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Detroit Free Press

The expiration of the UAW contract with the Big Three auto companies necessitates our attempting to engage in a national campaign in which the organization as a whole, but in particular those in the industry, can play a role and begin to redirect the organization outward in the working class movement. For various reasons -- the nature of the auto industry, its role in the economy, the type of exploitation, the history of the union, the role of blacks, etc -- all point to the potential for a movement to develop in the industry. In part, this will be a test for the working class. The auto contract will be the first major contract under Phase IV and will be coming after a series of defeats and sellouts in the Phase III part of the 1973-74 bargaining round. Rubber, electrical, post office and teamsters all went down to defeats which will have their impact on the struggles of the UAW. That is, the rank and file of the UAW will have to overcome many obstacles including: the demoralization produced by the series of defeats so far this year, the government's intervention, the corporations' drive for increased profits, their attack on the union at the shop floor level and the UAW bureaucracy.

The goal of IS intervention in the UAW contract is to have an impact on the contract. This means attempting to build a movement for a decent contract which sees its task as fighting for the rejection of the contract proposed by Woodcock and the corporations and fighting for those issues that really face auto workers today. For various reasons, most beyond our control, we are starting this campaign late and have already missed several opportunities for building the sort of movement we would like to see. There is by no means any guarantee of success in this attempt. Nonetheless, the aim we must have in order to attract others is that we will be able to present a strategy for the struggle against Woodcock, the companies and the government.

The campaign also has to be seen as one step towards building a left opposition movement in the UAW. Such a movement must be based on black production workers. In the past we have had much difficulty presenting the idea of a national opposition movement to them. Now, however, we expect the total inability of the Woodcock contract to speak to the present conditions facing auto workers to open up the situation for us and point clearly to the need for such an opposition movement.

The whole pattern set so far in this bargaining round has been one of a series of defeats for the rank and file. So far the rank and file in none of the important contracts that have come up has been able to take on the bureaucrats and stop the sellouts, in the process laying the basis for a genuine struggle against the companies. We don't expect the auto contract to be much different. We expect to be able to raise the question of the contract in the minds of the militants in the union and to have some impact on certain local situations. While our aim is to affect the contract and struggle around it, we are not overly optimistic about our chances of success. Taking this into account, we believe that the measure of success of our activity in this campaign will be judged on the following:

-- The degree to which we are able to really involve the caucuses we are working in and able to draw other workers to those groups. The campaign offers us the opportunity to draw together our work in the different locals and provide a focus and means of linking up militants in different shops in a common struggle against the auto companies and the UAW bureaucracy.

-- The degree to which we involve other elements besides the groups we are involved in. The campaign must be utilized to allow us to make or re-establish contact with militants in other auto plants. Our work in the auto industry and the UAW cannot be limited solely to those plants we are actually in. The opportunity to work closely and directly with militants from other plants is very important to us.

-- The degree to which we are able to influence the UNC. This campaign can not serve as a substitute for the needed discussion on our perspectives for the UNC. Nonetheless, one measure of our success will be our ability to influence the direction of the UNC through this campaign.

This campaign will be the first time that we have attempted to initiate a national industrial campaign. It will be an important first step in developing a national auto faction and a local Detroit auto faction. Additionally, all branches close to auto plants will have a role to play in our activity in this campaign. Finally, we seek to use this to gain IS contacts and build the IS.

The campaign to be successful from our point of view must attempt to put forward a strategy for auto workers on how to fight for a decent contract, one which speaks to the questions facing them. We will put forward what demands we believe to be the direction that struggle has to take and what kind of fight must be conducted for them. The campaign then will take the form of putting out propoganda and agitational material in the plants on the contract and the problems auto workers face on four main issues:

-- Inflation will be a strong factor in the minds of everyone in the next year. Already there are predictions of how the cost-of-living will shoot up when the freeze on prices is lifted. We must point to the fact that the 8% that is being heralded as a tremendous victory are not enough to meet the needs of auto workers today. An adequate income and full cost-of-living protection must be the direction that the struggle takes in order to answer that, even in part.

-- Working conditions will also be important to the rank and file. The productivity drive that the auto companies and GM in particular have been spearheading for industry in general has had its successes and as a result working conditions have undergone an extreme attack. Speed-up, forced overtime, unsafe conditions are the problems auto workers face every day. Our campaign will make clear the need to fight over these issues and to take head on the auto companies drive for increased profits through productivity drives.

-- Job security will be increasingly a factor as the recession that is clearly coming takes its toll on jobs. Many workers will not be as concerned about this question at present but we must explain what is going to happen to the economy and why a fight on this is necessary now rather than after the increased unemployment hits. Already, unemployment in Michigan is twice the national average.

-- Discrimination against blacks and other minorities and against women is a practice that must be fought against now. The union, no doubt, will give lip service to this. We must push for a real fight on it.

Our program then has several aspects to it in terms of its application. We believe that auto workers must fight for a program like the following, that is, that this be seen as their goal:

- Minimum UAW wage of \$12,500 per year -- no auto price increases.
- 100% C.C.L. to cover wages and fringes and pensions.
- Guarantee protection of SUB and pension funds against total corporate assets.
- SUB for the duration of all lay-offs.
- 30 hours work for 40 hours pay.
- No forced overtime.
- Right of any local or bargaining unit to strike by majority vote on any issue without need for prior authorization.
- Innocent until proven guilty.
- Right to a steward for every foreman.
- Workers control over production standards -- standards negotiated on the shop floor at beginning of each model run, set in writing only with approval of workers involved and frozen for model year.
- Elected union safety committee, representatives on each shift with authority to shut down unsafe or unhealthy jobs without penalty and authority to enforce any federal, state, or local health and safety code.
- Fire foremen for racist acts, sexist acts, or knowingly instructing a worker to perform an unsafe or unhealthy operation.
- Set period after which skilled trades and other desirable jobs must have the same racial and sexual proportions as corporate workforce as a whole.
- Full insurance benefits and seniority protection for all pre-natal, post natal, or other maternity connected leaves.
- Company paid, parent controlled 24 hour child care.

At the same time we believe that it is necessary to not just raise those questions we believe to be objectively in the workers interests, but to attempt to build a movement capable of fighting for it. At present that means that while we put forward this program, there are several points we must make:

--Woodcock's statements about no need for a strike should be a warning to militants of what is to come. Even though it is traditional to announce that the union does not want to strike, the results of the first part of this bargaining round show that Woodcock may well be serious about it. We must point out the dangers of not striking in terms of what that will mean for the defense of the working conditions and living standards of auto workers today. The focus of our work will be the need for a strike in order to win on any issue and that such a strike must be against all three. We must point out that without a strike the auto companies will continue their policy of harassment, speed-up and firings and the workers will be considerably weakened in taking this up or dealing with the economy. In calling for a strike against all three we also raise the demand for rank and file control over the bargaining--for a real GM, Ford, and Chrysler bargaining council, not the phoney ones they have now, for open negotiations so that all may watch, for settlement of all local agreements prior to the national contract being signed, complete copies of the agreement to all UAW members 2 days before the vote.

--Therefore we call for a rejection of the proposed contract as being totally inadequate as the first form a strike movement will take.

--We will raise certain demands as necessary for the contract before we would even consider the possibility of urging an acceptance of it:

--Inflation: A real step towards defending the workers against inflation. For a 20% wage increase the first year with full cost of living in wages, pensions, SUB.

--Working conditions: A defense of the workers position on the shop floor. No absentee control procedure. No forced overtime. Right to strike over any issue. Safety committee. Freeze production standards for model year. Rehire fired militants, fire foremen for unsafe acts.

--Job security: Real protection against the coming recession. Shorter work week. Layoff protection with extended SUB and permanent recall rights.

--End discrimination. Preferential hiring into skilled trades for blacks, other minorities and women. Maternity leave with full seniority and insurance benefits. Fire foremen for racism, sexism.

--We warn against the government's intervention in this contract. Already just the threat of the CCLC rejecting the contract will be enough for most to be afraid of fighting for more. We must propose steps to overcome this. Full labor movement support to the UAW in this contract. The UAW, being one of the strongest unions must make the attempt to smash the guidelines. To do so we must raise this question now.

The way we will put these demands forward and raise these issues among militants will take several forms.

--The UNC newspaper which we will push to carry our strategy for the contract fight and deal with the auto industry in general as well as the more specific Chrysler campaign. We will seek to make full use of the paper, to have it come out during the pre-contract period rather than just commenting on it after the fact.

--A contract newsletter centered around Chrysler but not limited to it which at this point we foresee as being a newsletter that can be distributed between now and the resolution of the contract as frequently as possible. The newsletter should attempt to cover the company's position on the contract, the position of the bureaucracy and then what our program is, what our strategy is and how the workers can fight for many of these issues. The newsletter must attempt to point the direction the struggle must go in whether that is a petition campaign or a mass demonstration. All issues should include both educational material about the contract and material telling militants what they must do.

--The newsletters we are currently working on must continue the policy of talking about the contract in each issue (except of course in exceptional cases). The steering committee will attempt to help out in the writing of articles on the contract. We seek to raise the question of the national contract and the fight against it and why workers must actively join in that fight and at the same time begin to raise the questions of the local contract and what is needed to be done about that.

The national campaign that we would like to build must follow the developments in all three companies and in the union. In particular, special attention will be paid to two parts: GMAD and Chrysler. We will attempt to learn through our contacts in St Louis and New Jersey and the UNC what is going on in GMAD as we already know of some communication between rank and file leaders of different locals. Such developments are very important and the presence on the bargaining council of some militants committed to opposing Woodcock can help to open things up for us.

As the central focus of that campaign and as the part of it we are most in a position to affect, we are proposing a Chrysler-wide coalition. Such a grouping has potential for the following reasons:

-- Chrysler has the most militant and geographically concentrated workforce, making it the only one of the big three where even the possibility of cohering a rank and file movement to attempt to influence the majority of Chrysler workers has credibility today.

-- Chrysler is in the most economically precarious position. It has a new corporate leadership that has made dramatic progress towards rebuilding an almost bankrupt outfit. They are doing well now -- but they don't know how much longer this prosperity will last. The threat of disrupted production is qualitatively more damaging to Chrysler management than to Ford or GM.

-- Chrysler is majority black workforce, tending to give a successful Chrysler movement a black character.

-- Chrysler is where we are.

We propose to the UNC that it take the initiative in this campaign. We seek to have it play as much a role as possible, preferably in a united front type basis with the other groups we are in which do not think much of the UNC at present. Sims can play an important although not absolutely crucial role in this. Optimally we would like to convince Sims of the need for such a campaign. With that done we would seek to meet with militants from other plants and lay the groundwork for establishing some local groups committed to this fight on the contract. With this done we will seek to hold our first public meeting of the campaign with at least some local base, even if small. We would expect such a base to grow if we can demonstrate a real movement towards a national contract fight. We would also propose to the UNC that it begin a skilled trades coalition on the contract, something it would probably agree to. We expect to build up to demonstrations and meetings around the contract.

It is still too early to plan what steps the campaign must follow until we begin drawing others into the campaign. Certain initial steps, however, can be undertaken now:

- establish the Detroit auto fraction with regular meetings
- communication with comrades involved either directly or indirectly in auto in other cities
- discussion on the implementation of this proposal in each plant
- investigation into the Chrysler plants where we are not

auto contract

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lastings

- discussion with Sims and also Kelly on the campaign
- plans laid for the first newsletter by the beginning of August
- petition campaign throughout Chrysler (whole industry) around the contract

IS propoganda. (Section to be added.)

(Note: this document was requested by the auto fraction steering committee to fill out the original document passed by the NC and summarize the discussion held on the steering committee. It therefore contains parts of the original document by JW and still has areas that are sketchy. --BH)

IS INTERVENTION IN THE CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

by the Bay Area AFT Fraction - May and June, 1973

The first section of this is a brief history of our statewide activities in the past four years. This was taken from a talk given by Joel just prior to the 1973 convention.

Following that is a plan, or perspective, for functioning at the 1973 convention, also prepared mainly by Joel (with amendments by Martha) just prior to the convention. Then follows an evaluation and report on the convention and our immediate plans, written mainly by Joel and Jan in June, after the convention. We do not consider this by any means adequate as a statewide perspective, but we wished to begin the process of recording the major events and perspectives. We invite questions, which should be addressed to Joel c/o the East Bay branch.

HISTORY

1) Los Angeles state convention - 1969

The first major intervention of the IS at a CFT convention was at Christmas, 1969. (At that time state conventions were held at Christmas.) At that convention, our perspective was to begin a radical caucus inside the CFT. At that time we had a number of leading members who are no longer with us, especially Dick B., who was quite active in all this (and later left with Reorient).

Our perspective at that time was a Radical Caucus that would consist of all the old-time militants and socially-conscious unionists in the CFT, plus the New-Left militants who had been radicalized by their college experience, and who translated that to militancy or radicalism within the CFT. For those of us at the convention, the Radical Caucus was quite successful, in that it was the first major opposition grouping that formed inside the CFT. It got roughly one-fourth of the votes at the convention, and had 40-50 people attending its meetings. It initiated a number of campaigns at the convention. One of these was to picket Joseph Alioto, who at that time was just finishing opposing the SF State strike, and had been invited by the CFT leadership to speak. That is their way, to invite all of labor's enemies in the DP to speak at conventions.

The Radical Caucus ran a full slate of candidates; Bill Doyle, an old-timer, for President; Alberta and Minerva for vice-presidents, as well as others. That's where we met Minerva. She almost won.

The IS was very clearly the political leadership; no other tendency was represented in the Radical Caucus. The program of the Radical Caucus was;

- 1) militant, democratic trade unionism;
- 2) community control of schools and the police;
- 3) draft counselors at all junior high, high school and college campuses;
- 4) free child-care centers for all;
- 5) immediate withdrawal from Vietnam;
- 6) an end to US imperialism -- this included a call for a national work stoppage on April 15, 1970;
- 7) independent political action -- not relying solely on the Democratic and Republican parties;
- 8) an end to political repression -- defend the Black Panther Party and Los Niete de la Raza
- 9) defense of academic freedom for teachers and students;
- 10) abolish tracking -- grading on a credit-noncredit basis only;
- 12) use of Spanish on an equal basis with English in the schools of California.

In actual practice, the Radical Caucus was a very loose assortment of radicals, leftists of all varieties, although its core was New-Left and young elements within the CFT. We created a tremendous stir at the Convention, and promised that we'd be back the next year in fuller force.

We deliberately tried, at that time, to push other people, non-IS'ers, into the leadership of the caucus, to give it more substance and independence (from the IS). As it turned out, the Radical Caucus went the way that any caucus would go at a convention that isn't taken seriously by the rank and file of the teachers' union. That's less true today, but still generally CFT conventions, while they debate policy, basically are not that important. CFT staff is small, and generally low-profile in terms of its activities. The interest of local delegates is provincial, mainly concerned with local matters. They don't take CFT seriously.

Consequently, the Radical Caucus did little until the next convention. There were several meetings attempting to start a newsletter; one issue was put out. Dick took responsibility for writing to people, and letters were written. But basically the caucus was a convention animal, and didn't function much until the next convention.

The general criticism that the IS made of the Radical Caucus was that it lacked substance, in the same sense that the CFT convention lacked substance. It was a chance to get in contact with other radicals around the state, and fight for issues that the leadership regards as splitters within the union; the caucus generally took responsibility for pushing those issues.

2) 1970 Convention (Monterey)

Before the 1970 convention, the IS fraction decided to change the name of the caucus to the New Caucus. The national New Caucus had been formed, led by Z, who at that time was not in the IS. The name-change was not intended to fuse with the New Caucus, but ~~we~~ to show that we recognized the existence of the New Caucus, much as Teachers' Action Caucus (TAC) in San Francisco took its name from other rank-and-file caucuses in other parts of the country.

The 1970 convention was really more interesting in terms of IS internal development. At the December 1970 convention, the Radical Caucus met again; this time it was even larger, with some 50 members at its first meeting. We formed the New Caucus as an outgrowth of the Radical Caucus.

Essentially it had the same program as the Radical Caucus. The question wasn't program so much as whether we could make the caucus real, sink roots in the locals. There are a number of old WP or IS articles by Dick or Dick and Joel about our perspective of attempting to sink roots in the locals.

However, after the convention there developed a split, practically an even split, between the Reorient comrades and the people who remained in IS. The split was over the question of whether a caucus was appropriate in a union that was in its organizing stage. And parallel to that, the question of whether we should organize caucuses in any of the local unions, even the ones that have the hardest CFT leadership types (Los Angeles and San Francisco).

The actual convention went quite well; we kept the caucus together. Dick, who had been a leader of the caucus in the beginning, began to phase out, and Joel and Margaret took much more important roles. Joel became the chairman of the steering committee of the New Caucus.

Joel presented a thesis to the first steering committee meeting of the New Caucus, which provided for the development of caucuses in every local we could, but not necessarily counterposed to the leadership. This perspective was developed by the last fraction we had while Reorient was still in the IS. The Reorient comrades agreed to be on the steering committee of the New Caucus, and were elected to it at the convention. It wasn't until the first meeting of the steering committee, after the convention, that the disagreement emerged.

The perspective we developed for the caucus was based on the following five assumptions;

- 1) That the social-democratic leadership of the AFT and the CFT, due to its conservative and bureaucratic outlook as well as its disastrous political alliances with the bourgeois political parties, is incapable of leading a successful union organizing drive in the nation and in California. Nor is it capable of fighting within the labor movement for a militant program and social unionism.
- 2) That accordingly, the IS would seek to develop or enter a militant rank and file union caucus based on a militant, actionable program of social unionism, and which would have to counterpose itself as an alternative pole of attraction to the leadership within the union.
- 3) That these caucuses, if they were ever to have any significant impact on the state and national level, would have to organize on a local basis, though not necessarily counterposed to the local leadership. (What we had in mind here was a place like Oakland where the leadership would be in the CFT New Caucus. Maybe the Exec would function as a local caucus. It wouldn't have to be formalized through a caucus. Essentially we'd try to develop contacts with militants united, basically, around the program.)
- 4) Especially in unorganized states such as California, the principle task of these caucuses is to organize the union around a program of social unionism, in alliance with other movements in struggle.
- 5) The main group of activities within these caucuses would be initially drawn from; young white teachers influenced by the radical student and anti-war movements, Black teachers with roots in the Black movement, women teachers influenced by the women's liberation movement, and older militants with experience in the trade-union movement.

Although Reorient was officially on the New Caucus Steering Committee, their attitude was basically that the caucus was a new-left formation and hence to be rejected; it didn't represent the REAL trade-unionists inside the CFT. This was true to some extent; the caucus included some dilettantes, parvenus, people who were in the CFT to push their favorite political line about something else. But Reorient failed to take into account that most of the New Caucus members were concerned with building their own unions, were very active in their own unions. Furthermore, they had no perspective that any New Caucus members could be won over to our program. At a steering committee meeting of the New Caucus, Joel presented this thesis, whereupon, without ever having brought it up at a fraction beforehand, without ever having breathed a word of it, the Reorient comrades came put publically and opposed the whole line, lock, stock, and barrel. Joel was astonished...

It's true that the New Caucus was sort of New-Leftish, but we realized that it would be the best of these elements who will form the core of any serious opposition inside the CFT.

An example of the difference in orientation was that Reorient thought it was a terrible mistake that New Caucus members had made a concerted fight on the question of Gay Liberation. The motion was for gay teachers to get together to draw up a program for counseling gay students, under the auspices of CFT. It took a lot of time; there were two roll-call votes on it; the furor was just incredible. It passed, but actually it was never implemented.

Thus what the Reorient people counterposed to the New-Leftism of the caucus was pure and simple trade union militancy. Our interpretation is that these "real trade unionists" they didn't want to prematurely cut themselves off from by forming a caucus -- are the leadership elements. Reorient had a stage theory; first the unions get collective bargaining rights, then caucuses. (This is a left-bureaucrat position; for example, Ballard, SF local president, holds this view... that we shouldn't be forming a caucus yet. Recently, in June 1973, ISCO member David F. just accepted appointment by Ballard to the Exec Board.) We feel that when a union gets CB is just that point at which the leadership is most able to congeal its hold on the union. Our argument was, and is, that you try to form caucuses right from the beginning, precisely to stop a bureaucratic leadership in formation, or at least be a counterweight to it.

With the split in the IS, the New Caucus died, for all practical purposes. The vote on the steering committee went very badly; Joel and maybe one other voted for our perspective. Jeff M., Dick and Minerva were on the steering committee, and withdrew after that first meeting (Minerva followed Dick's line).

So we essentially retreated. We put out a newsletter at the March 15, 1971 demonstration in Sacramento, raising our line of corporate taxation, mass demonstrations, community alliances, etc. This demonstration was passed at a CFT convention, and delayed, and delayed, and finally took place. Sibelman raised a motion at a CFT convention for a march around the demands of collective bargaining and more money. It was reluctantly passed by the CFT leadership, who did virtually nothing to implement it (organize for it). We tried to get farmworkers, Black groups, etc. invited. They refused to invite them. They reluctantly included AFSCME. After a long fight we got Cesar Chavez invited, but he wasn't able to be there. We attempted to some extent to change some of the demands of the march, but to get CLF support, they had to tone down their program so it was indistinguishable from a Democratic Party program; "equitable taxation" when the CFT's official position was for "corporate taxation." The march was a disaster; less than 1000 teachers, although the leadership claimed 3000. (Miles Meyers, CFT senior vice-president, remarked "Better 900 stalwart teacher-unionists than 10,000 rock-throwers.")

3) 1971 convention (Oakland)

The New Caucus kind of limped along until the next convention, in October 1971. The New Caucus had fallen apart at the seams. We made an attempt to resurrect it, with little success. It was an awful convention.

The committee structure had been so tightened up, and the convention in general, that it was very difficult to function; very disorienting for us. It was an election year; Joel ran for VP on the general program (independent politics, mass action etc.) Jeff M. and Dave E. also ran. The New Caucus wasn't a policy-making group; it was so small, and there was so little commitment to it, that people just came out of curiosity, walked in and out.

At that convention we basically decided to scrap the thing. There was no political basis for a caucus, at that time. The leadership was beginning to harden

up, and there was little holding a caucus together. If we were going to reestablish one, it would have to be on firmer political grounds, which would have to be propagandized for in advance.

4) 1972 Convention (San Diego)

In preparation for the May 1972 convention, we decided that, to lay the basis for a future caucus, we would try to get people around us on a basis of primarily programmatic, actionable, agitational and educational resolutions. We had two main resolutions; labor party and funding.

This was right before the 1972 election; McGovern spoke at the convention, and there was a motion to endorse him. We fought around that. We had a resolution on independent political action, opposed to endorsing McGovern; "we must stop giving our votes and money to either party of big business." We circulated this for signatures, got about 25, and put it out as a leaflet with the signatures on it. We went around to people with the resolution, explained it, and got people to sign it.

At all these conventions we had IS leaflets. At this one it was on the labor party, McGovern's stand on things, against endorsing him, on the Democratic Party.

The other resolution was on building a campaign of mass demonstrations to compel the legislature to tax the corporations and cough up more funds. We got more signatures on that one.

There was also a fight which we participated in, around the women's committee. At the previous convention a motion had passed to set up an elected "Women in Education" committee at this convention. On arriving and receiving the schedule, we saw there was no time provided for an election. A "women's caucus" had been meeting together for a year or two; these women met and got the election scheduled. Essentially there were two slates in the election, we supported the caucus, more-or-less opposition slate, and there was a leadership slate. The caucus slate won most of the seats. For example, the San Francisco leadership put up two candidates, who lost, while Alberta, who had not even managed to be elected a convention alternate, so tightly was the delegate-election controlled in SF, was elected to the women's committee. This committee meets periodically and has held some workshops.

5) General approach and problems

We attempted for at least two years to start a newsletter; the Radical Caucus and the New Caucus each managed to get out one issue. Basically, we weren't able to build a group of people who were committed enough. It boiled down to whether or not the IS was willing to put out a newsletter, which we weren't willing to do.

When the IS/ISCO split occurred, it had a bad effect on the people in the New Caucus. Another problem was that the only way it could work, the only way we could sustain a statewide organization, would be if we were involved in local caucuses in SF and LA. All the other locals are too tiny; there's not enough to oppose. The Democrats are always there to oppose, but our real issues, the socialist issues, the militant issues, just don't come up.

PERSPECTIVE FOR THE May, 1973 CFT CONVENTION
and immediate plans for statewide functioning thereafter

(This was presented orally by Joel, and the following is a transcription of the tape. The fraction passed this plan at the May 21 meeting, just before the convention. There were amendments to the program section, by Martha; those which passed are simply included.)

There is now a basis for a programmatically sound, but small, statewide news-letter. The changes in our situation that make this possible are;

1) There is now a caucus in San Francisco, whose members we hope can be gotten to relate to this newsletter. Before Jan and Martha came on the scene, our contact in San Francisco was Minerva, who was obviously unreliable (since the ISCO split early in 1971, she has moved gradually closer to the bureaucracy).

2) We now have a number of contacts in Los Angeles; Bob Q. and Pat S. are the solidest ones, and there are others.

3) We have at least one contact in San Diego.

4) We have a member in community colleges, Ed, who can solicit contributions (Ed will be leaving CFT staff shortly).

5) We have several contacts in Oakland who are now closer, in the sense that they will probably be actively involved.

There now exists a group that can be gotten together around a programmatic unity. I don't believe we can form a statewide caucus at this convention. Our mistake in the past has been to form a broad left grouping which, although they would formally pass our program, didn't really understand it. We used too much of a public approach, and not enough of a private approach. More intense discussion with people could get them committed to fighting for the program, not just voting for it. This group should see itself as attempting to use the program to organize a militant grouping in the CFT.

I am not for laying out the program in writing, but orally, and laying it out gradually through newspaper articles. Through individual, informal contacts, talking about the sort of statewide newsletter of communication we want to see, I think we can get a number of people to agree to this program:

- 1) Mass actions, strikes and demonstrations at the statewide level
- 2) Collective bargaining
- 3) Merger on a class basis (excluding administrators, democratic structure, affiliation with the AFL-CIO)
- 4) Opposition to AFL-CIO bureaucrats, local, state, and national; building active rank and file labor involvement and support for labor struggles, such as the Farmworkers; coalition with other public employee unions.
- 5) Support for struggles of oppressed groups, and their special demands
- 6) Support for local and state alliances of parents and students with teachers
- 7) Democracy in the schools; for parent-teacher-student control
- 8) Reduced class size to improve education, improve working conditions, and hire the unemployed; support to the struggles of other workers to reduce unemployment through a shorter work week, such as the 30-for-40 campaign
- 9) Opposition to the wage freeze
- 10) Tax the corporations to finance education
- 11) No dependence on Republican or Democratic party politicians; we need a labor party based on this program.

(There was also a motion, by Martha, to add "to fight for a workers' government" to point 11, and this was voted down by the fraction.)

The editorial board should be in the Bay Area, including IS and non-IS; an IS editor, probably Joel; the Board should be able to meet together; the paper should be put out in the Bay Area.

Rather than issue a broad call to all, we should divide up responsibility and talk to people, invite people; if we can get 20 people together, including ourselves, that should be enough for a start.

The level of commitment we will be seeking, is that people commit themselves to:

- 1) contribute money (we will ask for \$5 each initially)
- 2) we will send out the first issue free, based on the money we collect, then through the paper we will ask for subscription/contributions;
- 3) contribute articles, under the prodding of an editorial board;
- 4) commit themselves to the program;
- 5) commit themselves to this as a serious task.

I think it can work now. If not, chalk it up to experience; but I think people have sorted themselves out, those who've been at conventions for a couple of years can be brought to gether.

* * * * *

At this fraction meeting (May 21) we also discussed Joel's draft for an IS leaflet, literature table, and the resolutions. We had a long discussion on the problems of being both for CB and merger and agreed to have a forum on it sometime soon. (The problem is that small, militant locals are afraid that merger will mean being submerged by the Association, from which they just recently emerged; and there is some disagreement among the leadership, Ballard being very anxious to merge and less interested in CB, and Sibelman, heading a merged local in IA, being very interested in getting CB.)

Note by Joel on program: (later)

In making this proposal, I did not elaborate a full program for this newsletter grouping, but rather the general emphasis. That is why Martha's additions were all acceptable to me (with the exception of the fight for a workers' government!) just as other suggestions would have been, viv-a-vis parapprofessionals, substitutes, etc. There was absolutely no fight against or even resistance to her amendments. The main point was that we were (are) attempting to initiate an opposition newsletter whose program would be elaborated in its articles, and that we needed general agreement on mass action, political independence, opposition to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, alliance with parents and students, unlimited right to strike, etc. WITHOUT HAVING TO SPELL EVERYTHING OUT IN ADVANCE. As things turned out, this approach worked very well and we were able to cohere a fairly homogeneous group politically.

REPORT ON THE MAY, 1973 CFT CONVENTION (LOS ANGELES)

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1) PERSONNEL

We had a large enough group to be effective. We had six delegates (Joel, Margaret, Sheila, Ed, Charlie, and Bonnie), two alternates (Chuck and Jan) and two observers (Connie and Martha) as well as a live-in back-up comrade (Barry). We had good cooperation from the LA IS comrades (particularly Steve and Marilyn) who arranged for us to have a typewriter, mimeo and supplies to bring to the hotel for the entire convention, plus folding tables and literature. Except for minor details, the technical aspects went smoothly. Margaret phoned ahead to arrange these details, and this would be good to remember in the future.

Unfortunately some of our comrades were not enthusiastic about our plans and only partially cooperated. The non-Bay Area people felt left out because they weren't present while plans were being made.

2) Composition of convention

On the whole, the composition of delegates at the convention was not significantly different from the last. They were overwhelmingly white (perhaps there were a total of 15 black and Chicano delegates) with a good number of first-timers. The Los Angeles and San Francisco locals dominated as usual, but since their delegations were somewhat split (more evenly in LA) the convention atmosphere was relatively open and tolerant toward dissenting points of view. Besides, the objective situation in California -- deteriorating schools, declining salaries -- is having its effect. Even the AFT leadership is now calling for taxing the corporations to finance education. Also, the split at the top in AFT offered us an opening. Selden spoke near the beginning of the convention, criticizing the AFL-CIO leadership for lagging behind the rank and file of the labor movement.

On the dark side, however, was the impact of the decline in the radical movement generally. The few blacks that did attend either supported the leadership or played no role at all. Larry Gurley of the CP called a black caucus at the convention, but it did nothing. Consciousness over women's issues was still keen and the elections to the CFT women's committee helped keep that in the foreground. But overall there was little of that sense of radicalism which had pervaded conventions of the past.

3) THE FORMATION OF NETWORK

Our main perspective at the convention -- to cohere a group around a statewide newsletter -- went even better than we expected. During the convention, comrades made individual contacts with delegates who we already knew and met others for the first time who were interested in forming a newsletter. We called a meeting the evening before the final session, inviting those who generally agreed with our perspective. Including IS members, about 25 attended, representing about a dozen locals and including the most important Southern California locals. The overwhelming majority were young, independent radicals, active in their locals, and very anxious to establish links with other radicals around the state. Unfortunately, only one non-IS member of SF's Teachers' Action Caucus attended, mainly because PL, which dominated TAC, had no interest in relating to a group dominated by IS, which is also their main opposition in TAC. Four non-IS members from Oakland's New Directions Caucus attended, and are taking major responsibility for Network (they are all close IS contacts).

Joel presented our proposed program for the newsletter to the group. The main

concern expressed was that the newsletter should be "constructive" rather than only critical. In other words, the newsletter should provide local militants with aid in how to organize their locals, how to build struggles, etc. rather than just criticize the CFT leadership elements. Others were worried the paper might be too sectarian in its application of the labor party demand, which they privately agreed with in theory. The IA delegates were somewhat pessimistic about their relationship to an AFT-oriented newsletter, since the union has no identity in IA due to the merger. (Actually, their pessimism reflected their own isolation in UTIA where there is no organized grouping of left-wingers. We will use this opportunity to help them develop this in UTIA).

Nevertheless, there was general enthusiasm for the newsletter. Practically everyone there contributed \$5 to kick it off, and everyone committed themselves to either contributing to it and/or distributing it. Joel was chosen editor with associate editors from Southern and Northern California. The editorial committee then met to discuss the first issue and to name the newsletter NETWORK: A Newsletter of CFT Rank-and-File Opinion.

The following day we set up a table and distributed a leaflet announcing the paper. About 35 delegates signed up for the first issue. Immediately following the convention, Joel sent out sign-up sheets to all of Network's founders requesting that they get union members to sign up in their locals. In this way, we added over 100 more names to the mailing list.

The first issue is now in preparation (early July) and will be printed professionally. Beginning next fall we will probably go to tabloid size and attempt mass distribution in as many locals as possible. Each local will have a contact in charge of distribution.

Our political assessment of the Network grouping is that it contains the best elements inside the CFT, those who have activist commitment to building a fighting union and are beginning to understand the importance of a statewide and nationwide perspective in their local work. Most of these elements were active in the broader student, anti-war movement in the past, but have a more serious union commitment than most of the New Left elements among teachers. Our main task inside this grouping is to give these feelings and sentiments a coherent and political expression through our leadership in Network. All are aware of our IS membership and do not object, in fact look to us for leadership. It is from this grouping, expanded throughout the year as Network materializes, that we hope to initiate a serious rank-and-file caucus at next year's convention.

Inside the fraction, the decision not to form a caucus at this convention was challenged. This decision thus demands some further elaboration. On purely tactical grounds we felt that at this point a convention caucus would be premature, unless it could be built around a shared program and a perspective toward building support in locals on a year-round basis. In the past, we have had difficulty cohering such a caucus, even though the caucuses we have initiated agreed to our program on paper. The reason for this has to do with the lack of seriousness with which most delegates regard the state convention, an attitude consciously encouraged by the CFT leadership for obvious reasons. In this context, CFT conventions have been havens for disgruntled types who see the conventions as debating sessions, rather than serious policy-making bodies. This view of the conventions is shared by out-bureaucrats and political sectarians alike who seek out any opposition

caucuses for their own ends, no matter what program it is initiated around. Of course, any decent caucus would attract these elements anyway. The problem is that there does not now exist a core of activists outside ourselves committed to building and defending such a caucus. We do not have, fortunately, a body of rules which calls for caucuses at any and all times regardless of the circumstances. We do not publically call for soviets just because we want them, but only when these is a basis for them. Ditto with caucuses.

Thus, we felt the need first to make private contacts among those best, most militant union activists around a project which would test their committment to developing a serious statewide strategy. This project -- Network -- if successful, would make possible the building of a serious rank-and-file caucus at the next convention, with deeper roots in the locals and with greater political clarity. Just as Rank-and-File in Great Britain built its caucus around a newsletter begun immediately following an NUT conference (convention), so will Network perform the same service.

4) FARMWORKERS

A few weeks prior to the convention, the Bay Area fraction decided to solicit support for a resolution supporting the farmworkers, calling for CFT to give a substantial amount of money and initiate massive teachers support on the local and state level, including statewide caravans, boycott activity, etc. In particular, the motion called for building a fight in the labor movement for full support as opposed to the token support of the AFL-CIO. When the motion hit the floor, we had collected over 140 signatures for the motion, including the endorsement of several locals.

The leadership of the SF local attempted to substitute a motion commending and supporting the activities of the AFL-CIO but this was ruled out of order. Our motion was passed without opposition, the leadership of CFT feeling that too much support had been gathered for them to oppose it.

As things stand, the CFT is planning two support caravans, from Northern and Southern California, in July, which they will do little to organize for. It will be up to the militants to do this work.

It was very worthwhile for us to initiate this resolution in that (1) it relates to an important concrete struggle, (2) it enabled us to make concrete our politics of class solidarity, opposition to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, etc, when that is more difficult than approaching these questions more abstractly, and (3) it puts us in a better position to make fights on other issues such as labor party and corporate taxation.

(The wording of the resolution will be found as an appendix to this report.)

5) LABOR PARTY

We decided in advance to support (perhaps to amend) the labor party resolution introduced (passed through the Oakland local) by a Workers' League sympathizer. It called for convening a Congress of Labor to form a Labor Party committed to repudiating the Democratic and Republican parties and planning a strategy to smash Phase III, including general strike action. But in the Socio-Political Subcommittee, the Labor Party phrase was amended out (by a PL-er who objects to the British LP). Meanwhile, the WL had decided to amend their own resolution with a lot of confusing and extraneous crisis-mongering (about Watergate, new election should be called with the Labor Party running, etc.). When the motion came up on the floor, the

Workers' League sympathizer was incapable of making an argument. Joel had to fight to be allowed to speak for the resolution, which was then defeated, getting roughly 25% of the vote.

Having seen in advance that the WL wasn't capable of conducting a fight that would even make the issues clear to delegates, we decided to put out our own leaflet on the general question. This was written mostly by Barry, in a non-jargon form. We distributed this leaflet in advance of the floor consideration of the LP. We decided that we were ourselves to blame for not having come in with a decent labor party resolution, as we have in all previous CFT conventions, and as we intend to do in the future.

(We are adding the wording of our leaflet as an appendix to this report.)

6) IS LEAFLET

An attractive and well-written leaflet, prepared in advance mainly by Joel, was passed by the fraction ahead of time in rough form and distributed early in the convention. It generally tied together the various strategies we expected to be discussing at the convention. We are considering issuing some such leaflet as a short pamphlet for use in the coming year, in California.

(With a sigh, the typist decides to add this leaflet as an appendix to this report.)

7) FUNDING

As in the past, we decided to initiate a funding resolution calling for a campaign around corporate taxation and the distribution of surplus state funds to the schools and other social services. The original resolution which we wrote centered mainly on the surplus. At Martha's suggestion, we all agreed to attempt to amend the resolution to emphasize corporate taxation, which had been inadvertently left out of the original. Sheila succeeded in getting through some amendments in the subcommittee which accomplished this objective. On the floor, the resolution was passed, though the last three resolutions were amended out, thereby gutting any mass action around the campaign. This according to its opponents would only alienate our friends in the legislature. Some Democratic-party ass-lickers even wanted to "request" rather than "demand" that these politicians HOLD HEARINGS, but this was defeated.

What with Ballard, Selden et al. now calling for corporate taxation, our tasks are made a bit easier. Last convention, even the idea of corporate taxation was rejected. Of course the leadership has no intention of taking their rhetoric seriously, as was proved at this convention.

(Yes, the wording of this resolution also appears as an appendix to this report.)

8) THE GREAT LITERATURE TABLE CONTROVERSY

To visualize the setting, think of a series of four rooms, with the outer one, or number 4, being the area around the elevators, farthest from the convention floor; #3 being a room through which all must pass, with some tables that had paid for the space, such as AB Dick and Gestetner, and some CFT tables, such as the credit union; space #2 was a room with chairs, but not generally in use while there were plenary sessions; and the inner room, #1, where the convention sessions themselves were held.

Apparently the Workers' League originally set up in room #3, was asked to move by a CFT vice-president, and did move, to space #4, by the elevators, definitely less visible. Then we set up in an unused, but visible, corner of space #3. The WL then whined to a CFT VP, "Why can't we move our table back in there? The IS has their table there." "They're going out," she replied, and began the process of trying to persuade us to leave without actually having to use force. Rationalizations for this variously included; (1) IS didn't pay for the space (as Gestetner did), (2) the table is blocking the fire escape (!), (3) IS doesn't agree with CFT policy (as a hastily set-up farmworker-support table did), (4) all of these...

We think there is an important principle involved; the right of the revolutionary organizations of the working class to sell their literature or otherwise propagandize among the workers. If it weren't serious, it would be very funny. We spent two or three hours during a session, arguing by turns with a CFT VP, who kept threatening to call the security guards and have us removed, but was actually hoping to talk us into leaving, since he knew we had delegates and he didn't want to see a floor fight. Finally he arrived at a face-saving compromise; we would set up in space #2, actually more visible and better for us. Meanwhile, as the session broke up, we had gathered comrades and friends to add to the show of strength which which we confronted the bureaucrats.

The only point to be remembered here, and similar things have happened elsewhere, is that, if the organization decides to go somewhere to sell literature, we should realize that it may be embarrassing, and we may have to argue for our right to do it; we should be ready to put up a fight if necessary. If there are few or no other literature tables, we should particularly try to put ours up; we have a better chance to get into discussions than we do where there are 57 varieties of other radicals. It is precisely when bureaucrats try to convince us that it is inappropriate since there are few or no other groups around, that we should fight to remain.

9) ELECTIONS

This was an election year. The leadership had their election literature, a full slate of president (Teilhet) and 16 vice-presidents, all printed in advance, even though the constitution had to be amended at the beginning of the convention to provide for an increase from 12 to 16 vice-presidents. Actually there was no opposition to this change; the vice-presidents are not paid positions.

There were five candidates for vice-president who did not run on the "unity" slate. Dennis and Kitty ran from the San Francisco TAC, mainly to get TAC known which infuriated the Ballard group. There was some nasty business on the floor, where Ballard called one TAC member a scab (untrue). In the course of trying to extend the TAC strategy to apply statewide, the TAC discovered it didn't have a statewide strategy, a point Jan had been trying to make all year. This opens up possible discussions in the TAC.

One candidate had no politics at all; he was an oppositionist from Compton, running against a Unity candidate from Compton who, it was claimed, ran his local with rigged elections.

Bill Wood from Riverside ran with clearly opposition politics.

Dick B., who was the only non-Unity candidate to win (edging out the allegedly crooked Compton president), did not play as good a role as last year, when he was much more vocal in anti-leadership floor fights. He had a "program" of independent

political action and merger. After the results were announced Dick wrote a leaflet, which had already edged a little more to the right since his campaign. It still talks about merger, but the IPA part has been smudged into "a force which can defend the interests of teachers and students and which can join with the rest of the labor movement and with other movements for social justice to bring about changes in our society which we, our students and all working people need." As for organizing the rank and file, Dick provides his telephone number — both at home and at school.

Generally we played little part, and no direct part, in the elections. In retrospect, we feel that this was a mistake, that one of us should have run for VP on our general program, to provide a pole of attraction for those elements dissatisfied with the leadership.

APPENDIX I - SUPPORT THE FARMWORKERS

Whereas the United Farmworkers Union is engaged in a critical struggle to organize the field workers in California,

Whereas many growers have signed "sweetheart" agreements with the Teamsters Union in order to smash the UFWU,

Whereas the state AFL-CIO and most central labor bodies have provided only token support to the UFW,

Whereas the success of the UFW is of crucial importance for all unions attempting to organize the unorganized,

Whereas a UFW victory substantially strengthens the forces of militant, socially and politically conscious trade unionism inside the labor movement and hence strengthens the CFT's ability to find allies in our own political struggle for teacher unionism,

And whereas there is a good possibility that strikebreakers will be recruited to break UFW strikes,

Be it resolved, that the CFT gives full and public support to the United Farmworkers Union in its present struggles and condemns the International Brotherhood of Teamsters for its blatant, anti-union collaboration with the growers,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT fight consistently inside the state labor federation for full support to the UFWU, and strongly urge all CFT locals to do the same in their respective central labor councils,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT strongly urges the state council meeting immediately following this convention to contribute a sum of no less than \$5,000 to the UFW, and urges every CFT local to contribute money to the UFWU,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT declare a "Farmworker Support Day" during which the CFT will mobilize a caravan of teachers, students, and the community to join the farmworker picket lines in the Coachella valley or in some other location in consultation with the UFWU,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT include a special insert in the next issue of the California Teacher publicizing "Farmworker Support Day" and explaining the significance of the farmworkers' struggle to teachers and the exploitative role of agribusiness in the California economy,

be it further resolved, that the CFT strongly urges CFT locals to take responsibility for boycott activities in their areas and organize food caravans for strikers,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT strongly urges its local affiliates to actively oppose scab-herding in those areas where strikebreakers are being recruited,

Be it further resolved, that the CFT establish a statewide Farmworker Support Committee open to all interested delegates, alternates, and all other interested CFT members. The first meeting of this committee should be held at the convention site during or immediately following the convention to begin plans for a successful Farmworker Support Day.

The Farmworker Support Resolution was amended in the Socio-Political subcommittee. The substance of the amendments is as follows: 1) to change the word "token" in the third whereas, to "limited" 2) to condemn the leadership of the Teamsters and not the rank and file 3) to give flexibility to the financial contribution of the CFT by allowing the financial situation of the CFT to be taken into account 4) to support secret ballot elections for farmworkers. The original circulators of the petition are in general agreement with the amendments. (Note from the leaflet bearing the signatures of the supporters.)

APPENDIX III - LABOR PARTY LEAFLET

--- WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT A LABOR PARTY? ---

Why do working people need their own political party? Isn't such a party "unrealistic" at the present time?

The AFT, unlike the NEA, was formed on the basis of exclusion of administrators-- those who have the power to hire and fire, to raise or lower wages, to increase or decrease class size. Everyone in the AFT should agree that it would be unrealistic to expect the interests of employer and employee to be the same.

Teachers are public employees. We can win nothing without political struggle, not even the right to strike. Without the unlimited right to strike, collective bargaining is a fraud. The union had no way to enforce its demands. Yet even liberal Democrats consistently support collective bargaining bills that make strikes almost impossible.

Why is this? Successful strikes would almost certainly cost the system more money than it is willing or able to grant. Higher wages, smaller class sizes, prep periods for all teachers, new educational programs, and jobs for the unemployed, are all demands that require more money, either directly or indirectly. But the amount of money that is needed is not available at the local level under present tax laws. These laws were passed with bi-partisan support of both Democrats and Republicans.

Funding for schools must come out of corporate profits, which are at record levels, thanks to the wage freeze. We cannot expect other working people to pay our salaries through regressive taxation in this period of inflation.

Since Nixon announced the wage freeze, more and more unions have discovered that old-time business unionism does not win for them any more. The entire labor movement has an interest in a general price roll-back and an end to all wage controls. Yet liberal Democrats like McGovern wondered why Nixon didn't apply the wage freeze sooner!

The strategy of militant socially-conscious unionism demands coordinated mass action on a state and national level and the merger of all teacher organizations to better make this fight.

Cutbacks in social services hit all working people in some way, but teachers are hit directly. Teachers are therefore in an excellent position to lead the fight for general social demands such as the struggle for a shorter work week (30 for 40) for all workers, increased welfare payments, national health insurance, and more day care facilities.

We should support the struggles of all oppressed groups fighting now for an end to every kind of social discrimination -- whether it be racial, national, or sexual -- and support their special demands.

Such a program is national in scope and expresses the interests of all working people in the USA. Is it realistic to expect the Republican and Democratic Parties to fight for such a program? Can we settle for less?

Realism demands that we form a labor party to fight for this program. The present leaders of the CFT, AFT, and AFL-CIO will not lead such a fight. The impetus must come from the rank and file.

Today, labor parties controlled by bureaucrats, such as the British Labor Party, attack the living standards of all working people when in power. They do this in order to make British business interests more competitive internationally. In the USA, such pressures to sacrifice the interests of workers to the expansion of capitalism also exist, but they are represented inside the Democratic and Republican parties. They also occur inside the AFL-CIO bureaucracy to the extent that it relies on capitalist policies.

We see a labor party in the USA being formed from below by mass action of rank-and-file workers. We see a labor party as a step toward further struggle, not as a roadblock to it like the Democrats and Republicans, or even the Labor Party in Great Britain.

Teachers can play a crucial role in this struggle. By breaking now from the two old parties, we hasten the day when other groups of workers will also make that break.

Such a labor party, based on a rank-and-file program, cannot be formed immediately. But it is only this perspective that offers hope for the future liberation of humanity. We hope that all militant labor unionists will join with us to fight for such a party and such a program.

-- distributed by the Teachers' Committee of the International Socialists

APPENDIX III - IS LEAFLET

needed: A STATE-WIDE STRATEGY FOR C.F.T.

For most of us, the L.A. International Hotel is a welcome, if expensive, escape from an often depressing school environment. Maybe even too expensive, in these days of soaring inflation and meager paychecks. "I guess I'll stay with a friend this year," sighs the veteran convention-goer.

And so, escapes are even hard to come by in 1973. For that is what CFT conventions have been over the years. Sure, we have debated important issues, elected officers, learnt about other locals, etc. But we have not seen ourselves as the formulators of a statewide program of action to deal with our all too pressing problems. Instead, we have assumed that most of them can be dealt with on the local level, and that all the CFT should do is service locals and lobby for collective bargaining in the state legislature.

Of course, those things are important. But as a strategy it cannot deal with the realities of political and economic life in 1973. Much more is needed.

"PERCEPTIONS, PROBLEMS. . ."

As teacher unionists, our primary fight is for more money and more democratic control over the educational system. Yet it has become increasingly clear in recent years that local school districts are losing the power they once had over public education.

For instance, the fact that the tax base in urban areas is drying up is attributable to national and state developments, such as war-induced inflation and runaway shops. Moreover, in California, the state legislature through SB 90 has assumed great power over local funding by limiting local property tax rates. At the same time, the legislature and the federal government have actually reduced their share of school expenditures, which amounts to an all-out attack on teachers, students and the public.

In this context, there are no local solutions, only band-aids. Most districts have a little fat which they usually reserve for their administrative bureaucracies. AFT locals must, of course, fight for this share of the shrinking pie. But we should have few illusions about how much can be won. Even a 5½% salary increase, which few districts can probably afford, leaves us lagging way behind the current rate of inflation.

THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING MORASS

Similarly with collective bargaining. The Moretti CB bill in the legislature is consciously designed to restrict, not expand, the freedom of public employee unions to defend themselves. It is a classic case of one step forward, two steps back. The bill grants CB and the right to strike, but makes striking next to impossible. It requires at least a 60 day delay before a strike, during which the union would have to deal with fact finding committees and mediators, all appointed by a governor-appointed commission. In any case, any taxpayer is empowered to seek a court injunction against a strike even before it takes place. To top it off, the bill provides for a court-imposed settlement if an injunction is issued. No wonder then that Moretti hailed the provisions of this bill as "a way to minimize the threat of disrupted government services due to unresolved employee grievances."

(California Teacher, May 1973) No wonder CTA Executive Director Jack Rees thinks that the bill is "safer than our current system which encourages premature walkouts." Only a neanderthal governor like Reagan would fail to see the anti-labor sophistication of this phony piece of legislation. Or maybe he will.

Moscone's compromise CFT-CTA bill (SB 400) also has serious flaws. It sets up a governor-appointed commission with broad powers to define "reasonable" bargaining units, set up elections, etc. Most important, it says nothing about the right to strike, which must be the guts of a decent CB bill. Thus we can look forward to more injunctions, bill or no bill.

Finally, with the Stull Bill, we have already seen the legislature begin to assert its authority over teacher rights in the areas of due process and job security.

In short, California teachers are becoming increasingly enmeshed in a vast network of state restrictions which makes local bargaining a farce. The question is how to respond.

MILITANCY AND THE CFT LEADERSHIP

Perhaps the most important lesson we can learn from the trade union movement is that it takes mass struggle in order to win reforms. The greater the struggle, the more possible the reforms. As teachers, we understand how massive pressure, through strikes, demonstrations etc., have moved even the most reluctant school boards where quiet "lobbying" has failed.

This lesson must be relearned by the CFT leadership, or we will never get anywhere.

On the local level, this lack of understanding has taken a number of forms. In Pittsburgh, the CFT leadership refused to take a principled stand against strike-breaking by the Pittsburgh local, presumably so as not to alienate the local's membership. Such timidity particularly miseducates other small locals who stand to lose the most from such actions. We may have perfectly justifiable complaints against the Association, but let's not sabotage militant teacher actions because of them.

The CFT leadership's position on student support during strikes is another case in point. In a number of local strikes, CFT organizers have asked that teachers encourage students to go to class and bar them from teacher picket lines. Besides miseducating students about crossing picket lines, this policy is self-defeating in that it plays right into the administration's hands. Active student support helps build community support for the teachers, it improves student-teacher relationships, it involves students in political life. Teachers will fare much better against conservative school boards with such support because it becomes more difficult to play off teachers against students and the community.

LAWYERS, LOBBYISTS, AND LEGISLATORS

On the state level, our leadership's legalistic "insider" approach is equally self-defeating. It consists of trying to get the ear of this week's favorite politician (usually a Democrat) who next week sells us down the river. All this without once calling upon the CFT membership to exert mass pressure on the state legislature, either in the form of co-ordinated mass demonstrations or even work-stoppages in those urban locals with substantial union membership.

For instance, the legislature is currently sitting on some \$85 million in surplus funds. Yet CFT "action" on this matter consists of filing a superior court brief to get this money distributed to the schools. Why not build massive demonstrations in Northern and Southern California, demanding that this money go to the schools and other needed social programs? Just as union negotiators "produce" results because of local militancy, lobbying is able to "produce" results because of mass pressure from the outside, representing a real social force that can't be ignored.

Furthermore, CFT needs to put forward a funding program which places the burden of financing the schools where it belongs: on the giant corporations and financial institutions which are the prime beneficiaries of education in this state and this country. Otherwise, we perpetually find ourselves pitted against other workers -- employed and unemployed -- who are already taxed to the hilt. The CFT leadership was therefore right to oppose SB 90, which increases the regressive sales tax. But its alternative -- the graduated income tax -- is also mainly a tax on working people, which corporations are able to avoid and evade. If we take labor solidarity seriously, the CFT should begin to build an educational campaign inside and outside the labor movement for corporate taxation (without price increases) as the alternative to all forms of regressive taxation.

Likewise, it is a sad commentary on CFT strategy that we should be advocating with the Moretti or Moscone bills, rather than attempting to mobilize teachers and other public employees to demand a bill which safeguards collective bargaining with the unlimited right to strike. Compromises may have to be made, but a leadership which begins with such compromises usually wins nothing at all.

C.F.T., SHANKER, & MEANY

But why, you might ask, is the CFT leadership unwilling to build such struggles?

We feel there are a number of reasons. Inside the AFT, the entire CFT top leadership belongs to the Progressive Caucus dominated by Al Shanker of local #2, New York. Shanker's political positions are virtually identical with those of George Meany, whom he defends at every opportunity. Both support American war policies all over the world, including Vietnam. Both are closely allied with the conservative wing of the Democratic Party. Both actually support wage controls. Inside the Progressive Caucus, the CFT leadership sometimes breaks with Shanker over issues such as Vietnam, due to membership pressure. But in general they enthusiastically support Shanker inside the union and Meany inside the AFL-CIO.

Hence, Pres. Teilhet's recent letter commending Meany for his "generous" gift of \$1.6 million to the United Farm Workers Union (UFWU). What he neglected to add, however, is that Meany refuses to support the UFWU's lettuce and grape boycotts because he is unwilling to fight the anti-secondary boycott provision in the Taft-Hartley law. In fact, he wants the farmworkers to be covered by this law which labor fight against for so many years. He also neglected to add that \$1.6 million is small relative to the task: in a 20-week strike, it provides strike benefits for only 1600 workers who have little or no savings of their own. Compare this to the Teamsters who have committed at least \$2 million to their raid -- and none of this goes to strike benefits. If the AFL-CIO can find millions of dollars to finance pro-American labor unions all over the world, it can certainly do better for one of its most militant and desperate affiliates.

"WITH SUCH FRIENDS, WHO NEEDS ENEMIES"

Part and parcel of the leadership's legalistic, no-struggle policy is its dependency on Democratic Party politicians, rather than on our own organized **strength**. It would be one thing if these politicians were chosen by and responsible to the trade union movement. But they, and the parties they represent, have proven in practice that they cannot be relied on to even defend, much less carry forward, the cause of teachers or education in California. The Democratic Party and the Republican Party have actually led the attack on teachers in the past few years.

SB 90 was a disastrous piece of legislation for education in California. In exchange for a pitiful amount of money, local school districts lost their special override taxes and found their tax rates frozen, while the 1% sales tax increase hit poor and working people the hardest. CFT opposed it, but the legislature voted for it overwhelmingly, 64-8 in the Assembly and 29-10 in the Senate. And so our "friends" let us down once again.

In December, Teilhet thanked the few courageous senators who fought this bill, including our regular CFT convention keynoter, Senator James Mills. Only later do we discover that Mills wound up voting for the bill, explaining that ". . . it was the only school finance bill alive." Only in CFT leadership circles will such courage be rewarded.

Senator Rodda, another "finest friend" of public education, actually carried a community college bill (SB 696) which, like the Stull Bill, provided for bi-annual evaluations of tenured instructors and weakened the rights of all instructors. And for providing such "services" Rodda was invited to deliver the keynote address at the February Community College Conference. Alfred Alquist, still another CFT-annointed friend, is carrying a community college bill similar to SB 90, supports the voucher system, PPBS, and the state system of textbook adoption. In fact, 15 out of the 25 Democratic assemblymen responding to the CFT's December survey, also support PPBS.

And finally, the Democrats and Republicans united to give us the infamous Stull Bill.

One could go on, but the facts are clear. It is pure futility to put our trust in such "friends." Yet, that is just what our leadership would have us do.

It is not that these Democratic politicians are bad people who just have to be replaced by good people. It is that they are the political representatives of a party which, like the Republican party, stands for the continued corporate domination of American society and the anti-labor policies that flow from that. From a teacher's vantagepoint, they're very much like the "friendly" administrators whose words are never quite translated into action. Both are regulators and pacifiers. All seek the smooth functioning of the system of domination, though they sometimes disagree over the methods.

Let's not allow the CFT to be lulled into this trap. We need an aggressive, interventionist union which does not accept the limits of these political administrators, which begins to recognize that a militant labor movement needs its own political party to carry on its struggles in the political arena. For public employees, a labor party is doubly necessary, since we are particularly affected by governmental action.

Of course, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy opposes such a party, just as it opposes all movements which threaten to go beyond its own narrow limits. We hope that CFT

members will increasingly realize they will have to fight inside labor, including the CFT, for a strategy which refuses to subordinate the interests of workers to the system under which we live. We must dedicate ourselves to the difficult, but necessary, task of building a politically independent labor movement, based on the struggles of a militant and active rank-and-file.

The CFT is a good place to begin.

—distributed by the Teachers Committee of the International Socialists.

(followed by blurb and coupon)

APPENDIX IV - State Funding Resolution

Whereas there is a large amount of surplus dollars in the state budget, and

Whereas SB 90 has not alleviated the financial problems of many school districts and contains elements of regressive taxation,

Whereas SB 6 and AB 46 promise to expand the problems created by SB 90 to the community colleges, and

Whereas federal money to education and other essential social services are being drastically cut and corporate profits are at an all time high;

Whereas local teacher militancy is excellent, it is limited and needs to be coordinated and extended to include state-wide action,

Be it therefore resolved that within the next month the CFT initiate a public campaign urging the state legislature allocate additional funds to education, child care facilities and other social services.

Be it further resolved that the CFT demand all state legislators, especially those who consider themselves to be "friends of labor" to hold simultaneous public hearings in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, to deal with the inadequate funding of education and call for sharply increased taxes on corporate profits to help fund public education,

Be it further resolved that the CFT initiate a public campaign around these hearings, calling upon teachers, other public employees and representatives of the community to testify about the needs of their school and community,

Be it further resolved that the CFT call for and help organize mass demonstrations by teachers, public employees and community outside those hearings,

Be it further resolved that if hearings are not set up by legislators, the CFT organize protest rallies in Los Angeles and San Francisco calling for improved funding (mentioned above) to Public Education, and

Be it finally resolved that the CFT publish the responses of each legislator and publicize the progress of this campaign.

REGARDING CALIFORNIA LOCALS - a draft by Joel, March, 1973

THE GENERAL SITUATION

Unlike AFT locals in other states which have enjoyed collective bargaining for a number of years, California locals are still at a primitive level of organization and political development. The overwhelming majority are still in a real sense organizing committees with only 10-30% of the teachers in their jurisdiction. Despite the merger in Los Angeles, the LA local is still a minority in UTLA. Only in San Francisco and a few small districts is the union even close to overtaking the association in membership.

Yet, the attack on public education in California is in full swing, finding most locals ill prepared to combat it by themselves. The districts most capable of even beginning to throw up mass struggles have done so either with joint cooperation between teacher organizations, as in San Francisco, actual merger of the organizations (L.A.), or where the association itself launched independent struggles with minimal or even no union support (Daly City, Pittsburgh). "Professionalism" no longer suffices as the main hindrance to teacher militancy in California. It has become a question of organization and leadership.

The growing militancy of many association chapters, combined with the small size of most AFT locals, necessitates a program of common struggle by both teacher organizations as the squeeze on public education tightens. Yet, organizational bivalry has often blocked such a development, though this varies from place to place. How the AFT locals relate to the associations in the next period will to a great extent determine the success or failure of the AFT in California. The problem for revolutionaries is how to approach the question to the greatest advantage of the union, as well as to enhance the possibilities of struggle involving both organizations.

LEFT-WINGERS AND THE LEADERSHIP

Due to their relative openness, liberal political views, and need for activists, California AFT locals have always been fertile grounds for left-wingers. And in varying degrees many locals are led by an assortment of left-oriented people, whose politics includes support for student rights, parent involvement, innovation in education, and opposition to war, racism, and sexism.

Yet, the large dominant locals of LA and SF are still in the hands of a hard social-democratic clique whose program is an uncomfortable compromise between Shankerism and "progressive" trade unionism. In the past, this leadership has been willing to tolerate left-wingers at conventions, but even this is no longer true. As collective bargaining gets closer, this process of consolidation will accelerate, as the leadership moves toward trade union "maturation."

It will thus be necessary to develop a core of militants in these locals which can pose an alternative political program. This will be made difficult by a number of factors. First, the leadership itself has put forward its "left" face, as indeed it must at this, the organizing phase of the AFT. Secondly, most young left-wing militants in the union are inexperienced in union affairs and poorly schooled in class politics. Many have already learned bureaucratic attitudes and methods from the student-antiwar milieu, which makes them susceptible to cooptation or quiescence to the union leadership.

These problems are by no means insurmountable, however. Short of developing a massive teacher-community-labor alliance, as they will not, the leadership simply lacks the political muscle to wrest significant concessions from its political "friends" in the legislature or in city offices. Urban education will continue to deteriorate. Nor will it be able to effectively counter moves toward increased political control over curriculum. Lacking a program of its own, other than reliance on liberal politicians and occasional show-case strikes, the leadership will tend to swim with the tide; attempting to control and limit whatever actions they feel compelled to organize or support.

In this situation, a conscious group of militants must function as a left-opposition to the leadership, exposing their every vacillation and weakness. This role is more analagous to the role of militants to the union leaderships of the 1930's than in the 1970's, given the position of the AFT in California. But this also implies a duty to take direct responsibility for the union, in positions which involve the maximum contact with the membership and the minimum amount of control by the leadership; such as building representative, member of a union committee, etc.

But this is not enough to pose as an alternative leadership to the union. That requires a program which can link up the objective needs of the teachers with their subjective feelings, politics, etc., a program which flows directly from the immediate concerns of the teachers and points toward greater combativity against the state and toward greater control over their work situation.

7/30/73

Chrysler Take-over Eyed by Socialist

BY PAUL M. BRAZBURG
Area Press Staff Writer

Isaac Shorter, one of the two spot welders who closed down the Chrysler Corp. Jefferson Ave. plant last week by turning off the electricity to an assembly line, said Sunday that he is a socialist working to "change the total structure of the capitalist system by scientific socialism."

The 26-year-old native of Cleveland, Miss., told a rally that his goal is "the workers taking control of Chrysler. We share the profits, the community shares the profit, the country shares the profits, the world shares the profits."

BOTH SHORTER and his partner in the shutdown of the plant, Larry Carter, stood on a stage accepting questions from the audience, but Shorter did most of the talking and Carter made just a few brief comments.

The dramatic action taken by the two workers sent ripples of anxiety through auto management and union leadership, who recognized that militant actions by workers threaten union-company authority.

At the rally, Shorter said that he is not affiliated with any socialist organizations. He worked with the Black Panther Party during a year of employment at the Chrysler plant in Commerce, Cal., but he says he is not affiliated with a Panther group here.

"The workers of the world must unite!" he told a cheering "victory celebration" at

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Chrysler Take-over Is Goal, Militant Worker Tells Rally

Continued from Page 1A

Masonic Hall, 1775 W. Forest. There were about 100 in the audience, a strong minority of them socialist activists.

"We need an organization vanguard party that all people can relate to," said Shorter, who repeatedly denounced his union, the United Auto Workers.

"We know the role the union plays—they sell us out," he said. "They go behind closed doors and sell us out. They represent the interests of the corporation, not us."

Shorter derided UAW representatives who had tried to persuade him and Carter to give up their seizure of an electricity control panel.

"I thought they were plant managers for Chrysler Corp.," Shorter told a laughing audience. "We told them they didn't represent us. Even ... the chief steward tried to get us out."

"We plan on getting rid of the UAW, taking over the

UAW," Shorter later told reporters. "UAW would have no (role) in representing the workers."

SHORTER SAID that he and Carter were "working on a program" for "General Motors, Ford, you name it."

He did not give any details. The young worker advised other workers at the rally to follow his tactics, but to first go through what he said would be the motions of trying to protest through the union grievance procedure.

"In the beginning you should try with the union," he said. "We know it won't work. But some of the workers don't know."

"I believe that the workers in the plant should be independent from the UAW," he said. "I believe that the workers should control the plants."

Douglas Fraser, the UAW vice-president who heads the union's Chrysler department, declined in a telephone interview to comment on Shorter's remarks.

The sponsor of the rally was United Justice Caucus (UJC), a group of workers at the Jefferson Ave. plant opposed to UAW policies.

Shorter predicted that his political activity might jeopardize his employment.

"I won't be able to keep the job for long," he said.