

INTERNATIONAL



SOCIALISTS



WHAT WE DO

and

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HOW WE WORK

If you are considering joining the IS then you will have questions about us: how we work, and what you will have to do. This pamphlet is written to answer the questions most people have about the IS. It might not answer all of yours and we will be glad to discuss them with you.



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The IS: International Socialists

The IS is an activist revolutionary socialist organization. The ideas that we fight for today grew out of the experience of the working class struggles and the revolutionary movements in the US and in other countries. During the 1950s, what seemed to be permanent prosperity for some combined with the repression and red-bating destroyed much of the revolutionary working class movement. It has been necessary to rebuild. In the black, student, women's and anti-war movements of the 60's our comrades revitalized and fought for the ideas of revolutionary Marxism. In 1969 we formed the International Socialists.

Since then we have been in the process of building an changing the IS into a revolutionary workers organization which participates in the daily struggles of the working class. By proving that we can effectively fight and lead in these struggles and by showing why the capitalist system must be replaced, we work to build a revolutionary party. Such a party can lead the working class to overthrow this system of rule by the rich few and create a workers' democracy.

A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The IS today is a national organization. Our national office is in Detroit where we publish our national weekly newspaper, Workers' Power. The National Office also publishes pamphlets and other educational material. It arranges for speaking tours and conferences.

Most importantly, the national organization leads and coordinates the work of all IS members in this country so that acting together we can be a unified more powerful force.

The IS now has branches in these cities:

Amherst	Madison
Bay Area	New Paltz
Bloomington	New York
Boston	Philadelphia
Chicago	Pittsburgh
Cleveland	Portland
Detroit	Seattle
Indianapolis	St. Louis
Los Angeles	Sacramento
Louisville	Charleston, W Va.

AN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

It was always necessary for all workers of the world to work together rather than against each other. Now in these days of "multi-national" corporations it is even

more important. The IS in the United States works with groups in other countries which have similar views. In Great Britain the British IS has become an industrial workers' organization of thousands. In Portugal we work with the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (Revolutionary Brigades) which is playing a leading role in workers' councils. We also have fraternal relations with organizations in many other countries including Canada, Australia, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Sweden.

Because we know that what happens in one country effects the rest of the world, we actively support revolutionary workers movements in other countries to help counter the attacks of the US through the CIA or other ways. Currently we are working hard to let people know the truth about Portugal, where the workers have locked the bosses out of factories and are running them with workers' councils and where councils of soldiers and sailors are running part of the military. The US and NATO countries want to smash the Portuguese workers because they know that if workers in the US and other contries find out the truth it will encourage them to also want to take control of their factories and their countries. And that is one more reason why we defend and spread the word about the Portuguese revolution.




Revolutionary workers' demonstration in Portugal.

RED TIDE, THE YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF THE IS

In 1974, two groups of youth met and formed the Red Tide as a youth organization of the IS. Red Tide is part of the same political movement as the IS but it is a separate organization organizing and fighting for young workers on the job or students in high schools and college. Many members of the Red Tide are also members of the IS.

The Red Tide has its own program of activities and education although it works closely with the IS. The Red Tide publishes its own monthly newspaper called Red Tide.

Red Tide first started on the West Coast and is now organizing in midwest cities.



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High School Students:
FIGHT THE POWER!

Highland Park High School students know how to get what they want. They've just returned back to school after a militant and victorious strike that won them some of their demands.

For three days Highland Parkers held together and stayed out of school.

Spirited demonstrations of hundreds of students from the school to the Board of Education, kept school officials and cops in their places.

Chants of "ain't give up no ground" and "Parkers—Fight the Power" let everyone know that Highland Park students had the power and knew how to use it. Here's what happened:



The Red Tide, a revolutionary paper for youth.

How The IS Works

FULL FREEDOM OF CRITICISM—UNITY IN ACTION

We believe that every member has important contributions to make to IS policy as the result of his or her experiences. That is why we organize political discussions in the organization where every member can participate, and why we elect delegates to our convention to decide basic policy.

We use democratic procedures because they make our decisions better and therefore more effective. For the same reason, once we make a decision, every member works to carry it out. After the decision has been carried out we then evaluate it to learn from our mistakes.

We take the election of leaders in the IS very seriously. We demand of leading committees like executive committees that they organize our work, initiate programs, implement our policies—that is, lead. We also expect leading committees which we elect to make decisions for bodies that elected them between meetings. For example, a branch executive committee can make decisions between branch meetings and these decisions are policy of the IS in that area.

Similarly, the national EC can make decisions for the whole IS between meetings of the National Committee. We do this so the organization can be an action organization ready to respond as a unified whole to events whenever they happen. If we do not like the leadership provided by a leading committee then we can replace the members of that committee. We call this conception of leadership **democratic centralism**.

FRACTIONS

Fractions are the basic unit of political work. Every branch is divided up into fractions consisting of the members who are working together in the same union or other area of political activity. Industrial fractions include auto, CWA, Teamsters, steel, teachers. We also have a black fraction for organizing our activity in the black community, a women's fraction which takes up questions of IS work in the Coalition of Labor Union Women [CLUW] and other activities in the women's movement. Many members will belong to more than one fractions.

Fractions meet regularly (weekly or bi-weekly) to plan strategies and tactics for building rank and file struggles in the unions and workplaces locally. They are also linked up to fractions in other branches. National coordination is particularly important in the case of fractions which have built or which participate in national opposition caucuses in the unions—the

United National Caucus of the UAW and United Action in telephone are examples. It is also through fractions that our major contact work takes place locally. A **contact** is anyone who we think it is possible to recruit. In fraction meetings we discuss contacts and attempt to work out ways for bringing them closer to joining the IS.

BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Branch meetings usually take place every other week. Here members discuss the work of the organization. The branch elects its executive committee and also delegates to the national convention.

The **Executive Committee (exec)** is the political and organizational leadership of the branch and usually has 3 to 6 members elected periodically at branch meetings.

The Exec makes sure that the decisions of the organization are carried out. This includes overseeing Workers' Power and contact work and education for the branch. The Exec provides an analysis and strategy for IS work locally. The Exec is the branch leadership body. It is responsible for responding to and finding ways to overcome any problem that holds back the effectiveness of the branch. It does this by organizing branch discussions, coordinating fraction work and soliciting input from individual members.

WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The Women's Caucus is another vital part of branch functioning. It works closely with and in some branches may be the same as the women's **fraction**. But the women's caucus helps deal with any problems of sexism in the IS and helps develop strategies for building the skills and confidence for political leadership responsibilities by women.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The **IS National Convention** is held once a year in Detroit in the summer or early fall. Prior to the convention delegates are elected by each branch. They are elected according to their political positions on issues to be taken up at the convention. Branch size determines the number of delegates allowed. Where a significant minority exists on an important issue, they are also allowed delegates to represent their point of view.

Documents and resolutions at the convention do two major things: they further develop and update our revolutionary Marxist theory, and/or they put forward a practical strategy for building the working class movement and the revolutionary party during the coming year. The convention is the disciplined expressed will of the majority of the organization. It is

the highest and most important policy-making body of the IS. Therefore the democratic decisions of the convention are defended, enforced, and carried out by the other leadership bodies and the membership.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The National Committee (NC) meets four times a year to plan short-range strategy and to provide leadership for the organization in carrying out convention decisions. Major decisions unable to wait until the next convention are also made by the NC. The NC is roughly 20 people from around the country, elected at the convention on the basis of their political ideas and their political leadership in the IS. Further, the NC appoints whatever national officers it deems necessary including National Chairperson, National Secretary, and Workers' Power editor.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The National Executive Committee (EC) meets weekly in Detroit—its members all live there. There are roughly half a dozen members on the EC; they are all elected by the NC. The EC guides branch internal and external work, oversees the production and political viewpoint of Workers' Power, and acts on organizational problems. And on a daily basis the EC is the national leadership of the IS.

FRACTION LEADERSHIP

National Fraction Steering Committees are usually elected by the national fractions and are under the direction of the national EC through the Industrial Committee. These are usually organized around union lines. For example, we have national fractions for auto workers, communication workers, steel workers, and Teamsters. The national fraction steering committees are responsible for guiding our daily political work in these industries, including organizing national campaigns and seeing that we raise the same ideas in the unions in a coordinated way across the country.

COMMISSIONS

National Commissions are appointed by the Executive Committee (EC). Presently there are two: the Women's Commission and the Black Commission whose tasks are similar.

They coordinate national contact work among these two specially oppressed groups. They provide the daily leadership for IS intervention into the struggles of black and women. It is a primary task of the IS to recruit large numbers of comrades from these two groups and to further train and educate these comrades to become real leaders of the IS. And it is the task of these

commissions to oversee the day to day details of this process.

WORKERS' POWER

Workers' Power is the weekly newspaper of the IS. It presents our analysis and position on current world, national, and local events. It presents our views on what is happening in the trade union movement and on the shop floor. It is written primarily for industrial workers who want to fight more effectively, and it reports extensively on rank and file struggles that are not covered anywhere else.

Because Workers' Power is one of the main ways we have for getting our ideas across, distributing the paper and getting articles for it are among the most important responsibilities of every member.

We ask worker militants to write articles and letters for the paper describing their organizations and struggles.

WORKERS' Power

news direct from the revolution

PORTUGAL

Lisbon, Tuesday Evening, September 30, 1975.

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PORTUGAL: CIA Funds For Fascism

High School Students Strike

Workers' Power, weekly newspaper of the International Socialists.

What It Means To Join IS

The IS is open to those who agree with our basic ideas and actively work with us to achieve them. Joining the IS is a commitment to help expand the membership of the IS and spread our ideas in the working class movement.

Just exactly what form of activity will depend on individual circumstances. A union shop steward will be more involved in shop floor struggles. An unemployed worker perhaps will work with unemployed committees while seeking a job. A worker with family responsibilities and a full time job will have less time.

But whatever the specific situation every member of the IS contributes according to his or her situation and ability and workers hard to build the group and carry out our program.

SPECIFICS

Every member of the IS is expected to:

1) **Build the organization and power of the working class.** Every IS member works with one of the IS fractions, consisting of those IS members who are working together in a specific union or in some other area of activity.

Usually, one of the main objectives of the fraction is to build a rank and file caucus inside the work place based on the ideas of class struggle unionism. These caucuses, with IS leadership, should become the effective rank and file opposition inside the union always fighting for class struggle policies, and against the sell out policies of the union bureaucrats. Leaflets, petitions, and regular rank and file bulletins are some of the tools used by these caucuses.

2) **Participate in IS branch meetings.** Branch meetings review and organize the work of the IS in one local area. These meetings are a place where IS members can discuss problems they face in organizing and get help and advice from members who work in other fractions. Branch meetings also discuss communications from the national organization. The branches also elect delegates to the national convention and elect the local executive committee.

3) **Participate in the educational program.** Nobody ever knows all the answers. But we have to act on the basis of what we do know; otherwise we are letting other people control the situation. We believe that education is very important so that we can be still more effective. Every member is expected to become both a learner and a teacher to newer members and other workers.

At the beginning, all new members of the IS participate in a class series on the basic IS politics.

4) **Carry out branch activities.** In addition to our

organizing at the work place, there are also full branch activities. For example a branch might be organizing support for the Portuguese revolution by holding a public meeting. Or a branch might be organizing a demonstration against racism in the community. We believe that one of our important jobs is to relate these kinds of issues to the struggles in the workplace. All IS members help carry out these activities.

5) **Recruit new members.** Another important branch activity is recruiting new members. We want to bring people who know what we stand for and want to work with us into the IS as fast as possible because the IS must grow quickly. Branches make a plan for recruitment and see that possible members are contacted and talked to about the IS and our ideas. As a member of the IS you will work to recruit your workmates, friends, and relatives to the IS. You will do this by talking to them about our ideas, selling them our paper, and inviting them to our activities.

6) **Sell Workers' Power.** Our newspaper, Workers' Power, is one of the best ways to spread the influence and ideas of the IS to other workers. Every member has regular selling assignments for the paper and also sees that the paper gets to his or her workmates and friends.

7) **Dues.** All members pay dues to support the ongoing work of the organization both nationally and locally.

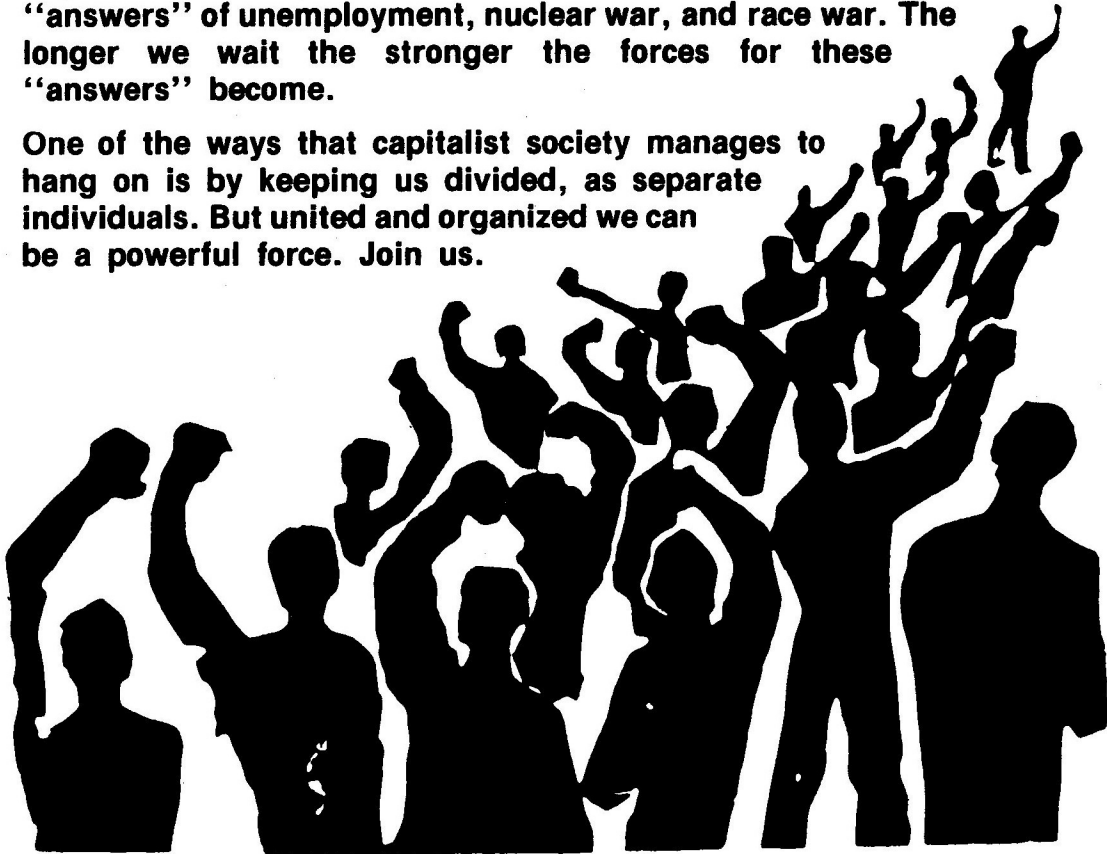
The amount of dues is based on the member's income and family expenses. Before figuring their dues members can deduct such expenses as childcare expenses, child support, medical and other exceptional expenses. Since the organization must have money to do its work we take dues paying very seriously. But there are often exceptional circumstances and the branch treasurer and exec can adjust a member's dues or make some arrangement for paying. We don't allow shirkers to stay in the organization, but we would not let a real financial problem prevent someone from being a full member.

Join Us!

Society does not stand still.

Capitalism is today a decaying system which can provide only the “answers” of unemployment, nuclear war, and race war. The longer we wait the stronger the forces for these “answers” become.

One of the ways that capitalist society manages to hang on is by keeping us divided, as separate individuals. But united and organized we can be a powerful force. Join us.



What We Stand For

The International Socialists are open to all who accept our basic principles and are willing to work as a member of our organization to achieve them. We stand for:

WORKING CLASS REVOLUTION

Working class revolution will destroy capitalism. Reform schemes cannot patch it up. The wealth produced by workers will be collectively controlled by workers to provide a decent life and freedom for all. Today that wealth is stolen from working people by the capitalist class. Socialism can be won only through workers' revolution. The capitalist state must be destroyed. So must its institutions: the legislature, army, police, and courts. A socialist society will be ruled democratically by mass organizations of all working people.

MASS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

Today the trade unions are the only mass working class organizations. We work for rank and file control of the unions to make them fighting instruments of workers against the employers. We fight for workers' action against the economic and social crisis of capitalism. Defend working conditions. No controls on wages. 30 hours work for 40 hours pay to fight unemployment. The right to a job at union wages for everyone. Organize the unorganized. Nationalization of industry without compensation and under workers' control.

BLACK LIBERATION

We stand for black liberation. Full equality for black people and all national minorities. Defend the black community and other oppressed peoples against all forms of racism, police terror and discrimination. We call for independent organization by black and other specially oppressed people to struggle for their liberation and to build the unity among all workers that will lead to socialism. Independence for Puerto Rico.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

For complete social, economic, and political equality for women. Free quality childcare, birth control and abortion on demand. Abolish oppression of gay people, and all sexual oppression.

YOUTH

Equality for young people. The right to good jobs for all youth. Stop police intimidation of young people. For

schools controlled by students, teachers and community. For a revolutionary socialist youth movement.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM

We oppose US imperialism, its nuclear weapons and its alliances such as NATO. Unconditional support to movements for national liberation. We oppose Russian imperialism and its war bloc, the Warsaw Pact, which controls Eastern Europe. For an independent movement of the working class and oppressed peoples everywhere against imperialism, East and West.

FOR WORLD SOCIALISM

The first successful socialist revolution was made by the Russian working class in 1917. But the revolution was isolated and destroyed by a counterrevolution led by Stalin. Workers' councils, political parties and trade unions were all crushed. Today Russia, China and the rest of the "Communist" countries are not socialist, but societies in which workers are exploited by a bureaucratic ruling class. We support workers' struggles in Russia, China and Eastern Europe for democracy and freedom. For workers' revolution to overthrow Stalinism and replace it with socialism.

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win the fight for socialism the most militant sections of the working class must be organized into a revolutionary party. The revolutionary party is a political force linking workers in separate factories, unions and industries, helping to organize and lead them to take state power and control society as a class. All the activity of the IS is directed toward building such a revolutionary party out of the struggles working people are waging today.

International Socialists



If you agree with the views expressed in this pamphlet and would like more information, or would like to join the International Socialists, then send this form to:

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS
14131 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, MI 48203

Name

Address

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Trade Union