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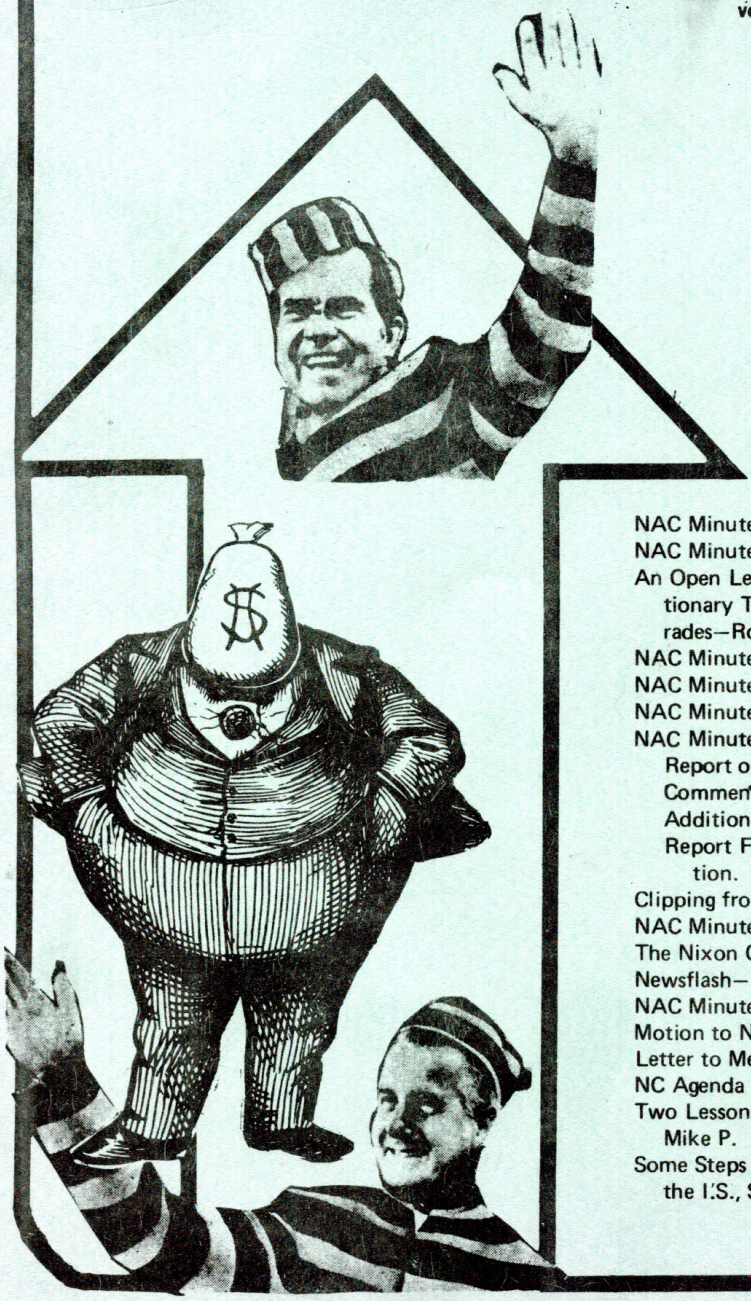

TABLE OF CONTENTS

for members only

NAC MINUTES 7/11/73 Present: All

1. NC EVALUATION. Presentation by JG and discussion on progress made by the NC and possibilities for improving the discussions at future NC meetings.

2. WORKERS POWER. Interim report by DF. Discussions of Phase 4 and auto to be held next week to shape articles for WP #80.

3. AUTO CAMPAIGHN. MOTION: JT to be co-ordinator for auto campaign steering committee. PASSED 6-0.
MOTION: Committee to discuss possible publication of contract bulletin and WP supplement. PASSED 6-0.
Further discussion of strategy and program for campaign.
MOTION (DF): To replace 12-point "minimal program" in JW auto campaign motion with an actual minimal program meeting the immediate pressing needs of the auto workers, along the following lines:
a) FULL COST OF LIVING PROTECTION FOR ALL AUTO WORKERS
b) LAYOFF PROTECTION FOR ALL AUTO WORKERS, WITH EXTENDED SUB AND PERMANENT RECALL RIGHTS -- SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR WOMEN AND OPPRESSED MINORITIES AGAINST LAYOFFS
c) NO COMPROMISE ON FORCED OVERTIME, NO PROHIBITIONS AGAINST "CONCERTED ACTION"
d) FULL RIGHT TO STRIKE OVER SAFETY, SPEEDUP, DISCIPLINE AND WORKING CONDITIONS
e) AN IMMEDIATE 10% WAGE INCREASE WITH A 25% INCREASE OVER THREE-YEAR CONTRACT TABLED FOR ONE WEEK.

4. THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS. The NAC will be holding discussions on a series of major topics, with the aim of mandating similar discussions in the branches. There will be a reporter for each theoretical discussion to make a presentation to the NAC. If the NAC proposes the discussion to be continued in the branches, the reporter will prepare a critique of the piece. First topics for discussion will be:
Mike Parker document "Revolutionary Method: Program and Leadership" (JT--reporter)
Hallas article on reformist demands (BH--reporter)
Imperialism, Highest Stage, But One (MS--reporter)

5. INDUSTRIAL REPORT. Report by BH on industrial department. BH to make further reports on issues raised by NC document. MS to report to NAC on inflation campaign proposal.

6. STAFF. Preliminary discussion. At this time we do not have comrades available to fill the positions of black/brown coordinator and midwest travelling organizer.

7. MEMBERSHIP RE-REGISTRATION. MOTION: 1) All branches are requested to send in up-to-date list of members by July 15, if possible.
2) Branches and O.C.'s are requested to submit perspectives and budgets in the context of the interim perspective document passed by NC. ALL FOR.

8. ISGB. MOTION (JG): 1) NAC thanks the British I.S. comrades for their support during the faction fight. The National Secretaries are instructed to write to ISGB.
2) To pursue this collaboration further the NAC will discuss the possibility of broader distribution of the I.S. Journal in this country, request a small bundle of ISGB internal bulletins, and consider sending comrades to Britain for brief periods to work on SOCIALIST WORKER.
MOTION ON ISGB PASSED, ALL FOR.

9. TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES. A subcommittee of DF, BH, JG, JT was established to discuss the T & P drafts (TC AND LAT) for the purpose of exploring the possibility of producing a joint convention document, with major amendments representing the viewpoint of the tendencies.

NAC MINUTES 7/17/73

1. NATSEC REPORT. (To be written up by JG).

MOTION: (JG) Speakers to be sent to Champaign and Austin-SA to discuss the split and to determine the relationship of these branches to the organization. PASSED
MOTION: (JT) TASKS AND Perspectives subcommittee (assigned to discuss T & P drafts is also mandated to discuss Third Camp document. FAILED.
NATSEC report ACCEPTED 4-0-2 (JT,JW).

2. REVOLUTIONARY METHOD: PROGRAM AND LEADERSHIP. Discussion of Mike P. document. Presentation by Jack T. (to be summarized and sent to branches for discussion; other comrades on NAC will also write up critical comments.
MOTION (MS): The NAC intends to arrange that this document be revised for external use (as article or pamphlet of some kind.) ALL FOR
MOTION (MS): The NAC mandates all branches to discuss the Mike P. document: NAC members are to write up their own amendments to the document. TABLED.

3. AUTO CAMPAIGN. A committee (enlarged auto fraction steering commitee) has been established in Detrot and is working out plans for auto contract campaign. Comrades from this committee have been assigned specific responsibilities for maintaining communication with various areas, plants, etc. Report by Bill H. ACCEPTED ALL FOR.

4. SPLIT STATEMENT. Presentation by MS of draft statement to contacts on the split in the I.S. Discussion of necessary revisions. JG and Kit L. were assigned to revise the statement.
MOTION (JT): Revised statement should include description of RT as a petty-bourgeois tendency whose politics are a theoretical cover for a retreat from industrialization. FAILED 2-4 (JW,JT for)

5. INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT. Summary of lengthy report by BH: Discussions have been initiated with some of the branches on perspectives for industrialization. Communication with all branches will continue in the next month. We hope to have perspectives developed before the coming Convention (assuming agreement on industrial trialization priorities in T & P documents) NAC will have discussion in near future on direction of industrialization. We would also like to take up problems encountered in industrialization. Industrial Secretary will solicit documents from several comrades on this. We are still looking into a mean of distribution of information from the bourgeois press, trade journals, govt figures, etc. REPORT ACCEPTED, ALL FOR.

6. REPORT ON WORKERS POWER. Report on thrust of coming issue (#80) by DF. Issues to be stressed include the crisis of inflation (Phase 4, price increases) and the character of bourgeois politics (Watergate) Major union coverage includes auto, farmworkers, teamsters.
MOTION (JT): To inititate discussion on conception of WP next week. FAILED.
MOTION (JG): To discuss in depth several issues of SW to see what can be learned from it. PASSED 3-1-1 (JT against, BH abstain; JW absent.)

The following statement was submitted by two comrades in Australia:

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE IS AND THE REVOLUTIONARY TENDENCY

A split in the IS appears inevitable.

Despite our distance from the debate, we feel no hesitation in supporting the I.S. majority in the present dispute. We can do so because the bankruptcy of the Landy position is evident from his document, the "National Report" as distributed by the majority.

It is a hysterical hodge-podge of insults and digressions, which however, fail to hide the absence of any real theoretical position.

Landy suddenly turns and labels as rotten-to-the-core an organization which he not only helped to build, but which accepted him as its National Secretary not long ago. He says the differences will never be reconcilible! That Landy lived together with such rotten opportunists for so long without criticizing (not recognizing?) their opportunism is surely a remarkable comment on Landy!

The politics of the Landy tendency are no politics at all. They are an irrational response to the difficult period through which the American Left is passing. It is a period which calls for calm, careful base-building work so that the inevitable upsurge within the working class will not pass us by when it comes. Because many cannot stand the strain, there is a tendency for sectarian groupings and sectarian politics to proliferate. Sectarianism is a retreat from the difficult reality of the class struggle as it is carried out by real workers in real situations. Landy is beating a frantic retreat, which is why the "politics" of the RT have developed so quickly.

As a start to building a sectarian wall between himself and the real class struggle, Landy is frantically drawing the "class line" between himself and the I.S.

We believe there is a good chance of creating a revolutionary third camp tendency in Australia, if the American split does not do us too much harm. If we are successful, we will create a movement which is based, as is the Socialist Workers' Action group now, in the real flesh-and-blood struggles of workers and the oppressed

The development of vanguard organizations is inseparable from the development of the class struggle. Real program and theory can only be developed out of genuine intervention into this struggle, putting flesh-and-blood on the skeletal heritage of the Trotskyist movement. Only the I.S., at this time, is willing or able to begin this work and for this reason we will fight those who wish to destroy it.

cont'd

There must be many serious revolutionaries in the RT. We say: if you go with Landy you head for oblivion; if you stay with the IS., you can rebuild something that was becoming, and will again become, meaningful in the workers' movement. Consider carefully what you do.

We are sticking with the revolutionary third camp, sticking with the organization which is serious about the class struggle, with confidence in its future.

Ron Flaherty
Shayna Birstein

NAC MINUTES 7/30/73 PRESENT: ALL

1. IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST STAGE BUT ONE. The bulk of this meeting was devoted to a presentation by MS and discussion on the theory of imperialism and the permanent arms economy put forward in Mike Kidron's article "Imperialism, the Highest Stage But One" and related pieces. This was part of the series of discussions which the NAC is holding on theoretical questions which should be part of the general theoretical equipment of the I.S.

MOTION (JW): (i) MS is instructed to write up the substance of his presentation as a critique of the Kidron article. PASSED 6-0. (ii) A response to this critique will be requested from Kidron and the ISGB. PASSED 5-1 (MS). (iii) A special issue of the I.S. theoretical journal next year should be devoted to a symposium on the post-war boom and its demise. FAILED 2-3-1. (JT, JW for; BH abstain).

2. PROGRAM DISCUSSION FOR CONVENTION. Re-consideration of previous decision to hold discussion on the question of transitional program and demands at the Convention.

MOTION(JW): We attempt to organize discussion at the Convention only on questions which have actionable consequences.

MOTION(DF): Program and related sections of the Tasks and Perspectives documents will be discussed at the Convention, as counterposed amendments to the joint document, with a definite time limit (e.g. 1 hr.) assigned to this debate. (The basis for amendment in this discussion from the LAT document is section V-A, "Program in the Current Period").

MOTION(MS): New amendments to the T and P document will be written, putting forward the views of the tendencies on transitional program to be debated at the Convention to establish a point of view for the I.S. on this question.

JW motion PASSED 3-2-1 (MS, BH against; DF abstain).

NOTE by DF: The intent of Jack's motion, and the effect of its passing, is that the NAC is opposed to discussion on transitional program at this convention. That is, the I.S. will not have a position on this question. Unlike Jack, I believe that positions on transitional program do have "actionable consequences" for the work of the I.S.; but it should be understood in any case that the motion means deleting all discussion relating to the general issue of transitional program (from either the TC or LAT standpoint) from the joint document, and that we urge the tendencies not to submit amendments to the joint discussion document on this question.

NAC MINUTES 8/2/73

1. Pamphlets. Leinenweber pamphlet proposals.
   a) Pension pamphlet accepted ALL FOR
   b) PAE pamphlet accepted ALL FOR

2. Antiwar invitation.
MOTION: Send telegram of greetings to 11th International Anti-war rally in Tokyo organized by the Revolutionary Communist League. ALL FOR.

3. Tasks and Perspectives.
MOTION (JT):Accept TC section on Crisis in I.S. as basis for amendment, plus LAT section on discipline. ALL FOR
MOTION (DF): LAT section on Tasks of the I.S. in U.S. Politics to be submitted as amendment. ALL FOR.

4. Third Camp Document.
Report on preparation and brief discussion.

5. Equipment.
MOTION (BH): I. The Detroit branch has offered the NO to split the cost of purchasing an offset press and related equipment. The NAC accepts this offer conditional on the following:

A. The Detroit branch commits itself to providing the necessary personnel for those times when the press will be used for major projects (such as pamplets)

B. The Detroit branch agrees to supplement the NO staff for the regular care of the equipment with some comrades to be designated by the exec or organizer.

C. The press is to be run only by those individuals properly and fully trained and is under no circumstances to be run by individuals not designated to do so.

D. If the above are agreed to, the NAC authorizes the purchase of the press and related equipment offered to us. We request of Doug in the absence of BH that he make the final decision on the press.

II. No new purchase of further typesetting equipment is to be made prior to BH's return from NY towards the end of the month.

III. The NAC is committed to the aquiring of a headliner. BH is instructed to look into the one we currently have to see about its fixability, usefulness, expense, etc. PASSES 3-1 (JG)
MOTION (DF): That point 1 of BH motion be submitted to Detroit exec for discussion. Prior to making final decision, NAC requests written report from exec on (1) branch commitment to furnish needed labor on volunteer basis, and (2) how this is to be accomplished. Final decision to be made when report is submitted. PASSES 3-0-1 (JT)
MOTION (JG): Prior to purchasing a press, a plan should be presented on purchasing and financing the related machinery. FAILS 2-2 (JG,DF)--(BH,JT)

6. Detroit Organizer. Discussion to be continued.

7. Chidcare.
MOTION (SG,DL,RG-Chicago): Childcare during IS meetings and functions is a serious problem for both parent comrades and childless comrades and will become more pressing as we recruit workers with familites. More immediately, something must be done before the Convention to which several members will come with their children. As a parent and comrade, I will point out some of the past difficulties and pose some possible solutions.

There have been two methods of childcare so far tried. One is to allot money for paying a sitter, but no one to make arrangements, leaving the parent, who does

not know the city, to find a sitter, This generally fails and necessitates the second method which is a rotation of members watching the kids. Although all the parents certainly do appreciate our comrades donations of services, this way of handling the situation is unsatisfactory from every point of view. First, no comrades should have to miss meetings or portions of meetings. Secondly, effective childcare is still not provided. Sometimes there have been gaps in scheduling or in people getting to the kids so that very young children have been left entirely unattended. The people who watch them do so for such short periods that there is constant discontinuity and disruption for the kids who are already upset being in a strange place, with strange people and separated from their parents for long periods. These people generally are not accustomed to caring for children and allow them to do dangerous things, do not feed them, do not give them naps, and do not read or play with them. Also there is seldom a place for childcare, with sufficient play area and nap space or with toilet, cooking, refridgeration, or with water facilities, or heat or air conditioning.

We would suggest that the NO set money aside for paying a professional babysitter or for renting day care facilities and hiring personel for all national I.S. functions. Someone must take responsibility for making arrangements well ahead of time and have an alternative if the first plan falls through. The babysitter or babysitters should sit at his or her own home if possible (or at rented facility) or agree to sit at a comrades's house who has adequate facilities. Adequate facilities means heater or air conditionar, phone, TV, toys, enough shpace. There must be enough sitters (say 1 for 5 kids) and enough space (5 kids could be watched in a large, two bedroom apartment). IS should provide healthy food for the day, such as fruit, yogurt, sandwhich made with whole wheat bread, milk, juice, crackers. There should be a telephone at both meeting place and childcare place for communication between parent and sitter. All parents should sign emergency medical releases in case a child needs to be taken to a doctor or hospital. The sitter should understand that he/she is not to take children swimming or in a car, etc. without the parents permission. The NO should consider contacting a licensed day care center to see about lists of sitter or possible use of DCC facilities and to ask for a set of their rules or guides for watching children.

Another associated problem has to do with housing. Mary Ann was considerate last NC in housing all parents and kids together at a place close to the meeting. Often we have been assigned houses far from meeting places with no transportation, with inadequate sleeping room for children and no where to feed them.

When making childcare and housing arrangements the comrades in charge must consider all children not only as people (not extra luggage of the parents, but as people who have extrat needs and aren't able to care for themselves or "rough it". And their parents need to be able to participate fully in I.S. functions without having to chase kids around or to worry that they aren't being cared for. Childcare should also be planned for caucus meeting time and for the social events since much of the political discussion and decision making actually takes place there. PASSED--ALL FOR

3. <u>Program.</u> MOTION: To send Jack B. statement out with NAC minutes. ALL FOR.

9. Candidacy.
Preliminary discussion of NY documents and general conception of candidacy. Discussion to be continued.

The NAC mandates discussion in the branches of the Mike Pl. document:"Revolutionary Method: Program and Leadership". The following was a motion passed by the NAC: The NAC intends to arrange that this document be revised for external use.

The following are some of the important points concerning the document which were raised during the Nac discussion by Jack Trautman:

1) The section on Program (pp. 2-4) while generally quite good leaves out that a program is or attempts to be systematic -- to have a clear conception of how to go from one place to another. While a part of this idea is implied in the statement (p.3) that our program includes "how and in what situations or periods we raise these demands" that is not sufficient. This failing leads to important confusions later, as I will show. (See point 5).

2. In the section on the Transitional Program (pp.4-7) Mike correctly emphasizes that the draft transitional program was written for a pre-revolutionary period and that "the transitional demands were insolubly linked to the task of winning of the mass struggles to revolutionary leadership". Also, that what made the program "transitional," rather than utopian, maximalist or irrelevant was that it was adressed to moving workers who were involved in mass struggles over reformist demands to the consciousness of revolutionary struggle; this was done by raising demands which if fought for would direct the struggle against capitalism. What must be emphasized is that it was possible to raise those demands in more than a propagandistic way: they could be raised and fought for. The program, that is, did stem from "today's conditions and today's consciousness" (which are, of oourse, related).

3) On p. 6 Mike argues that it is the lack of mass working class struggle that leads our program to concentrate heavily on the specially oppressed. That is a mistake. The relative lack of working class struggle creates special problems for us in relation to the oppressed, but our basic program regarding the oppressed remains the same.

4) Similarly, Mike maintains that the relative lack of working class struggle leads us to take an attitude toward non-working class "issue-oriented movements". This, too, is a mistake. We have an attitude towards them always -- not because of the lack of movement on the part of the working class. If Mike is implying that we should place special emphasis on these arenas today I believe he is mistaken. Today, our emphasis should be on the working class, conceivably even to the exclusion of other activities because of our lack of resources. At any rate, other activities should be justified to make sure they do not conflict with our all important task: building a base in the working class.

5) Toward the end of this section Mike makes some confusing and contradictory statements which illustrate the problem alluded to in point(1): He states the TP is still relevant in three respects:

A) It fills in part of our perspective (how we go from here to there.)

B) Individual transitional demands from the TP can be raised.
C) In mass struggles transitional demands are major tools for raising consciousness.

He then cautions us: "But it must be made clear: a program of transitional demands is a program of fighting demands 'for the revolutionary action of millions' in a pre-revolutionary period."

In the meantime, he goes on, "our lack of involvement in mass struggles means that our transitional program can only exist now in broad outline"....Trotsky's draft will do to begin with.

All of this is quite confused. What is a transitional program? It is either what MIke speaks of in his caution: a (systematic) program of fighting demands designed to mobilize the masses; or it is what he speaks of when discussing the "relevance" of the transitional program: something we keep in mind that we will be using some day, something from which we choose individual transtional demands educationally.

If it is the former, then it is a system designed to win workers who are involved in mass struggles away from reformist leadership to revolutionary leadership, from reformist consciousness to revolutionary consciousness. But then it is designed for a certain period, a pre-revolutionary period -- it is not just a grab-bag of transitonal demands that can be used to raise consciousness. Trotsky's was a system of demnds designed to accomplish the former task.

It is important to raise transtional demands, to use the method of the transitional program -- fighting for the workers' needs, not what capitalism can grant, framing demands in such a way as to be able to mobilize the workers in struggle and thus to raise their consciousness (because as Mike points out, it is not the demands or the propaganda per se which tend to raise consciousness, but only as the ideas get tested out in struggle) but that is not the same as a program designed to mobilize the masses in revolutionary struggle.

Especially given the confusion regarding the TP current today in the left it is important not to give way to any of its illusions. Use of transitional demands designed to raise consciousness and to sharpen the struggle and of a system of transitional demands designed to lead to the revolution are two different phenomena for different periods. Not to understand that is to lead to confusion. That is why Mike's formulation (point 2) that the "transitional demands were insolubly linked to the task of winning of the mass struggles to revolutionary leadership" is itself incorrect. It is not the demands themselves but the system of demands, i.e., the TP to which the task of winning the workers to revolutionary leadership is ascribed.

Therefore it is wrong to say that it is our lack of involvement that makes a TP impossible, so Trotsky's will do as a start. Trotsky's TP is a good place to start for using transitional demands, but not for a TP because no TP is possible given today's conditions and today's level of consciousness. What is required is

not simple involvement, but a certain level of struggle and consciousness on the part of the working class (if not pre-revolutionary, the period of the formation of the CIO is in no way comparable to this one, and that is not to mention the different international context), or at least the indication that the objective conditions are such that such a level of consciousness and organization was inevitably being forced upon the working class imminently.

6) Mike argues (p.10) that Lenin's answer to economism was " to involve the working class in general democratic and social struggles which by their nature were directed against the state." There is not the time here to enter into an extended discussion of economism here, but Mike's is not an adequate statement. Stated as it is it implies that the way to raise political consciousness is to involve the workers in something other than the class struggle. Lenin was in favor of that: it is necessary got the working class to take up the banner of the struggle against all oppression. But simply focusing on the need to involve the working class in general democratic and social struggles is too facile an answer.

Ususally people tend to focus on "economism" as being limiting the workers to economic struggles -- Lenin's phrase was "The economic struggle for the workers, the political struggle for the liberals". But economism meant more than that as Lenin himself made clear in an article in 1916 entitled "The Nascent Trend of Imerialist Economism":

"The old Economism of 1894-1902 reasoned thus: the Narodniks have been refuted; capitalism has triumphed in Russia. Consequently, there can be no question of political revolution. The practical conclusion: either 'economic struggle be left to the workers and political struggle to the liberals' -- that is a curvet to the right- or, instead of political revolution, a general strike for socialist revolution. That curvet to the left was advocated in a pamphlet, now forgotten, of a Russian Economist of the late nineties.

"Now a new Economism is being born. Its reasoning is similarly based on the two curvets: "Right" -- we are against the 'right to self-determination' (i.e., against the liberation of oppressed peoples, the struggle against annexations -- that has not yet been fully thought or clearly stated), "Left' -- we are opposed to a minimum program (i.e., opposed to struggle for reforms and democracy) as "contradictory' to socialist revolution." (Vol. 23, p. 13)

As Lenin makes clear, "economism" refers to an inability on the part of revolutionaries to make their revolutionary politics relevant to the day-today concerns and needs and struggles of the working class. More broadly, Lenin's aim was to bring the working class out of its parachial consciousness -- out of the struggles against individual employer or groups of employers toward the struggle against exloitation and oppression to comprehend the political character of that struggle, the need to overthrow the bourgeois state. Understanding that, we can see that involving workers in the gerneral democratic and social struggles was only one means of overcoming their tendecy to see things in a narrow framework.

7) MIke's discussion of the united front is confused (p. 15). The united front was meant both as a means of mobilizing the working class to the tasks that face it, and to expose the reformist leadership. The concept was formulated for a particular circumstance: when the revolutionary organization was neither hegemonic over the working class (in which case the use of the united front tactic was unnecessary)nor when its influence was negligible (in which case its use of the united front was irrelevant because it could be ignored) but rather when it was competing for leadership with other tendecies. In that case the united front is proposed; if the other organization accepts the proposal then the working class is being mobilized for the tasks it must carry out and the class struggle is advanced. If not, the reformist leadership is exposed and it becomes more possible for the revolutionaries to win the following of the workers who otherwise followed the reformist leadership and in that way to mobilize the working class for the tasks that face it. Of course, when the influence of the revolutionaries is negligible, a united front with Meany or Woodcock to fight against wage controls and we were ignored they would not be exposed: in fact, no one would notice.

NAC MINUTES 7/24/73 (inadvertanaly left out of previous mailing)

1. NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT on branch re-registration and perspectives reports. MOTION (JT): NATSECs to present weekly report on implementation of NC interim perspective motion. PASSED.

2. REFORM DEMANDS. Presentation by BH on articles by Duncan Hallas and Joan Smith in British I.S. #54, 56, 57. Discussion. (NOTE: This is another in a series of discussions which we began with the discussion of the Mike P. document). MOTION (JT): We mandate branches to discuss articles on reform demands and economism in I.S. journal in connection with Parker document. FAILED 2-2-2 (JT, JW for; JG, DF against).
MOTION (MS): Positions on transitional program, method and demands are to be written up as amendments to tasks and perspectives document for discussion at Convention. PASSED 4-1-1 (JW against, JT abstain).

3. THIRD CAMP DOCUMENT AND CLASS SERIES. Report on draft of document by DF (draft submitted to NAC for discussion); report by JG on proposal for class series on the third camp and I.S. politics.
A motion by JW, that the NAC solicit a series of twelve tapes not exceeding one hour in length on topics covered in Joel's class series proposal, was PASSED 5-0-1 (BH abstain).

4. A request by JT to be relieved of education director responsibilities, which he cannot fill because of other pressing work for the N.O. and the auto fraction, was TABLED for one week.

5. SOCIALIST WORKER. A couple of issues of SW, chosen earlier, were discussed with the intention to help stimulate discussion over how to improve and transform WORKERS POWER. Special attention was given not only to the SW industrial coverage, but also to their educational/propaganda articles and the way in which the paper handles a broad range of questions, especially black and other minority issues.
MOTION (JG): Request WP editorial board to hold similar discussion. PASSED 5-0-1 (BH)
MOTION (JW): To correspond with SW editorial board to request information about their functioning. FAILED.
MOTION (JT): WP editorial board to report in two weeks on the functioning of WP since the NC and to initiate discussion of WP at that time. FAILED

6. INDUSTRIAL REPORT. Bill H. to attend AFT convention and meet intersively with fraction.

7. SOJOURNER TRUTH ORGANIZATION. Presentation by JW: recommendation that JW be mandated to attempt to initiate discussion with STO on trade union and theoretical questions.
MOTION (JW): JW to attempt to arrange for such discussions, involving industrialized comrades, through Chicago branch.
MOTION (JG): JW to write up perspective for relations with STO, and that this be circulated to Chicago branch before action is taken with STO.
Above motions counterposed: JG motion PASSED 4-2 (JT, JW against).

Motion (MS): JG to inform Chicago branch of this discussion and request information on STO and their attitude toward a perspective toward it. (Vote not recorded)

NAC MINUTES 8/9/73 Present: ALL

1. EQUIPMENT. The written report requested from the Detroit exec on the question of supplying personnel to operate and maintain the press was not prepared. A verbal report was presented instead.
MOTION (JW): To authorize purchase of press; to establish subcommittee to arrange details of operation.
AMENDMENTS (MS): It is to be understood that the N.O. staff is not to be involved in the production of pamphlets (if it is decided to produce them on this press): i.e., collating, stapling, etc. PASSED
Subject to this amendment, JW motion PASSED 4-0-2 (JG,MS abstain). Subcommittee to consist of Bill H., Doug P., and a representative of Detroit exec.

2. CONVENTION DOCUMENTS. Discussions on black liberation documents. Discussion on "strategy" amendment to be submitted by TC to joint labor perspectives document (the final form of this amendment is still in preparation). The discussion was based on a draft which is to be revised and submitted in the form of a series of amendments. It will be sent out as soon as ready.

3. CONVENTION PREPARATIONS. The following NAC meeting will have a complete discussion on arrangements, including finances (report by MS), agenda structure (report by DF), and housing and site (by Jim W. for Detroit exec). Following this a convention call will be sent out immediately. The following request from the Berkeley branch for the financing of six delegates and/or alternates from Berkeley was ACCEPTED:
A FORMAL REQUEST FROM THE BERKELEY BRANCH EXEC:

We wish to know immediately about the financing arrangements for the Convention. Assuming it is to be similar to past procedures (expenses for delegates only divided evenly) we wish to ask an exception. We are entitled to 5 delegates. We are asking that we be allowed expenses for 6 people rather than 5, no more than 3 of which will fly. We are secondly asking that we be able to assign that money to our delegates and alternates as we can best work it out.

4. FARMWORKER SUPPORT. Amotion submitted from the East Bay that Kevin B. be sent to West Coast in connection with farmworker support was PASSED. The following reports have been received from Berkeley and Seattle on the campaign.

REPORT ON FARMWORKER ACTIVITY MIKE P., EAST BAY

Background on the Union: Crudely, the union can be divided into three different levels. First is the Ranch Committees where the UFWU holds contracts. These tend to be primarily Mexican & Chicano and extremely democratic and responsive to the farm workers.

The second level is the field staff. There is a tendency for these to be disproportionately anglo and the anglos tend to have disproportionate influence. The causes are understandable. The union has made no real attempt to develop Mexican secondary leadership. The staff salaries are so small that most farmworkers with families can not afford to maintain the jobs long and the skill requirements tend to by high. The net result is theat a lot of ex-student types occupy places of responsibility. It seems to me that there is some tension between the field staff and the farmworkers but that in the main the field staff identifies with the farmworkers and maintains a satisfactory relationship with them at least during the current struggle.

The third level is the bureaucracy. It is not even a question of the executive committee (there have not yet been elections). Chavez and his "brain trust" again dominated by anglos clearly urns the union. In 1971 Larry Itliong former head of the AFLCIO AWOC before it merged with the NFWA resigned in protest (although Quietly) over the influence of this "brain trust".

The boycott committees that are established in urban areas are funded by the union and are the official union representatives. That is, they are not simply boycott committees but spokesmen for the union. These committees report directly through a chain of command to La Paz the national headquarters of the UFWU. They are extremely bureaucratic in structure (although here and there are exceptions) because the union top is so bureaucratic. Orders literally come down from the top on a regular basis: Picket safeway, write letters to a Sherrif about arrests, etc. The farmworker bureaucracy is spread very thin and at the very ends of its "chain of command" in the boycott offices there are often petty and incompetant bureacratic types who are more concerned about their position in the chain than they are they struggle. Let me make it clear that there are also a lot of very dedicated and committed staffers in the boycott houses (who are paid $5.00/plus room and board). There is a tremendous turn-over on theses. Some leave of their own volition others are transferred somewhere else or are forced out if they pose a challenge to the chain of command.

This problem of the boycott committees is compounded by the politics of the bureaucracy especially in three areas. 1) The reliance on the boycott strategy as the means to win the strike -- this is tied in with the non-violence, church appeals, etc. 2) Absolutely refusing to intervene in the labor movement on it own behalf. The UFW did nothing to relate to the Teamster cannery strikes or Salinas Driver and stitcher strikes. In an interview Chavez made it clear that he was opposed to mixing in the affairs of other unions.

The union is unwilling even in the most minor ways to raise any challenge of the AFL-CIO role in all this. The UFW policy was to not even send a table to the Labor rally against the freeze a few months ago. (The rally organized by local labor bureaucrats was notable in its support for Farah and Shell strikes and its deafening silence about the farmworkers (so as not to antagonieze the Teamsters.) The Farmworkers raised no protest over the Alameda Central Labor Councils refusal to join in the labor caravan (they(CLC) called it "grandstanding" as opposed to the"real" support that the CLC was giving by assigning 2 staffers to help out in

the valley -- i.e. quiet support is alright but don't do anything to antagonize the Teamsters). The union is most of all uptight about any criticism of Meany or the AFL. They got very upset in the local area about a leaflet put out under the name of AFSCME 1695 which in the gentlest way said that the $1.6 million AFL-CIO contibution was not enough.

3) The farmworkers position on the deportation of illegals while somewhat fudged now is still bad. Since almost every farmworker has some relative who is an illegal the issue is of extreme importance. Rather than taking up the demands for rights for "illegals" the UFW is still hoping to get the border shut down. At some places, eg in Salinas the UFW very effectively championed illegals for a short period by saying that they would sit down in the fields if immigration agents came in.

The boycott strategy is so deeply ingrained that in at least this area there is a distinction between "strike support" and "boycott" activity. The boycott committee has generally been uninterested in or even quietly opposed (as a waste of time) to raising food and money for the strikers, caravans, labor support work or anything else that is not immediately directed at boycotting safeway. On the other hand, the field offices urgently want carabans for the political support as well as for the food and money that they bring.

The Strike Support Committee For the FArmworkers

The SSC was established just 2 months ago (beginning of June). Two basic groups initiated it. The first was a grouping of volunteers around the boycott who wanted to do strike support (caravans, food raising etc.) for the farmworkers as well as boycotting, who had personal ties with poeple in the field staffs and were generally disaffected with the direction and incompetancy of the boycott offices. The second group was us. I think it is fair to say that we served the role of crystalizing the group and with organizational and political experience in chhereing it. We went in with our perspective of focusing on labor work. This was accepted but not internalized by the group as a whole, eg. we attracted initially very few independents to the labor union contact committee although there were quite a few who joined the factory gate committee (leafleting, food raising, and fund raising).

The SSC was extremely active and rapidly attracted active people. Many of the people active with it did not care about meeting but would work with one of the sub committees. The group seemed to stabilize with about 50 people at meetings but with a fairly large periphery.

Officially the group began as a committee of the boycott house. But from the beginning Bill Purcell, head of the local boycott was quite hostile. He would regularly appear at meetings to blast us and tell us that what we were doing was a waste of time because it didn't direct itself immediately to boycotting. We were told for example that everything should be put into Safeway because there was pressure on Safeway to run an ad (which it finally did) calling for elections in the fields. They really believed that the ad was going to have some significant effect on the growers rather than what it was -- a way for Safeway to say that poor little it was caught in a jurisdictional dispute in the labor movement and nobody should be mad at Safeway.

The committee tended to function independently and we let the question of the relationship to the boycott house be smudged over. We did not counter pose strike support to the boycott. In union we posed setting up farmworker support committees which among other things would take responsibility for boycotting a Safeway. This was pressed in a number of places although at this time only 2 union where we had influence actually set up such committees AFT 771 (Oak) and AFSCME 1695. We did raise the question in many other union locals and began in ones and twos to involve some new trade unionists in the activity.

The committee also organized collections of food and money at factory gates and at the Coop food stores. These were taken down on bi-weekly caravans. We also correctly argued that caravans contributed to the boycott -- that people who went down on caravans and got a sense of the real struggle were more willing to do boycott activities. We had a clear orientation toward mobilizing volunteers to boycott. The boycott staff had given up that perspective of organizing others to boycott and instead were trying to do all the boycott work themselves.

While tension with the boycott committee was bound to build and several incidents came up (eg. references in AFSCME 1695 leaflets that the $1.6 was not enough) the main thing I think was that the success of the committee was very threatening to Purcell. In the background was the official UFW policy that it wanted no independent support groups which it did not control. Elsewhere, the UFW had forced RU front groups to disband (which they did -- although in Salinas the Citizens Committee represented something more than the RU and was not forced to disband but did acquiesce to union policy). In the words of Marshall Ganz (one of the brain trusters) they "butchered" a PL group which would not disband (but I don't have any more details about this). In Los Angeles I understand that an independent group with SWP was planning a demo against Teamsters and this was squashed by the UFW. In other words, independent groups are officially not welcome. Chavez made the statement that if you can't work through the union he doesn't want support. But actually independent groups are tolerated either to the degree that they represent something real or to the degree that they don't in any way "embarass" the union.

The specific incident which provoked the crisis in Oakland was extrememly trivial. We proposed that on one day -- we picked July 28 -- that there be a massive anti=Safeway rally and demonstration to be able to give the thing more public notice as well as to give people a sense of being in something big. In addition it would be a way to challenge all the petty restrictions on picketing in driveways, bull horns etc. that had been enforced on the boycott with injunctions. In principle this was not against UFW policy. In fact, as it turned out this date was the 3rd anniversary of the Delano contracts and the UFW planned later almost exactly the same thing for a number of California cities. However, when this was proposed at an SSC meeting, Purcell said that his plan (i.e. the "UFW" plan) for Oakland was to boycott all 33 E.B. Safeways that day. The matter was left somewhat in the air with he implying that this was union policy and our committee implying that we were probably going to go ahead on the demonstration. The following week at an SSC steering committee meeting Purcell came and said the the "union" had decided that the activity would consist of boycotting 4 Safeways and that they had already arranged for the Panthers to take one. We said OK -- we suggest that the campus

for a motion to try to negotiate the entry of the sub committees of the SSC into the Boycott. Hoping to have cake and eat it. I don't think that they understood well that the main things that will probably go under that proposal is the elan of the committees, the contacts with the field staff and most importantly for us the political work in the labor movement.

At present time things are in the air. The official boycott position was that there was nothing to be discussed until we dissolved. But over last weekend the struggle heightened in the valley. On our caravan we talked to the regiouanl strike head who said he really wanted caravans and that he would call the boycott house and try to get them to cooperate with us. Exactly what will happen, I can't say.

Political Conclusions

The perspective that we wrote turned out to be amazingly viable and accurate at least for this area. The conflict in the fields is heightening the political questions. People in the SSC have gotten a tremendous political education about the labor movement. Everybody understands how bureaucratic the leadership of the farmworkers really is while simultaniously understanding of the need to support the struggle.

Comments by Leslye R.

A note about the value of work in this arena. I've been struck by the really high calibre of people the farmworker's movement attracts. Certainly the best of the ex-student radicals (many of whom had been around PL/SDS) and the most advanced "workers" -- not many. The sects aren't interested at this point, I get the impression (from an RT-er) that the "farmworkers are going to lose anyway so it is creating illusions to fight" this particularly bit of vulgar defeatism is perhaps shared by others. The SL passed out a leaflet at two events but don't join in and are thoroughly detested. SWP hasn't been aroun -- don't know why -- sometimes one or two show up to do pure boycott safeway work. PL has nobody left in the East Bay but I don't think they're hostile. We're too "reformist" for the Ortho sects -- too "ultra-left" for the CP, SIP et al -- my hunwh is we must be doing right.

Although I supported Mike's proposal for an independent committee with a little hesitation -- I now think we were wrong. In fact, in this context what we were proposing was a political independent committee in opposition to the UFWU. At the point where such a move would be viable is when there are significant rank and file movements within the AFL-CIO and elsewhere which is being held back by the political conservatism of the UFWU bureaucracy or their own unions. That is simply not the case today. Therefore, it is simply impossible to go to unions, circulate petitions and so on when the UFW is clearly and openly telling people not to support the activity. If it were the dase that the UFW quietly didn't want us to be independent and remained neutral about our activity I'd definitely be for doing it. Our major perspective for this committee was to attempt to build up rank and file pressure on the bureaucracy for real support to the UFW -- that is not feasible when every possible activity which could be used to implement such a perspective is countermanded and attacked by the very union you are asking people to support.

I also feel less gloomy about prospects of activity within the Boycott structure -- though it's not what we'd like it ot be. Basically we should just carry on with our activity being careful for awhile not to step on toes and we will de facto have accomplished much of what we set out to. There's no question that at some point there will be a political break -- but it won't be while the Chavez leadership is actually leading a social movement (despite its weaknesses etc.) Incidentally, intra-union committees etc are certainly not and shouldn't be bound by the politics of the UFWU; I hope there is no confusion on this -- there is a world of difference between a particular union's support committee and a basically ad hoc support committee.

Finally, there is no disagreement about the content of Mike's proposals and in fact most of the independents in the SSC agree to some extent, my point is that almost none of them can be carried out within his organizational proposal and some can be carried out in the Boycott House.

Additional comments by Mike P.:

Leo S. and Margaret J., agree genreally with my point of view. Leo suggests that one part of my report may appear misleading. While we went into this with the perspective of focusing on raising the farmworkers struggle in other unions this activity did not expand as rapidly as the others and was seriously didetracked by the struggle with the boycott house. I did not have the illusions that it could proceed at a pace more rapid than it did. Making a few contacts here and there, getting a couple of committees started...but that it would of necessity be bery slow and patient work. This work has been going on but it has not dominated the SSC because other developments were so much faster.

The other glaring ommission is that our Teamster part of the perspective has been very limp. Our Teamster work is in serious trouble. Richard B. of SIP has not been very good, and other Teamster contacts have fallen back for a variety of reasons some of which I do not know.

One final point. When this activity started, there was the background of the IS faction fight. As one comrade has mentioned to me, just these two brief months have indicated hwo a serious political fight inside the union is built out of the seeming insignificant stuff of caravans, fund raising, etc.

REPORT FROM SEATTLE

Because of the national campaign around the UFW called for by the July NC, the Seattle Third World Fraction wishes to inform the rest of the organization of our situation and our activities with respect to UFW support work. We have had extensive experience with the Seattle Boycott Committee and we hope that this will be of some value to the campaign.

Early this year the UFW moved to reestablish the lettuce boycott directed aganist Safeway on the West Coast and A&P on the East. UFW organizers were taken from organizing campaigns in the fields and sent to urban areas to form boycott committees. This flow of personnel reversed itself when the grape strike began,

but most major cities have established boycott groups complete with an official UFW organizer.

The UFW's attitude towards the boycott is mompletely pragmatic. The boycott is used not only as an instrument of economic pressure, but as a base for mounting public opinion campaigns as well. The activities of the Seattle boycott committee range from propaganda aimed at winning rank and file support in other unions, to letter and phone call pressure efforts directed at grocery stores, warehoused, and Fitzsimmons. A major issue which the union has pushed is consumer fraud, (Safeway has dirty stores, and short weights, and mislabels meat, and....)

The major focus of the boycott is in picketing in front of Safeway stores. At each weekly meeting of the boycott committee, picket captains report the number of turnaways and the weekly results are totaled. Discussions center around good picketing places, effective techinques, reactions to the picket line, and police harrassment. There is a weekly report on the situation in California, fund raising reports and proposals, and a pep talk.

The compostion of the weekly boycott meeting continually changes. They are "open" meetings, no votes are taken, and "consensus" is the operating principle. Naturally, the UFW organizer and his handpicked staff dominate them. The organizer in Seattle is probably typical of the UFW organizers around the country. He is a white middle class former Methodist minister. He became part of the UFW through its religious support group, the Interfaith Committee. Although initially attracted to the UFW because of the moral aspect of the struggle, he is not politically naive. He is well informed about left sects, and comfortable in working with them. His own politics are those of a left trade union bureaucrat. The organizer functions in a manipulative fashion in carrying out UFW policy.

The rest of the boycott staff, (4 people), are independdents, no members of left goups have been recruited. We have found that staff members are open to political discussion and count a Chicano staffer as a contact.

The size of the boycott in the Seattle areaais fairly large. Presently, 26 picket lines operate at 14 locations on various days: the lines involve about 100 picketers, and turn away over 1000 shoppers each week. In addition to the more consistent picketers, there is a large periphery of supporters who give money or irregular picket duty. About ¼ of the picketers come to boycott meetings.

Typically half the people at a boycott meeting are independents, and the rest are members of left groups. The independents are a varied group. Some of them are middle class activists with background in previous UFW boycotts. Their are no independent rank and filers exeept our local teamster contacts. The most important group for us is the UW campus Chicanos. The left groups with the strongest presence in the boycott are the RU and the IS.

A third important influence is El Centro de la Raza, a local chicano and third world group with ties to the RU and CP, but not hostile to us. There is a tendency towards increased sectarian involvement with the boycott. The SWP sniffed around for awhile and decided to enter. The Panthers have said that they will join the

boycott. The CP empties its geriatrics ward from time to time.

So far, the boycott has not turned into a sectarian zoo. The RU's strategy is one of limited visibility. They operate through a front group, the Seattle Strike Support Committee, and take responsibility for operating their own picket line. While isolating themselves from the independents (they probably run their own picket line so that they have a safe place to work with contacts), the RU courts the UFW organizer and raises no politics. With the exception of the SWP, the other groups function similarly to the RU. The SWP is operating in their usual opportunist fashion. Their opening line to the UFW organizer was, "We are a group of professional organizers and what we have to offer is..." and then began to suggest to him all the things which had already been done.

Our approach to UFW support activities is to work through the boycott committee. We see the struggle of the UFW as important in itself, but equally as important for us is the chance to work with Third World people in a common arena. Much of our work is contact work.

Our orientation towards developing third world contacts creates certain problems of being able to criticize the UFW without alienating the union's supporters by appearing sectarian. We have attempted to overcome this problem by building a reputation as dedicated boycott workers.

Being a "dedicated boycott worker" is not as easy as it sounds. Ther are constant pressures on pepple to become uncritical shitworkers for the boycott leadership. On the other hand, just going to boycott meetings to raise your politics is ineffective. The problem is to win repect and gain a hearing. We have been fairly successful in doing this, for two reasons.

First, the Teamster work in Seattle gives us something to offer. Our Teamster contacts picket, and show up in a group for major events where we have successfully made the effort to see that a rank and file teamster speaker is part of the agenda. Because we are able to involve rank and file teamsters in the boycott, we are taken seriously by the boycott.

Secondly, we partially solved the problem of how much work to do. Some of us are consistent pickets and participants at boycott meetings. Unlike the RU, we do not hide our membership in a revolutionary organization, we are well known as ISers. We don not operate our own picket line but spread out to lines where there is third world participation. This maximizes both the number of people who know that we picket and our opportunities for contact work.

On the line we are aggressive and effective pickets. We do not seek but have accepted responsibility as picket captains. At boycott meetings we propose activities and take on minor tasks. As a result, we are an important part of the secondary leaderhsip of the boycott and have the respect of those we work with.

The way we put our politics across comes from our position within the boycott. On picketlines we sell WP to those we picket with and discuss the issues related to the UFW struggle. This one to one propaganda work is reinforced by the things we put forward at boycott meetings.

At boycott meetings we have three areas of focus: 1) The need to build the boycott and UFW support by appealing to the trade union rank and file on the basis of a common struggle. 2) Proposing and building mass action such as mass picketing at the Teamster hall and demonstrations against Safeway. 3) Pushing for rank and file teamster speakers at demonstrations and the need to create links between the UFW and the Teamster rank and file.

In each of these things we have met with resistance from the UFW organizer but with eventual or partial success. Boycott picketlines no longer approach shoppers on the basis of consumer fraud. The lines are conducted as union lines which workers are expected to respect.

Getting the boycott to hold mass actions is the major thrust of our work. The UFW organizer is reluctant to do anything but picket. When we raised the question of a mass picket at Teamster headquarters this spring he told us that we were not going to go near the place. A week later he had a secret concerned clergy vigil there which we learned of and crashed with our teamster contacts. Early this summer the organizer initiated a mass picket at the Teamster hall when the violence in Coachella started. The most recent action was at a new Safeway store. Picketing at the opening of the store on Sunday resulted in 10 arrests for "yelling and shouting" when we refused to stop chanting at the request of the police (the UFW organizer was not there). The main action took place on Thursday with a mass picket and rally (300 people participated). We initiated this demonstration.

We have succeeded in making rank and file teamsters a prominent part of the boycott. This is a concrete way of linking the struggle of the UFW with the rank and file revolt. Our next steip is to build the link the other way by involving our boycott contacts in selling the Semi when the paper carries an article on the UFW.

Our other future plans are to continue to push for mass actions. We want to develop a picketline leaflet which not only attempt to reach people on the basis of a common trade union struggle, but which also poses the issue of militant social unionism. We plan to continue working within the boycott committee.

Realistically, we can expect to continue to have problems raising criticisms of the union. The WP supplement on the UFW was extremely helpful in this regard. We distributed 700 of them to teamster workplaces and the boycott. The response at workplaces was friendly but we feceived no feedback. At the boycott committee the supplement provoked a controversy and helped to focus our propaganda efforts. We look forward to continued UFW coverage in WP.

Finding the best way to conduct UFW support work isn't easy. The Third World Fraction and the Seattle branch discussed this question and decided to remain within the boycott committee because of the opportunities which this situation presented us. The alternative, an independent rank and file group, was not a practical possibility. We could not insure that such a group would be anything more than the feeblest kind of front group. We did not think that we could mobilize sufficient rank and filers to operate without the Caesar Chavez franchise. And we did not want to risk our contact work in the boycott committee by counterposing ourselves to it.

We hope this report is of some use to comrades. Any comment about our work is welcome and we hope to hear from others doing UFW support work.

Third World Fraction
Seattle I.S.

Young Workers Seeking 2d Revolution

DETROIT FREE PRESS 8/19/73

THIS ONE MADE IN DETROIT

BY JO THOMAS
Free Press Staff Writer

The young white man in bermuda shorts had stopped a much older black man just outside the gate of Chrysler's Detroit Forge plant. The white man carried an armload of newspapers, but it was his voice that was inescapable—urgent, non-stop, insinuating itself above the roar of the traffic on Lynch Rd.

"The union is no more," he told his listener, pursuing when the man backed a few steps, following when the man sidled through a crowd of cameramen, policemen and pickets sweating in the hot afternoon sun.

"The company and the UAW are training welfare recipients to take your job," the white man said.

Finally, the older man politely took a newspaper. But he said nothing — just nodded thoughtfully and walked away.

The older man was a UAW member. Earlier in the week, his co-workers at the Forge plant had charged that it was filthy and unsafe to work there — and so they refused to work. He had not gone in either, but he had come to the gate to see how things were going.

The young man was Gerald M. Rose, 25, who received some attention recently when he and others were ruled too young to run for mayor of Detroit. More importantly, Rose is a member of one of a swarm of leftist organizations dreaming of a second American Revolution — this one Made in Detroit.

"American Airlines Revolutionaries," some Detroit-born radicals call them: Fly in, make trouble, fly out.

MILITANT WORKER groups and left-wing organizers are nothing new in Detroit. Such activity has gone on here for decades. But the new breed of white radicals started arriving in the late 1960s when the black-organized League of Revolutionary Black Workers started getting wide publicity.

In a nation whose working class was becoming white collar, Detroit was a place would-be leaders could still find the honest-to-God blue collar workers that their revolution called for.

The romance and excitement of leading assembly line workers into a world revolution died a quick death in most cases. Black workers didn't want white student leaders. The students found they didn't even LIKE the white workers, and they hated working in the plants.

And then there were campus uprisings and, always, the war in Vietnam.

One of the few groups that came and stayed was the International Socialist (IS) movement, which brought its national headquarters to Detroit in 1970.

Three years later, on the third floor of a Highland Park office building, 14131 Woodward, it is still a tiny group and still in the painful transition from a student group to a workers group. It has fewer than a dozen organizers in Detroit plants.

They are socially isolated from other leftist groups in Detroit and are more democratic and less doctrinaire than most of the newcomers.

They are often accused of "workerism" because they contend that "no program makes sense unless it meets the real needs of the workers."

At the same time, they hope to persuade workers that their goal — democratic socialism and workers' control of the economy — is the correct one.

"We don't expect miracles," said one IS member. "We don't expect to take over the plants in a year.

"But the economic boom is over. We're heading for a depression. Society is rotting. For the first time in a generation, we can build a revolutionary movement in the working class.

"It COULD happen quickly — the student movement was built in five years. I'm not predicting this — but it's possible. It's what keeps us going."

What fuels these revolutionaries' dreams? The same conditions that bring workers' nightmares.

Bad working conditions. Filth. Exhaustion. Frustration. Hazards. Wild gyrations of the economy. The sweatshop conditions caused by the boom — months of overtime, using every possible piece of equipment, no time out for cleaning up.

The Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL) is another such group.

It split from the International Socialists a month ago and moved a few blocks south, setting up at 13755 Woodward over a meat market.

It wants to attract black workers. So far it is white. Its main accomplishment: "Auto Bulletin No. 1," distributed at the Mack Ave. Stamping Plant sit-in.

BUT THEN, almost nobody had heard of the Workers Action Movement (WAM) either before one of its members, William Gilbreth, sparked the Mack Ave. sit-in.

The telephone at WAM's storefront at 14542 Fenkell had been disconnected, and at the beginning of the week it looked like just another wraith — an organization that had almost disappeared unnoticed months after it began.

But Chrysler gave Gilbreth a helping hand. It fired him for leading a work stoppage over lack of ventilation in his department. When he sat-in last Tuesday, he had a lot of sympathizers, ew of whom had ever heard of WAM.

"It's Chrysler that organizes these things themselves," Gilbreth's wife, Sarah, observed. "They don't correct conditions. They're the most effective organizers. It's not just Bill — everybody has to breathe."

WAM was formed by the Progressive Labor Party, **which took over Students for a Democratic Society in 1969. Its enemies charge that it places people in plants and incites wildcats or "incidents" which end up getting real workers fired with no backup to help them out.**

"You end up in court at midnight with three lawyers and a bunch of esoteric arguments in front of a bunch of reporters, and spies from the UAW and the company," said one attorney who has seen groups come and go. "It's useless."

One of WAM's most implacable enemies is the National Caucus of Labor Committee, known here as the Detroit Labor Committee. One of its members traded blows with a WAM member at the Mack Ave. plant over distribution of labor committee leaflets.

Rose, who was running for mayor on the U.S. Labor Party ticket, is one of the labor committee's organizers. The committee favors an alliance of ghetto youth, workers and welfare recipients, a nationwide strike, and the forceful overthrow of the government.

Earlier this year, they appointed themselves the destroyers of the Communist Party, which they see as right-wing, and put 35 CP members in the hospital in what they called "Operation Mop Up."

"They're like young kids who just discovered they could hit people," said one black Detroiter who is a longtime organizer of radical groups. "If they mess with us, we'll take care of them."

At the moment, the labor committee has a tiny membership and no permanent offices in Detroit. The committee expects 150 at a Midwest regional conference here Sunday.

THE SPARTACIST League, which also has no offices, is another group which has arrived "to colonize," as one member put it. Other groups known only by names and post office box numbers, seem to come and go daily at plant gates.

There is a sharp dividing line between the newcomers and the home-grown radicals who have worked for years on many different fronts — in factories, in court, in running some of their own candidates for office.

These radicals consider the newcomers "parasitical" and "contemptible" to the extent that they use workers to further their own ends.

There have been shifts and splits, but the older radicals seem here to stay.

Workers who find the UAW too slow, too hard to change, too top-heavy, have formed caucuses within the UAW.

They come under the umbrella of the United National Caucus (UNC) and include the Mack Safety Watchdog (Local 212, Mack Ave. Stamping), United Justice Caucus (Local 7, Jefferson Ave. Assembly), Strike Back (Local 3, Hamtramck Assembly), Shifting Gears (Local 235, Chevrolet Gear and Axle), Democratic Caucus (Local 155, tool and die workers at 130 small plants).

"We don't expect miracles. We don't expect to take over the plants in a year."

"Workers will have to save themselves," said Pete Kelly, UNC co-chairman. "These kids don't want to be workers. They want to pull off some heroic stunt. We've been there. We will be there."

Kelly and his co-chairman, Jordan Sims, president of Local 961 at Chrysler's Eldon Ave. plant, needle and pressure the top UAW brass, but are also respected by them.

"Our objective is not to overthrow the UAW," said Sims. "It is to oppose the UAW. We are corrective in action, and not punitive in action.

"I'm not trying to sell socialism in my plant. I'm trying to sell workers' equity."

NAC Minutes, 10/31/73

1. Minutes of last NAC approved: All For.

2. National Sec. Report: MD
   Motion: JG, The NAC endorses Cal W. as Cleveland branch organizer.

3. Nixon/Watergate discussion
   Presentation by JG
   Motion: JT - "The Nixon regime has been discredited. It cannot govern. It cannot carry out foreign policy effectively. Therefore, the ruling class is forced to find some way to govern the country and to resotre confidence. The most likely solution is to force Nixon out, preferably quietly, and to try to put together a government of national unity and/or new elections. In any case, we anticipate a continued crisis of confidence for some time to come." passes: 4 for, 1 abst.

   Motion: MD - The substance of JG's presentation be included in the Key List mailing. passed: 5 for, 0 opposed.

   Motion: JW - "We would consider a movement toward a mass march on Washington, demanding Nixon out, to be an important progressive development. This should be included in our propaganda, including demands on and exposure of those in a position to do something about it.
   "We can not see ourselves playing a key role in instigating such a movement, but it would open up fantastic opportunities for us in developing a political working class movement." passes: 3 for, 2 abst.

   Motion: JG - that JG organize a speaking tour on the Nixon/Watergate crisis following the next NAC. passes: 5 for.

   Motion: JT - 1) We look to developing our analysis in WP over time. 2) We will not atempt to cram articles with all points. 3) We will endeavor to have short articles amplifying various points that we wish to emphasize and educate about.
   The thrust of JG's presentation to the NAC on Watergate is to be wrtten up for WP. We want JG to continue to develop his analysis for a pamphlet. passes: 4 for, 1 abst.

4. ISBG Industrial Conference.

   Motion: JG - that Brian M. attend the ISGB Industrial Conference. passes: 3 for, 2 abst.

5. Black Liberation Movement.

   Presentation by JT, followed by discussion. (Motions of NC agenda, tabled to NC discussion)

   Motion: MD - that JT's document be sent out right away. passes: 5 for

6. NC Agenda.

Presentation by ~~ML~~ JT.

Motion: ~~XXX~~ - that JT's black motion be sent out immediately with an introduction stating that it is not complete, needs substantive amendments, and that comrades are requested to write substantive amendments.

Motion: BM - that JT's draft be sent out as the basis for future amendment on the black movement, but that this topic not be allocated a session at this NC.

These two motions voted counterposed: for BM 3; for JT 1 ; abst. 1.

Motion: ~~tx~~ JW - that the Nixon/Watergate crisis be on the NC agenda, on Friday. passes: 5 for.

7. Detroit Branch Perspective.

Presentation by ML, followed by general discussion.

Motions: JT - 1) Contact work is of the greatest importance and is the most serious lack in the work of the Detroit branch. A systematic method of doing contact work must be devised, including regular assignment to contacts, and someone or several people responsible for overseeing contact work. passes: 5 for

2) The Detroit branch must choose a limited field of activity, which it can reasonably be expected to carry out. It should choose 1 or 2 major activities in addition to auto and contact work and concentrate on doing that. The NAC recommends that UFW be investigated as that activity. passes: 5 for.

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 10/31/73

1. NC: The pamphlet on Chile is out. The National Report is going out with WP #85. Dave F. is currently on a speaking tour on the Middle East. He has already spoken in St. Louis, Bloomington and Louisville, and is publically speaking in New York this weekend. ~~x~~
2. NYC: The ~~NYX~~ UFWA work is going quite well. Last weekend the NY fraction was successful in getting 7 sotres of one supermarket chain to remove scab grapes and lettuce! New York women and one comrade from Chicago attended a women's conference organized by Districe 65 (an independent, small leftish union) on organizing women workers, and malle a very successful impact.
3. Cleveland: Cal W. ~~x~~ has been made full-time organizer.
4. Detroit: The branch held a successful forum on the majoral election (black liberal vs. white police commissioner) with Joel G. speaking. It was planned as a debate but the representative from the Young campaign did not show up.
5. Bloomington: A successful study group has been set up with about 15 contacts.
6. Seattle/Northwest: The Seattle branch is currently involved in a support group for a prisoner's union (see WP#85 for details) and it looks quite promising for us. The last issue of the Seattle Semi (IBT rank and file paper) were almost all distributed. In Portland we now have a group around us involved in UFWA

work. Steve L. from Seattle spoke at a Chile Teach-in in Bellingham of about 100 people. Bellingham distributes 25 WP's per issue!
7. Bay Area: The East Bay branch held a Friday night dinner discussion on the Middle East. Twenty-four copies of WP were sold at a Oakland Federation of Teachers meeting. The SF branch held a forum with Dave N. of SWAG from Australia on New Guinea.
8. Fund Drive: We have now collected $5,211 (35%) and we're still behind; weshould be close to half now and must begin to catch up soon or we won't make it.
9. Mike P. of the East Bay branch requests comments and criticisms of the document he wrote during the faction fight on Revolutionary Leadership, The NO is planning on publishing it as a pamphlet; ~~xxx~~ comrades should write Mike if they have suggestions on this document.

PROPOSED NC AGENDA

Friday, November 23, 1973

First Session: 10am-1pm: Black Liberation, analysis, perspectives for recruitment.

Second Session: 2pm-5pm: UFWA perspectives

Third Session: 7:30pm-10:30pm: Watergate and related government scandal

Saturday, November 24

Fourth Session: 10am-1pm: Workers Power, Report by Editor, conception, audience

Fifth Session: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ 2pm-5pm: Workers Power, format, frequency, staff, editor.

PARTY

Sunday, November 25

Sixth Session 10:30am-1:30pm: Reports: National Secretary, Industrial Secretary, Educational Director, Budget. Motion from LA branch to rescind NAC motion limiting articles to Internal Bulletin to 3,000 words, other organizational motions.

The Nixon Crisis Joel Geier

The following is a rough approximation of a presentation given to the NAC on 10/31/73. It will be revised, and written up in thesis form for the next NAC. The thrust of it is to appear in Workers Power. The version adopted by the NAC will become the basis for a speech Geier is to give on a speaking tour.

The accumulated fallout of the Watergate scandals has finally reached the point of no re no return. The Nixonx administrations has been destroyed. It no longer controls events. Its credibility has been ruined beyond repair. No one is prepared to believe its version of events. It is impossible for an adminstration to be reconstructed around Nixon and his entourage, and for this gang to continue to rule the country for the next three and a half years.

Wherever any political opponent cares to press new scandals are revealed. The normal modes of functioning of capitalist politcs, usually accepted or carefully covered up, ignored, ideologically mystified, justified or explained away, are now being nakedly presented as scandal, corruption, kickback, deception, lying, etc. If this were to continue the moral authority of the political system and its representatives-so carefully nutured by the schools, media, churches, etc- would unravel, and system and leaders loose the confidence, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ of those they manipulate and rule over.

For the Nixon entourage, confidence has already entirely vanished. It is difficult to get even its supporters to admit to belief in its press releases and alibis. With respect for the adminstration gone, it becomes impossible to get competent people to serve in government. Their careers may not be advanced, but forever tarnished if they were to accept appointment in this adminstration.

High officials will soon be in the dock, and jail. The normal mode of bouregois politics is the cover-up; one ~~xx~~ official glossing over and proctecting the actions of others. Now, with the hunt on, officials are being treated as criminals normally are- release evidence, stop the cover up, and perhaps you will be granted immunity, protection, or a lighter sentence. High officials are reacting no different than petty theyves. With the adminstration no longer in a position to protect them, they are looking out for themselves, and implicating their associates, and still higher officials including Nixon in fresh scandals. Kleindienst, Mitchells, Stans and the others will all follow this route.

Beyond what has already been revealed, and that is staggering (Bugging, burglery, the cover up, the functioning of the executive branch, its spying, lying, secret police force, its conception of law, morality, and its own powers, its conception of its relationship to the American people, laws and Congress, the tapes, the speaial prosecutor, who is to appoint him, his powers and accesss to presidential material, the corruption and indictment of Cabinet members and Presidential aides) a whole new flock of scandals are being daily revealed (Nixon's taxs, Hughes contribution to Rebozo, Rebozo stolen stock deals, the dairy trust contributions, ITT and Nixon, Butz's intervention in Heublein affaor. et., etc.) which are all quickly pushed out of the headlines by still new scandals, with more bait already being tantalizingly hinted out (Project Odessa, Special Proj ect One, etc.).

No coverup is large enough to bury allof these scandals, or to repress the dozens which will surface if Nixon continues in office. The point for that

has long since been passed. Nor can there a propaganda campaign which would be larger enough to restore confidence in the integrity of the Nixon regime. Nor could the ruling class be reunited at this point on the basis of accepting and coverup for Nixon. If the Nixon riegime were to continue, it could only be on the basis of the open recognition, and condoning of these scandals, corruption, and Watergate plumbing methods - a proposition which would in the long run threaten the moral legitimacy of the ruling class to run this society. No compromise is possible at this point. Any concession made by Nixon (giving tapes, naming a new special prosecutor) only raise s cries for still further demands on the adminstration, demands which it is incapable of meeting without revealing all and indicting itself. Confidence in Nixon has been so destroyed that no explanations are accepted at face value, and all call for still new revelations. With its credibility gone, the Nixon adminstration hannot "tough it out". That strategy, based on the hope that the American people would lose interest in the matter, has proven false with the raft of new scandals. The Nixon regime no longer has a real strategy. It is a government of manouevers, reacting and reeling from blow to blow, incapable of anticipating events, but meekly awaiting the inevitable new scandal. The government no longer has a policy on Watergate. The intiative has passed to its opponents.

This situation cannot continue indefinitely, implicating more and more political leaders without eventually threatening the system. The President is no doubt now leaking information to the press on his political oppoenents - and scandals start to crop up around Humphrey (money from Hughes) Beall, etc. It is one of the reasons for the reluctance of the liberal leadership to put itself forward- some of the trugh about its behavior would start to appear in the press.

This crisis could easily be resolved under a parliamentary regime- but given the structure of the American political institutions (institutions which have served capitalism so well for so long that they are reluctant to change) it has produced a crisis of government. The crisis has only gone on for so long because the American people have not intervened decisively- because there has been no immediate threat at home. Usually when cracks have opened in the ruling class and political system, the masses have pushed through such openings for their own interests. If the crisis were to continue this cannot be ruled out in the future, with swift shifts in consciousness. It is not however an immediate likely probability. This failure of the masses to intervene is a testament to the defeat of the left suffered in the late 60s, particularly the black left, to the continuing economic strength of the system-its ability to with all of its contradictions continue to function at a high level meeting material needs- and to the complete lack of desire of the liberals, labor bureaucracy and established black political leadership to take advantage of this crisis. All the while that they expose Nixon they have failed to provide an alternative political leadersjip or program because of their committment to the system and their felt need to continue the cover-up of the system, channelizing the conflict into legal forms as much as possible, and drawing back from any effective fight, particularly one that would draw the masses into the political struggle. Hence the prolonged character of the crisis. No immediate threat at home, Nixon's opponents continuing the campaign against him, but providing no clear alteranative. Even if the criss were to be resolved tomorrow, it will have fallout effects for years. If in the immediate future, it produces greater cynicism, and lack of political invovlvement, in the long run it is underminig the authority of capitalist ideology, institutions, values, leadership, and political process. When the masses do go into motion, the effects of watergate will be felt, opening the possibility of extremely great volatility, rapid shifts in consciousness, and extracting the price for the behavior and betrayals of the political leadership.

Immediately the crisis has destroyed the ability of the government to introduce new policy. In the future it may prove to have diggiculties controlling wages and prices whenever there will be firm resistance from sections of either the working or capitalist classes. With its moreal credibility gone it would have great difficulties in disciplining workers in the face of greater inflation.

Most importantly, most immediately, the crisis has produced a disaster for America's imperialist interests and foreign policy. As a result of the American governmental paralysis the new war in the Middle East has imposed an enormous political blow to American imperialism -- one which to be sure it will attempt to repair, but one which will reverberated throughout the imperialist system for years. There is the set back in the Mideast and Mediterranean, a set back which has been going on on a molecular level while America was bogged down in Vietnam, but now has qualitatively turned for the worse in an area which has the raw material, oil, which is the jugular vein of Western Europe and Japan. Client states like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Sheikdoms, whose antedeluvian ruling classes are maintained in power by the military might of the US so that they can front for the American oil companies, financed this war, are using the card of oil pressure against American policy, and are further opening the area for the Russians There is the rupture of the NATO alliance , so carefully, so expensively, nutured and developed over the last decades. Beyong the indignity of client regimes like the Greeks and Turks, whose governments were created to be American bases, now defying the US (in the case of Turkey denying American planes the right to fly over to deliver cargo to Israel, whioe allowing Russia to do so for the Arabs), the more important question is the break of the Common Market countries with the Americans on this question. Each of the European imperialists looked out for its own interests on oil, with little concern for the needs of the capitalist alliance as a whole. Reciprocallly the US did not consult its Nato allies in deciding policy, nor given the crisis was it capable of discipling them -even to the extent of its request to cool trade and other things with Russia temporarily. At this point there was no organizor of the capitalist world - only inter imperialist rivalry. A situation whose prologation is impossible for the capitalist powers, and the US in particular, but which already is raising questions of realigning alliances. The Japanese finance Abu Dhabi, which in term finances Egypts war effort. The French dream of olaying a larger role, of organizing Europe, or replacing the Russians as the supplier of arms to the Arabs in return for oil. The Chinese come out for a stronger NATO - to defend the West from "the Russian threat."

The Middle East crisis raised the stakes of imperialist politics. It also raised the question of how intact the American government was. How capable was Washington of making decisions, of making deals, and of honoring them? Due to its domestic crisis was it incapable of action? Did its word mean little since it would be shortly repudiated, or changed to placate its domestic opponents, or overturned entirely? The fate of imperialist interests, indeed, perhaps of the world, revolves around the continous whirlppol of Watergate crisis.

Under Kissinger's leadership the immediate threat was overcome. Billions were poured into Israel, to provide it with the arms to maintain its hold, and to so stuff it like Straoubourg goose with American arms that it is further reduced to client state status - so that it can effectively whittled down (no matter what the wishes of the Jewish lobby at home) for whatever deal is to be made between Russia and America The world-wide alert was designed to show that there was an American government, capable of action of the most immense proportions, capable of intervening in the Mideast of making and enforcing agreements with Russia, the Arabs and Israel. Kissinger provided the most class conscious, imperialist leadership the American ruling class has had. Gone were all the liberal, and conservative, shiboleths, out front was the naked interests of American capitalism, to be carefully balanced by the relative, and shifting, relationship of forces. Within a week the capitalist class matured rapidly in terms of consciousness of its own interests internationally. Under Kissinger's leadership the entire capitalist class, all wings of it, were drawn together by the external threat, and he helped restore to it a good measure of its self confidence. Kissinger proved American power able to overcome the crisis not just to the outside world but also to our own, despressed, and uncertain ruling class.

But this is strictly a temporary solution. The capitalist xx are aware how much they owe to Kissinger in this crisis of governmental paralysis. Nixon was barely consulted, and informed of the decisions of the National Secrurity Council only after they wrere made. He tried to used the Mideast crisis first for domestic purposes- to strengthem his position, to fire Cox under the coverofx the war, and later to attempt to take credit for the handling of it at his press conference last Friday, even though the decisions were made without him. The anomalous situation exists that this alert, with its hints at confrontation, was announced, explained, and pushed through publically by Kissinger - not Nixon. The immediate danger was overcome, the capitalist class was drawn together under their new savior Kissinger, but in the process Nixon's fate was sealed.

The crisis of governmental confidence must be quickly resolved because of the external difficulties immediately faced by American capitalism. It has, and is continuing to convince the ruling class that the current situation, so fraught with danger for American national capital, requires firm leadership, a strong government capable of making hard and swift decisions. Decisions which will reshape world alliances. War in the Mideast may resume at any moment. Neither side was victorious, or defeated - the next round may be in days or months, not years. Even if war is not resumed there is the difficulty of getting a peace which maintains American imperialist interests in oil, and attempts to reimpose American hegemony in the Arab world. As much of the Western alliance as possible must be restored, while at the same time detente, opening trade with Russia and China, and playing them off against each other must be consummated. All of this requires the hard bargaining that only a strong government can provide. It can only be accomplished now by the dismissal of Nixon and as quickly as possible.

Nixon must be forced to resign, he cannot be impeached. Impeachment would take too long. It would prolong the crisis and paralysis of the government. Indeed impeahment would intensify it. It would be too damaging. It would threaten the cohesion of the capitalist xxx class. Impeachment would also raoise for public scruitny even more aspects of the system. Nixo's defense would be to implicate others, that this is after all normal political behavior engaged in by his partisan opponents. Impeachment would also smack too much of Democratic Party partisanship, and possibly produce a new regime which also lacked moral authority. The point is to get rid of Nixon by covering the curtain as much as possible over what has occured, and impeachment militates against that. Impeachment would divide the ruling class, when the task now is to draw it together. For xxx the ruling class Nixon must resign, or be forced to resign. This indeed is the struggle which is now going on behind closed doors. Although most leading corporate heads are against resignation, this is due to a lag of consciousness on their part. Most of them will be for it shortly as they face the prospect of administration to weak to handle the difficulties confronting it, and with no resolution of the crisis possible short of resignation.

Behind closed doors they are also working out, consociously and unconsciously, how to get rid of him as painlessly as possible for the system and its disruption. They may convince him to resign via plea bargaining, ala Agnew (which at this point may also include his family who are also possibly up for prison terms if he doesnt bow out gracefully-re Tricia Nixon and the Rebozo money). They are trying to do this in a way that leaves as little bitter aftertaste as possible among those who supported him loyally until the very end, and may feel betrayed (as did many Agnew backers), and of convincing the American people that it was not a partisan Democratic doup against a recently elected Republican executive. They are currently trying ,and groping, to figure out how to handle this situation constitutionally and politically. New elections, all sorts of ideas are being raised, and debated before they finally decide on the best possiblity. Meanwhile they are also bargaining and haggling over the succession.

Ford will become the new President, barring his being badly tainted by scandal in the investigations of him. However that is unlikely, they will try to make

sure there are new scandals involving people like Ford. that would be too destructive of the system. He has certain disadvantages. He is the nomineee of the discredited amdinistration. He is a Nixon loyalist, and represents the right of the Republican Party, while real power with rest with a Democraatic Congress. He is not too bright; first a crook and not a fool. Everyone remembers LBJ's bonmots("he played football without his helmet too often", "he cant chew gum and walk at the same time" etc) He does not have the confidence of the capitalist class, Congress of the people. But his nomination will be rushed through with as much speed as decency and necessity to restore credibility allows. He is the virtual leader of the House Republican Party, and represents a legitimate succession (re the 72 election results). He was picked precisely because he could be agreed upon most easily and represents possibly the easiest possible transition.

However Ford is not the leader of a strong government, of the government required given the problems. He would at best be a front man. What is now going on is haggling over who the real powers will be. Of necessity there will have to be a government of national unity. One capable of restoring confidence, authority, unity. One capable of relying upon a Democratic Congress - which will be overwhelmingly Democratic after the Congressional elections of 74 take their Watergate toll on the Republican Party One capable of making hard choices in foreign policy, while facing growing economic difficulties. The ruling class is groping to this solution, a unique solution for it, but a solution for a sort of crisis it has never had to face before, and for which this is its only real, credible option. Even such a government of national unity, if it can be constructed, will not necessarily be able to overcome the crisis, to gain the authroity it needs to make the immense decisions it will have to, many of them painful and unpopular.

Kissinger will remain in charge of foreign policy. Not only did he pull the fat out of the fire in the Mideast, he has preformed wonders for American imperialism in Vietnam, and with Russia and China. While he has become a hero to the capitalist class, there is no reaso to believe that he will able to pull off all that is required: reimposing American hegemony in the Mideast, over Europe, and balancing off Russia and China. Even with his showy successes of the past, the NATO alliance erupted like a house of cards over the oil crisis- when it shouldnt have, but could have jointly "toughened itout". The contradictions of the inter-imperialist rivalry among the capitalist powers will intensify given American difficulties in the Mideast.

Schlesinger will proably also be kept at Defense, having proven himself in this recent crisis. On top of the previous crisis in the armed forces due to the defeat and loss of morale in Vietnam, and the necessity to therefore revamp the armed forces, the Mideast war has shown that the Russians have caught up to theAmericans in many technical weapons, particularly missles. Russian power has not just grown politically in the Mideast due to American imperialist problems in Vietnam and being tied to Israel, but also militarily in many areas the Russians have finally caught up with, if not outstripped, the West. To overcome this the Americans will probably thoroughly revamp the war budget, and raise it considerably, and reshift much of its emphasis. The domestic consequences will be further cuts in welfare spending, possible budget deficits and new added fuel to inflation. It will probably mean still further cuts in troops in Europe, particularly in Germany. To shift money requirements of the war budget. To shift costs off to the other capitalist powers, particularly given their poor bahavior in the crisis (and perhaps also to"punish" them), so that more money is available for new technology, weaponry, and research to overtake the Russians. This too should produce new strains and intensified contradictions in the Western imperialist system.

In domestic terms a government of national unity is necessary because it will depednd on the Congressional Democractic Party for support. The DP cannot credibly put in a DP President, but it can make any government meet its terms. The DP, including its liberal wing, will probably buy a governemment of national unity because of their committment to the capitalist system and American imperialism, and because throughout this crisis they have provided no clear alternative in terms of policy, program, stragey, leadership, or even a strong desire to fight.

While types like Richardson, Cox, and Ervin can , and some will, be brought into a government of national unity, to restore the Justice Dept, xx moral leadership, etc., a key sticking point will be over the economy. The government has, with the aid of the labor bureaucracy, been capable of holding down wages. American inflation, bad as it is, has therefore been less than in the other capitalist powers as the labor bureaucracy negotiates wage cuts. Coupled to the still successful American imposed realignmnet of currencies, America's competetive edge in the world market has been somewhat restored. But America still faces great economic difficulties in a world of economic instability. With the greater role of world trade, and commodity inflaton, the decline of the dollar has fueled inflation to the point where it may now start to run ahead of European inflation. A new government has to face not just increased instability but added war expense, unpopular welfare cuts, new currency crisis(and worse bargaining over currency given the difficulties of the Western alliance), and the strong possiblity of a fairly immediate recession. Such a government will require the continued xxxxxxxxxxxx cooperation of the labor bureaucracy. But given the continued ravages of inflation, the decline of real wages in the last year with its possiblity of of mounting disontent among the ranks, and the weakened position of American capital, the price the labor bureaucracy will want for its cooperation may be somewhat higher than in the past. To be sure it will want to make the system work, as it has always loyally tried to, but it also wants to save its own skin. It was this which was behind the AFL-CIO convention unamiously voting for Nixon's impeachment. Beyond their trying to put some distance between themselves and Nixon given their backhanded support for him in 72, they were also announcing to the capitalist class that they are a power to contend with, that they want a piece of the action in the new government which is now being constructed. The bureaucracy is continuing to function in pressure groups terms. It wants to extract greater leverage from a new adminstration, while at the same time it will probably not want to take responsibility for a government which may shortly be in the midst of a recession.

The last reason for the fact that its possible to get a government of national unity in the US today, is that there are no real parties in American politics now. With all of the splits in the last year there still has been no alternative strategies, programs, principles, leaderships put forward and prepared to fight courageously.. This failure of the liberals, labor bureaucracy and established black leadership is a testament to their loyalty to the system, the system which produces Vietnams and Watergates. While there are no real political parties in America today the door is opening for new political alignments, for a revival of politics. The basis for a middle class reform movement chasing after clean government,xxxxxxx utopias, and constitutional changes certainly exists. The question is whether it will try to join that to populist appeals. On the right, Rockerfeller is attempting to resolidfy the Republican Party with an approach to the Goldwater-Agnew wing. In terms of foreign policy the conservatives are presenting a more class conscious states man like approach to Russia and China ala Kissinger. The liber-labor types xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx of the Jackson-Meany variety are still attempting to operate in the 50s when American imperialism could afford the luxuries of fantasizing about containing Communism or avoiding detente. Even left liberals, up to types like IF Stone, have come out for Jackson's amendments tieing Russian trade to questions of Jewish emigrationand/or liberal intellectual dissenters in Russia. Kissinger, quite correctly from the capitalist point of view, has stated that US capitalism cannot today make deals with the Russians and at the same time attempt to interfere in their internal affairs. The basis for new political alliances coming out of Watergate, the disruption of the Western alliance and the new relationships of world forces exist. In the absence of independent working class movment and policy it will only repeat the usual reform movement which rationalizes but maintains the system. Nonetheless it may help to open up the political immobilism currently existing in the working class and the left.

FLASH! LEFT SECTS SOLVE ENERGY CRISIS!!!

A major theoretical breakthrough on the energy front was announced tonight by James Robertson and Sy Landy, leading spokesmen for the Spartacist League and the Revolutionary Socialist League.

Robertson and Landy issued a united-front press statement explaining the revolutionary technique for generating unlimited amounts of heat. The method is called "leninist fusion," and consists of joining atomic-sized particles under intense pressure from the class struggle.

The resulting combinations tend to be highly unstable and to rapidly undergo a process of "principled fission," the dialectical opposite of the fusion process. Both the SL and RSL are products of such fissions.

"In just one case alone," noted Robertson, "one single fission reaction between us and the Workers League generated enough energy to fill two entire volumes of our newspaper, not to mention enough left over for both volumes of CONVERSATIONS WITH WOHLFORTH."

"Of course," continued Robertson, "the reaction also produced a considerable amount of radioactive fallout. in the form of the BULLETIN OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE' but we are trying to learn to control the reaction to prevent these dangerous side effects."

Landy and Robertson noted that the fission process was much more developed and well-known, and that the SL and RSL were barely beginning to experiment with the possibilities of fusion

Theoretically, however, the harnessing of the fusion process could produce enough internal bulletins to meet the needs of the world's furnaces for centuries to come.

NAC MINUTES 11/7/73 Present: All except JW

0.MINUTES. Suggestion by JT that divisions on votes not bexxxxxxxxxx recorded unless requested. TABLED.

1.NA TSEC REPORT. DF spoke on the Middle East for St. Louis, Louisville, Bloomington,NY. Attendance (not counting comrades was 35,3,35, and 10 respectively. The three organizing committees are getting peripheries which will lay the basis for recruitmedn.

The UNC called a mass picket and demonstration at Solidarity House (UAW International headquarters) in opposition tothe Ford contract, and a Nov. 9 citywide meeting to discuss what to do about the contract. The Detroit branch distributed the UNC leaflet calling for the demonstration and its own leaf let at the meeting.

The fund drive total stands at 51.2% ($7680) with four weeks to go. Most branches and OC's are keeping up, except Bloomington which so far has xxxx sent nothing in. Get ready for the home stretch!

2.WASHINGTON D.C. Report by MD on contact with left=wing xxxxxxxx NAM members. BM to be sent to speak with the group; MD to contact NY to help set up the meeting. Speaker also be sent to speak with contacts in Potsdam, NY.

3.THEORETICAL JOURNAL. Presentation by JT. MOTION:JT to write up presentation for further discussion and vote. ALL FOR.
MOTION(DF):The urgency of publishing the journal has not lessened since the split and the convention; on the contrary, it has increased. There is only one proviso: we will not initiate TJ publication at the expense of the newspaper. To do so - i.e. to cut the quality of WP or the efficiency of its staff in order to publish the magazine - would bethoroughly self=defeating and would destroy the improvements we have been able to make in WP so far. It is therefore our perspective to pursue the professionalization of the N.O. and WP to the point where publication of the journal xxx can be launched without damaging WP. We expect that this can be accomplished fairly rapidly.
PASSED xx 2-1-2 (BM against; JT, JG abstain).

4.BUDGET. Report by JG for October. Discussion of deficits.
MOTION(JT):(1)All long-distance phone calls to be made at night unless unavoidable. ALL FOR. (2)Lengthy long-distance calls to be cleared with NATSEC in advance except for emergencies. FAILED 2-3 (JT, MD).
MOTION(DF): WP phone calls to be kept track of by WP staff and paid for from WP subsidy money. FAILED 1-1-3 (DF for, JG against). (NOTE by DF: I have since learned that most WP calls are already paid for by WP, which I didn't know).

5. GOVERNMENT CRISIS. Report by JG. JG to take speaking tour on Watergate crisis and its consequences for American and world capitalism. MOTION(DF): Top priority is to be to attempt to arrange a meeting in Madison (where the N.O. so far has not yet sent speakers). ALL FOR
MOTION(JT): (1)The Watergate coverage in WP#85 is not consistent with the NAC motion passed at the last meeting, the text of which read: "We look to developing our analysis in WP over time. We will not xxx attempt to cram articles with all points. We will endeavor to have short articles amplifying various points that we wish to emphasize and educate about. The thrust of JG's presentation to the NAC on Watergate is to be written up for WP". PASSED 3-2 (JG, DF against)
2)JG to be assigned to write the Watergate coverage articles for WP, consistent with the NAC motion on Watergate coverage. PASSEDxxx 4-0-1 (DF abstain).
3)JG's talk to be taped and t anscribed to serve as the basis for a pamphlet. PASSED 5-0.

NOTE by JT: The above motion is not intended to be a slap in the face at the WP editorial board, which is operating under difficult conditions, but an effort of the NAC to give direction to the ~~EB~~ E.B. and to shape the character of the coverage.

STATEMENT by DF: Speaking only for myself, not for the editorial board, I find JT's motion (whatever its intent) worse than useless. Guidance from the NAC to WP, which is desperately needed, should pertain to the content and substance of the articles. Motions on the length of articles on Watergate or anything else represent little more than pious wishes, which are ~~xg~~ shared not only by JT and the NAC but also by the editor (who wrote the article in #85) and the whole editorial board. Without political and substantive guidance, however, it is not always possible for these wishes to be realized in practice ~~xxxx~~ - unless we either receive copy well in advance or have the articles written by the WP staff itself with specified word limits and in such a way that the articles fit together in a coordinated way. This is a question of organization and technique which we have to develop over time. Motions stating that the form of this or that article was "inconsistent" with this or that previous motion, with nothing to say about the political content (including what if anything was superfluous),do not help at all.

6.~~NCxASSESSMENX~~ NC ASSESSMENT. MOTION(MD): Assessment for Thanksgiving NC to be $6 per member, to be collected only after fund drive is over. ALL FOR. MOTION(JG):National dues to be raised to $6/mo. ~~xxxxxxx~~ beginning in January; all national assessments to be eliminated. (This proposal to be presented to the NC by the NAC). FAILED ~~2x2xx~~ 2-2-1 (BM, JT against; MD abstain).

7.WOMEN'S COMMISSION. Report by GS on women's commission (being sent out in the form of a letter), working women's conferences occurring in various states, and the motion below/ pertaining to the discussion on women's industrialization.

MOTION:THE NAC agrees with the motion submitted by GS; however, due to the misunderstandings that have develppd on CRG's motion passed at the convention, we will not take a formal vote until the next meeting in two ~~xxxxx~~ weeks, and we invite comrades in Chicago and NYC who may disagree with this interpretation to submit their position to the NAC fot discussion. ALL FOR

The text of the motion follows:

MOTION TO THE NAC--submitted by Rose V. Nov. 7, 1973

The following motion is submitted to the NAC as clarification of the motion On Women's Perspectives passed by the August, 1973 Convention.

The motion was presented to rectify the complete absence on any discussion at the convention on the women's question or on perspectives for building a working women's movement.

Unfortunately, although the motion attempts to deal with some very real problems the organization has had in developing ongoing work, it is open to different interpretations and therefore has added confusion to the question.

The following motion, using the NC Women's Liberation document, attempts to clarify the organization's position on points that have come into question.

1. Industrialization of IS women will be based on the national industrial priorities for all comrades which are: UAW, IBT, AFT and CWA. Industiralization of women, as of all comrades, is based on our analysis of what the most important industries are, the history of the unions involved, history of militancy and analysis of the future role of these industries. In addition, our national priorities have been limited to the above four because of the limited resources of the organization.

In this context, the best situation for women is in industries/unions where there are other women. If we must choose between a situation that has few women but is a national priority vs. a situation where there are many women in a non-priority industry, we choose the national priority. However, as there are a great number of women in the UAW, AFT, and CWA, we expect that most industrialized IS women will be able to do work with working class women.

There may be local exceptions to this, however, the additon of a local priority must be argued for on the basis of the political importance of that union in the local labor movement and not simply on how many women there are. Also, an additional local priority must be considered understanding the very limited resources of the national office and therefore increased burden on the branch and local leadership.

2. Each branch should attempt to develop a perspective for doing work among working class women. This will not be easy nor possible in every area at this time. However, these are beginning indications that what is left of the women's movement, mainly NOW and the Women's Ploitical Caucus, has begun to make a turn toward working women. This has shown inself in several conferences on organizing working women called by the above groups and various trade unions. Although neither the direction, the politics or the impact of this is clear yet, it opens up exciting new possibilites for us.

We are for the formati on of ongoing pro-union groups and will work within them. In opposition to the trade unionbureaucrat and NOW types we will push our politics on building a rank and file movement, women's caucuses, against a strategy of affirmative actions programs looking to the courts or federal agencies and opposition to the Democratic Party.

We cannot depend on the development of many groups like DARE in Chicago, initiated by radical women, because of the collapse of the radical woing of the women's movement. Unfortunately what will develop will probably have greater contact with the right wing of the movement--NOW and the NWPC. However, the remnants of the radical movement should be checked out.

3. Each branch should establish local women's commissions. The job of these commissions will be to investigate above work and develop perspectives for the above work. When the press of work warrants these commissions will broaden into fractions dealing with women's work.

The commissions are not counterposed to women's caucuses.

November 10, 1973

Dear Comrades,

After much unfortunate delay we have begun to set up the Women's Commission. Marilyn D. and Kay S. will serve on the commission along with myself, who will serve as the coodinator.

The specific duties and functioning of the commission still needs to be worked out. However various things have already been started and activity in the branches has picked up.

One of the first things I hope to do will be to put out a report of where I.S. women are in Industry and what they are doing.

Many industrialized women have raised the question that they have had difficulty raising women's issues in their work. Another task of the commission will be to begin discussion of how to raise these questions in industry. The N.Y and Detroit women's caucusses are both planning discussions on how to raise women's issues in the shops. Hopefully discussion documents will be the result.

I hope to get different women to do research on the national priority industries in terms of women's work. The research should cover questions such as how many women? where are most important locals? what is attitude of union and industry toward women? what is happening in industry that will affect women? etc. I will work out a guide for the research shortly. Thus far, I understand, Mary in Seattle is planning to do that kind of research on the IBT and I will attempt to get other women to take on the responsibility for UAW, AFT and CWA.

The teachers fraction had requested a review of our position on the ERA because they fouod our position no longer usable at the AFT National Convention. Caroline in N.Y. has agreed to take on that responsibility working with Sheila and Ruth of the AFT fracion. A document for consideration by the NAC should be forthcoming.

Discussion on a women's column for Workers' Power has begun, and various women have agreed to take on different responsibilities for the column. The plans have still to be discussed bythe Editorial Board and finalized.

Celia E. will be finishing her pamphlet on Revolutionary Feminism in the next few weeks. After that she will begin working on an introduction to a Kollantai speech on International Women's Day to be turned into a pamphlet. She has also agreed to do public speaking and proposals will be sent to the branches later on.

Discussion on Black and Latina women needs to be organized by the commission as well as discussions on NOW and the Women's Political Caucus.

I intend to be writing to individual women about much of the above. If comrades have additional ideas for the women's commission or any comments on what I have put forward, please write.

Most of my time is taken up by work on the newspaper. This is true for Kay as well and most of Marilyns time is taken up by her duties as national secretary. This will mean that much of the work of the commission will have to be farmed out to other women with the commission giving the direction and coordinating the work.

Werhave not been receiving reports from all the branches on women's activities so the following report is not complete. Howevre, there is still a lot to report as women's activity has been picking up. This is due to an apparant turn toward working women by the right wing of the women's movement - NOW and the Women's Political Caucus. They along with various trade unions have been organizing conferences on working women.

In NY, NOW Women's Political Caucus, Radical Feminists, the Women's Bureau-U.S. Dept. of Labor(Region 11), District 65 (a local NY union representing distributive workers - has a liberal frontand is heavily CP influenced), plus other groups called a Women Office Workers (WOW) conference.

About 250-300 women attended, mainly clerical workers who had in some way been touched by the womens movement. We had expected the major debate to be between a perapective for Affirmative Action Programs vs. trade unions. This was not the case as most women agreed that trade eunions were the necessary vehicle for organizing working women.

Elemen IS women attended, including Carol R. from Chicago. We sold a great deal of literature including 40 copies of WP.

The ex conference was set up with no discussion from the floor. However we were effective in the workshops giving the political lead in the ones we were able to cover. We focused on the questions of unioniztion and women's caucus within unions. Both ideas were responded to favorably.

We were the only sect there in any numbers and were very well received.

An ongoing organization will vome out of the conference although its conception is not yet clear. We will be part of this group pushing a rank and file perspective and that the group not see itself as an organizing committee for District 65.

We made a great many excellent contacts and the branch will be planning forums and possibly dinner discussions to bringthese contacts around.

A similar conference is planned for November 17 in St. Louis. It is sponsored by NOW, WPC,an IBT local and other groups. As it is open to men our comrades plan to attend. In addition, Carol R. will be attnding and it is planned that she will give a public talk the next day on DARE.

Similar confernces are planned for other areas but we do not have very much information on them yet.

Although it is too early to tell the full meaning or impact of these conferences, they obviously open up many exciting possibilities for us. The women's commission will organize a discussion on what these conferences mean and perspecitves for the groups coming out of them.

Also on Nov. 17, there will be a women's cpnference in Bowling Green Ohio. It is more of the old style women's conference . IS women from Cleveland and Detroit will attend. We will organize a workshop on organizing working women and attempt to make contacts among women interested in that question.

All branches and organizing committees should assign someone to correspond with the women's commission and send regular reports on women's work to us. We will attempt to send out monthly reposrts summarizing the work being done.

In struggle,
Rose Veviaka

NC AGENDA

Friday, November 23

First Session: 10:00-2:00 Black liberation

A. Analysis 2 1/2 hours
   30 minute presentation by JT, 15 minute summary; 20 minute presentation by DF, 10 minute summary
   4 minute discussion round
B. Perspectives for recruitment 1 1/2 hours
   4 minute discussion round
   10 minute presentation by JT, 5 minute summary
C. Voting

Second Session: 3:00-5:00

A. UFW Fraction
B. Informal discussion

Third Session: 7:30-10:30 Government Crisis

30 minute presentation by JG, 15 minute summary
4 minute discussion round
Voting

Saturday, November 24

Fourth Session: Workers Power Conception, audience, content 10:00-2:00

A. Report by Editor 15 minutes
B. Discussion of documents
   30 minute presentation by Rose V., 15 minute summary
   15 minute counter presentation by Kevin B., 7 minute summary
   5 minute presentation of amendments to Rose V. document by DF
   5 minute discussion round

Fifth Session: Workers Power Format, frequency, organization 3:00-5:00

A. 20 minute presentation by Rose V., 10 minute summary
   3 minute discussion round
   Voting on all WP documents
B. Motion from LA Branch on rescinding the NAC motion to limit the Bulletin contributions to 3,000 words
   10 minute presentation by SF (LA)
   2 for, 2 against, 4 minutes each
   Voting

PARTY 9pm

Sunday, November 25

Sixth Session: 10:30-2:30

A. National Secretary's Report
   20 minute presentation, 10 minute summary, 4 minute discussion round (total time 1 hr.)
B. Industrial Secretary's Report
   15 minute presentation, 7 minute summary, 3 minute round (total time 45 minutes)
C. Educational Secretary's Report
   15 minute presentation, 7 minute summary, 3 minute round (total time 30 minutes)
D. Budget Report JG
   10 minute presentation, 25 minutes discussion

ADJOURN

TWO LESSONS FROM THE 1973 CONVENTION

-- Mike P., East Bay, 7/8/73

I. On the election of NC members as Convention delegates

What has been an unfortunate tendency in recent conventions was carried to the extreme at the 1973 Convention. With the single exception of Ken P. from the Cleveland branch, no N.C. member stood for election in his or her branch. This was usually done to increase the number of people from the branch who could speak at the Convention since N.C. members who are not delegates have speaking rights.

This is a bad practice and should not be repeated. To the extent that the leadership of the organization does not run for delegates the position of delegates is devalued and the decisions made by the convention will be less respected. It makes little difference when there are hard tendency lines but where these lines are weak or nonexistant there is no reason to assume that convention votes with almost the entire NC leadership recorded as consultative only would be the same if the leadership votes counted. (Compare for example the convention delegate vote to the NC consultative vote on Candidate Membership.)

Further, the test of an NC member's leadership should be more than a "starring performance" at the Convention but the leadership provided throughout the year in the on-going activities of the branch. The failure of an NC member to be elected by his/her branch should call into question (although not decisively) the leadership he/she has given throughout the year.

The procedure to give non-delegate N.C. members voice but no vote at conventions was designed not to give NC members the right to regularly participate in Conventions without having to subject themselves to a vote. The purpose was primarily to allow NC members who were defeated in branch delegate elections to defend their policies of the past year at the Convention.

If we feel that there should be a large Convention we should not do it by distorting and abusing the N.C. voice procedure. Instead we should change the delegate ration from 1 per 5 to say 1 per 4.

II. On the political leadership of the N.C.

In chosing an appropriate and workable N.C. (and implicitly NAC) the convention could not include everyone in the organization who plays a leadership role. This meant breaking with the past conception that to not be an NC member was a denigration of the role of the particular individual not included. This conception was a reflection of the old idea that the N.C. was just another arena where the factional battle was carried on.

Now we have adopted the idea that we are electing not a collection of individuals but a body collectively charged with responsibility for overall leadership of the organization as a whole. This does not and should not mean that others not on the NC are not leaders of the organization or necessarily "rank lower" in leadership than specific individuals on the N.C. There are numerous leadership roles in the I.S. in branches, fractions, writing, education etc. all as necessary for the success of the organization as a functioning N.C.

The individuals on the NC must of course be respected as political leaders of the organization if the NC as a body is to be able to provide leadership. And, more importantly, the NC as a whole must be chosen so that it can in fact be respected as the political leadership of the organization as a whole. But the fractions, education, branch work and political writing also desperately require leadership in its real sense - taking the responsibility to formulate and initiate the political and organization direction for our work.

[illegible] I.S. [illegible] 1973
[illegible] S.F. (LOS ANGELES)

I.

There is no question that the 1973 I.S. Convention marked a positive turn in the development of our organization. However, I feel that there was not sufficient reassessment of what went wrong in our past theory and practice not for the sake of finding culprits for our past misfortunes but in order to get the maximum advantage and derive the best lessons of what admittedly was a harmful, yet necessary split. Comrades Mackenzie and Jacoby have written at some length on this matter (Mackenzie's Tasks and Perspectives and Jacoby's On the necessity to Pause for Self-Examination). Unfortunately, the Convention had no systematic discussion of this matter although there were numerous occasional comments relevant to it.

II.

Comrades have referred to the slow development of the class struggle as a key factor in the development of sectarian factionalism in the I.S. This is true and not true. There is nothing in the current objective situation which would have precluded us from being a relatively stable sect of say 300 members rather than the fratricidal group of 300 of mid-1973. Comrade Mackenzie is closer to the mark when he discusses our inability to develop a competant and well-integrated political leadership team. While subscribing to Comrade Mackenzie's discussion on this question, I would like to raise some additional suggestions for the future. First and foremost, it is essential that we redefine ourselves and aquire a different conception of who we are, of how we see ourselves and how we want others to see us. Let us determine to be an action oriented organization and not a sectarian talking shop; let us stop playing the role of the senators

and inactive critics of the revolutionary left. Let us be activists and educators while not forgetting that as Marx put it *"the educator himself needs educating"* (Third Theses on Feuerbach). I would like to suggest that our activity in the 1964 Free Speech Movement in Berkeley is a relevant model here: Hal Draper's *THE MIND OF CLARK KERR* and the ISC leaflets were the best political interpreters and educators in that historic conjuncture: that literature was sold and distributed by inside activists who retained their political independence and tried to raise the political level of the movement while avoiding the temptation of being another standing-at-the-door-newspaper-vanguard.

We must also abandon fantasy politics. I am now looking at the call for our 1969 Founding Convention. It states: *"We do not claim to be the vanguard, but we do see ourselves as a center for discussion and action stemming from a democratic revolutionary viewpoint and as a part of the future revolutionary socialist movement of the working class and its allies"*. From that we moved to something like we are part of the process by which a revolutionary party will be formed and then some of us moved (with little visible opposition) to formulations like the nucleus of the vanguard (physical analogy) and some of us talked about embryos as well (biological analogy--perhaps we would have been a fetus by the time of the 1971 convention). Did anything happen in the real world to warrant such rethorical acceleration? Not at all. We have had some modest success in "industrializing" a fair number of comrades, but very tiny growth even by the standards of the most bankrupt sects.

Something similar happened with our claims that we already were a working class organization because of our politics. Aside from the

clear substitutionist element in this formulation, the fantasy element was also striking. If we are already a working class organization why is "industrialization" such as central issue in our organization? Precisely because we are not yet a working class organization. "Industrialization" is a last resort strategy warranted by the fact that we have no roots in th working class. In this connection, Mackenzie's formulation in his 1973 Tasks and Perspectives document(page 8) marks a step forward: *"We define ourselves as a working class tendency not only because we have members in the trade unions but because of our politics..."*. I would amend this to say taht having a significant number of members who are indigenous to working class institutions is a necessary but not sufficient condition to our becoming a working class tendency. We must also develop a better conception of what is a cadre. There was a tendency in my branch, for example, to think of a cadre primarily in terms of somebody who could be articulate(glib?) and talk well. We hardly ever thought of a cadre in terms of the total functioning of comrades; that is, to develop their general organizational skills as well as their ability to speak. We rarely had discussions revieving the activity of comrades in our own and other organizations. Without falling into the Stalinist charade of "criticism and self-criticism", we must be more self-consciously critical of our practical functioning and criticize each other when that is indicated. Part of the reason we have not done so is that the I.S. has always had difficulty developing a democratic collectivist approach to working together. If somebody screws up there are no ways of holding that comrade responsible. There is little sense that we are a collective working towards a goal rather than a aggregation of individuals. There is a

lot that can be done in this area without falling into the elitist strait jackets of Lutte Ouvriere or the Bradley Amendments. For one thing I propose that Execs not only plan future membership meetings but briefly review past membership meetings and discuss what went wrong with them and what can be done to correct it in the future. Execs and branches should also review what happened at specific interventions in arenas(e.g. an important trade union meeting and what our comrades did there). The execs should also have membership reviews where at each exec meeting the work of say two individual comrades is discussed. In this way, even execs of large branches will have discussed the work of each comrade at least every three or four months.

III.

In the past many of these specific organizational proposals were met not only with substantive criticism(which is fair and proper) but with the repetitious line that *"you are not being political"*. Bernard O. and Richard L. have already dealt with this objection in their *"Proposal for Los Angeles Branch Reorganization"*. I just want to add here that this objection almost always came from comrades whose conceeption of politics was primarily oriented to talk and not action, words and not deeds. It was revealing that most of those comrades objected to the Bradley Amendments as being "mechanical" and not political. While there was an element of truth in that charge, that was not the main problem with those Amendments; instead we should have disagreed with the *substance* of the Bradley Amendments(candidate membership, requesting permission to move to another city, etc.) I think that comrade Bradley behave quite rightly in proposing a specific and concrete set of ideas to improve our functioning.

Improving our practical functioning and developing our theory and

politics cannot be counterposed; they are equally essential to our political success. We should be in a position where we can initiate things seize opportunities and point the road forward because we have both the politics and the willingness and the ability to deliver the goods. Whatever we might have done wrong in the Peace and Freedom Party that still remains as a prime example of where we acted rather than merely reacted, where we took a practical initiative based on a certain political perspective and analysis. I submit that it is no accident that that was the single largest source of recruitment to the I.S.G.-I.S. Of course, we must have priorities and we cannot do everything at once. On this I totally agree with Mike P.'s presentation at the 1973 Convention; but we must still have a goal of the kind and type of organization we want to build.

IV.

There is another organizational problem which has been ignored for too long in the I.S. We have tended to regard personal frictions among comrades as a "non-political" matter. This is not so, particularly in small groups like our branches still are. While I do not propose that our branches become sensitivity groups and that we subscribe to "touchy-feelie" politics, it would be equally wrong to continue to ignore these matters as we have done in the past. At the very least we must strive to maintain true comradely relations with each other. This means that we must *consciously* act to try to bring about such a situation. While we cannot expect comrades to always like each other, being "political" does not require that we always have to hate each other. On more than one occasion, friendly visitors to our branches meetings have remarked to me something like the following: *"Jesus, it's*

a long time since I have been to a meeting where there was such a dry and unfriendly atmosphere". And these comments were made at times and places when factional warfare was *not* happening!

There is no reason why meetings should not be lively and even exciting rather than long, painful chores. A meeting should be fast moving with brief reports on what we are *doing*. There should be less time for presentations and summaries and more time for discussions; far more often than not people already know what the point of view of the presentation-giver is, particularly if a document has been written or the matter has been previously discussed. Comrades should consciously refrain from repeating what others have said. If you feel you must go on record simply say: *"I agree with what comrade X said"*. Period. That takes about twenty seconds, saving some two minutes and forty seconds on a three minute round. Self-indulgence and exeessive ego-gratification activiites are out of place in a democratic-collectivist organization. We must aim at ending meetings by 10 p.m.(therefore the L.A. slogan: *TEN and OUT!)* so we can relax, talk to the non-members present(this is very important). If we start on time at 7:30 p.m., that leaves two and one-half hours of meeting time which is more than enough(in Britain it would have been considered very excessive!). If necessary we should penalize comrades who arrive late thus making it harder to start meetings on time; for example, they could be given two minutes to speak in a three minute round. We should be particularly hard on older and more experience comrades who should know better. We should have a different attitude towards a new inexperienced comrade who for lack of articulation rpeats what others have said. In fact, in many instances we may want to encourage that. We should discourage

the hostile or more frequently the embarassed reactions that our members often have when a newcomer says something which is not part of the I.S. vocabulary or frame of reference(e.g. attributing something to human nature). that is often in fact a golden opportunity to engage in a very meaningful and basic political dialouge with the person we are trying to influence(in turn those persons would educate and let us find out the most frequent and stubborn features of anti-Marxist "common sense").

As an experiment, I am proposing to the L.A. branch that we have "open houses" every friday night at four different comrades' homes for the four weeks of the month(if there is a fifth Friday they can go to an RSL'ers home!!). Nothing specific would be scheduled for that evening but it would be an opportunity for comrades to talk informally to each other, and to close friends of the organization. That is important in a city like L.A. where comrades somtimes meet each other only at membership meetings and have no opportunity to share in the oral tradition which is perhaps unfortunately still too important to our politics. Hopefully, this will also help to create some cohesion when there is no campus or any other single activity which can act as a focus for the whole branch. I got this idea from visiting the Coventry Leicester, Glasgow and other branches of the I.S.G.B. where comrades go to the same pub on Friday nights for no specific prupose except chatting and boozing. In fact, a lot of politics is actually "transacted" on such occasions.

V.

All members should be asked to give presentations on a variety of topics. Meetings should be planned fairly far in advance so the less

experience comrades have sufficient time to prepare the topics that they are in charge of. A cadre organization must train all of its members without exception. The very notion of "heavies" should be anathema to a revolutionary organization. Of course, this does not mean that the more experienced comrades should not help the less experience ones. The contrary is the case. What it means is that for both reasons of socialist principle and practicality, the fullest political development of each and every comrade is a top priority. And as far as I know, nobody has ever learned by not trying and not doing and by just watching others try and do. It might be that some presentations will not be as smooth and well organized as they might have otherwise been. It is then the role of the other comrades to engage in cooperative and constructive criticism and not the chop to pieces and intimidating attacks we are so used to.

We must have a lot more political disucssions in our branches! The pre-split I.S. branch in L.A. tended not to discuss politics. This might sound paradoxical for a group the majority of which ended up by seeing the rest of the I.S. as "economist" among other things. But in fact what passed for politics in this branch was frequent discussion of vague and non-directive "perspectives" for this, that and the other arena. Or at best, to engage in the most non-topical discussions of socialist theory or history. Early this year, this writer challenged the branch exec. to have a series discussing such matters as Immigration(which has never been discussed in the L.A. branch!), racism, the role of government in the unions, popular and united fronts, the Vietnam Peace Treaty, etc. None of these matters had ever been discussed in the branch. The branch upheld(by a close vote) the Exec's

decision to hold a five-week series on American labor history instead. Also while repeatedly discussing our "perspectives" for arenas very little time was spent discussing our actual functioning there. It is no accident that this writer as well as at least 3/4 of the pre-split I.S. in L.A. had no concrete idea as to the actual problems in our Teamster work, for example.

As part of our reorientation and transforming ourselves into an activist and outward looking organization we must be alot more systematic in our recruitment and work with close political friends (contacts in objectified language). Both the local and national organization should set recruitment targets which should be periodically discussed and revised if necessary. Execs should periodically dicusse our friends as a matter of high priority making a careful assessment of their potential, strenghts and weaknesses from our point of view. Specific members should be assigned to talk and work with specific close friends and to periodically report back to the Exec on it. (This would, among other things, help to make candidate membership superflous). In recruiting we should give equal priority to activism, outward orientation and non-sectariansim as well as political agreement with what the I.S. stands for. We do not want inactive and hopeless sectarians even if they are in 100% political agreement with us.

VI.

Execs should try to set up as many regional conferences as possible. For a while, thse may have to be primarily internal in orientation in order to solidify our political educaiton and to break down the perennial tendency in I.S. towards geographical factions. Also, no question should be brought to the exec's attention by either an exec or branch

member without at least a tentative solution being offered(e.g. if you want to propose a certain class or talk check beforehand whether the comrade you have in mind can do it or not and it so when). This will help to save precious time that the exec can use for more important political tasks. When non-controversial matters are brought to the exec's attention, we should develop the habit of voting on such things without debate; very often a proposal for a three-minute round is a knee-jerk reaction based on our past verbose mistraining rather than on substantive political need. Routine matters such as who is sending the mailing this week should be taken out of the exec; this can be easily accomplished through a careful division of labor within the exec and the branch. Also, having an organizer should be an early priority for branches. In my opinion, this will usually be a higher priority than having an office, for example. In electing an Exec, it will often be a good idea to elect one relatively newer member who would not normally be considered for a slate on "political" grounds alone. In other words people need to be trained for executive functions. Of course, there are many considerations in electing an exec but one of them should be to train new people rather than reelecting the same team over and over again. Naturally, if the exec is too small(like a three person exec) or there is a very divided political situation where a precise allocation of positions must be made, then the above suggestion might not be feasible. It helps a lot if exec members spend some time *before* the exec thinking and preparing for that particular exec's agenda. But of course, the most important thing an exec can do is to be ready and alert to seize political initiatives and take advantage of whatever political opportunities exist for us in the area. Sometimes, this may

include a lot of very long-range foresight and planning(e.g. organizing an independent working-class electoral campaign). Routinism can be the deadliest enemy of an expanding and politically self-confident I.S. and it must be avoided like the plague.

VII

Finally, I would like to make a series of concrete proposals to the N.A.C. and N.C.

1). That the N.A.C. and N.C. set up recruitment targets in consultation with local branches and that these targets be periodically discussed and revised if necessary.

2). That in order to facilitate the national integration of our organization, locally produced leaflets, local exec minutes and other relevant materials be included in the Internal Bulletin.

3). That there should be no word limitations on articles written for our Internal Bulletin. After we have a theoretical journal we may discuss the matter again but I'm not favorably inclined to *this* type of "administrative solution". It should be obvious that such a limitation would be very harmful in the absence of a theoretical journal.

4). That the N.A.C. and the N.C. periodically discuss the content of *WORKERS POWER*. That *WORKERS POWER* start a section entitled "opinion" or "discussion" where dissenting views held by comrades or even by a close friend of the organization should be publically ventilated. This section need not appear on every issue of the paper.

5). That our industrial and other fractions start an exchange of information and views with the equivalent fractions in the I.S.G.B. In many cases it might even be possible to develop some pratical cooperation such as our own Chrysler comrades with the Chrysler com-

rades at Ryton in Coventry and Linwood in Glasgow.

6). That the N.A.C. And T.C. more explicitly(i.e. in writing and discussion) defend its allocation of comrades to various branches and areas of the country. For example, there should be a discussion and vote on the concept of the West Coast as "feeder branches" to the Midwest(a concept which I find totally disasterous to the building of stable and politically self-confident West Coast branches). Other things to be considered in this regard include the consequences of sending too many experienced people into one branch(given the scarcity of experienced people in our organization), and whether the "colonizing" of a new city helps or hinders the process of integrating our own organization by helping to break down geographically-based tendencies. In this connection, the choice of sending T.C. comrades to Cleveland rather than to Northern New Jersey makes no sense to me. We also have to consider the problem of people who are moved by the N.O. while leaving all sorts of industrial and other close political friends behind them without a proper follow-up having been arranged. Last but not least we must keep in mind that we are very small in numbers and are limited in resources and that our survival as a *visible* political tendency must take precedence. This means that we cannot afford to allocate people and resources like a small mass party would. Such a party could look at an industrial map of the U.S. and make decisions more in accordance with the needs of the class struggle itself. We must think of political survival as a higher *priority*.

7). That the N.A.C. commission the writing of an internal pamphlet (similar to Hal Draper's *A POLITICAL GUIDE TO THE ABC OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS*) answering all the charges that have been made in

the recent past against the history of our political tendency by Spartacists, R.S.L.'ers, etc. This could be done in the form of a *"REPLY TO SLANDERS"* taking them on one by one. At least one of our most experienced comrades has already expressed interest in working on such a project. That an external pamphelt be prepared with articles from the I.S. Journal by Nigel Harris and Tony Cliff on China and Maoism, andperhaps some of our own stuff or even material written by people not in I.S.(e.g. Martin Glaberman *"MAO AS A DIALECTICIAN" International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 3, 1963).