

REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER #4

January 31, 1976

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1. News from the Local Branches

a) New York

The New York group appears to be functioning on all cylinders (except for tardiness in dues payment) as we can see from the following communications:

(1) Report dated Dec. 26, 1975. -- The priorities adopted by the NY - RMOC were those of the Baltimore conference, that is Iberian work and Inprecor sales. Because of the size of the group and the relationship to other groups, and to improved morale, it was also decided to make contact work a priority. This would be mainly approaching ex-ITers and regrouping IMT supporters. There are presently nine members.

Organizational forms have recently been outlined. A coordination committee member (BB) and one alternate were selected. An organizational secretary (AR), a finance/sales organizer (E) and one to coordinate contact work were also selected (DC). We now have two comrades who will be in charge of correspondence, a campus fraction and two comrades presently working with the MEC.

We will be submitting minutes of our meetings starting with this weeks meeting.

We have had a belated start in Iberian work, in part due to the existence of other front committees of the sects. We are organizing an educational on Portugal in the next month and we are going to look into the possibility of building Angolan support work. A second problem was the manner in which preconference discussions were carried out. Having overemphasized the discussion, it was tending to replace actual activity. We will now discuss documents as they come out, and discuss any draft documents being submitted by NY comrades.

Inprecor has been ordered. We are beginning with a bundle of 25 so as to not repeat the mistake the NY IT made of overextending ourselves. We expect to increase the bundle as we improve our sales.

We will be collecting \$10.00 per comrade in monthly dues, eight of which will go to the center. (Thus \$72.00 is enclosed for November).

The cutback crisis in New York has opened up some possibilities on the campuses because of the loss of open admission at the City University. However, the end of the semester, the demoralization on the campus, and the fact that we began work so late

in the semester means that our ability to intervene effectively is somewhat limited. We are planning to use the vacation period to gain familiarity with the situation.

Comradely yours, for the NY RMOC, s/ AR

(2) Report on Angola demonstration initiated by YAWF. The New York times reported 1,000 participants. -- We printed up the USFI declaration of Nov. 23 and circulated it along with our forum leaflet and a handbill reprint of the Peterson prospectus on the FI from Africa in Struggle. Let the record also say that fully half the marchers were black or latin and that we printed our own leaflet in support of it and leafletted around town last week, even going out on a paste up in a snowstorm.

Some former comrades responded (turned out) for the first time in a long time.

In a certain sense, its remarkable how we were able to snap into it these last two weeks. Especially when you think of the fact that we had no reason to think that anyone would actually be in the march besides YAWF and their friends. But what is more remarkable is how we pulled together. Remarkable because we've been so long on talk for so long and not least of all because this is the first depression for most of us and we have to learn how to work when we're broke.

Venceremos, s/ D

b) Baltimore - Report of December activities.

(1) Portugal-Angola-Spain. We participated in a small demo at the White House around the demand "Hands Off Africa: Angola - Another Viet Nam?" It was organized by the Anti-Apartheid Movement USA (AAMUSA). We have been able to find out very little about them. They support Victory to the MPLA. The demo was poorly organized, and only about 80 people were there, mostly white leftists. We're still trying to organize some kind of forum on Angola in Baltimore. We remain in contact with the Portugal Information Center in New York. They put out a good newsletter on the November 25, 26 events. We will give a course on "Spain; Revolution and Civil War" through the Baltimore school in February.

(2) Impresor. In conjunction with Washington we have sold 9 subs, and Baltimore has increased its bundle to 25 (from 12 in October). Selling subs is extremely difficult because of the cost factor, and we do not want to use the high pressure techniques so common to other groups. A certain number of contacts buy from us regularly, and we sell at political events and two bookstores.

(3) The nursing home strike has gone into a 60 day cooling off period. Things don't look too good.

(4) We now have two comrades on the staff of the hospital workers union.

(5) We participated in a demo to support the Washington Post pressmen. There were about 2500 demonstrators, many workers as well as the entire DC left. The demo was very spirited.

(6) We continue to work in the SI and Jobs coalitions. Neither is doing much now.

(7) The local AFSC has initiated a new Chile committee. Our focus will be a visit by the prison ship Esmeralda in July. We hope to build for a demo through forums, films, street meetings, etc.

s/ J

c) Chicago

(1) Report on Angola demonstration. -- On Jan. 10 nearly 200 militants marched in Chicago in solidarity with the MPLA-led Peoples Republic of Angola. The slogans were: US-CIA Hands Off Angola; South Africa-Zaire Out of Angola; and Victory to the MPLA. The demo was initiated by Workers World Party. Although the WWP used this fact to have only their speakers at a unity meeting the night before, overall it was a

real case of unity in action.

The co-sponsors included CASA, Iranian Students Association, Puerto Rican Socialist Party, Eritreans for Liberation, New World Resource Center (a radical bookstore/collective work groups), and Chicago Red Circle. All comrades were at the demo to intervene with various material and comrade Danel presented a message of solidarity incorporating part of the United Secretariat declaration on Angola.

We were well received and continued to work with some of the same forces from the November teach-in as well as new ones. This action was a partial prelude to the Angola coalition we are participating in.

A broad coalition has formed around Angola. Initiated by members in CCLAMG, a work group supporting the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies and tied to NWRC, the coalition includes the CP, PSP, CLP, WWP, RMOC, IS, as well as a dozen peace, radical and religious groups, and individuals and Sid Lens. The formative stage of the coalition oscillated between all activities based on Victory to the MPLA, reflected in the original name (MPLA support committee) and the thrust toward US out of Angola, this perspective winning out (the coalition was renamed US out of Angola committee). We supported this move.

Despite the "leftist" platform (support to the MPLA is one of the five points), the growth in the number of liberal groups and the CP are strengthening a reformist tendency. A petition directed to congress as an adjunct to organizing for a Feb. 6-7 educational night and demonstration is seen by some as a real means in cutting off aid to FNLA-Unita and Zaire. Another indication is the list of invited speakers. This includes four Black congressmen and Adie Wyatt, a union bureaucrat in CLUW, whose position is not even known! Counter-balancing these speakers, the UN representative from MPLA is invited, but it is unconfirmed whether he can attend. Non pro-MPLA speakers were invited as a positive attempt to involve forces which could not join the coalition. PUSP, a reformist Black organization, invited the coalition to distribute leaflets at a King memorial.

After the Feb. 6-7 actions the conflicting trends (emphasis on US out and jobs at home and on the other hand the restrictive pro-MPLA stand) could raise the question of basis for an Angola coalition again. There are forces inside and outside (SWP, which finds itself totally isolated at present) who favor a strict US Out position. We are in favor of such a broader coalition around US Hands Off and breaking all relations with South Africa. It would be necessary to continue a pro-MPLA caucus that could build separate contingents as well as call its own activities.

We feel that comrades should have Angola solidarity work as a priority involving themselves with existing coalitions or where necessary initiating them. Our small grouping can have the greatest impact on the political milieu by international solidarity work: themes of internationalism, discussion on superpowers theory, unity in action, linking revolutionary struggles to advanced worker militants and the program of the Fourth International. In Chicago we have concentrated on Portugal, Spain, and Angola solidarity as well as participating in actions around Puerto Rico. Although there is a setback in Portugal, Spain is heading for the revolutionary general strike to smash the Francoist state. We must prepare now. We should also work in particular with Arab Students and workers around Lebanon where Chamoun called for US intervention (he was prime minister in 1958 and asked for US intervention).

s/ Rico

(2) Report on trade union work from a sympathiser who is a committee-person in a large plant in the Chicago area: -- I have succeeded in "scaring to death" (as some of the guys put it in the local) the bureaucracy, but they don't know exactly what to do about me yet.

In this "committeeperson" job I managed to organize my district into a kind of organization of its own with regular shift meetings to discuss problems and strategy where needed on issues around speed-up and the layoffs which are now severely

crippling our workforce, almost 2000 laid off since June. The bureaucrats don't like that sort of organizing for it puts them on the spot "to do something" mostly. So in September when it appeared that a redistricting was required in my District as the number of workers had been reduced the bureaucrats scheduled a run off election between myself and the other committeeperson hoping to get rid of me, since the balance left in his district was skilled trades who had never had a woman representing them, etc. Ordinarily in a redistricting the "past practice was to combine districts with the least numbers into the district with the most, which would have left me in. Actually, the election was the most democratic procedure had it not been for their underlying motive.

In the end, I outmaneuvered them by slating myself with an anti-leadership skilled tradesman and we developed a mini-program to fight the reduction in force combining local issues on Sunday nite start, inverse seniority on a voluntary basis on temporary layoff and 30 for 40-jobs for all-sliding scale of wages and hours. It was a very successful campaign. I'm enclosing a copy of our first leaflet which was followed by a paste up leaflet with a boat on it and the heading "rock the boat" then under the boat the waves being each of our points. Anyway, we won a smashing victory 289 to 69 out of a District of 372 people. Only 11 people did not vote in the election and 4 of them were absent and 3 were ex-foreman.

It stunned most of the bureaucrats largely because of the sheer numbers since in most district elections only 25% of the District actually votes and they never run on a program, even a limited one like ours. It meant that I actually controlled a large block of votes and potentially more. The threat of bringing those votes to a membership meeting left them in disarray and began a process of deterioration in the bureaucrat caucus that has yet to be concluded.

Following the election we set up a network in the District, patterned on the old steward system where we have a person in each Dept that unofficially tries to handle problems, organizes new people coming in, etc. and reports back to me, where the official representation comes in. Al has mobilized the skilled trades in a real unity with production workers that has never happened before and so where we have a problem with a foreman who is speeding someone up or threatening discipline we'll send an electrician, machine-repairman or whatever we need in the Dept on the QT and plugs get pulled or wires get crossed or whatever is necessary to put that machine down for the shift.

It has required a lot of time and energy but it has been worth it. Most recently, our District as a whole submitted about 15 resolutions for the resolutions convention and while most of them were on local issues some were national and best was 30 for 40-jobs for all-sliding scale of wages and hours resolution. Although, it had less support in the skilled trades we did get over 250 signatures to the resolution (I'll send you a copy after the holiday period as its in my desk at the hall), which has helped to politicize the ranks, although I would not say it brought any of them closer to consciously fighting for Socialism, unfortunately.

But we are working on initiating a caucus, with a program and will be doing building for a slate of delegates for the convention and other offices. The primary difficulty is motivating workers to do anything once outside of the plant, and of course, to relate their struggles to other issues. I am trying to do that with regards to the Angola demo slated here for the 10th and of course what ever work continues to develop out of a coalition that involves CP, Communist Labor League, YAWF and I hope and understand the "Red Circle". I am very much interested in receiving the "Africa in Struggle" compilation.

d) Houston

Houston plans for Portugal-Angola teach-in for first week in February; decided to participate in an Angola demo being organized by African Liberation Committee for Jan. 10 and to intervene with a leaflet (we have not yet received a report on the results). The group continues activities around support of the farmworkers and voted an assessment of \$5 per member for special fund to support this work.

e) Los Angeles

Participated in a picket line on Angola organized by a coalition dominated by Black CP sympathiser types and NAM. Due in large measure to poor organization and tight top-down control allowing no room for participation, it was not a resounding success. About 100 participated with no reports in the media.

A mass rally is scheduled for Feb. 14, initiated by a Black community coalition. Organizers are counting on prominent Black politicians to attract large attendance.

In contradiction to the reformist direction (lobbying, etc.) the leadership insisted on a pro-MPLA basis for the demo. In the debate over the question, we argued unsuccessfully for some actions around a US Out of Angola basis to accomodate ACLU, SWP and others. Three representatives of the SWP were present, but did not participate on the picket line (other than to sell Militants).

A coalition is also functioning in Pasadena, initiated by a Black community group. We joined with the SWP in opposing a motion to prohibit the carrying of banners with the names of participating organizations. The motion carried nevertheless.

The LA group is concentrating on Inprecor sales (ordered 80 of #40/41) and forums. The Angola forum attracted about 60 people. Three SWPers attended but left at the opening of the discussion period. Forum on Lebanon planned for Feb. 6.

There are signs around the SWP of lack of conviction in their Angola line. Our comrades have had some success selling Inprecors at their forums and even sold a sub to an SWP member.

f) Washington DC

We hear that a new RMOC group is being organized by former ITers.

2. Angola

As anticipated, left activity is definitely centering around Angola, and the reports indicate our branches are in the thick of it. The dispute over the basis of the coalitions ("US Out of Angola" or "Support to MPLA") is popping up in various places, as expected. It will become more serious now that the SWP is beginning to implement its decision to "launch a campaign against US involvement in Angola".

We agree entirely with the line expressed in the Chicago report: "We are in favor of such a broader coalition around US Hands Off and breaking all relations with South Africa. It would be necessary to continue a pro-MPLA caucus that could build separate contingents as well as call its own activities."

We could not, of course, participate in coalitions based on the demand that all foreign governments stop intervening in Angola. While the SWP is inconsistent in demanding unilateral US withdrawal, this makes it possible theoretically for us to collaborate with them. However, it is so isolated due to its abstentionist line on the Angolan civil war that it is doubtful that we will have much opportunity to engage in such collaboration in practice.

### 3. Left Spectrum on Angola

There is probably more diversity within the left on Angola than there has been on any other international event. Both the Maoist and Trotskyist currents are divided. For those who are not keeping score, the positions are more-or-less as follows:

October League, CLP, and (we think) RU -- No support to either side. Both superpowers out of Angola.

SWP -- No support to either side, but only US out.

Guardian, NAM, WWP/YAWF, CP -- uncritical support to MPLA

Spartacists -- Agree with Maoists that it is a war of the superpowers fought by proxy (except that the S. U. is not an imperialist superpower). Therefore, although the MPLA is equally as reactionary as its enemies, military victory for the MPLA must be supported on the grounds of defense of the S.U. vs. imperialism (sic!).

IS -- Support MPLA with little or no criticism on the grounds that the MPLA is more independent of Russian imperialism than FNLA-UNITA of US imperialism, and its victory could be the beginning of the socialist revolution.

On Angola, as on Portugal, our line is distinct from all others and this presents us with an important opportunity to establish our political identity.

### 4. Financial Report as of January 30, 1976

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Dues	912.00	Sustainer	302.00
Inprecor Subs	146.00	Inprecor subs	152.00
Inprecor Bundles	220.25	Inprecor bundles	222.50
Conference surplus	187.04	Postage	81.74
Donations	21.00	Phone	90.52
Total	1486.29	Subs for center	59.00
		Donations	10.00
		Travel	90.00
Balance on hand	\$465.36	Supplies	13.17
		Total	1020.93

#### Outstanding debts:

Inprecor bundle \$279.00 (see Lit. report  
for breakdown)

Three locals are behind in their dues, these amounts due and payable to the center now!

San Francisco	Dec-Jan	\$ 48.00
Chicago	Dec-Jan	96.00
New York	Dec-Jan	152.00

### 5. Literature & Sub-drive

The final results will not be announced until the next newsletter, so keep those subs coming in. Also, it still appears that some subs have been sent direct to Brussels without our receiving a copy here at the center. If so, get them in. It looks as though we can reach our national goal of 50 new subscribers (50 was our goal even though after assigning quotas to each area they totalled '60) if we all make a concerted push in the next couple of weeks.

The total of our bundles is steadily increasing. This is excellent, however, each local must begin to regularize their payments. We expect each local to send their payment on receipt of the bundle at the rate of \$.65 per issue (1.20 for 40/41). The center cannot finance the local bundles.

<u>Area</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Total subs</u>	<u>1 year</u>	<u>6 months</u>	<u>Intro</u>	<u>% Goal</u>
Houston	8	9	2	0	7	113
Los Angeles	15	16	5	4	7	106
New York	10	0				0
Chicago	5	2	0	0	2	40
Baltimore-Wash	10	10	0	0	10	100
San Francisco	5	0				0
Iowa City	3	0				0
At Large	4	0				0
Total	60	37	7	4	26	62%

Inprecor Bundles

<u>Area</u>	<u>Bundle Size</u>	<u>Amount owed</u>	<u>Very Old #39 &amp; before</u>
Houston	15	\$27.75	
Los Angeles	60	39.00	
New York	25	46.25	
Chicago	20	37.00	
Baltimore-Wash	25	52.25	
San Francisco	25	41.75	
Iowa City	10	18.50	
Minn.-St. Paul	10	38.00	19.50
Total	190	300.50	19.50

The center is going to bring the payments to Inprecor up to date in the very near future. In order to accomplish this locals must pay up. From here on in make your checks out to RMOC. This will make bookkeeping easier.