposals:

The following are our concrete proposals for the time being. They fall under two headings: political and organizational.

1. Political

a) Priorities

We fundamentally agree with the recommendations on labor work and perspectives which we understand to be contained in the document coming out of the L.A. branch and there is therefore no need to repeat them here. We wish it to be clear that we continue to support the basic thrust and direction of IS work in our priority areas. The problems we are addressing now have to do with the general political illness of the IS, which goes far beyond any given fraction.

b) Non-Priority Work

We have to recognize, as was stated in a recent EC document, that no matter how great our politics and strategy, our success will be limited.

by our ridiculously small size. Therefore, some activities are justified simply on the basis that they will help us recruit. (As long as the organization has national industrial priorities and our work in them is the primary work of the organization, we do not need to worry about recruiting "the wrong sorts of people" through this other non-priority work.) Local branch execs should have it as a constant ongoing concern to search out opportunities to recruit and build our periphery. A periphery campaign is not sufficient. Relating to people and places outside our priority work who would be open to our politics is an essential, even though non-priority, part of our perspective--and not just an occasional exception. This would mean different things in places. (And the proportion of priority and non-priority work would vary; in some branches it might make sense to do none of the following because of the consuming importance of priority work, whereas in occasional other branches where priority work was unavailable the non-priority work might be the bulk of the work.) The following is the kind of work we have in mind:

1. Activities

a.) If we have a member or contact who is already doing rank and file work within a non-priority union, the individual case should be explored and sometimes they should get the assistance of the branch. The teacher work in NYC is an example of this. It would have been terrific had we had such a contact or member involved in the rober strike.

b.) Given the difficulty of recruiting women through our industrial work, the recruitment of women should be a central goal of our non-priority work. We must consistently and systematically search for opportunities to implement our Women's Liberation perspectives. In addition to propaganda and non-trade union movements mentioned below, we should be on the lookout for strikes and union struggles where there is a predominantly female work force. The Trico strike for pay that The ISGB has been involved in is a good example. An example of a lost opportunity is the 6-week nurses' strike in Chicago.

c.) If there are groups protesting cutbacks in social services or working around other non-work place issues like racism, abortion, we should explore the possibility of participating in them (e.g., Community Labor Action Against the Cuts, Union WAGE); sometimes we should even organize them (e.g., WAR).

d.) It is the responsibility of the national leadership to ensure that systematic and consistent student work be done in a limited number of schools and/or cities where this is a realistic and worthwhile perspective in terms of possible recruitment considering the nature and social composition of certain schools and cities (for example, Boston, New York City and the San Francisco Bay Area). This would be done under the direction of a coordinator designated by and responsible to the national leadership and on the basis of a unified national political program for our student work and perspectives. While we do not believe that it is now possible or desirable for us to try to help build a student movement, the fact remains that other organizations such as the Young Workers Liberation League, the YSA and the Revolutionary Student Brigade have been recruiting considerably on campuses particularly in community and state colleges and universities with large working class and Third World student bodies. There is no reason why we should or could not tap this still very important source of recruitment. This general approach of recognizing the wide local and regional diversity in the US which makes serious student work possible and desirable in certain cities

and schools but not necessarily in others applies even more in regards to Latin work. Again, there is no reason why the approach discussed above could not be very fruitfully applied in a number of cities with significant Latin populations (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles). Sometimes there have been instances where student and Latin work could have been combined such as the important Latin struggles at Hostos Community college in New York City.

2. Propagandistic Work

For example:

a.) Organizing forms, films, literature tables, et. at campuses where there are likely to be a larger number of students open to our politics.

b.) Participating in what rare, non-sectarian radical or Marxist schools exist, such as the School for Marxist Education in NY, and other habitats of independent radicals. (Many independent radicals are hopeless but others would be sympathetic to us if they knew us.)

3. Political Education and Training

a.) Discussion of national fraction work, including fundamental motivation, should go on in every branch; every member should be informed and fully understand the primary work of the organization.

b.) Cadre schools should be held on a regional as well as national basis and not just for organizers.

(The amount of space we have spent on non-priority work does not mean we think it should be a priority. This detail is necessary to correct the rigidity of our present orientation.)

2. Organizational

a.) New leadership bodies should be elected. (This does not ~~mean~~ preclude electing all or some of the present leadership.

b.) The EC should no longer be disciplined.

c.) NCs should be open except for personnel, personal and security discussions.

d.) Appointment of organizers should be collaborative and there should be veto power for both branches and EC.

e.) There should be an appeals board, politically elected by the Convention, to deal with cases of discipline. (This existed for many years in the ISGB and it has now become necessary for us given the fact that more than a handful of members have complained that they have been threatened with disciplinary measures in the course of political disputes with leaders of the organization.)

f.) There should be no suppression of information and discussion as occurred, e.g. with John Charlton's visit and written reports from comrades visiting Portugal; in fact, these should be circulated and discussion organized.

g.) A political editor or deditorial board for WP should be chosen by the EC. This is necessary to beef up what is currently the weak political content of the paper.

We are convinced that, with discussion and implementation of these propqsals, and others like them, those excellent comrades who are currently disaffected can be saved for the IS--and--the IS can be saved for them and all of us as well.

FINAL NOTE

We disagree with the Left Faction on one last thing: it's not simply bluster to declare that "we have left the world of the sects." What this means is not that we have ceased to be a sect (we haven't technically) but that in our practice, with all of its failings, we have begun on the long road towards the revolutionary workers' party--whereas most other sects are still busy chasing up and down side roads. We're taking our first steps down that road largely because of industrialization and planning. Our present course threatens to land us in a rut, but the "New Course" threatens (despite best intentions) to take us x off the road altogether. Let's move on!

Peter D.
Nancy H.
Sam F.

New York
12/26/76

Open Letter to the "Left Faction"
By Dave F. - Louisville

Dear Comrades,

If I did not consider you comrades and somewhat capable of understanding what I have to say, I would not have written. I really feel that this time I have something to teach you, hopefully you'll listen.

As a worker, I am angered and disgusted with the Left Faction, and its positions. It flies in the face of what I know as a worker. In discussing the document with its supporters several weeks ago, I began to realize what it was all about. When I raised questions or objections (which I raised from my own experience) I was told, "that's what the E.C. says", as though I was too ignorant to come to these conclusions on my own, and the E.C. had somehow brainwashed me to think these things. I draw my conclusions from practical experience, from what I'm attempting to do in the Bakery (something I will elaborate on later.) I'm perfectly capable of thinking for myself. I don't need the E.C. to program my brain for argument with the Left Faction. In the same manner I don't need the Left Faction's rhetoric on what we need to do. (I'm doing it). I know from experience, that the Faction has some very capable people. People who are able to "convince" workers that we have the "correct line". This leads to what I think has been one of the major problems of the I.S. all along, and that is communication with workers.

Students and intellectuals naturally have a hard time relating to workers, this is understandable, and the reverse is also true. Students and intellectuals have for the bulk of the time, been in the main stream of the I.S. The manner in which workers have been approached and talked to has usually been very condescending. An attitude somewhat reflected as "I know more than you, so just listen". Something I believe many signers of the document are guilty of. The Faction gives some recognition to this problem, but skates the issue by saying it's the E.C.'s fault for programming you wrong; implying that the E.C. should have trained you better in dealing with the worker consciousness. When you came into contact with worker consciousness, it failed to make an impression. Yet all it took was a few words from the experts (I.S.G.B.) and you were ready to scrap the strategy, because it wasn't "correct", or successful enough to suit you.

Who is leading this Faction? That is what you must ask yourself. At our branch meeting, who argued which position? Not, how well was it argued. Certainly you have people who are adept at arguing, they did it very well in college, I'm sure. I'm certain that you owe the fact that workers are supporting the present strategy to the E.C.'s expertise at 'fooling' workers, as members of the Faction have admittedly attempted to do as hacks of the E.C. If you feel that this is all that workers are capable of, you should back your ass out the door right now. Although you probably won't admit it, that is not only your underlying attitude, but the essence of the Left Faction.

I have talked to workers who said they were supporting your Faction. When they told me they supported the Faction, they said it with all the enthusiasm and surity of someone going to the electric chair. They were approached in the same way you have always approached workers, by pointing out "how everything is all fucked up, if you agree, follow us we will lead you out of this mess". I have fallen for that crap before; never again, not with the Left Faction or the E.C. Do you really feel that you are only capable of giving an intellectual (what you call 'political') lead. Do you really feel that impotent in dealing with workers that you must resort to the shit resorted to in the document. I certainly feel that to a degree, the E.C. has been guilty of this intellectual crap. The reason for it, I think, is accommodation to the strong middle class elements of the I.S. That is why

I nearly left the organization. I returned with extreme doubts on how the middle class consciousness could be divorced from the I.S. I never envisioned that this consciousness would become organized into a Faction, and that you would be in it.

It appears that many of you feel extremely embarrassed for being hacks of the E.C. for so many years; if you don't feel that way, you should. Do you really feel that I am a hack of the E.C. because I support the current strategy? Do you think that I should feel embarrassed? It has taken nearly two years; the hardest of my life to come to an understanding of what we are about. Nothing the E.C. ever said or any document they put out, convinced me we were right, nor could it have. I learned from everyday experiences with workers and from putting politics into action on a very basic level. I had my doubts that workers would move at all, especially in a Bakery where there has not been a strike in over 20 years. I have had my doubts removed by the workers around me. When I was ready to give up, they, more than anyone else, convinced me to continue. I could have given up when I was told that recruitment was the precondition to my doing contact work, even though I knew it was unrealistic. But I did not give up. I realized and still do that if the Bakery is to be a priority, I have to make it one. To get where I am at now, it took months of bitter struggle, with the company, the union, the Chief Steward. I did it nearly on my own, although I did receive helpful advice from Danny (another E.C. hack). I received other advice (mostly from people who are now in the Left Faction) which was totally useless. That chief Steward, whom I bitterly fought, is on the verge of being recruited to socialist politics. Due to his connections, we have the strong possibility of organizing a Rank and File opposition in the local. If the E.C. attempts to expell me for doing it, I'll quit before they get the chance. In reality, you know they won't. I feel now, that I was correct at the time to encourage me to get into a priority industry. Even to myself, the situation seemed helpless. I feel that if I show meaningful results, which I already have, the E.C. will "Bend the Stick." There are countless examples, nationally, where they have done so.

If I could have talked to that Electrical worker in Cincinnati, I would have told her what the real story is: If you are in a non-priority union without something to show, you have a simple choice, you stick it out where you're at and organize - you will get advice - or you get into a priority. Workers have never been penalized for Rank and File organizing. I had to ask myself, what can the IS do for me in organizing the Bakery? Judging from the suggestion I was given by most comrades, I realized that in actuality there was very little that the I.S. could do, priorities or no priorities. The only people who could give meaningful advice should be organizing more than advising.

The same is true with W.P. - you know we didn't sell papers at the rubber complex - we had a hard enough time getting people to sell at priorities, much less anywhere else. What is the Faction going to do to make selling the paper so enjoyable, that we will want to sell at every factory gate and barn? I have never sold the paper out of enjoyment, but out of political commitment. That is one thing that the Faction conveniently forgets, how to get workers to politically commit themselves.

I'm certain the E.C. would not have reprimanded us for selling papers at the Rubber complex. They didn't do this in W. Virginia, and in fact helped out. Would your E.C. have some magic Formula for getting people to sell the paper? After all the Hare Krishnas and the rest can get their followers out on the streets to do their dirty work. Political Commitment is the key and I really don't think you can talk people into selling the paper as easily as you got their commitment on your document. It is a much more difficult process than you would have us believe.

The Faction seems content with calling TDC a success. You can't skate this as easily, because you know it took everything we had to pull it off. What would have happened if we decided that the P.O. campaign was too successful just to let slide. We could not have put all of our resources or any great amount on P.O. work without seriously jeopardizing the TDC work. You seem to have forgotten the strain that TDC placed on all of us. Does the Faction have some new vitamin to give us

that will guard against that strain? It would be great to carry on 9 or 10 major campaigns at the same time. It really seems that your promises are utopianism of the highest order. If you really think you have a chance and by some twist of misfortune you convince the majority of the I.S., don't look over your shoulder for me. If you even attempted to perform the tasks you have set for a short period of time, you would have a group of burnt out, half insane people calling themselves Revolutionaries, that's if they don't quit after the first two months. The ultra-left positions, the tactics of the "Left Faction" rear of student-intellectual consciousness,,for a good reason, it is lead by student-intellectuals.

I suppose by now you will have heard enough. Hopefully you will have listened, not in the manner you usually listen in, Working people are waiting and watching, but they won't wait forever. As a worker, I ask you to seriously reconsider the goals you have set for yourselves.

David L.
Louisville

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND WORKERS POWER

by the Seattle and Portland Women's Caucus

Articles on women in WP have been few and far between in the last few months. By articles on women we mean articles on struggles in workplaces employing largely women, articles on the special problems women face in all industries and articles on feminist theory. We can come to only three conclusions: Nothing is happening; no one is writing these articles or they are so badly written that WP is embarrassed to print them. We don't believe in any of these theories. But, just to be sure, let's examine them one by one.

NOTHING IS HAPPENING. Plenty is always happening. Abortion was almost legislated out of existence for poor women. A woman in Chicago was arrested for firing a gun at her roommates rapist. Teachers have struck. Minority women undergo forced sterilization. In short, capitalism continues to oppress us and we are continuing to fight back. But you'd never know by reading WP. Why?

NO ONE IS WRITING. Again, untrue. An article analyzing the failures of the women's liberation movement of the '60's was written by a Portland contact. Never printed. No response why. 5 articles for a possible health and safety column, including one on the special hazards women faced, received the same treatment. An article on abortion written to coincide with the passage of the Hyde amendment was printed three weeks later as a letter (the major article on abortion promised was printed two weeks late.) And if the WP staff really sees few articles being sent in, why aren't they soliciting such articles?

THE ARTICLES ARE AWFUL. If an article is stylistically boring or grammatically unreadable, surely the WP staff should be able to fix it without changing the politics of the article. But more and more, we see editing, meaning editing out the political points and parallels our articles make. Here are some examples of what we mean: An article about medical care for women prisoners (#175) was not only completely rewritten to eliminate the personal point of view but conclusions about women's oppression by the male medical establishment were eliminated. A letter on the rights of transsexuals was shortened, rearranged, and chopped to bits. Since when are letters to the editor edited? The original letter linked the struggles of Blacks with the struggle of transsexuals in a way not reproduced in the letter printed. An article on the nurses strike in Seattle had comments on the nature of

professionalism that were left out of the article because they were "unclear." Have we nothing to say on how professionalism holds us back? Must all our articles profess labor solidarity with no depth or understanding of individual differences. The letter printed on abortion almost eliminated the most important thing we have to say about abortion, which is that we believe that the right to choose not only means the right to abortion and birth control, but the right to have and raise a child. All these articles were praised by the WP staff at the same time as they were cut. When articles are treated in such a manner it is small wonder if fewer articles are being sent in.

Why is it that we are made to feel that we have nothing to say in Workers Power articles? Is our political line so delicate that only experienced comrades in the center can carry it? If so it should be made clear in the response letters we sometimes get that the editing was political and why. When these issues were raised to our National Secretary the response was that articles on women and feminism should be sent to the Women's Commission. This is not acceptable to us. First of all, it doesn't work. We were unable to get an abortion article printed on time, even with the help of the women's commissioner. Second of all, why are women's articles different than articles on our other important work. Must articles on the UPS strike be sent to the national teamster fraction? Articles on Gary Tyler work to the Black caucus? Of course not. The Workers Power staff must receive these articles, indeed solicit them and either print them or help us write better ones.

We do not think that the problem is that the WP staff is overworked, or completely insensitive to women's issues. We do think it's indicative of a general problem in our organization. We cannot relate to most women and the issues that affect them because of our industrial priorities. Our articles on women seem unattached to our "real" work and therefore our "real" priorities. Even when a strong feminist stance is appropriate and possible in our steel work or our UPS coverage we miss the boat. Is it really true that we must ignore the vast majority of working women. We believe that we must not.

STATEMENT FROM THE LEFT FACTION

The Left Faction is against a split. A split perspective was never the goal of the Left Faction. Our goal is to win the organization to our position.

The Left Faction as a political group within the IS is loyal to the organization. The signers of the Left Faction document have demonstrated time and again that they are loyal ISers. Many of the supporters of the Left Faction have been the hardest working members at trying to implement the current perspectives of the IS.

While the Left Faction is hard in its criticism of the rightward drift of the I.S., we in no way are characterizing the organization as right wing, social democratic, Menshevik, counter revolutionary or any of the other slanders being circulated. Nor do we characterize the leadership with any of these formulations.

We are a democratic faction within the I.S., open to all who agree with us or who wish to learn more about our positions. We extended an invitation to the EC to send a representative to our January 2 meeting. The EC representative (Ken B. Chicago) was given ten minutes to speak to the Left Faction meeting.

On the other hand, the EC did not invite the Left Faction to send a representative to its caucus meeting.

We reject the position that the Left Faction and the current leadership cannot co-exist within the IS. Therefore, we call for the democratic carrying out of the political debate in comradely fashion on all sides of the question before us.

We call on all members to reject any formulations for expulsions, harassment or intimidation of Left faction members.

In addition, we call on the EC to reaffirm its loyalty to the IS if the Left Faction wins the majority of the IS.

This motion was adopted unanimously at the January 2 Left Faction meeting, held in Cincinnati, Ohio.

REPLY TO WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND WORKERS' POWER

by Karen Kaye,
member of WP Editorial Board

A document by the Seattle and Portland Women's Caucus charges WP with infrequent women's coverage in the last few months. The document then raises three theories on the reason: that nothing is happening, that no one is writing, or that they are all so badly written they are rejected. The document then refutes these theories and concludes that "we cannot relate to most women and the issues that affect them because of our industrial priorities."

The point about the lack of women's coverage is well taken, and is a concern shared by the WP Editorial Board. However, the Women's Commissioner (BW) was responsible for generating and soliciting women's coverage from around the time of the convention until late December. She requested the assignment the same day that the Editorial Board was going to ask her to assume that responsibility, so it was an arrangement agreeable to all.

This is why, as the Seattle-Portland document points out, the National Secretary advised comrades to send articles on women and feminism to the Women's Commissioner. Also, to answer another point, it is not unusual for the WP staff to have someone in the national IBT fraction read UPS copy, or for the national black organizaer to be asked to read Gary Tyler copy, etc. It is very helpful to have comments and suggestions from the people responsible for the work. Also the leaders of areas of work and fractions work with the WP staff to generate WP articles from those areas of work. So it can be seen that the arrangement for getting women's coverage was not very different, it just wasn't carried out very well.

Nonehteless, there has been some very good women's coverage during this period, including the popular series "What Do You Women Want Anyhow?", women under apartheid, several reviews dealing with women, the abortion issue, Women Against Racism, sexual advances on the job, toilets for women at U.S. Steel, and others.

Now that BW is no longer responsible for women's coverage, the Editorial Board, in consultation with the interim Women's Commission is working out plans for future women's coverage. Immediate plans are for continuing coverage of the issue of maternity benefits, and for a series of articles to run from February to International Women's Day. The series will begin with a piece on the attacks on the gains of women from the Supreme Court's 1973 abortion decision through the recent maternity benefit decision. It will continue with articles on women in the workforce, women and the law, women and bargaining, possibly women and medicine, and women and welfare. We are seeking writers from several branches to contribute to the series. The WP staff, as well as the rest of the organization, is committed to providing ongoing coverage and analysis of women's struggles in WP.

However, at this point it is appropriate to note that the Editorial Board differs somewhat on what is meant by women's coverage. The Seattle-Portland document said, "by articles on women we mean articles on struggles in workplaces employing largely women, articles on the special problems women face in all industries and articles on feminist theory." Women's coverage in WP will tend to emphasize struggles of women in heavy industry, in industries where our members work, although we never have and will not, have a policy of ignoring other women's struggles.

It will also include issues of law and corporate policy that affect women, and educational articles on revolutionary feminism, and the presentation of women as leaders

in the class struggle and the I.S.

This is because we reject the idea that "We cannot relate to most women and the issues that affect them because of our industrial priorities." On the contrary, the fact that women are increasingly employed in major industries and covered by contracts of powerful unions is one of the most major advances for women's struggle for liberation. It places women in positions of class power previously held overwhelmingly by men.

What event raised the issue of how to deal with "last hired and first fired" and caused a debate among working women on superseniority? It was when G.M. laid off almost all the women it had hired, 1973. This issue was of concern to "most women."

Most women were affected when steel began hiring women. It gave them hope of getting a decent-paying job, and provided women with ammunition against the idea "you can't do men's work." Each case like this lays groundwork for struggles around equal work. Similarly MOST WOMEN were affected when AT&T was slapped with an EEOC suit against sexist discrimination. The IBT rank and file struggle brought women from "non-priorities" into activism with the formation of the TDU women's groups.

Women in major industries are in the best position to lead the response to attacks on all women. For instance, in the present attack on maternity benefits, it is women in major unions who can fight for their contractual guarantees while liberals appeal to Congress to pass another law for the Supreme Court to strike down.

The ability of women in "priority" industry to lead defense of other women was also seen when we were involved in CLUW. An example: in 1975, WP covered strikes in Detroit by women workers at a small bindery (Helm, GAIU), Detroit Optometric Center and ~~Metropolitan Hospital~~. All three were over union busting issues, and all three were militant. But these strikers would have been isolated except for support from CLUW, led by UAW women. CLUW brought women experienced in the class struggle and unionism to give real support on the picket lines and in discussion of tactics. The support helped bring the attention of the community to the struggles.

Finally, as to the charges in the three theories concerning WP editing and handling of copy. First, several of the articles mentioned came in unexpectedly. These often get a lot of editing due to space restrictions, especially when they must go in the current issue. The health and safety series came unsolicited and unfortunately was too general to be interesting. Sometimes we do edit what the author intended as "the politics" out of an article. This happens when, in the view of the EB the politics are presented in, yes, an "unclear," or abstract way, and yet the facts of the articles are important and make a political point by themselves, which is often the case.

The article on the Seattle nurses was extremely detailed and long. Directed at the nurses, it was too localized to justify its length. We judged that it would make a good WP article though, if the information in it was directed at a broader audience, to show an example of cutbacks in society against patients and employees.

Generally we only edit letters for length. However, sometimes articles from members are edited for use as articles and then for space or other reasons are used as letters. This is not a good practice and we try to avoid it, and apologize when we misuse it.

STATEMENT FROM THE MAJORITY

The "Left" Faction states it is against a split. Whether this is a stance to their own rank and file and to the rank and file of the I.S., a tactic of entrism, or a commitment to loyal, comradely functioning, will be shown in practice. Whichever, it is good that the minority has backed off from the increasingly hysterical split atmosphere they were creating, so that a political debate which clarifies the issues can be held.

Beginning with their document, statements like "There is no democracy in the I.S." or "The I.S. as it is organized today has no future," left no doubt to the rest of us that the original intention was to force a split.

This was further born out when a minority-appointed spokesperson, travelling at the organization's expense, stated that if the minority lost he would "quit and take as many with him as possible." When asked what their perspective was, other "Left" Faction members would not commit themselves to stay in the I.S. if they lost.

So while we have questions about the "Left" Faction statement, we welcome it. We also welcome the fact that there will be no further slanders of the majority such as calling us "Mensheviks" and right-wing. The "Left" Faction statement implies that this was not done. The truth is that it was, many times. For example, an internal "Left" Faction report on Louisville called the majority "Mensheviks."

The "Left" Factions change in attitude has a basis in reality. They thought that the rank and file of the majority would not stand up for the organization's policies and perspectives. Instead they found a membership prepared to fight down the line in defense of our ideas. During the 'first round' of debate in December at branch meetings across the country, the minority was soundly beaten. Most promising for the organization's future was the widespread participation of the new worker recruits in defending the policies of the I.S.

Second, the minority leadership expected to quickly win a majority to their new perspectives based on a false assessment of where the organization is at. They were stopped, fairly early on. They do not now have sufficient numbers and cadres to survive as a separate organization. Outside the I.S. the minority would crumble.

Third, although many rank and file members of the "Left" Faction signed the document out of political agreement, they had never been through a faction fight and did not understand its dynamics. They had not intended to commit themselves to a group with a split perspective. The rank and file put a great deal of pressure on the "Left" Faction leadership to come out ~~clearly~~ clearly against a split. The majority is glad for the loyalty of the "Left" Faction's ranks.

But we would be performing a disservice to the entire organization if we were to simply accept these new minority claims of loyalty and belief in the fundamentally democratic character of the I.S. The minority's

Statement from the Majority, Page 2

would do better to spend its time explaining what has changed in the organization over the last month in terms of its democratic nature rather than throwing down a series of childish challenges to the majority. No, there will be no policy of expulsion, harassment or intimidation of "Left" Faction members.

But let us be clear, the I.S. cannot survive an indefinite internal debate. The issues will be brought to a conclusion democratically and the organization as a whole will move forward on those policies it chooses. In the meantime the normal functioning of the organization will continue - and the elected leadership bodies must continue to set policy. All members will carry these out. Anything else is a violation of the democratic rights of the majority - both present and future.

We have requested of the E.C. that they call a special convention in February for the purposes of deciding the questions in dispute and moving forward. Until that convention, and after it, the organization must continue to insist on the norms of democratic centralism. The majority is confident that we will win, point by point, and issue by issue, in the pre-convention discussions and at the convention.

We do not believe it will be easy for the minority to carry out the organization's policies while maintaining a hard factional attitude. However, we must insist they carry them out. We urge the "Left" Faction to remember that the commitment made in the statement means a commitment to the I.S. over and above any commitment to an internal grouping. We call on the "Left" Faction rank and file to see to it that your leadership carries that commitment. The principled and constructive carrying out of political assignments will do more to convince the majority of the loyalty of the "Left" Faction than will a thousand statements.

The "Left" Faction change of attitude is a result of the fact that the majority would not stand up for the organization's policies and principles. Instead they would surrender to the "Left" Faction's demands for a "left" faction. The majority is confident that the "Left" Faction will be able to carry out its political assignments in a principled and constructive manner.

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CRITICISM AND SELF-CRITICISM ON WORKERS' POWER

The WP coverage of the Sadlowski campaign in the USW has been criticized by the minority faction for being "uncritical". It has been said that we should criticize Sadlowski because he is "committed to capitalism", or that we should dredge up the Danley Machine strike or that we should place more emphasis on the difference between his position on the No Strike Deal and ours. But regardless of which member of the reaction is making which criticism, they are all sure that the problem is that we need to be more critical.

The T.U.E.L. Model

I have not been very satisfied with the WP coverage that I and others in the fraction have contributed so I tried to find an example of how a revolutionary paper covered an election campaign by a union reformist. When the Trade Union Education League, a coalition of union rank and file organizations built by the Communist Party in the 1920's when the CP was still a revolutionary party, was pointed to in the Gary branch as the orientation to the militant minority desired by the faction, I decided to investigate how the CP newspaper, the Daily Worker, covered John Brophy's campaign for president of the miners' union in 1926.

Brophy and Sadlowski

Brophy's campaign had many parallels to Sadlowski's. Brophy was a District Director of the UMW. He challenged the completely class collaboratorist John L. Lewis machine. He used some radical rhetoric and was associated with the reformist Socialist Party wing of the AFL. One thing that was sharply different about his campaign was that it had the backing of the second biggest bureaucrat in the union, Frank Farrington. Farrington was a vile pro-company big whose machine had a stranglehold on the 80,000 member Illinois district of the UMW, but who also played games with the SP, as a foil against his enemy Lewis.

Uncritical

I found the Daily Worker coverage of Brophy's campaign to be uncritical. Even when Lewis released in the middle of the campaign a contract signed by Farrington secretly agreeing to go to work for Peabody Coal Co. for \$25,000/yr when ever he left the union, the DW made no mention of his connections with Brophy.

But the other difference from our WP coverage that stood out was the sparse coverage of the campaign itself, limited to little more than reprints of Brophy press releases every few weeks. In fact the DW never officially endorsed Brophy, undoubtedly because of the intensive redbaiting that Lewis was famous for.

Politics

This doesn't mean it ignored the miners' union. During the campaign there was coverage on the miners' union every day. These articles were detailed accounts from nearly every coalfield (Hocking Valley, Bellaire, fields in W. Virginia and western PA, a week long series on the UMW in Illinois, etc.) They could be stories on mines where the Union had been lost, and why. Or how many days work miners were getting a month, along with an investigation of what had happened to the coal market in that area. Or how the contract was being decimated by systematic violation. The troubles a miner had trying to feed his family. Or a detailed description of a mine accident.

Read every day, these articles gave a clear picture of the state of the union and the failure of class collaboratorist policies. The coverage proved to a rank and file member that the state of the union, nature of the coal market and policies of the big companies made a national drive to "organize the unorganized" a practical necessity. And that the desperate tactics that competition drove the operators (esp. the independents) to demanded nationalization.

I felt the Daily Worker was actually far more political than WP has been despite having no explicit criticism of Brophy! What radiated through these articles was a rich and detailed knowledge of the miners' union and the coal fields, knowledge which could only be gained thru the years that the UMW had been a priority for the CP. The weakness of our Sadlowski coverage is not some "right wing turn" but our ignorance and inexperience in the steelworkers' union.

Opportunity

The Sadlowski campaign is rich with potential for us to gain political experience (both in the steel fraction and the whole IS) in months that might not come in years of patient work where a union's bureaucracy remained unchallenged. If the steel committee can organize a political life for the fraction around the questions that come up in this campaign, we can begin eradicating a situation where a political line, however correct, substitutes for the ability to demonstrate its truth from peoples' daily experience. Only a politically developed fraction can bring real political coverage to WP. (Of course, the DW coverage also depended on DW reporters who weren't miners themselves, but learned from the revolutionary miners the politics of the union.) But if we get sidetracked into debates about abstract demands for "more criticism", it will be both a tragedy and a farce.

A Note for History

In 1926, when Brophy challenged Lewis, there was no NLRB or Landrum-Griffin election law. Lewis flagrantly stole the election. Brophy announced that he had won, but the Lewis controlled election board ignored him (Farrington had been expelled).

The Communist Party was very active in building the Brophy campaign, as is shown by the fact that after the election they were able to win control of the remaining campaign organization and rebuild it as the Save the Union Committee. (Save the Union was the title of Brophy's main campaign brochure.) But the defeat of the Brophy campaign proved a death blow to the rank and file movement in the UMW. Brophy was expelled on the charge that the Save the Union Committee was "dual unionist" (this charge was being made against all the TUEL formations around this time). The committee collapsed and the CP soon gave up its work inside the UMW to build its own independent formation. Brophy was appointed by Lewis several years later to be executive director of the CIO, but Lewis never faced another opponent in his 40 year dictatorship over the UMW.

Joe F.
Gary

&Mike S.

The idea behind this short paper is a sort of fishing expedition to get other comrades to participate in a discussion of developing the use of WP. How to make the paper play the role we have cut out for it, to help organize our work and our friends.

This paper is based on two main ideas 1) that the use of WP is closely connected with two other main problems facing the organization, re-politicisation and the training of cadre, and 2) The simple proposition that when you participate in something you then have a stake in making it work.

We often sell the paper but seldom use it, because it's easier to sell the paper than it is to use it. Many of us have had the experience of selling a paper to a co-worker, pointing out an article and coming back later to discuss it. Usually the conversation runs something like this: (ISer) "What did you think of the article?" (co-worker) "Ya. that was pretty hip." (awkward pause) (ISer) "What did you think of the other articles?" (co-worker) "Ya, this paper tells/like it is." (conversation begins to peter out) it

The obvious problem with this approach is that it is a very superficial use of the paper. It doesn't leave any lasting results.

Our two comrades at the Harvester plant have used this approach extensively. At high points we were able to sell as many as 80 copies of a single issue. But, when the lay-offs came and the workers were dispersed in all directions, the superficial character of our high sales and large "paper routes" was revealed. We are now lucky to sell 5-to 10 papers apiece.

We had not gotten very close to our goal. We hadn't developed our routes into a network of politically minded people interested in the paper and discussing its contents. Namely, we hadn't accomplished the first step in making the paper our "best organizer".

Why was this so? The answer is in three parts 1) beefing up the wp staff to make the paper more professional 2) a solid plan for circulation and 3) developing the use of the paper. The first two points have been discussed in other documents and will not be gone into here. The third point has been alluded to in several documents, but not much in the way of content has been given to it. The rest of this paper will attempt to do that.

We start by going back to the statement at the beginning: "when you participate in something you then have a stake in making it work. This statement applies equally to our members and to our friends (periphery). It also applies equally to industrial members as well as non-industrialized.

We have to create a situation among our members where many, not few, participate in the paper. Namely, write or help write for it. There is nothing quite like having to write to make you think through the various things required to have a political discussion of wp's content. You have to decide who your audience is. How best to get your points over to that audience, and how to organize your points so they will be interesting.

Once you've done this you are far better equipped to use the ~~paper~~ paper with a particular audience. You've invested some time and energy and are therefore far more inclined to try until you get political discussion that goes deeper than the "Ya, that was hip" response.

In addition to preparing yourself to use the paper, you have also taken a big step in the direction of two other very important problems facing the IS, repoliticising the IS and the training of cadre.

You've had to think through the political content of your article and thereby raised your political level as well as having learned something about writing (a big ingredient in cadre development).

To get a lot of participation in writing for WP will require more than requests to do so, it will require a campaign. Our watch-word should be Every Member a Writer! An atmosphere must be created that makes people take WP as seriously as they take going to work. You might miss once in a while but mainly you go.

The contents of WP should be made a standing topic of branch and committee meetings. The desired goal of such a campaign would be to create the feeling that to be a member of a branch or committee means to be prepared to write or help write for WP.

As we said, participation is also the key for our periphery. The level of participation won't be as high but the important thing is participation at any level.

Many of our comrades in industry enjoy a certain "fame" as being people who know a lot. This usually means they are in a position where other workers come to them with their problems, thoughts or whatever. When this situation occurs it is usually fairly easy to turn the interchange into an article, or at least a comment. This is extremely important for other workers who look at our paper because they see themselves in it. It gives the worker responsible for the article as well as other workers who can identify with it, a stake in the paper. But, interchanges of this kind will not be turned into articles unless there is an atmosphere compelling the industrial comrades to make it happen.

This process can help create the formation of a network of people who have invested more than 15¢ in the paper and therefore have a higher stake in it. To further this process we should begin to take collections for WP beyond the price of it. This is an excellent way of putting the paper to work as an organizer. We know this is possible because we have tried it. Again, at the Harvester plant we made a one shot effort at collecting donations, the result was \$15-20 in cash, 3-4 brief articles and a greatly improved situation for discussing the contents of WP. The people with whom this effort was made were later laid off. We lost touch and the opening dried up, but, a beginning was made!

We should begin a new feature in WP, in addition to the letters section, we should open a contributions section showing the plants collected at, the workers job and name if they desire. (or picture). We can't underestimate the impact this will have on workers who read our paper.

Collections for WP is not the highest level of political activity, but the point is that participation at any level creates a deeper commitment to the paper than simply buying it ever will.

Developing the use of WP Harry P. - Mike S. Chicago 3

A further note regarding non-industrialized members: The campaign to increase the participation of our worker members and contacts in writing for WP would also be a way of integrating our non-industrialized members more fully into our priority work. This might occur in several different ways: 1) Our non-industrialized members could be involved in helping our worker members and contacts to write the articles. This would allow these members to meet our worker contacts and relate to them in a more systematic way. 2) Through the process of discussing the political content of the articles, these members would develop a more concrete understanding of the union and industry. They would not be merely passive commentators nor would they be relegated to doing the "shit-work" for the fraction. Instead they would develop more politically meaningful roles in the fraction. 3) The WP sales of these members should be connected to the ongoing work of the fraction. To the extent that they are involved in writing WP articles with our worker members and contacts, they will not only be better sellers, but also be better able to make contacts for the IS.

It goes without saying that this campaign can only be one aspect of the attempt to bring our non-industrialized members into the heart of our work, but, it does constitute one important way of dealing with the problem of "second class citizenship" in the IS.

The IS has a long history of... (The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible due to the quality of the scan. It appears to be a continuation of the document's content, possibly discussing the IS's approach to non-industrialized members and the role of WP.)

THE LEFT FACTION STRATEGY? - A RANK AND FILE POINT OF VIEW

Dwight - Atlanta

In its document, "A New Course for the IS," the left faction takes it upon itself to attempt to discredit "industrialization" and "Mass Work." In some instances they have correctly pointed out that there have been some problems and that demoralization has had its halting grip tightly around the advancement of the struggle. However, they incorrectly juxtapose the EC's perspective of the last three years and the results of our activities over the last three years and claim that the "Grand Schemes" were all wrong. They further claim that we must now realize what we are and regress five years to a Propaganda group. The incorrectness of their analysis is a direct result of their careful neglect of the objective conditions that surround the course that we have followed from perspective to result. It is important to realize that because the left faction realizes that the foundation of their argument is extremely weak they paint for us a most dismal disfigurement of the present status of the IS to gain sympathy for their faction. Comrades, do not be fooled. This faction not only longs for the past when the organization had ideas, a paper, and no strategy. And whether they realize it or not are intent on destroying everything that we have worked so hard to build.

Without a doubt the left faction's position has been discussed and debated throughout every branch in the IS. Because of this it will not be necessary for this document to be a showcase of arguments for priorities, industrialization and mass work. Instead it will center around my experiences within the working class and how they have brought me to full support of our present line.

Nine months ago I was practically non-political. Like many people my age I was going to school and working. College education was proving itself not to be the easy road to success. And working, well, I worked for UPS. The rosy picture that had been painted for me by parents and teachers was turning out not to be accurate.

I attended Wayne State University which is known to have many "Liberal Professors." Many left groups flourish on the campus. Every day one group or another would be selling their paper. I evaded these people like the plague. In my history classes I was taught about the "Cold War" and the "Red Scare" and wanted nothing to do with "commies." In my three and one half years of university education I never once had a political discussion or bought a paper or even went to a rally movie or the like. I simply wanted no part of it.

UPS was my first industrial job and even though the facility that I worked at was small the bosses were still teaching we many lessons. The first lesson I learned was the result of working for five months to get seniority that should have taken only six weeks. In addition to this I was the only surviving member of an initial hiring of 12 people. From this I learned of employer exploitation and manipulation of the workers.

The second lesson I learned was a result of my own naivete. In truth I was a ratebuster. I also did excellent work. From this activity I hoped that the supervisors would be kind enough to give me full time work. Not only did I not get a full time job, but I also was continually harrassed for very petty minor things. All of this infuriated me. After 16 months of suffering with UPS I was introduced to UPSurge.

Stephanie's firing was the actual catalyst of my involvement. I had had some inkling that UPSurge was something that neither the Teamsters nor UPS was very pleased with. The fact that she was fired would have been cause for general concern as all firings at a small center are. But this plus a demonstration at the front gate got everyone thinking. Having just one industrialized member of the IS in Detroit UPSurge made all the difference. In fact, a short

A RANK AND FILE POINT OF VIEW (cont.)

while ago when the power went out at the Livonia hub and offices, Bill Fraser the district manager (big cheese in Detroit) was heard to remark, "Stephanie must be back."

I immediately found UPSurge something that I could identify with. I found that I was not alone in my hatred of UPS. I also found that I was not the only person dismayed with the teamster union. I think it appropriate to point out here that even though I was angry I would probably never have started an UPSurge. All IS comrades should be proud of our role in this, though it should be remembered that it would not have been possible without industrialization and a strategy for mass work. Another item of note is that I was not considered part of the "militant minority," as I was not leading nor had I even been part of the struggle. In short, my consciousness was very low at the time I met UPSurge, but I was ready to move because UPSurge had attracted me and was attracting many others. Little did I know that this was mass work. But I was aware that it seemed to be effective.

In Detroit UPSurge was orienting to the masses while the IS was orienting to a militant minority of package car and feeder drivers at the main hub. This strategy was obviously a workable one because this minority gave UPSurge credibility at union meetings and with the rest of the workers. Unfortunately when the real struggle came in the form of a one day wildcat in 8 cities, the minority would not support the people that it had been leading. Through the concept of mass work the consciousness of the rank and file had been raised to the point that these leaders were no longer necessary to the continuation of the struggle.

The IS created UPSurge by understanding mass work. And UPSurge called the wildcat. The left faction is critical of creating struggle even though they also point out that the class struggle is moving very slowly. Without that struggle I would probably not have joined the IS. I definitely would not as a WP buyer if the IS had been selling from the outside, because I wouldn't have bought the paper. My consciousness of politics was raised more that day than through the few discussions that I had had with my contacts from the IS, BW and CW, who were supposedly struggling with me over ideas even though they never raised politics with me.

The one day wildcat was my final lesson from UPS. The bosses were out in full force along with their own security. Also, to my initial surprise, five patrol cars were present. It did not take long for me to decide whose interests they were protecting.

Even though our picket line lacked massive support we were militant. We stopped some customers from entering, held package cars up going out and one semi going in. When Jenny V. was arrested we tightened up and our struggle took on a more serious tone. The turning point for me that day was when we had stopped the exit of a convoy of package cars. Management sent out its security guards to rough us up a bit and get us to disperse. Two people in the line ahead of me had been pushed and when the same happened to me I retaliated by busting the guard's jaw, 13 stitches worth. Of course I was arrested immediately, though the guards were not. It could not have been made any clearer to me.

I joined the IS shortly after this. The most important reason was that I saw the industrial work that the IS is involved in as key to bringing about change and recruiting more workers. It seemed to me that the most effective way to recruit workers is to begin convincing them on the level that most directly affects them. That is, as workers using workers issues.

The left faction takes issue with our involvement in the working class by pointing out the tendency of some of our comrades to be conservatized. They also claim that the 'struggle over ideas' is the dynamic that will change the consciousness of the conservative workers. It seems that for the sake of their argument the left faction has divorced the 'struggle over ideas' with the workers struggle.

A RANK AND FILE POWER ON WEEK 2 (cont.)

This makes their position seem purely political rather than tainted by the conservatism they claim is pushing the IS to the right. In my view, two of the most conservative people are BW and CW who did not even raise politics with close contacts. During the UPSurge campaign they had many dinners at their house for contacts. I attended two of those, and at neither were politics raised. The talk centered around the UPSurge work. Politics, which would have given us a bigger picture of what the struggle is about, were not raised. It is unfortunate that this problem exists especially when it involves national leaders. The necessity of being able and confident to discuss politics with contacts is made clear when the number of recruits is noted. This is the major cause of demoralization, not "the course." The fact is that after the major campaigns were over the IS correctly decided on a WP push, and a periphery campaign. Both of which have brought some results. Everybody knows that while the industrial work was going on, politics were neglected in varying degrees as was the selling of WP. The IS has put out documents to attempt to rectify our past mistakes. But what about future campaigns. Will we then be able to openly discuss politics with contacts or will we again be closed mouthed and hiding our politics in the closet. It is here that we need direction and leadership not internal conflict in the form of this faction fight.

OUTSIDE ORGANIZING - IS IT A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE?

One of the most successful instances of outside organizing that the IS has participated in was in the car haulers. Because of the work that we did both as the IS and through TDU there is now a TDU branch in Flint and the TDU work in Detroit is on the move with one of the militant car hauler leaders now in the IS.

This case of outside organizing began with my attending a Local 299 meeting for the car hauler shift. I attended the meeting because Pete had informed me that a wildcat was brewing. At that meeting militants from one barn with the support of all those present took over with the intention of calling a city-wide wildcat. One of the main speakers calling for the wildcat was Al. The wildcat began shortly after the meeting ended but at only one barn.

The next day I went down to the picket line as a WP reporter. I immediately started discussions with Al about TDU and brought in the fact that I was a Teamster, was part of TDU and had just been through a struggle with UPS and the Teamsters. What gave me credibility with Al was all of those factors and without them our contact probably would have ceased after the first discussion. The fact that TDU existed and that I was part of it meant that I had something to offer.

Throughout the next few weeks, which culminated in another wildcat, we developed a working relationship. I helped with the writing, publishing and distribution of leaflets. I told Al what strategy I could convince Al and the militants from the other barns to accept. I learned the strike headquarters phone and picked up the leaders to support and publicize TDU which they did. I also told Al about the IS and talked politics to him, and sold WP at both picket lines during the two week wildcat.

All of these things were feasible to do made it seem like this is an argument for the IS faction. This was an extraordinary case because of all the terrible things that occurred of it. On the other hand TDU people were fired as a result of the two week wildcat. The drawback of working from the outside was that I was not in a credible enough position to stop the disaster that I now was coming.

There was a lot of work done with other people and contacts during the wildcat. I was able to get a lot of people to join TDU and to sell a lot of WP. I was able to get a lot of people to join the IS and to sell a lot of WP. I was able to get a lot of people to join the IS and to sell a lot of WP. I was able to get a lot of people to join the IS and to sell a lot of WP.

OUTSIDE ORGANIZING (cont.)

Since I was not a carhauler it was difficult for me to attend their union meetings. Pete was recently thrown out of one, and he is in the same local. I was also excluded from the strategy meetings of the militants from various barns. I also did not have the credibility to influence the strategy of the wildcat very significantly. I saw the weaknesses of the wildcat and began lobbying for it to cease even though the courts had not handed down an injunction. I also knew that a strategy of refusing to allow the union to bargain for jobs, even when it was clear that the wildcat was doomed, was a lunacy that made certain that jobs would be lost.

Needless to say one industrialized member of the IS could have made all the difference and there is a good chance that the ten or so fired carhaulers would still have the jobs with which to fight another day. As it is now, ten of the best militants are no longer even in the industry.

Understanding the importance of TDU in this campaign will give those who have doubts about industrialization and mass work a much clearer picture. The carhaulers had no real network when they launched into the strike. Contact was made by phone to other cities, but it is next to impossible to convince people that have never met you that such a strike was possible. A network such as TDU is the answer to this need. Since the strike many carhaulers have joined TDU because they see the necessity for such an organization. A good sized contingent of carhaulers attended the TDU convention, and are now keeping Detroit TDU in forward motion. With out the presence of TDU, after the strike was over our contact with these carhaulers would have ended. Instead it is just beginning and the membership in TDU is larger because of it. Since recruiting and building the IS is our Major goal, having a growing TDU greatly advances this aim.