

I.S. NATIONAL REPORT

Volume III, No. 1

Sep. 1974

CONTENTS

National Secretary Report 9/12/74
UWFA National Fraction Report #14
Motion to EC on Developing the NC
WP Editor's Report (plus Bay Area WP motions)
EC minutes 9/4/74
EC minutes 9/11/74
NC minutes (after Convention)

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

National Secretary's Report September 12, 1974

1. EC: The EC has begun its assessment of the convention which it plans to have out for the next national Report. Beyond this, we have been discussing how to precede to move ahead with the momentum that the convention gave to the entire organization. Discussions on continuing the Maoism campaign, with ideas about the ex-Modern Times comrades to do some traveling, as well as comrades from the NO, and the Detroit Branch. Some of this traveling will be done in conjunction with building the upcoming rank and file educational conferences in New York, Bloomington, and Detroit. We also discussed the various ~~frax~~ fractions, based upon reports from the fraction meetings at the convention, and plans for further developing them as real national bodies, as well as passing unanimously the UFWA fraction report.
2. Socialist Collective: ~~F~~ Since the convention, EC members have spent most of their time in discussions with the comrades of the Socialist Collective who will be here until Sunday, Sept 15. Various EC members have had long discussions with the SC on Party and Class, Labor and Industrial Perspectives, women, blacks and international perspectives. On the first tow there were no real differences. On women and blacks, where as there are still differences, they are not nearly as wide as both groups thought they would be in the beginning. Both organizations understand that we must fight against racism and sexism in the working class, and that those issues cannot be subordinated to the less advanced consciousness of white and/or male workers, ie that unity of the working class can only be real unity if it does fight against the oppression of women and blacks. We also agree that nationalism or ~~the~~ feminism as ideologies represent no solution to the problems of blacks or women, and that only proletarian revolution will solve the problems of the special oppression that faces each of these groups. And while there are still differences abstractly, both groups agree that there are no principle differences, that those that do exist are in terms of strategy and tactics and that those can be worked out in practice inside the same organization. Moreover, in every concrete case, that was discussed, there were no real differences. On international questions the SC comrades have a state capitalist analysis of the stalinist systems, but that aside, we have no essential differences on international perspectives. Based on these discussions, the EC voted unanimously that we were for unity, ie the SC comrades joining the IS. The SC ~~xxx~~ had voted prior to coming to Detroit unanimously that they were for unity if it waw possible, based upon the political discussions to be held here. The SC comrades here (4 out of a 5 of their central Committee) agree that there are no principle differences, and that those ~~that~~ differences that do exist can be worked out in practice inside the IS. So, over the weekend of September 13-15, we will be discussing concretely how un ity is to take place. The specifics of this will be reported in the next National Report.
3. Canada: The comrades from Toronto Canada who attended the convention were very impressed with the IS, and think that there is the basis for a Canadian IS group. ~~Members~~ Members of the EC will be working with them, and helping out where possible in this important international venture.
4. Chicago: The Sojourner Truth Organization has split again, and some parts of it remerged. All groups on some level are interested in discussions with us. Most important of these is the group that includes most of their cadre in the plant where we have comrades, who want to have joint work and discussions with us.
5. Boston: We will be setting up a study group on basic Marxism with friends we've met through ~~the~~ NAM conference

National Secretary's Report continued

6. St. Louis: A close friend of ours who has been in the forefront of struggle in one of our priority industries there is under heavy political and physical attack by the bureaucracy and the company. We will be attempting to publicize what is happening and to link it up to similar, but less severe harrassment of some of our own comrades through a national caucus we're involved with.

7. Youngstown: There was a small but significant rank and file conference ~~xxx fax~~ of steelworkers held by RAFT last weekend. RAFT will be putting out a national newsletter which will attempt to spread its influence. We now have a several comrades as well as close friends in this industry, who will be involved in the newsletter.

8. VERY IMPORTANT: Please note that the NC immediately following the convention voted to raise the national dues from \$6.50/ month to \$7.50/month. It is important for the a national budget that branches begin paying this immediately, and pay their national dues on time.

UFWA NATIONAL FRACTION REPORT #14

National Fraction meeting

The national fraction met at the national convention. Most branches distributed written reports. Every branch should have a copy of these and they will not be summarized here. After a general discussion the perspectives for our work as proposed by the fraction steering committee in #13 were passed (most by overwhelming votes).

This includes the major political points on which we wish to focus our propaganda work in the paper and discussions:

- 1) the need for mass strike action (including non-violence question)
- 2) Undocumented workers
- 3) The role of the labor movement (including secondary boycott)
- 4) Winning UFW to the need for stimulating struggle for UFW through independent (from UFW structure) committees in unions.

Our political stance vis a vis Chavez was adopted. What is needed in the union is the development of an opposition which can fight for a program (including the above politics) and develop an alternative leadership to Chavez. Such does not exist at the present and until it has begun to develop the call for dumping Chavez is at best meaningless. We are clear however we are in opposition to Chavez and that in all probability Chavez will not be won to the politics necessary to win and will have to be ousted.

Finally we voted that the focus of our organizational work should be labor support: raising the UFW and organizing activities in our trade unions and doing labor contact work. We continue to participate in boycott committees but we see this as means for communication and legitimacy and coordination in our labor work.

We also recommended to the NAC after our discussion that we initiate a protest campaign of open letters to La Paz over the issue of workers without documents being turned over to the INS. This will be possible because of the widespread opposition to the policy among supporters and staffers and the fact that we are well established as serious UFWA supporters in most boycott cities.

We can carry out more than propaganda on this issue without isolating ourselves. In fact the campaign should help us move our work forward by providing an actionable way for us to raise our criticisms of the UFWA policy. To independents in the committees who agree with us we will appear as more than people who talk a good line but never do more than that. To those who don't agree it gives a concrete chance to talk about the issue again. Maoists and CPer's who try to fudge on the issue can be exposed for their unwillingness to publically criticize this racist policy, a policy that many denounce in private.

What we are proposing is that we draft an open letter to the UFWA in each of the various cities in which we do boycott work and in unions which have gone on record as in support of the UFWA.

In some places these letters may be put forward as resolutions but probably we should circulate them to be signed by boycott supporters. We should explain to sympathetic staffers that we are not asking them to sign (x 4 staffers in Fla. were fired for opposing the union line on "illegals") although they can if they wish.

Already in Louisville the committee has voted to draft a letter of protest to La Paz over this issue and will vote soon at our urging to circulate the resolution to other boycott cities. This should be our model although it may only happen in St. Louis and Bloomington. Elsewhere the protests will probably take the form of open letters to La Paz. These will be circulated among the fraction so that we are able to make it clear in our local work that this is a national campaign.

The resolutions and open letters will contain two major points. They will be in opposition to the policy of the UFWA relying upon the bosses Immigration and Naturalization Service to clear scabs out of the fields by attacking the workers without documents. The letters will also raise the alternative strategy of an attack upon the coyotes.

UFWA NATION FRACTION REPORT (continued)

This is a draft statement to be used as a model which was adopted by the fraction;

As supporters of the United Farmworkers of America we disagree with the UFWA's campaign to call in the Immigration and Naturalization Service to clear scabs from the fields. "La Migra" is an enemy of all workers without documents and is used by employers to steal wages, Social Security benefits and break union organizations.

The farmworkers should clear the scabs out of the fields by relying on themselves and their supporters, not the racist INS. The solidarity of workers without documents should be sought by a campaign against the coyotes and labor contractors who run this exploitative system for the growers.

MOTION TO EC ON DEVELOPING THE NC

We propose that one of the immediate tasks of the ED is to organize the NC into a working body and develop a national collaborative leadership. The initial step should be the immediate establishment of a series of NC subcommittees.

Each subcommittee should include from 3 to 7 members of the NC (or alternates). Each should include at least one member of the EC who should serve as its coordinator. Each subcommittee shall have circulated to it all materials discussed by the EC in its specific area. Documents and proposals shall generally, when possible, be submitted to the appropriate subcommittee members for comments and discussion before action is taken by the EC and the NC.

The NC meetings will be organized so that subcommittee meetings take a substantial portion of the time. Documents and motions will first be submitted to the subcommittees which as working bodies will improve and crystalize the documents and discussions for focussed presentation to the NC. For example the subcommittees could be of three kinds: organizational, political work and theory.

The NC subcommittees have no power themselves to intervene directly into the work of the organization (which is the responsibility of the EC and the NC) but to closely follow the work of the organization, establish ongoing consultation with the EC, and report to, organize and make meaningful NC meetings. I.S. commissions will continue h their present responsibilities but will regularly report to the NC subcommittees.

These subcommittees shall be established so that their work can begin before the fall National Committee meeting.

Mike P.	Jack T.	Ken S.
Mike S.	Bill R.	Dave M.
Sam F.	Bill H.	Ilene W.
Joe F.	Ken B.	Enid E.

EDITORS REPORT 9/16/74

1. Thus far I have gotten reports on WP sales from only three branches--SF, Seattle and Chicago. I want to begin publishing numbers sold, branch by branch, in the next Report (in 2 weeks). It is essential that comrades send in branch reports. We want to double our circulation in the next year. Distribution of WP must be taken seriously and records kept of the real number distributed. Our press run is now 3,500. I have no real idea of how many are actually sold or given away or kept in someone's closet.
2. We would like to launch some sort of sub drive this fall. The difficulties with a sub drive have been: we have a second class mailing permit which means that the papers take 2 weeks to get where they are going and are often out of date when they get there. We have been hesitant to push subs for that reason. Also one cannot discuss the paper with a contact when they get it in the mail so we have tended to prefer one to one sales. However several branches have been considering running sub drives but delivering the paper themselves. I am attaching the proposal adopted by the Bay Area branch for other branches to consider.

I spoke with comrades in charge of distribution from each branch at the Convention. All seemed eager to consider some sort of national sub-drive that would be delivered by branch members. I would like each branch to discuss the possibilities and let me know if they feel their branch could take on the burden of delivering the papers.

3. We would also like to get out a poster advertising WP this fall.

4. Starting with issue #105 we are going to attempt a Weds. morning print date. This would be much easier on the staff who now spends 2 weekends, each month, working round the clock on the paper and the other two weekends at branch meetings. This would mean the larger branches would still get the paper by Thursday or Friday. In the next report I will include the newspaper schedule for the next 6 months.

5. With #104 we have reorganized the pages in the paper. Page 14 will always be I.S. news. In #105 we hope to have a new "what we stand for" and then re-design the page. We also want to develop a real "What's On" Column. That means that branches must send me notices of everything they have planned--demonstrations, classes, forums, etc. Branches should also send news items of their own activities. We want the paper to reflect an organization that is alive and growing.

6. With #104 we have also moved Feedback to a more prominent section of the paper--with the editorial on page 6. It is important that members encourage their contacts to write. Often people will not write because they think we already get too many letters, they are too intimidated or they feel we wouldn't be interested in their opinions. We must help them get over their hesitations and encourage them to write. We print almost all the letters we get.

BAY AREA EXEC PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE CONTACT MAILINGS

1. We propose to do away with the contact mailing as it now exists.
2. We will send out free samples of Workers Power to the entire contact list. Then, in consultation with Sheila and other interested branch members, we will contact everyone on the list and try to get them to subscribe to WP. The purpose of this is not to eliminate names from the contact list but to get new subscribers to the paper.
3. We will obtain a list of WP subscribers in this area from Detroit.
4. We will request that enough WP's be added to our shipment to enable us to do the mailing ourselves. We will investigate ways of distributing WP's. Our options include hand delivery, first-class mail, second-class mail (maybe), or third-class mail. We could either do institutional subscriptions by third-class mail or let Detroit handle them.
5. We will send out our contact mailing stapled inside the copies of Workers Power. This mailing would include a calendar and any other important announcements. We will weed out Sparts and other hostile forces from the list of subscribers who are to get mailings.

Motivation

1. Contact mailings cost money, about \$10 per mailing and we get very little out of it. While doing a recent mailing, I realized that I had never met or heard of 80% of the people on the list. This means that they don't come to meetings or other IS activities. Many of the names I recognized were of people who have only the most peripheral relationship to us. Since we don't have a full-time organizer, the mailings for contacts have been short and uninteresting, often consisting of a one-page calendar only. This is not meant to criticize the mailings, which require a lot of work, but to point out that receiving it should not be confused with having some political relationship with the IS. That is a role for our paper.
2. Part of the job of turning WP into the organizer of the IS entails getting our contacts to read it regularly. If contacts do not read our press, or do not think it is worth \$1 for three months, then they are contacts of a most peculiar sort.
3. We have never had a subscription drive or made a serious effort to push subscriptions on our friends. That time has come. The paper is now read and respected by most of the organization. In some arenas, like UFW and CLUW, WP is our No. 1 organizing tool. In other arenas like the UAW, CWA, IBT, and AFT the paper's coverage of our work has improved dramatically. Sales of the paper have also picked up. The next step is a national subscription drive. While that is not being proposed immediately, we should start to turn our contacts into subscribers in this area. "For \$3.50, you get one year of WP and announcements of all IS activities."
4. The major technical problem with WP subscriptions has been time factor. Because our subscriptions are sent third-class from Detroit, they take over one week to reach West Coast subscribers. By the time they arrive they are out of date. If this branch were to do the mailing itself, this would no longer be a problem. This would not require much more work than doing the mailing and would be infinitely more rewarding.
5. We should make every effort to advertise local events in WP. This means serious planning but it might bring some of our subscribers around, and would help WP appear as a serious activist paper. For example, we should have advertised the current China series, in WP: if interested, please contact so and so...
6. There will probably be a few exceptions who should receive mailings even if they are unwilling to subscribe to WP. These exceptions should be temporary ones. There is no reason for someone we have known for years not to read our paper.

E.C. MINUTES 9/4

(NOTE: The NC meeting following the Convention changed the name of the National Action Committee (NAC) to Executive Committee (E.C.).

1. CONVENTION ASSESSMENT. Lengthy discussion of the convention - assessment will be included in next National Report. Reports from the fraction meetings were also presented by EC members who attended them.
2. UFW PETITION. The UFW fraction ~~xxxx~~ at the Convention discussed and passed a proposal that a petition be circulated among UFW supporters calling on the UFW to give up the campaign ~~calling~~ calling for the arrest and deportation of undocumented workers. This proposal was discussed briefly and accepted by the EC.
3. TORONTO. Report by JT on discussions with contacts who could become basis of IS group.
4. MEMBERSHIP. (a) A former comrade in Cincinnati, RL, ~~xxx~~ who left the IS with the RT at the time of the split, has applied to rejoin the IS and has been ~~in~~ in correspondence with us. Based on correspondence, his understanding of the differences between IS and RSL politics is very unclear. A member of the EC will speak directly with him at the Bloomington educational conference. (b) The EC, with regret, has suspended Roney S. (Madison) from membership in the IS. (This action was taken by the EC in the absence of a Madison branch at this time). The necessity of this arose because RS, without informing us in advance and at a time when no other members were present in Madison, embarked on an "independent campaign" for sheriff in Dane County, Wisconsin, in a loose bloc with the Socialist Party of Wisconsin, on the basis of a program which is unsupportable and indefensible for us. Its main focus is prison reform - not abolition of the prison system, but reforming it - and is completely within a social-democratic framework. In addition, the campaign represents no movement or forces, and is simply an effort to produce an "electoral alternative on the left". It is not intended as an IS campaign or an IS-building activity. Upon being informed of this, well after the initial phase of the campaign was underway, the EC through DF spoke at great length with RS and stated our view that he must drop out of the race because it was politically indefensible. His refusal to do so leaves us no choice but to suspend him. We have urgently requested that RS come to Detroit to discuss the politics of the question with us directly, as well as political perspectives for building the IS in general. If this request is not ~~met~~ met we will ask the next NC meeting to finalize his expulsion. While RS has been informed of this, we have so far received no answer although he is continuing to send us his campaign material and press statements.
5. Brief discussion, to be continued, on possibilities for developing strike support work around the upcoming national miners' strike. Detailed discussion of prospects for this to be scheduled.

E.C MINUTES 9/11

1. Reprts. Further splits, regroupments and new splits in Sojourner Truth Organization. We are engaged in discussions with some of them, whose positions on unions etc. are in flux.

A campaign has been launched to wipe out milirants in UAW Local 25 (St. Louis GMAD) following 12-week strike sabotaged by INternational. See next WP for coverage. A coordinated defense may be set up.

The RAFT sponsored steel conference was unspectacular but useful. Turnout was about 35 (a little disappointing to the organizers). An independent leaflet will be issued supporting the demonstration to be held at the convention, and an effort to build a small but vocal opposition caucus will be made there as well.

(Other reports were technical, e.g. progress in search for typesetter and preparations for Bloomington conference).

2. CONVENTION AND NC's. This is the first preliminary discussion, which will be completed in the next few weeks. We intend to establish firmly not only the dates but also the agendas for major national meetings well in advance this year, as part of the essential process of developing a functional NC. The following was established: dates for NC's will be (i)Thanksgiving, (ii) Washington or Lincoln's Birthday in February, (iii)possibly Memorial Day if no earlier date is feasible. All dates will be firmly established in the immediate future. The Convention will be held July 4-6, and the summer school (which will be devoted to the black liberation issue and our perspectives toward the black community) July 7-13.

The Thanksgiving NC agenda must take up youth perspectives, CLUW, and the development of the Maoism campaign. It is also certain that in February there will be a discussion on the black left. Remainder of agenda proposals will be discussed shortly.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to our discussions in progress with the Socialist Collective leadership. A full report will be forthcoming on their conclusion.

MINUTES--SEPTEMBER NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING(1970)

Present- MD, KM, JW, JT, DF, JG, SF, KS, CW, ~~KB~~ KB, BH, GS, BW, WT, EE, BR, JF, MF FOR MP and LR for MS. DM absent.

1 NAC motion to return present NAC.

AMDNDMENT(SF) that GS be added to NAC slate because of her position as WP editor

GS- I do not have time to be an official member (SF amendment withdrawn)

VOTE--- ALL FOR NAC SLATE PASSES

2 MOTION-To change name of NAC to Executive Committee(EC)

VOTE-All for except 3 opposed(BH, MF, DF) 1 abstention(EE)

3 ~~XXX~~ EC slate on national officers PASSED all for.

4 EC BUDGET PROPOSAL REPORT

MAJOR DIFFERENCES: (from last years budget)

A Dues to be \$7.50 per month(national dues)

B LA be stricken from B.O subsidy

C Fund Drives-goals-\$22,500 in fall, \$5,000 in Apr81

MOTION(KB) Raise national dues to \$10 FAILS 1-17 2

MOTION(JW) Adopt EC report on budget PASSES ALL FOR

5 MOTION(JG) That ML be made fulltime youth organizer to bring together our youth work and to begin to build an IS youth group of the specific nature that the EC arrives upon PASSES ALL FOR.

MOTION (MF) That within next year the NC decide upon the type of youth group to be formed. PASSED ALL FOR.

6. MOTION(MD) That Womens fraction motions be tabled to next NC, that womens commission decide upon which should be immediately implemented PASSED ALL FOR.

7 MOTION(MF) That the Nc must become a working body with specific committees on our various work and different issues

MOTION(JW) To refer to EC the specific implementation PASSES ALL FOR

MOTION(KP) To vote on proposal PASSES ALL FOR

VOTE- PASSES 11-0-6(WT, JG, BW, CW, KM, GS)

8. MOTION(MD) That within 1 month the EC publicize when the next convention and summer school are to be held and where such events will take place PASSES ALL FOR.

9 MOTION(SF) That the EC present a proposal to the next NC on a theoretical journal. PASSES ~~XXXX~~ 11-6(LR, BM KS, JG, DF, KM)-3(JW, MD JF)

*(Same folks as this last year-JG Nat. Chair. , ~~XXX~~ MD Nat. Sec , Gs WP editor, ~~M~~ KM- Industrial Secretary, and JT, Educational Secretary)