

# NOVEMBER

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General Motors

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

"LAST GRAVE AT DIMBAZA"

This film graphically shows the unbearable conditions that are forcing black Africans to fight for their freedom no matter the odds, no matter the outcome.

Monday, October 25 at 7:30 p.m.

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**REVOLUTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA!**

is news of the month '76

for is and rt members only

## NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

This edition of "News of the Month" is the third hefty document sent out to all members in the last month. Fortunately it is the last of these. At least for the time being. The extensive production of internal political material was an inevitable by-product of coming to grips with the political crisis that faced the organisation, so it would be stupid to apologise for it. ~~xxx~~ We are acutely aware of the demands in time and effort we are making of the membership when we urge everyone to read and discuss these documents, but without them we would not be able to now think in terms of being over the worst of the demoralisation and stagnation which has characterised the IS for the past six months or so. In this "News" there is important material on the periphery campaign, the WP drive and the debate with the ISGB. All members should read it over the next week or so.

In the past month we have witnessed an extremely serious leadership crisis in the Red Tide. This came about not only as a result of the loss of both new and old cadre from the Detroit centre but because of fundamental difficulties inherent in the make-up of the remaining leadership. In short because of past political and personal differences collaboration on the RT EC was almost impossible for a period. This had the effect of immobilising the RT as an organisation for a brief period but though it is early to be sure, it does not appear that this immobilisation has done any lasting damage to the RT. It is to the credit of all involved ~~xxx~~ that when the political dangers of a paralysed leadership became clear, everyone made the necessary effort to pull things together again. We have not yet solved all the problems, there are still differences of political emphasis and method which could yet prove serious, but things are again moving in the right direction and the upcoming convention of the national RT, which by its very nature will force a clarification of the perspectives, should go a long way to providing a permanent solution to the problems.

Our work in the steel industry continues to escalate as we apply the perspectives which were laid out in the last internal bulletin. The work focuses on the campaign by Ed Sadlowski for the steel unions presidency and is based on Cleveland, Gary and Pittsburg. The Sadlowski campaign, in which we are becoming increasingly involved, is getting a real response from R&F steel-workers. Equally important, we are increasing our use of WP in the steel works and beginning to bring people around us politically as well. Next weeks WP will contain an extra four-page supplement on the steel union and industry.

Through meetings, literature, posters and most importantly the "Last Grave" film, we are now beginning to have an impact with our South Africa campaign. Following the excellent response in the auto plants, the Detroit branch has now scheduled a demonstration at the GM world headquarters under the slogan of GM out of S.A. This represents a significant expansion of this area of activity and we are now discussing to what extent, after the present Tyler tours, we can expand this work nation-wide. The EC will also be producing a more detailed briefing on the S.A. situation and there will be a major article in the first edition of the WP political magazine supplement which will hopefully be out in the first week of December. Other major articles will cover the experience of the TDC/TDU and the present situation in Portugal.

The auto contracts themselves are still not resolved. At the time of going to press there is still a possibility, particularly given the fact that there are already several plants out, that there will be a strike over the Chrysler contract. We have continued our agitation (see WP) for rejection of the Ford pattern at Chrysler and for the first time in this whole contract we ~~xxx~~ are

getting a measurable response from Chrysler workers. Last night over a hundred attended the largest CGC meeting there has been and the general feeling is that if the UAW doesn't come up with an improvement on the Ford deal then rejection is a real possibility. It is unusual for there to be this much activity around the second contract in the auto series and even if there is no national strike there will certainly be several substantial local strikes within which we will be able to operate. The fraction steering committee has produced a draft of a new, post contract perspective and that is now in the hands of local auto fractions across the country. There will be a national fraction conference in Detroit in the first week of December.

In the last month, as things have started to move in other branches, it became clear that we had worse than average problems in two branches and the EC has moved to deal with this. The two branches are Chicago (now separated from Gary as that unit did not work as a district due to distances involved) and Philadelphia. Chicago is in serious need of new forces in order to give it the weight to achieve a take-off in this largest and most important of the Mid-West cities. Philadelphia has an impossible job situation and was too small to grow without sending people in. As an area it is not vital enough to command any extra of our limited resources so we have decided that we would send as many as possible from there to Chicago as the first step towards the necessary strengthening of the Chicago branch. The decision to close down the Philly branch is the last step in the consolidation of the organisation that started in the summer with West Virginia and Sacramento. We took this decision with the same reluctance but it would be foolish to force fine comrades to carry on in what is at present an impossible situation.

As people are well aware, from the newspaper, the Gary Tyler work is back in full swing in the major cities with the rallies and demonstrations. We have not been getting the same excellent response we got on the first round, but we have not been organising failures either. The next steps, which are now being worked on in Detroit, will depend to a great extent on the result of the Nov 10th hearing in Louisiana. However it should be noted that it is unlikely that the next steps will include general joint work with the SWP. Through a strange mixture of incompetence and sectarianism they proved themselves generally incapable of working properly with us. We were fortunate in being able to prove to Mrs Tyler that this was largely the case, so despite the power the SWP have in New Orleans we should have no trouble maintaining fruitful relations with Mrs Tyler. We are sending a letter to the central committee of the SWP detailing their behaviour and asking for an explanation. We will also be putting out more internal info' on the SWP itself as this work, our steel work, etc puts us in increasing contact.

Finally, a word should be added about our relations with the ISGB. As members will have noted from the last Internal bulletin on Portugal and the two letters printed in this edition of the "News", serious differences have developed between us and the ISGB over the past few months. There is no real evidence that there is much support for the ISGB position either on Portugal or on the matters raised in their letter within our own organisation and this considerably reduces the possibility of a time-wasting and demoralising political fight. But that danger is probably the least of the problems involved. It is more likely that people will tend to exaggerate the differences, and such a course poses even greater dangers. It should be perfectly clear that these differences, though serious, are absolutely secondary and in no sense threaten our fraternal relations with the British comrades. As the leader of our international tendency they have done us great service in the past and will doubtless do so again.

GLENN WOLFE.

**I.S. MEMBERS!**

Workers' Power needs feedback on the paper. Without comments from the membership, it's impossible to improve the paper. This mailgram is for members to write back comments to the staff on the past month's issues.

At the last N.C., it was passed that organizers and N.C. members would gather feedback and write in to the staff every two weeks. So far, we have gotten only two responses. This mailgram should be used by N.C. members and organizers to fulfill this motion as well.

Far more important than criticisms from our own members, are criticisms from our periphery. That is who we are writing the paper for. So be sure to indicate whether your comments are your own, or your contacts'.

Some issues you may wish to discuss this month: **Auto coverage.** We are just concluding a campaign that involved extensive coverage in the paper. **Gary Tyler.** Including articles on the courts, Hurricane Carter and the Scotsboro case. **Election coverage.** A seven-part series plus the pull-out special. **Dixon Pyles scoop.** Exposing Carter's ties to the white businessmen out to smash the NAACP in Port Gibson. **South Africa coverage.** Steel campaign is just beginning. **UPS East Coast strike.** Letters campaign.

Let us know what you liked and what you didn't. What was useful with contacts, what fell flat. Feedback is key to improving the paper.

All you need to do is fold this mailgram, staple it and put it in the mailbox. Send it in today!

Thanks,  
Workers' Power

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Since we began the circulation drive on the paper almost two months ago there has been a real boost in circulation and in use of the paper. Nothing tremendous, but the improvement has been there. I have been in touch with more of the branch organizers and WP coordinators than I used to. However, there still needs to be more communication.

Still only about half of the branches are sending in sales reports. This we hope will improve over the next several weeks. These reports represent more than just numbers to us. As we put them all together we are able to notice trends. For instance, the trend now is for increased sales in many of the branches with a small but building readership in steel.

Several branches in particular are taking more papers now and selling more since the circulation drive began. They are: Cleveland, Detroit, Springfield, Indianapolis, New York and Pittsburgh. On any number of occasions these and other branches have ordered extra papers for particular events. There is clearly a trend not only to sell more papers but to go out and campaign with the paper where it is possible.

Community sales are continuing in a number of branches. These branches are: Seattle, Portland, Indianapolis, Springfield and Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh is the newest member of this group and they have been doing a lot of work to build community sales. For instance, they took 2,000 copies of WP #182, many of which were passed out in the communities that they are working in.

Subscriptions continue to come in but could come in much faster. During the period of the auto campaign we have gotten about 25 UAW subs. A number of the branches are still taking the subscription forms and getting them out. If your branch needs some order them soon.

One very good indicator on improved use of the paper has been the creative suggestions that we have been receiving. Letter grams for NC members, pre-paid sub forms on post card stock, and a variety of stickers are just some of the ideas that we have been receiving. Our print shop is expanding and we will be working on as many of these ideas as possible.

The financial situation of the paper has stabilized somewhat. This means that we are still short money every week. A number of branches continue to send in no money on their Workers' Power bills. Comrades should be reminded that one of the conditions for going to a 16 page paper is a better flow of cash. It would cost more to produce and more to print.

I would like to finally mention that the branches have not been contributing enough to the IS page. In particular there has been a lack of reports for the page on how your branch is using the paper. If you or your branch has been doing something good with the paper write it up and send it in.

In general we think the quality of the paper is on the upswing and the branches have been responding by selling it more and using it more in their work. Let's keep this trend up.

Tom Dougherty

WORKERS' POWER LETTER SCOREBOARD

ISSUE #	#178	#179	#180	#181	#182
Branches:					
Austin, TX	1				
Cleveland			1		
Detroit		1		1	2
Louisville			1		
Los Angeles	1	1	1		
New York		1			
Portland		1			
Fractions:					
Teamsters		2	1		
UAW				1	1
CWA		1	1		
Steel				1	
WAR	1		1		
Prisoners	2			1	
Miscellaneous	1		1		2

Members 70% Non-members 30%

The letters page has improved dramatically since the last scoreboard was published--but it is not good enough. There are two problems that remain.

FIRST, the majority of the letters have to be solicited from the center. This has to change. The letters page has to reflect the range of I.S. branches and fractions, including the smaller ones.

The letters do not come in spontaneously, and it may be a long time before they do. That is why it is crucial that organizers and fractions start taking responsibility for getting the letters in.

SECOND, we are not getting enough letters from contacts. Only 30% of the letters in the last five issues were from contacts.

Using the letters page is to your advantage. It can be an organizer. It can make your work better.

For example, if you get a contact to write in to the paper, it will make them feel closer to the organization when it is published.

Letters can be used to back up political points made in the paper. Many people complain that some of the articles in WP are assertions that are not substantiated with facts. A letter can be used to substantiate coverage in the paper.

For example, many people were reporting back to the WP staff that the coverage of Detroit cops and gangs was confusing and unclear. So the Women Against Racism fraction got a contact to write in on this issue. To have a black woman from the city verify our position, gives us a lot more credibility.

Also, there is a space crunch in the paper. But we have decided to continue to run the letters page in every issue (though it may not be a full page each week). Since we have so few letters coming in, virtually every one is published (though they may be shortened). So the letters page is a great place to get your ideas and small news items published!

Elissa C. for W.P.

1. There has been steady and recognizable progress in WP. Much of this is the product of the greater integration of various leadership bodies into the development of WP coverage, and much is due to the increasing seriousness with which the organization is again taking the paper. Many problems still remain however. The purpose of these reports is to keep the organization abreast with the improvements in the paper and also to make the organization knowledgeable about the unresolved problems.

2. The following bodies with greater and lesser success are now discussing WP coverage as part of their regular meetings. (Greater and lesser success refers to true individual bodies and not true process itself - which is proving to be quite successful.)

The bodies are: The EC, the auto fraction steering committee, black commission plus Kay, the WP industrial sub-committee which consists of Kim, Jack W, Jim, Fritz and Gay.

3. One of the first problems we attempted to deal with following the NC was the question of balance. In terms of the four types of political ideas outlined in the NC document, we felt that WP did relatively well, with topical political issues and did as best we could in terms of true ideas that move the movements forward. (This refers to the balance of the issue, not the content). Where we felt the paper had been doing a poor job was the question of socialist education and transitional ideas.

In going through the regular coverage demanded by the ongoing work of the organization and the campaigns of the organization it quickly became apparent to all of us that we had a severe space problem. In each issue besides the regular departments: Domestic politics, International coverage, Labor, Black and minorities. Women, youth, IS News, Reviews and letters we have recently had the following campaigns that demand regular space: Elections, Auto, Steel, Portugal, S. Africa and Gary Tyler. (Teamsters, Telephone and P.O. are included under general labor coverage, at this point.)

When we added Socialist education, anti capitalist material and broader social questions we came to at least 14 pages.

Clearly we will have to move to 16 pages down the road to solve the overwhelming space crunch. However the circulation and use of the paper does not yet justify that kind of expansion. But part of the motivation for increasing the use of WP should include the notion of the possibility of a better paper. A good example of how much better an issue can be in terms of breadth is the 16 pages that included the election special.

In the meantime we have to cut back somewhere. In addition to editing out repetition even more ruthlessly we will do the following: reviews will alternate with specific socialist educational material. The IS News page will appear bi-weekly, not weekly. The letters page will alternate between 1 page and  $\frac{1}{2}$  page on weeks when the IS News page appears.

To improve coverage where it is now deficient American Dream will return, and TAS - written mainly to the Red Tide, will also begin shortly on a regular basis. These two features plus an unending search for ways to make all sections of the paper more political should go a long way in improving WP.

4. Another severe problem we have not solved yet is the question of staff. WP is severely understaffed and functioning with part-time and temporary labor. We have openings for two people on staff. The first is a political



The branch is doing excellent work on all fronts. A ~~grx~~ branch political life greater than the sum of our fractions now exists. After some adjustments the exec is beginning to function as the collective branch leadership. A weekly branch education program for newer members and close contacts has been launched. WP sales have gone from 1 sale at UPS and distribution to a few contacts, to plant sales at Steel, Auto, PO, UPS as well as a more systematic approach to contact sales. We are also making it a priority to get letters from contacts and new members.

In steel, we are active in three plants. We recently helped put out a district paper, sponsored by 18 union members. Our strategy is now to put the newspaper on the back burner and put all of our energy into the Sadlowski campaign. This means building "fight back" groups in our locals, organizing around the upcoming local nominations for president, and pushing groups to be active in local plant issues. The prospects are excellent. At present, 15 steel workers receive WP on a semi-regular basis. Our goal is to regularize sales, solidify a periphery, and to hold an IS event on our perspectives for work in steel sometime in early January.

In Teamsters, we have re-organized the national fraction, which will allow us to make better use of our limited resources. There has been a good response to the local r&f paper, SpeakOut. A local TDU steering committee was recently elected, which will expand the core of people taking responsibility for local work. We are floating the idea of a campaign around ~~the~~ elected stewards. Red-baiting is still an issue locally, but it has not escalated significantly. We plan to hold an IS/IBT event in November. Besides carrying out a local agitational campaign, our priority tasks over the next few months are to re-establish a regularly meeting local fraction, find roles for less public IS/IBT members, and recruit to the IS.

Approximately 15-20 attend local Gary Tyler meetings (the majority h.s. students). We have been doing mass leafleting of high schools as well as neighborhood and plant distributions of leaflets to build the Cleveland rally for GT. If all goes well we expect a turnout of 150+ when Mrs. Tyler comes to town. We will also hold a picket line/demo at the Federal Bldg. in Cleveland the following week, on Nov. 6.

We have done some work around S. Africa. The response to our showing of the Last Grave was quite good. However, we had no follow up. We are showing the film at a number of high schools where we have contacts on Oct. 26-28. Along with the Red Tide we are discussing plans for a demo in Jan, at a Cleveland bank which is selling A. African gold coins.

The Red Tide in Cleveland has 10 members. Progress has been made in developing a stable leadership for the group. We have contacts and members in a number of high schools. The activity of the RT is currently built around Gary Tyler, educationals, and social events. Plans include the more systematic use of the paper, a recruitment drive, and work around S. Africa after the first of the year.

Last but not least, the women's caucus has begun meeting again, to discuss ways of bringing women around the IS and explaining our perspectives for women's liberation.

Out of all this work we have a range of contacts. Our most immediate prospects for recruitment are younger workers, most of whom are not in our priorities. In the next period we will recruit our first black members. It is not yet clear yet what adjustments this will require.

We have organized a number of branch events for contacts. We are trying a number of different approaches: Public forums featuring a movie and speaker, aside ~~from~~ Last Grave which had a good turnout we will be showing Union Maids in early December. We are also doing monthly pot lucks at members' homes. At our first, we showed the Inheritance, and had a party afterwards. Everyone dug it. At our next one in Nov. we'll show either the Death of Fred Hampton or the Salt of the Earth. The steel and IBT fractions will be holding events for contacts in their unions. We have recruited 2 members recently. If things continue on their present course, both our membership and our periphery should

"heavy". That is someone with years of political experience and an ability to write. The second is essentially a production job. However here too, we would prefer someone with some political experience. Experience in writing layout and other production skills is helpful but not necessary. If anyone is interested or has a suggestion for who might be interested please contact me.

5. Only 2 NC members have sent in reports on WP. The NC passed a motion that NC members would report every two weeks. This goes for organizers as well. Elsewhere in this News of the Month is a mailgram to be used for that purpose - please do so.

GAY SEMEL

## LOUISVILLE BRANCH REPORT OCTOBER 1976

In the last month the branch has seen several changes in personnel. Two members, including the former organizer, left for a new branch. Two comrades from other branches have moved here, one of them the new organizer. In the last period 2 black comrades were recruited through the Gary Tyler work. And in the last month we recruited a freight driver and TDU activist.

The branch is on an upswing, having bottomed out a few months ago. Important gains have been made in two key areas of work: black work and Teamsters; but in both areas the gains are fragile. They must be consolidated and built on quickly. In our other areas of work: phone co., women's caucus, and Workers' Power, we are setting out with a fairly clean slate.

Our black work committee consists of 4 ISers and 8 RTers. Our biggest gains in the area of education have been made in this committee. The Basic Education Series is well on the way in the black caucus. Educationals on southern Africa in the committee have made it possible for our black comrades to lead the branch in discussions at branch meetings. The most immediate task of the black work committee is organizing a Free Gary Tyler rally and forum on "Fighting the Growing Racist Movement" on Nov. 6. Community sales of WP in the black community are just getting underway; we have yet to report any results.

In Teamsters, our biggest gain has been the recruitment of a freight driver. In our rank and file work, many things have been tried in the attempt to build a local TDU chapter without much result. Now the Teamster fraction is initiating, with the help of local Teamster activists, a TDU newsletter with the first issue slated for November. In regards to the new UPS recruitment drive, we are in very good position. UPS has launched a full-scale attack on the Louisville hub. As this hub has one of the strongest UPSurge chapters in the country, the attack is of national significance. We will be doing all we can as TDUsers and as ISers to help the local UPSurge in its fight. Also, our WP sales at UPS are quite good, so we will probably be holding a WP social for UPS workers.

In phone work our situation is much shakier. We are not strong enough to serve as a real pole of attraction at this time. We will be trying to build strike sentiment with the issue of the strike fund. This will help us test the water for publishing a newsletter that can present a clear alternative.

As elsewhere, the women's caucus here died in the last year. Part of our periphery campaign plan is the reinstating of dinner or after-dinner discussions to be geared toward our women contacts and RT women, with an aim to recruitment to the IS. We now have a women's convenor to lead this work. Also, we have just started the Basic Education Series with 3 women contacts.

Our Periphery Campaign Perspectives, in a nutshell, are: 1) Kickoff with Gary Tyler rally and forum. We hope to get at least 50 people. We're building for a larger crowd, but we don't know how much the falling back of the GT campaign will affect our ability to build the rally. 2) Building on industrial and community sales of WP. Campaign to get members and contacts to write both articles and letters for the paper. Use of the paper to recruit and build a periphery, especially at UPS. 3) Women's Caucus discussions to be geared toward political contacts. 4) 3 day blitz on the Revolution in southern Africa with forum and showings of "Last Grave" on Dec. 3, 4, & 5.

Christina

L.A. BRANCH REPORT - OCT. 1976

There has definitely been an increase in activity on the part of most members in the past month. The IBT fraction has adopted a perspective for involving Teamster activists in fraction-sponsored mini-forums, the first of which will be held on Nov, 6. In addition it is streamlining its functioning so that it will meet once every two weeks rather than weekly, although this is subject to change. The general stress is on integrating our trade union practice with our political theory. TDU has great prospects at the present time, two TDCers are running for trustees in Local 692 on a TDU program and to build the TDU. TDU is beginning to relate to other crafts in LA such as beer and grocery. The next big event is a TDU Founding meeting on Nov. 13, with Pete Camaratta here to speak and hold a press conference. We think this will come off very well with hard work. We are succeeding in our perspective of developing a hard core leadership in TDU although there is still much room for improvement.

The auto work is at a much lower level, given the failure of the CGC campaign and our isolation in the plant. The Exec. is currently working out the perspectives there with the hope that we can continue that work on a realistic basis.

The Gary Tyler work is having its ups and downs, reflecting some of the problems that some of the national leaders of the GT committee have had with groups like the OL. There are suspicions of political groups which affects our ability to function. The fractions is trying to deal with this, at the same time we go forward and build the rally of Nov. 10 and begin to mobilize high school students. In CAPA, where we have a limited presence, we are beginning to establish a relationship with one of its most important and most political activists who is leading a defense movement and is the leader of a collective which takes politics seriously. He has invited us to enter into a series of discussions with the collective. We are now setting this up. The main questions seem to be 1. the working class, 2. black liberation, and 3. China, Cuba, etc. The GT fraction is still in the process of formulating a clear perspective toward its work, especially with respect to how to bring the IS forward.

Finally, the exec. has undertaken a limited perspective toward AFSCME on the UCLA campus, where we have one member and a few contacts working. An initial union organizing meeting attracted only around 10 people, but there was some enthusiasm on the part of key people in important shops.

With respect to internal functioning and WP sales, there has been some progress, and some stagnation. The Women's Caucus has been meeting regularly and now includes almost every woman in the branch. Its last meeting discussed how to prepare for a branch discussion on black women, to be held in December and how to coordinate a regional conference on women in Jan. with the Bay Area women's caucus. The convenor of the LA caucus has written a letter to the national Women's Commission requesting that an industrial women leader of the IS come to take part in the conference.

The area of greatest weakness in the branch is in the use of WP. Even though there are some individual standouts in the branch the overall circulation of the paper is small, nor has the branch arrived at a political conception for how the paper can be most effectively used. This is the fault of the Exec. and the organizer, but we are now beginning to deal with it in branch meetings.

## New Jersey Branch Report

The periphery campaign came just in time for the N. J. branch. We had just completed the first stage of establishing ourselves as a new branch and were preparing for the next step.

We succeeded in the initial period in getting some key jobs and organizing ourselves internally. We had some external activities, such as a forum about UPSurge and a Gary Tyler demo that never came off. However, as a whole, the branch was isolated and internally oriented. WP sales were non-existent except at UPS and contact work was haphazard.

Now we know that we can generate contacts aggressively by turning the branch outward.

We held a successful forum on southern Africa attended by about 20 contacts, mostly students, about half Black. We met a student group at a community college which wants to do Gary Tyler and southern Africa work.

We also held a dinner to discuss the TDU convention. A small group of UPSers came and decided to take another stab at putting together an UPSurge newsletter and also to hold monthly dinner meetings to discuss Teamster politics. This is seen as a low-level activity that could attract freight people and develop into a TDU chapter. Some of these people are probably recruitable.

The branch is now going all out to build the East Coast Rank and File Conference on November 13. This will be an all day spectacular event running the full range of our politics and including a film, a catered dinner, and a disco. It will cost \$10.00 to get in. Initial signs are that we picked the right approach - presenting an impressive event forces people to take it ~~more~~ seriously. Ticket sales are forcing us to organize the contact work.

After the conference we will evaluate our progress and target small group meetings for our best prospects. We are confident that we can recruit significantly by the end of the year.

## Pittsburgh Branch Report

This has been a period of rapid changes, with the branch growing from 8 to 16 since Convention. Concurrently, we have developed from a branch with external work real only in teamsters to one with rapidly developing work in steel, the black community and Red Tide. Along with this, a new branch organizer and a new RT organizer.

The immediate tasks facing the branch are: centering itself politically, developing a sense of common political movement, overcoming the political separation between the IS and our external work, overcoming the internal separations between the political activity of the several arenas, and tapping the leadership potential of all comrades.

The solutions are not merely programmatic. It is not a matter of getting ship-shape and presentable before coming out. We are already out--and out there is where our politics are shaped and made workable. Unless there is political consistency from one arena to another the branch cannot generalize from its experience, nor can it avoid making that lack of focus and movement a part of the integration of new members. The tremendous straining of resources necessary for teamster work may have made this uneven development more pronounced, but it has also given us the lessons on building a party which only a real test could provide. That Pittsburgh is not unique is demonstrated by the political direction of the NC.

The prospects here are excellent. We are in a position of expanding an existing periphery--and recruiting from it. In order to do that, as well as meet the training needs of everyone, we are working out a program which recruits ourselves as well as our periphery, and which trains us politically and practically at the same time. Branch and fraction meetings will continue to be by special invitation, but a very broad invitation will be extended on almost everything else. What would have been internal ed will be external. Rather than once in a blue moon massive forums with small attendance, we will be having many smaller public events. The menu will be varied and interesting (films, workshops, discussions, classes, day schools, etc), and an attractive schedule of events will be given out widely, including a brief and tantalizing description of each. Arrangements may be made for childcare, and various sessions will be rerun for different shifts. By scheduling well in advance comrades will have a chance to prepare longer, not only to do a better job, but to learn how to teach what they've learned. A sample schedule: How to fight redbaiting; How to chair a meeting; The party; Women & the party; National minorities & the party; How to ~~focus~~ give a speech; a movie; Garbage collection under socialism; MFA, TDU/ UPSurge, SADLOWSKI: Some lessons on building the r&f movement; Teamo fraction day school: how to organize your high school: etc. The revised BEP will be used with new members and interested contacts. Larger events, such as a forum/film on South Africa, will be integrated into and built on the arena work, i.e., Gary Tyler defense work, RT organizing, WP community sales, etc.

The development of concrete local perspectives, which carry the political line of the NC on WP, periphery building and mass work, is going on in each fraction and caucus. The intent is to make our practice more scientific, to develop a less ad hoc view of our work, and to systematically integrate all comrades into the work by way of participating in the decisions which they must implement.

The Women's Caucus is a part of the above programs. It has been stagnant for some time. With women making a majority of the branch its revitalization is essential, especially as its possibilities for external work are already waiting.

Our next branch report will assess the political impact and progress of these perspectives.

AUSTIN BRANCH REPORT - OCT. 1976

Austin has a small but enthusiastic group. We consist of 4 members and one dues-cheater. Three former members, wuit and moved away before the summer. Our periphery's very small -- some people in NAM, some Univ. of Texas clerical workers, a law student, a grad student in soc. Welfare.

Activity level zero during the summer. We've been meeting every single week since then. We've has three meetings of our budding women's caucus. We are planning the following activities:

On Nov. 5, a joint forum on Portugal with the local NAM chapter, which is pretty friendly. We plan to devote quite a bit of time to political preparation for this event, as NAM here is pretty soft on the PCP. There are only 5 of us, and they expect to turn out 35 people. We have ordered lit to sell there, and are putting out seperate publicity on the event.

In late Nov/Dec. we'd like to show Last Grave at Dimbaza together with black groups both at UT and at the community college.

WP sales--We have asked that our order be upped from 10 to 25. We'll then take up UPS. We'll be selling at Telephone, to contacts and the local bookstores, hopefully branching into some of the 6 freight places before too long. We were hassled at the phone company, we've now made friends with the Lawyer's Guild and the ACLU--should be OK.

Gary Tyler --We are contacting the SWP this week, to check out the possibility of joint work.

Women;s Caucus is only 3 women. Since we are so small, we will specialize in three areas: reading and discussion on: history and theory of women's movement - abortion - and working women.

Texas is open shop. Lots of runaway shops are here. Wages are incredibly bad - "SKILLED WORK, GOOD PAY: \$2.55 an hour!" At the same time the utility rates are second only to New York. Working Class is pretty weak, union consciousness pretty low. Scabbing and sellouts pretty common in strikes.

## BOSTON BRANCH REPORT

Until mid-September, the branch had few industrialized members, none of whom were in priority industries. Largely because of this weakness the branch did not suffer the kinds of demoralization that hit other branches; we were forced early on to professionalize the branch, to pick our shots and to celebrate small but cumulative victories. The branch was organized in the Summer of 1975 as a cadre organization around the politics of the "Turn" document, committed to industrialization and building the beginnings of a rank and file movement in New England. Where we didn't have cadre or contacts, we built from the outside, primarily around selling and writing for WP. This was done as an interim strategy, not as a replacement for industrialization, but because it was necessary in beginning to establish a presense. Given the enormous structural weaknesses of the New England economy, the lack of any militant union traditions, the small size of the black population, the petit-bourgeois composition of the remnants of the student left (there are more "study groups" in Boston than any other area, we estimate)-with all this, we have been successful to date. It was the weaknesses of Boston that forced us to be more professional than an older, ostensibly more successful branch. We hope we have learned the mistakes of the last period, and will not repeat them at a time when the branch is now industrializing and trying to cover all the bases it once did. The problem now is how not to overstretch ourselves and demoralize comrades precisely at the point the national organization is correcting these past imbalances.

IBT-The fraction organized in late August a a successful TDU meeting, with Mel and Anne speaking; TDU was reconstituted out of that meeting. Two IBTers went to the TDU founding convention, and came away committed to building TDU. Fraction members join the local UPS hub picket line 3 times a week. The current strike is a golden opportunity to talk politics and strategy with people who have never bought the paper before (WP has been sold at UPS since Christmas) as well as further solidify and deepen our relationship with regular buyers. The strike facilitated both IS and TDU work, creating a periphery for the branch, and a following for TDU. A comrade from Detroit IBT, and to a lesser extent, a non-IS West Coast TDuer, who were vacationing in New England, gave us a lot of help and ideas. Because of the access to UPSers the strike created, we were finally successful in getting a regular WP reader to take bundles of UPSurge into the main Boston barn. We are integrating new UPS contacts into the existing but fragile New England TDU UPSurge network.

UAW-Several comrades have been placed in Auto. When new hiring began, the entire branch, and a number of contacts applied. 300 new workers were hired, out of 4000 applications filed. Unfortunately, the place is something of a sectarian zoo, with at least the OL there besides us. The CGC leaflet on the contract was distributed, and we are organizing a free giveaway of the best WPs on Auto as an introduction to the paper for the new shift.

Postal Fraction-The Boston Rank and File Postal Worker group, after a summers doldrums, is being reorganized. Once again, no one in the branch is in the PO, and our contacts, while committed to the PO paper, are not close to joining; the work suffers because of it. The core of the group are people we met during the Postal campaign. While plans for a local newsletter need pumping up again, the paper is distributed by the postal workers themselves at six centers, including the GPO and the main Postal center.

Gary Tyler-Red Tide Fraction-The branch has not been successful in getting a permanent high school constituency for the GT committee, hence both GT and RT work are stalled. The committee has been active, and successful on individual projects. A bake sale netted over \$100, with most of the goods contributed by contacts (For what they're worth, branches should try bake sales-contacts will often bake goods who won't give money or come to meetings). With the SWP (NSCAR) we're holding a GT rally on Nov 6, and an event with Mrs Tyler on the 18-19.

International Work-At present this is largely work around Southern Africa. We sponsored a forum on SA in late September, that drew upwards of 100 people, almost half



(2)

of whom were black. While financially successful, it suffered from a lack of clarity about both IS's specific analysis of the permanent revolution in Africa, and any sense of how to build a Solidarity movement. Toward the end, organization began to get sloppy, allowing the Sparts to do their legendary martyr-thing, but this was secondary to the lack of coordination on the national level. Still, we sold out the house, and were the first group in Boston to show "Last Grave...", have a ZANU speaker (who praised the IS) and a competent IS speaker (Paul). We hadn't had a public meeting since late Spring, and we were rusty. The meeting was nominally co-sponsored by the SA Solidarity Committee, a catch-all support group, to which the comrade in charge of International work represents the branch.

Women's Caucus-The caucus is sponsoring a series of monthly dinners, with films and speakers. The next topic, for the end of Oct. is "Women and Apartheid," and Last Grave will be shown.

Branch Educationals-Partly in response to the periphery campaign, and following the model of the Women's Caucus, we are reorganizing the educationals and branch meetings. Branch meetings will continue for 2 hours maximum, then break for 15 minutes and reconvene as a substantial educational session to which contacts are invited. The stress will be on both those things comrades need to know, and those things that would serve as a vehicle for regular invitations to political collaborators. The present program is to run through Christmas, and will then be evaluated.

New Jersey Rank and File Conference-The New York District Comrades are organizing a conference for November 13th. This is a priority for the branch, and we hope to bring a number of UPS contacts.

Jobs Committee-Last Spring, we set up a committee to both familiarize itself with the political economy of New England, and ruthlessly hunt down job openings in priority industries and unions. It has been forced to consider non-priority industries in the interim, in order to give comrades credible work records. In so far as the present branch breaks into IBT, it will be due largely to the efforts of the jobs committee.

BOSTON. EXEC

### CHICAGO BRANCH REPORT

The two Chicago branches (Auto and Teamsters) have been combined into one branch. It proved difficult for the two small separate branches both to organize themselves internally and carry out external work. One tended to have no external work but a good branch life, while the other collapsed as a branch under the pressure of external work (esp. Marquette Park Campaign).

The former district committee covering the Chicago and Gary branches has also been dissolved. Given the distance between Chicago and Gary, the Gary branch became a separate branch with its own independent branch life and the district committee became in fact a Chicago exec. The two branches now coordinate activities through the district organizer and there is not felt to be a need for a separate District executive body.

### BRANCH WORK

With the splitting off of the Gary branch, the Chicago branch is now back to the size it was a year ago. Work in auto and teamsters remains at a very low level, with activity involving a few individual contacts, though getting several members jobs in those industries may give us new opportunities. The best opening in our industrial work at this point is in the PO where we have met a small group of PO workers interested in the RANK AND FILE PO WORKER, some of whom are also contacts of the IS.

The work with the most potential in Chicago is currently that around the Red Tide. The building of the Chicago RT was, with the founding of the Gary steel work, the most important advance of the Chicago branch in the past year. It ended our almost total political isolation from the black community. In the past two months following the Marquette Park campaign, however, the RT has floundered somewhat, lacking a workable perspective for external campaigns. The periphery established in West Englewood has drifted away, but not to the point where it cannot be drawn ~~xxxxx~~ back through the Gary Tyler and South Africa work. The link between what is happening in South Africa and the US was explicitly made in the Marquette Prk. marches. It remains for us to follow up more aggressively on the work begun. The IS periphery campaign will clearly also have to be a RT periphery campaign ~~xxxxx~~ or we stand to lose our hard won opening in the black community.

### PERIPHERY CAMPAIGN

There are two key tasks for the branch in building a periphery. The first is to establish a regular branch political life that can be used to consolidate our small and scattered existing periphery of trade union contacts and movement activists. To do this the branch has reorganized the branch meetings, set up an educational program that can include contacts and a program of IS branch forums.

The branch forums will be on a ~~xxxx~~ smaller scale than public WP forums, will include showings of movies and slide shows and will be held in the Chicago IS office. There are proportionately a ~~xxxx~~ large number of politically experienced comrades in the Chicago

branch and they, working with the branch/exec, are responsible for giving the forums.

The second task in building a periphery is to begin establishing The Chicago IS as a political force in the city through its involvement in broader struggles and through giving the IS a political presence. Given the size of the city, the number of competing left groups and the current limited resources of the branch, our efforts here have to be focused and somewhat modest. We are concentrating on The R work in West Englewood, with the IS basically providing back up to the RT. The Gary Tyler high school work is being centered in West Englewood and limited almost completely to the South Side (the largest black working class section of Chicago. Public forums will also be centered in West Englewood, the first WP/RT forum being on South Africa, with the film Last Grave at Dimbaza. We plan it as the first in a series of public forums in Englewood, hopefully working in conjunction with other groups in the community.

CHICAGO EXEC

## NEW YORK 1 BRANCH REPORT

In NY 1, we still must measure progress in relative terms: we've made progress, but there's a long way to go before we are objectively in good shape. Meetings are now held in a more informal, relaxed style; educationals are held as dinners; there are a series of activities at last set up which contacts can be invited to and which project a sense of an organization doing more than just holding meetings.

The Gary Tyler fraction has been working with a few potential Red Tide contacts, although that work goes slowly. The high schools students are hesitant and new to politics; the objective conditions are very much unlike those in Detroit, which tends to heighten their reluctance to raise militant issues. Our picnic early in the fall was rained out, which did little for demoralization; a modest Gary Tyler rally on the 6th. will be a help right now. As one of the key members of the fraction is now quite ill, we are having to search to find a new way of keeping these young contacts close to us. Going directly inside the high schools with the campaign, perhaps with the Gary Tyler film, is one possibility. We'll see.

The postal fraction, after some initial problems in organization and delays in putting out the paper, seems to have shaped up sufficiently where leaflet distribution, selling of the WP, and the use of the national postal paper are now all being done smoothly. A little original hesitancy on developing a campaign core has given away to some optimism as small actions suggesting anger over speedup--the big national issue--seem to be occurring. We have our fingers crossed here.

The CWA fraction is pretty quiet right now. There are few contacts, and those around us often go to night school. Nevertheless, the fraction members express optimism that they will get some of their contacts to events and much closer to the organization over the coming months. Sales of WP remain pretty low here, however, and the objective conditions inside are not yet very encouraging for the contract campaign.

The branch has been slow in coming around to taking the Workers' Power drive very seriously. With the exception of just a few members, most of the branch has not sold regularly. There has also been an unwillingness or an inability to get any contacts to write letters to the paper, attempt to develop articles, etc. The exc. has discussed this, and the comrade in charge of the work has approached it seriously. We expect this problem to end over the coming month--better sales, a few letters, and an article or two do not seem impossible tasks.

In short, it is a critical time for the branch. Objective conditions are not exciting inside the fractional arenas. Work is still scattered, although there is now enough of it for modest activity throughout the branch. But we have yet to demonstrate the consistency of effort that a smooth-functioning branch could have under even bad times.

## THE PERIPHERY CAMPAIGN.

It has become clear in the last couple of weeks that the periphery campaign, which was first launched over six weeks ago, is now finally getting into its stride. The delay was not caused by incompetence, either in the branches or at the centre, rather it was the product of the fact that the clear political basis for the campaign did not generally emerge until after the October NC discussions and the discussions of documents that followed in the branches. No shift of direction can be undertaken successfully unless the political motivation for it is clearly understood throughout the organisation.

There are several consequences to this late start...and it is only a start so far. Firstly, it is now clear that the original timing of the drive was too tight. It was due to last until the last week of November but will now be extended to the end of the year. Secondly, the idea we had that there would be a breathing space, however short, between the periphery campaign and our initiatives in the new year was mistaken. Not only because of the change in timetable but also because in a very real sense the periphery campaign represents a change in our method of operation which will have to be maintained, even if at a slightly less intense level, not only into the new year, but for the foreseeable future. Thirdly, the time that has elapsed in getting things moving has generally been well used by the branches. From the very beginning we stressed that this campaign involved a flexible approach which left the branches with plenty of room for their own initiatives. People have taken the original list of suggestions, added to them, and put together a program which does not necessarily use every suggestion, but is designed to fit the particular circumstances under which our members are operating.

This development will greatly aid not only the effectiveness of the campaign, but also the creation of a stronger leadership at different levels of the organisation. To help this development further, this article is designed to ~~xxx~~ spread the ideas of different branches to the whole organisation so that branches may learn off each other and not just from the centre or from their own experience. The material to write this article was taken from the incomplete file of branch perspectives for periphery building. The National Organiser will follow this up in a couple of weeks with a concrete report on progress which will not only go into ideas but also performance. This will enable branches to concentrate in the last few weeks of the official campaign on ideas that have proved successful in other areas in developing a political periphery.

As we expected, WP is in most cases at the centre of the periphery drive. Virtually all the branches are now making progress in using the paper more consistently, and thus increasing circulation. Getting more letters and articles for the paper, and thus improving its quality and usefulness to the organisation. And discussing the content of the paper and the changes the centre is making in WP, thus improving the level of political discussion in the branches. This is all to the good, a real step forward, but it is only the beginning. WP is going to become more and more central over the next period and members should carefully read the other articles in this edition of news of the month on the question of WP.

Less widely, but with great success, branches have been using the question of South Africa, and particularly the "last Grave" film to develop our periphery. In some cases, Detroit particularly, this initial propaganda work is now changing to concrete solidarity work, and the response of black workers has been very encouraging. We will be producing much more material on this

The new initiatives we have taken ~~around~~ around the Tyler case and the development of clearer perspectives for our Red Tide branches, have also very much aided the periphery campaign, bringing around us on a clear political basis scores of new friends and contacts. Indeed there is a general lesson becoming apparent which goes beyond the bounds of the RT. As we push our revolutionary politics more aggressively and creatively in our established areas of work, it is amongst the young workers that we are getting the best response. It follows that there must be a ~~new~~ conscious effort by branches and fractions to take advantage of that fact.

The following are some of the ways branches are creatively implementing the campaign. Often the initiative mentioned is being tried not only in the branches named, but in other places too. Every activity of every branch cannot be listed here. We give some branch names so that organisers who wish to get direct advice on the campaign from each other will be able to get in contact.

In terms of the type of activities being run, Pittsburg probably put it best when they said their aim was to offer "a varied menu". This idea of a series of different things being available, small forums, films, slide shows, workshops, discussions, classes, day-schools, debates, etc is central to a successful campaign. It also follows that we are talking about many things going on all the time. Not everyone, even members, will be involved in every event nor will we run many "show-case" events which take months to pull-off and often have only limited advantages. A plan which prevents, often for several weeks, branches from holding other regular political events is a bad plan.

The conscious development of a social dimension to our political events is another must in this campaign. Chicago, for example, understands this dimension well and are even making plans to re-decorate their office so that it can be a more hospitable place for meetings and events. At the end of the day it is these small, nitty-gritty considerations which make the difference between success and failure. Also in Chicago they are attempting to set up a sort of political events ctte. This flows not only from an understanding that the best plan in the world is useless unless there is a mechanism for carrying it out but also from a need to involve those members who are not in areas central to our industrial work.

Cleveland, with more advanced industrial work than most of our branches, is attempting to move forward by organising specific IS events for their main fractions, teamster and steel. This reflects an understanding that in the past our fractions have all too readily fallen into being unpolitical units of the organisation. In LA, they are coming to terms with the same problem, though they define it slightly differently. Their first step is to change the situation in which their teamster fraction tends to operate as the de facto steering ctte for the TDU work. For as long as that is the case ~~xxx~~ even if there is the will to make the fractions operate as political units, there is often not the time to do it. And though it is true there are periods when the IS must substitute for a non-party leadership in a rank and file movement, it is a big mistake to turn that necessity into some sort of bogus virtue.

The East Coast branches are now involved in a joint venture to run a conference in Jersey on the weekend of the 13th. It will focus on the politics of our industrial (particularly teamster) work, our black work and internationalism. It is being held in a motel, with catered dinner, etc and is a most professional undertaking. In order to build for it the branches involved have been organising other events, particularly in Jersey. At this point it looks as if it will be a real success both in terms of periphery and recruitment. It may be we should repeat the formula in other areas. But first

we must await the report and evaluation of the NY district committee.

Much of the success of the periphery campaign is a matter of finding ways to re-start serious, imaginative and consistent contact work. The Bay Area perspective puts in in terms of creating a well-serviced periphery, the Detroit district is backing up mandatory contact visiting/calls with a bi-weekly newsletter about the IS which is news and events and sent to all people in the periphery. Also various meetings particularly fractions are being organised so as to be open to people in our periphery and some branches are experimenting with taking contacts from one industry to a fraction ~~XX~~ meeting in another industry as a way of broadening their view of what the IS is. The jersey branch, getting to the crux of the problems of many branch meetings has embarked on a program to make branch meetings both short and lively. This is not as easy as it sounds for any branch, but it certainly won't be achieved unless the branch leadership consciously plans things that way. A final, but important point, which Louisville has given major prominence to, is the role of the womens caucus. It has been clear for some time that we had to have this caucus functioning better for internal reasons, but it is also the case that they can play an important external role and far from interfering with the internal role, that role is helped by having contacts involved in the meetings thru dinner-discussions, potlucks etc.

In conclusion it should be said that the periphery campaign is now moving forward. Success is not guaranteed, but if this progress can be continued thru to the end of the year then our problem of political isolation and internal demoralisation and stagnation will be behind us. The political opportunities for us are still there, the advent of a Carter administration in the new year should present more. The question for us now is to improve the health of our organisation to the extent that we do not miss the opportunities. The last six months have been very difficult for us, but we haven't been the only ones that have suffered. As the last Detroit district report pointed out,

"We have found that the left groups have all suffered pretty badly over the last year. The economic prosperity and the general lack of response in the working class, particularly in auto, have disoriented most groups. Add ~~XXX~~ to this the the disorientation for all the Maoist groups that comes from the split in the Chinese bureaucracy and it adds up to still more problems. In fact, most of these groups believe that the IS has moved way ahead during the year. (The truth, we sometimes forget about TDC ~~XX~~ /TDU, Red Tide, Gary Tyler work, South Africa....."

As ~~XX~~ well as the general periphery work, the addition of our new steel and South Africa work to existing areas of work gives us a very solid potential for real growth. Our aim at this point must be to have faced our major problems by the end of the year and be ready to start moving forward again after the January NC meeting.

Glenn Wolfe.

TO MEMBERS OF THE NC OF ISUS - SEPTEMBER 3, 1976

Dear Comrades

We are writing to express our anxiety and concern about what we see as potentially very dangerous trends emerging in ISUS.

No one can doubt the enormous progress made by ISUS since the absolutely essential split with the transitional programme fetishists in 1973. The activities of the last year, which were discussed at your 1976 Convention, Teamster work and Red Tide in particular, clearly mark a further step forward.

It is precisely because we see ISUS as the most important and hopeful development in the USA for a long time that we believe a candid discussion to be essential.

To be blunt, and we must be blunt for there is no room for diplomatic evasions between comrades, we think you are currently on a "triumphalist" course which grossly exaggerates your real influence in the American working class movement and which, unless corrected, will inevitably cause the demoralization of many comrades and a sharp internal conflict in your organization leading to possible splits and decline.

Our motive in intervening is solely to assist you in avoiding these extremely dangerous developments. To avoid misunderstanding, we do not regard ourselves as a sort of 'Comintern Executive' nor do we believe that we are infallible, very far from it. We wish you to profit from our mistakes, and we have made mistakes, so as to avoid the costs that we have had to pay for them. We want to help, and we ask you to accept our intervention in the spirit in which it is made, a spirit of candid but fraternal discussion, of mutual criticism and mutual political education and development.

The basis on which we have formed our opinion is the published material of ISUS (Convention discussion documents and resolutions, Workers Power, etc.) and a discussion between a member of your Executive Committee (who firmly defended your current line) and members of our Central Committee.

What do we mean by 'triumphalism'? We read in the Convention report in W.P. (19 July 1976) a statement by Glenn Wolfe: "The significance of this step to us (ie TDC and UPS) is that it takes us out of the world of the left sects and into the world of the working class, where there has been no revolutionary socialist presence for 40 years". An unnamed member of your National Committee is quoted in the same report as saying: "Last year we said that revolutionaries can lead in the working class - this year we have".

We do not want to make too much of possibly accidental rhetoric at a Convention. But in your EC Resolutions: 1976 Convention (p3, para 4) it is stated: 'A number of specific lessons can be drawn from the TDC experience. a) Revolutionaries can lead mass workers' movements around specific goals.'

Actually, we never doubted it, even before the 'TDC experience'. It has been proved over and over again in many countries, including both the USA and Britain, long before any of us was born. That, however, does not mean that ISUS is at present leading, or is in a position to lead, 'mass workers' movements'. It is not.

You have some 300 comrades in a highly industrialized country with a population of well over 200 million. We have ten times your membership in a country with a quarter of your population, a membership concentrated, moreover, in a space not much bigger geographically than the State of New York.



We count the number of our shop stewards in hundreds, of our comrades holding other union offices in the hundreds, of union bodies firmly under our influence in scores. We are the recognized opposition to the national leadership in at least two national unions. We lead the opposition nationally in the student movement. We have been able to mount a significant Right to Work Campaign. We are in the forefront of the struggle against racialism in Britain.

Yet we know very well that we are not yet leading 'mass workers' movement. That still lies in the future. Of course, IS members have played leading roles in strikes. IS members have been a significant factor in union policy making in some cases. But that falls far short of the leadership of real mass movements.

The truth is that we are still very small and weak in relation to the British workers' movement. We know it and we tell the truth to our members. Because that is the only way a movement can be built on solid foundations. To build on the politics of bluff, of chest beating and high-pressure salesmanship is to build on sand. We are, perhaps, fortunate in having an example before our eyes, the Healey organization - the SLL/WRP - which has tried for years to build on bluff, bluster and bullshit - with disastrous results.

The EC member of ISUS when we spoke said to us: "For the first time in 25 years revolutionaries are a force in the unions." We said: "What unions, where?" He replied: "The Teamsters." We asked: "How many Locals can you firmly count on?" (None) "How many delegates did you have at the last Teamsters' Convention?" (One or two).

Now on the basis of the answers given it is necessary to say that you are not yet a force in the IBT. That in no way alters the importance of the work you have done in this field. If properly developed, it holds great promise for the future. But a proper development is conditional upon a realistic assessment of where you are now. And you are now still marginal, even in the Teamsters.

You are very far from having come "out of the world of the left sects" as comrade Wolfe has it. On the contrary, some of the Maoist sects have penetrated the workers' movement more deeply than you have. Candidly, comrades, isn't that true? You are basically a propaganda organization striving to transform itself into an interventionist organization and still in the early stages of that transformation.

These are harsh criticisms, and designedly so. You may very properly reply: "And what are you? Are you then, a mass organization?" No we are not. We would apply to ourselves much the same description that we apply to you but with these differences: we are somewhat further along the road than you are and we do not deceive ourselves (or seek to deceive others) about our real strength and influence.

The point is that a very high price has to be paid for exaggerated claims and exaggerated expectations. Lenin said: 'Tell the truth to the workers'. It is, if anything, even more important to tell the truth to the party members. A leadership which fails in this respect is piling up terrible trouble for the future.

We may be accused of providing ammunition for 'conservative and negative elements' in your organization - although at this stage we address ourselves exclusively to the members of your leading committee. It is, of course,

true that similar criticisms can indeed be made by elements that are truly negative. Whether the criticisms - which are valid - serve positive or negative ends depends, overwhelmingly, on the reaction of the leadership, on its ability to recognize and to correct mistakes.'

We have spoken of our own mistakes and of the hope that you will learn from them, that you will manage matters better than we have done on certain occasions. To be specific: in carrying out an indispensable turn in the orientation of our organization towards worker membership and worker leadership we allowed, or at any rate, failed to prevent, the emergence in certain districts of precisely the kind of triumphalism we now detect in ISUS. We paid a heavy price for it. Indeed, we are still paying for it in one important district where our membership and influence is now very much below the national norm. We lost comrades, good comrades, because we failed to fight their illusions hard enough and in good time.

A little later, in the summer of 1974, we made another political mistake, a mistake in estimating the tempo of the class struggle under the new Labour government. This led us to propose targets for growth that proved impossible to realize. We paid a heavy price for that too. We unwittingly gave arguments and sustenance to a genuinely negative and conservative opposition, an opposition which exploited the gap between expectation and performance to mobilize opposition to all the initiatives we were mounting (intervention in union elections, the Right to Work Campaign) and which eventually provoked a split in our organization. Fortunately it was a very small split, a mere 100 members seceded, but that was in part due to the fact that waverers were pulled back by our 'gravitational pull', the size and weight of our union fractions (very weak as they are compared to the right wing) and corresponding units in other fields (such as our national student organization). You cannot count on any such adventitious aid. It is therefore all the more important for you to avoid similar mistakes.

You already have an opposition. The fact that your major policy document "Next Steps Towards Building the Party" was carried by only 35 votes to 27 at your Convention is an aminorous symptom and a most serious warning to any sensitive leadership. Insofar as we understand the position of this opposition, as presented in the document, 'Build a Worker Leadership: Make the IS a Force in the Class', we are entirely out of sympathy with it. Accidental agreements apart, it bears, to us, all the marks of the 'industrialized' student.

As you know, we have always been highly skeptical about the policy of 'industrialization'. We have never practised it ourselves and where you have urged it upon others (eg IS Australia) we have advised them to reject it. Venertheless we do have some experience of its fruits. They have generally proved to be sour.

In spite of our negative attitude nationally, a good many ex-students have gone into manual work in Britain, usually from the best of motives. In a few cases they have been able to overcome the difficulties and develop into excellent militants. In far more cases those who have stuck at it and successfully 'industrialized' have proved to be very conservative, 'negative' if you wish to use that term, in their attitude to the organization and its initiatives.

There is no mystery about the reasons for this fact. The 'industrialized' student is very often proud of being 'a worker' and is inclined to think that there is some peculiar merit in this. He expects to be listened to on

the strength of it. The genuine worker, unless corrupted by 'industrialized' students or otherwise lionised, rarely thinks in these terms.

In order to gain acceptance by his workmates the 'industrialized' student often adapts to their prejudices, much more than a genuine working class militant does, and tends to transmit these prejudices (suitably 'politicised' of course) back into the organization. He (or she) tends to become a source of factionalism.

This has been our experience - a number of honorable exceptions apart - and we now take it for granted that the 'industrialized' student will as like as not, be a nuisance rather than a help. It has been put to us that, because we are Europeans, we do not understand the American situation, that the class barriers are much more blurred in your country, that 'industrialization' is both a possible and an essential method of building a working class cadre in the USA.

We remain unconvinced, but you believe in it and you have done it. What we want to say at this point in time is this: do not deceive yourselves into believing that your 'industrialized' students are working class cadres. They are not. A few may develop in that direction but only if the organization as a whole adopts a realistic orientation.

To speak for example, of a 'worker leadership' in ISUS at this time is an absurdity. It is an absurdity because there are only a handful of genuine workers in your ranks (some of whom may well deserve a place in the leadership on their personal merits, but that is a different matter). You are still basically a propaganda group and to alter this state of affairs you must first face up to it frankly.

To become a party you must, of course, become a workers' organization but you cannot, in reality, achieve this by pretending that your 'industrialized' middle-class members are bona-fide workers or by pushing your handful of real workers artificisly into 'leading' positions. You will simple lose them taht way.

Nor do we believe you can become a workers' organization (or a party) without first properly dealing with the relationship between ex-student/white collar comrades and manual worker contwcts and members. We do not see how you can build an internally coherent organization by dividing your members into first and third class categories. More, your apparent rejection of systematic work in the public sector - Hospitals, teachers, students - reinforces this division. Our experience has been that white collar workers have become much better recruiters of manual workers when they are active white-collar trade unionists.

You have to recruit workers, by activity certainly, but also, at your stage of developemnt (and ours for that matter), by winning individuals politically. This does not necessarily mean long arguments about politics (although some workers will want that too) but by political interventions. You have done this already in one case - the Gary Tyler campaign is an excellent example of a political intervention which had nothing at all to do with your formal 'priorities'. an issue which you did not predict (and could not have predicted) specifically. You seized a chance and you were absolutely right. We did exactly the same thing with the racists murders in Britain this summer - which are not predicted specifically in our perspectives.

The point here is that the whole method of 'prioritisation' and the corresponding 'industrialization' which you have adopted is mechanical, dangerous and, in the end, false. The truth is that neither you nor we nor anybody else can predict in detail the course of the class struggle. If you had 100,000 members (as the CP USA had in 1945) you could afford to be wrong about the details (on which 'prioritisation' crucially depends). But you, with your actual membership (and we with ours) have to be 'opportunistic' in the sense of seizing whatever opportunities offer themselves, even if they are not the 'ideal' opportunities, even if they cut right across the 'plan'.

In fact even to speak of a 'plan', in any but the very loosest sense, is nonsense. To plan you need the strength to mould the world, or a bit of it to your will. You are not yet in that league. You need to pick up members wherever you can - and they will very likely not, for the most part, come from conflicts around the 'major contracts in auto, steel, telephone and coal mines' so carefully detailed in your resolution A4. In fact the whole motion is so unreal, so remote from the experience of the movement, including the movement in the USA, that we would like to persuade ourselves that you cannot really believe in it.

At any rate, let us remind you about what JP Cannon (who never lacked horse-sense, whatever his political deficiencies) said about the first real success of US Trotskyists in mass work:

'Our comrades in Minneapolis began their work in the coalyards and later extended their organizing campaign away from the general drivers and helpers. That was not a preconceived plan worked out in the general staff of our movement. The drivers of Minneapolis were not by far the most decisive section of the American proleteriat. We began our real activity in the labour movement in those places where the opportunity was open to us. It is not possible to select such occasions arbitrarily according to whim or preference. One must enter a mass movement where a door is open.'

And that surely is equally true today. The smaller and weaker the organization, the more true it is. To speak of planning, even in the most flexible sense, is to assume that you have a strength which you do not have.

This, of course, is equally true of 'blocs' with other forces in the unions. To even speak of a 'bloc' you need a force of your own. In no case can a bloc with reformists or centrists in the unions serve the interests of revolutionaries unless they dispose of a serious force themselves. Otherwise the 'revolutionaries' will merely serve as attorneys for some 'left' bureaucrat or other or they will be booted out by their allies at a time the latter find opportune. There is no substitute for winning a base of your own.

When we hear that the gap between pretensions and power is to be bridged by something called 'transitional politics' we find it difficult to choke back laughter.- or tears. We hope, we sincerely hope, that we have misunderstood your drift on this question. We find it very hard to believe that you could really have forgotten the struggle for the survival of your organization that you had to wage against Landy, Tabor and the rest.

We wish to avoid all unnecessary disputes, to raise only those matters which we believe it is obligatory for us to raise. We will therefore refrain from comment on your international perspectives.- except the one issue which cannot be passed over: Portugal.

You have chosen to reiterate (Resolution D2) an uncritical attitude towards the PRP. We dearly wish that what you say in para '3 of that resolution were true. Glenn Wolfe, in an article printed in IS 88, goes even further. "Thankfully we are now learning lessons from the PRP in Portugal as well, lessons we could not have learned from Britain...".

Unfortunately, any 'lessons' so learned can only be lessons on oscillating between ultra-leftism and opportunism. We are very sorry that it is so. But facts are facts. The PRP, originating as a Guevarist formation, has moved a long way towards a consistent communist (Leninist is the term you use) position. But it has not yet reached it and it is the worst possible service to the PRP to pretend otherwise.

We are, frankly, puzzled by your attitude on this question. Our own position has been developed in no less than eleven articles (one of large pamphlet length) in International Socialism. If you think we are wrong, either on fact or interpretation, why not help us to correct our errors by submitting your own views for publication? We will gladly print them.

So far as we know you have yourself published nothing serious on Portugal (we leave aside reports in Workers Power). Yet you persist in reiterating, without supporting evidence or argument, an attitude which we believe we have shown, in detail, to be basically wrong. Why is this?

We started by saying that we seek a candid but fraternal discussion. It is entirely possible that you may convince us that some of our criticisms are misplaced. Yet we keep coming back to the obvious contradiction between the triumphalist tone of your publication and what we know (from ISUS itself, not hostile sources) to be the reality.

Thus, EC Resolution B3 speaks of 'the stagnation of WP circulation'. Gay Semel, in the Workers Power Convention report, says 'circulation has dropped'. Whichever is correct, it is inconceivable for us that advances of the sort claimed in Glenn Wolfe's conference report ('You are not members of the same organization that existed a year ago. The International Socialists is now part of the working class.') could possibly be real without substantially lifting the sale of Workers Power.

We do not doubt that the enthusiasm of your members, and the drive of the leadership, has made possible some real advance. But we believe that you grossly exaggerate its scale and we believe that, unless you correct your course, you will be driven into increasingly false political positions in an attempt to conceal what will become a growing gulf between pretensions and reality. It would be tragic if this were allowed to happen. And it need not happen. There is still time to avert it.

Central Committee  
ISGB

Oct. 15, 1976

Dear Comrades,

In your letter to our National Committee dated September 3, 1976, you criticize our strategy for building a revolutionary workers party in the USA. You assert that "potentially very dangerous trends" are emerging in the ISUS, and you warn us that unless we change course, we can expect "sharp internal conflict" in our organization "leading to possible splits and decline." You assure us that your motive in intervening is solely to assist us "in avoiding these extremely dangerous developments."

To be blunt, we find that your criticisms, in almost every particular miss the mark. We are making a detailed reply to your letter so that in the future, you will be better informed on the conditions facing American revolutionaries and thereby render more useful any future observations you have. You, comrades, have a responsibility to play a vital leading role for our tendency internationally. To carry out that task, you will have to learn to develop a more flexible approach in applying your experiences to the needs of revolutionaries in different countries, with different conditions, and facing different problems.

We should state from the outset that we recognize our organization is, in fact, facing serious problems at this time. We have not kept this a secret from our membership, or from you. Nor did we need a warning letter from Britain to inform us. We already are involved in a struggle to overcome these problems as can be seen from the documents of our October NC that are already in your hands. But the road forward is not at all the one charted by your letter. As we will show, following your advice would mean going backwards - to use your words, giving up the "enormous progress" we have made in the last three years.

#### Focus on Basic Industry

The central, consistent theme in your advice to the ISUS, is your effort to convince us to turn away from a policy of "industrialization" and "priorities". You were successful in convincing the Canadians of this course, and now you turn to us. We have already written to you, some time ago, a detailed explanation of our strategy of industrializing members from middle-class backgrounds in major industrial unions. You have not yet made any comment or reply to this document, or even acknowledged its existence. But, since in this second letter on the subject, you still refuse to deal with the facts as they actually exist, we will turn again, briefly, to this very important question.

You tell us: "do not deceive yourself into believing that your 'industrialized' students are working class cadres." (emph in original). Comrades, are you trying to tell us you think we live in a fantasy world. We don't. We are painfully aware that our main struggle to develop a revolutionary industrial working class cadre still lies ahead. But to follow through on the logic of your argument would represent a retreat from that struggle. You tell us to end our policy of industrialization so that we can face the fact that we "are still basically a propaganda group." The logic of this argument is very dangerous to our development as a serious revolutionary organization.

Your argument for our members to leave the plants is an argument for us to stop relating our revolutionary politics to the real everyday experiences of workers. Instead, you suggest we go back to commenting on things we do not understand or face directly from a cozy position outside the plant, outside the struggle, and outside the working class. You ask us to

give up the progress we have made toward rooting our politics in the working class. This would inevitably take us back to a campus focus. If we followed your advice, it would not be long before members working from the outside on the basis of inspired ignorance start pressuring the leadership to be allowed to conduct their major political activity in arenas where they have knowledge and experience: among students, middle-class radicals, teachers, and so forth. This retreat would be an historic defeat in building a revolutionary party in the US.

Such a defeat could not be glossed over or hidden by some bogus perspective of doing "systematic work in the public sector." At the risk of being repetitive, we must remind you that the public sector in the US is not at all like the public sector in Britain. For example, there is no US equivalent to the National Union of Public Employees. If there were anything approaching its equivalent, it would have more than two million members.

In fact, a number of our leading cadres have been active in the public sector unions. We have a long history of involvement in them, particularly the American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Our experience in these unions convinced us that they were not going to be a primary source of militancy in the working class. Both of these unions were "priorities" of the ISUS until a couple of years ago when we discontinued encouraging people to get jobs covered by those unions.

The reasons for not emphasizing that work were numerous. For one thing, the politics of those unions, not just the leaders, tended to move to right as the crisis heated up. Second, and a cause of the first, these unions are extremely weak. Even in a well organized city like New York, the weakness of the unions, and not just the betrayal of the leaders, have undermined any serious response to the city crisis.

If we had followed your advice and concentrated in the public sector, we would, in fact, be operating in a sea of defeat. Such a milieu could only have unhealthy and defeatist effects on the organization. Fortunately, we have chosen to concentrate on the strongest sections of the working class. That is why we did not agree with you in 1973 when you suggested we "re-think" our teamster priority. On the whole our Priority Unions Represent those sections best able to mount resistance to the employers offensive and to give a real lead to the rest of the class. Even inside the public sector, the important of power reside, not among white collar workers, but in blue collar areas like maintenance and sanitation.

Your advice to concentrate on the public sector is based on the same kind of impressionism that led many sections of the new-left of the sixties to concentrate their efforts among the most oppressed sections of the working class. They concentrated on hospitals, small sweat shops, and unorganized plants filled with minority and women workers earning substandard wages. A lot of energy went into this work -- but practically nothing remains to show for it.

Your letter tries to tell us that the key to becoming a workers organization is "properly dealing with the relationship between ex-student/white collar comrades and manual worker contacts and members." You say: "Our experience has been that white collar workers have become much better recruiters of manual workers when they are active white collar trade unionists." You imply that the ISGB got its industrial worker base thru

the work of white collar unionists."But as you know, this is not how it happened.

Your growth among industrial workers in 1973/4 came out of direct work in those arenas -- not as a consequence of successful white collar/union work. It is only in the last two years, when you have lost much of that industrial base, that you have begun to elevate white-collar trade union work to the status of a critical stage that must be gone through before a solid base in industry can be built. This didn't work for you, it won't work for us, and it will only disorient revolutionaries in other countries who take this advice you give seriously.

We believe your request that we drop our priorities is made in good faith. But given our size, and the size of the country in which we operate, we would end up spreading our resources so thin that our impact on the class struggle would evaporate into nothing. To build anything of value, it is necessary to have an effect, however small, on real forces in the real world. And for a small group, this can only be done thru steady and consistent work.

#### Priorities and Planning

To ditch priorities is to ditch steady and consistent work. Rather, you advice us to seize every opportunity that offers itself. But the net result of chasing after everything that moves is to end up with nothing. We know because we spent years trying this method before we discovered the need for concentration and priorities.

In the past few years, we have had branches that were unable to get many members into priority industries. Out of necessity, they were forced to seize any opportunity that presented itself -- and this is what we encouraged them to do. There were heavy bursts of energy, but few solid accomplishments. And the comrades involved developed a practical understanding of the class struggle, more slowly and with less depth. On the whole, we have little to show for this activity.

Your experience is similar. In the early 1970's the ISGB tried the strategy of chasing everything that moves, One week it was the garbage workers who were in the vanguard of the class. But with no work that went before, and with no plan to follow-up afterwards (because when garbage workers stopped moving, someone else was sure to start) you got nothing out of it -- no membership, no rank and file organization. You followed the same pattern in the national postal strike, and again with variations, in the very important miners strikes.

Intervention in the mines did yield temporary progress: a rank and file paper and several dozen new members. But without a policy of prioritizing work in the mines and concentrating resources on that work, the beachhead in the mines was lost. By 1975, the paper and the members were gone.

If we were to take your advice, we would end up skipping from issue to issue and from struggle to struggle.-- acting like a band of dilitants. we would be an unserious organization. But in the US at this time, the question of being a revolutionary can not be taken lightly. We place greater stress than you on the question of cadre formation precisely because of the conditions we face.

A good quarter of our membership is solidly enough committed to put their whole life at the service of the organization. These are comrades



who, at the request of the organization, will pull up roots, break ties with family and friends, leave well paid jobs to move to the place where we need them, work in the industry we ask them to, and live in poverty as long as required. These cadre are the core of our organization. The purpose of concentration and prioritization is to maximize their effectiveness. When we open up a new area of work -- for example our Free Gary Tyler campaign -- we don't dabble; we make a serious, long term commitment. Any other policy would undermine our effort to build a dedicated and effective organization.

In your effort to convince us that it is "nonsense" to plan, you use a quote from Cannon that seems to show that US Trotskyists in the 1930's didn't prioritize and plan work. One would think that the Trotskyists went into the Minneapolis coal yards either by accident or because that was where the action was. Farrell Dobbs detailed history, "Teamster Rebellion", tells quite a different story.

Leading members of the Communist League (the US Trotskyists) were sent into the Teamsters union to begin feeling out a drive to unionize coal during the winter of 1930/31 -- years before the union drive actually began (p.47). Nor was the decision to go into coal an accident: "The campaign was opened in that particular industry for specific reasons: Communist League members were employed there; the coal yards were the strategic place to start the action because of the sub-zero Minnesota winters. (p. 42)." The lesson of Minneapolis is the exact opposite of your advice. The comrades planned and industrialized in a target industry.

When you tell us that the whole notion of planning is "unreal", we have a hard time taking you seriously. It sounds to us like you're talking yourself into a corner. No matter what the size of a revolutionary organization, serious planning is an absolute necessity. To be sure, no one can make even general projections with perfect accuracy. But a central part of revolutionary leadership is the ability to project likely developments in the class struggle, to develop a perspective on how to take advantage of these developments, and to suggest tactics that will produce desired results.

7 Sometimes initiatives don't pay off. That was our experience with our auto contract campaign. But our organization is pretty unanimous that given what we knew when we launched the campaign, we were basically correct in doing so, and would again.

But the ISGB also has experience with projections that don't pan out. You campaigned for the election of Labor government saying that this would improve the conditions under which the class struggle would be carried out. It didn't work that way - at least not in the short run.

For the past two years, you have had a hard time explaining to your membership why the working class was passive, how long it was likely to remain passive, and what exactly was happening in the British economy. You time and again declared the end of the 'bad period', and you lost another block of members every time the declaration proved hollow.

We don't claim to a better understanding of what your perspective should have been during that period. But at least we didn't intervene with cheap shots, frivolous and impressionistic criticisms, and the warning of splits and internal dissention unless you heeded our advice.

"Triumphalism"

This brings us to your charge against us of "triumphalism." On first reading, this charge, through grossly exaggerated, seems to be based on a

legitimate insight. Even before we received your letter, many ISUS members had begun to criticize a tendency in our leadership to exaggerate successes, and play down defeat -- a tendency that had become exaggerated and had begun to undermine the credibility of our leadership. Even before receiving your letter, our leadership took note of this problem and began taking steps to correct it. No doubt, even as far away as London, the word was out that this was a topic of conversation inside the ISUS. And so one would expect that your charge of triumphalism, upon reaching the States, should find fertile soil.

On closer examination, however your charge of triumphalism reveals itself as a smoke screen. Its purpose is not to convince us that we must be more honest and modest, but rather, you use this charge as an opening wedge in your effort to convince us that we never have led workers, that we can't lead workers, and that we shouldn't really even try. Before following this up in detail, however we must respond to the charge that we deliberately withhold the truth from our membership.

If you had accepted the invitation to send an observer to our 1976 Convention, you would have been present for the report on the state of the organization. By any standards, it was both sober and honest. In front of almost 300 members and sympathizers of the ISUS, a National Secretary's report was presented that itemized and analyzed in considerable detail the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. It presented both our successes over the preceding year in fulfilling our targets, and in many areas, our lack of success. It reported exact figures on the size of the organization and breakdowns by race, by sex, by membership in various unions etc. It has been years since the ISGB has provided a similar accounting, or opened its convention to its membership -- and this despite the fact that state repression and intervention against the revolutionary left is far higher in the US than in Britain.

You use the charge of "triumphalism" to dispute the successes of our work in the Teamster union. These successes represent the single most tangible fact that disproves your whole case against us.

By charging "triumphalism" you try to turn this fact into a fantasy hatched by the ISUS leadership to deceive our membership. In doing this, you reveal an amazingly high level of ignorance about both the US labor movement, and about the actual work of the ISUS. You will have to learn to stop taking the conditions that face you in Britain, and superimposing them on other countries without any serious study of the actual situation that exists in those countries.

Because the ISGB has yet to lead a "mass workers movement" does not mean automatically that its much smaller, weaker, and less mature fraternal organization in the US can not have done that around the Teamster contract.

The union involved was totally corrupt and absolutely divorced from its rank and file. Jimmy Hoffa, past President of the Teamsters, and only credible contender against the top union machine was murdered just before our campaign began, and most of the union membership believed union President Fitzsimmons gave the order. There is no mass social democratic consciousness among the workers, nor a Communist Party at all active in the arena. And the American garden variety trade union reformist usually refrains from raising their head in this union for fear it will be blown off. In short, we didn't face a "British" situation in the Teamsters Union, we

faced an "American" situation - a situation in which the vacuum on the left is much greater than anything you have ever experienced or even thought about.

You "prove" that we cannot possibly be a force in the Teamster Union, because we had influence over only one delegate at the entire convention. If you understood the Teamster Union and Teamster Conventions, you would not make such a glib statement. Out of thousands of convention seats, there are only a handful nationwide that rank and file members can run for - or that the ranks get even to vote on. Most delegates are full time officials earning in the \$20,000 to 200,000 annual pay range. The delegate in question ran in one of the most powerful Local's in the country (Hoffa's and Fitzsimmons home Local). He out-pollled the son of the National Teamster President. He leads Teamster for a Democratic Union, the first ongoing opposition in the largest union in the world, that recently had its own convention with 200 teamsters from IS states participating. He is quoted frequently by the press and TV as a national leader of "Dissident Teamsters". He returned from the Union Convention with a black eye and bruised ribs, testimony to his effectiveness there as an articulate spokesman of the rank and file.

This delegate was not an industrialized IS member. He is a worker leader we first met during the contract movement. The Teamster Union President felt called on to attack Workers Power by name in his keynote speech to the 2 million union members in which he explained he did not mean to equate the rank and file with the "commies". The union has taken out paid full page advertisements in mass circulation papers in which TDU and the IS are attacked by name. It bused in over 200 supporters to picket the TDU convention with signs like: "Tdu Is Socialist Lies."

Contrary to what you say, we are a force in the union. We are not a large force. The movement we lead is still quite fragile. Work in such a huge, powerful, corrupt, violence prone union is very difficult for an organization with our slender resources. But we do have an impact on the union and we are beginning to recruit Teamsters. We are proud of the magnificent work our members, particularly our industrialized members have done to make this possible.

We have spelled this example out in detail, because without a concrete understanding of the situation we face, you can not possibly give us useful advice. In fact comrades, if we followed your example, and offer "candid but fraternal" criticisms based on frivolous impressions and a superficial understanding of your situation, we could well end up mistakenly criticizing as "triumphalist" your announcement of the foundation of the party.

We know, after all, that this announcement takes place against a background of a loss of one third of your members between early 1974 and 1976, disintegration of virtually all of your factory branches in the same period, and an equally serious decline in industrial rank and file work, particularly in the blue collar unions. It takes place at a time when British workers are still relatively passive in the face of massive ruling class attacks. It would be simple to charge that you are now on a "triumphalist" course.

But, for us to make such a charge would be mistaken and frivolous. We understand that your recent "right to work" and "anti-racist" campaigns represents solid success for your organization in what is still a difficult period. These are important gains, even though they are not providing a solid base where it is most needed. However we agree with point 5 of your CC statement on the party, that it is: "important to grasp our opportunities; to understand the need for bold initiatives in appropriate circumstances."

It is proper, and not "triumphalist" to build on successes and lead from strength.

### Sectarianism:

We want to warn you that in your relations with us, with the PRP, and your international dealings generally you are developing a dangerous sectarian method. In general, this method is not consistent with your practice at home. It does disservice to the development of an international movement, and unless reversed, will eventually return to haunt you at home.

For example, you warn us against cooperating with non-revolutionary forces inside the unions. By merely repeating the well known fact that revolutionaries need their own base, you imply that we are on the way toward becoming "attorneys for some left bureaucrats for activities aimed at winning a base of our own. You make these charges without pointing to even a shred of evidence to back them up. This approach is sectarian phrase mongering of the most sterile kind.

In Britain, you show more sense than to operate on the advice you give us. In the engineering industry, you cooperated with the bureaucrats of the "broad left". You did this in the process of building your own base, and did not wait until your base was already in place. The same is true now of our work in the United Steel Workers Union. We are active in the Sadlowski campaign on this basis: not as uncritical supporters of union reformism, but also not as mindless sectarians eager to find every possible excuse for separating ourselves from a campaign that is stirring the rank and file and polarizing the union in a very healthy way. Do you really believe we are incorrect?

Your most serious and dangerous sectarianism is in regard to the Portuguese revolution. Our detailed rebuttal to your position is already in your hands and in the hands of our members. We will not repeat it here. But we do want to challenge your sneering reference to the fact that we have stated publicly that there are lessons to be learned from the PRP.

Our Portuguese comrades are active in a situation that is far in advance of what you or we face. This is not a time to indulge in a sterile and abstract debate on the history of party building. Nor is it a time to withdraw, thru inaction, support and encouragement from the most promising revolutionary situation of our generation. It is our historic opportunity to learn, in the flesh, from a living proletarian revolution as it unfolds, it is our duty to raise the question of party building to the level of the contemporary reality of that living revolution.

The PRP has much to teach about raising revolutionary politics in the working class and about how a small revolutionary party uses the tactics of the united front to develop strength and credibility to challenge the Communist Party whose hold over the workers has to be broken before the revolution can be carried through. Those are the major lessons. But there are scores of minor ones.

One lesson of particular relevance is the role of white collar workers. While organizations like the MES (a centrist swamp about which you have periodically harbored groundless illusions) were busy concentrating on the white collar sectors, the PRP was concentrating on building a serious industrial working class base. In the crisis that developed after Nov. 25th, the MES disappeared as an effective force, and the PRP continued its development. In part this flowed from differences in politics - one revolutionary and the other centrist. But it also flowed from the fact that industrial

workers and white collar workers responded to the crisis quite differently. White collar sectors overwhelmingly reflected the panic, disorientation, and defeatism that swept the left petty bourgeoisie. In the blue collar sector, there was much more of a tendency to entrench. We can learn these and many other important lessons only by rejecting categorically your advice that the only lessons to be learned from the PRP are "lessons on oscillating between ultra-leftism and opportunism."

Over the last year you have been consistently poor in your efforts at conducting international relations. This is unfortunate. Had you approached your interventions in a less high-handed manner, had you studied seriously what was actually going on, and had you based your advice on the concreteness of the situation, there is no doubt that with your great experience, you could have played a very positive role. Instead, we fear you may end up turning sectarianism into a method.

In the international perspectives produced for your own members, you seriously understate the problem. You say: "Last year shows us that it is much more difficult than we originally thought to influence organisations that have established traditions and leaderships." How did you learn this? Through your vain attempt to start a faction fight in the PRP? Through your intervention in the ISUS? Through your fervent belief that you can learn nothing from anyone else? If this method continues to characterise your international work, you will find that it will get more difficult to influence other organisations, not less.

#### GIVE A CONSTRUCTIVE LEAD

We appeal to you to change your course. We belong jointly to the most healthy of all international political tendencies.....and only you can lead it. We cannot sit-back and watch you fritter away opportunities that are now presented. You must begin to take yourselves as seriously as we take you as international leaders.

We believe that your errors flow from a "shoot from the hip" approach based on generalities and abstractions. When you send out a responsible leading comrade to directly check-out the situation, you get a different answer. For example, your last document communicated to us on our strategy was done under the name of Steve Jeffries in 1973. It applauds the policy of industrialisation, pointing out that the arguments against it for Britain are not valid for the USA. It states that "not surprisingly these industrialised comrades ....are among the most politically advanced in the organisation." It also states "ISGB can also learn and benefit from the ISUS, Their size has forced them to establish industrial and political priorities in a much more precise way than we do." If you again sent out a responsible observer to the States, with the responsibility to honestly investigate, he or she would again return with the same conclusions.

We reject the advice you give us for it clearly points us in a direction that is wrong. It seeks to convince us to stop planning and prioritising our work. To withdraw industrialised members from basic industry, to shift our union emphasis to white collar unions, to replace our agitational thrust with a propagandistic orientation. to stand aloof from non-revolutionary elements in the unions and to give up the idea that we can give a concrete lead to workers. It is a program that represents defeat and demoralisation in the effort to build an industrial based revolutionary working class organisation ....that represents an orientation back to the petit-bourgeoisie.

You have already pushed our Canadian comrades onto this course. When these documents are published there may emerge a handful of members in our organisation who are also sympathetic to the course you chart. But we predict that none but the most demoralised will be yet ready to take responsibility for your program in the extreme form represented by your letter and the direction you have charted for the Canadian IS.

Finally, despite the conflict we are now having, we believe our fraternal collaboration with the ISGB is one of our greatest assets. Sharp disagreements on questions secondary to the principles of our joint tendency should not interfere with this collaboration. We hope that in line with our own practise, you will make these exchanges open to your membership. Rather than come between our two organisations, we would like this debate to help all members, on both sides of the Atlantic, get a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their fraternal organisations.

You tell us to "profit from your mistakes". We have. And we have profited even more from your impressive successes. If you allow, we will continue to do so. We are 100% committed to do everything in our power not only to maintain our fraternal ties with the ISGB, but to expand them.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE,  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS (USA).