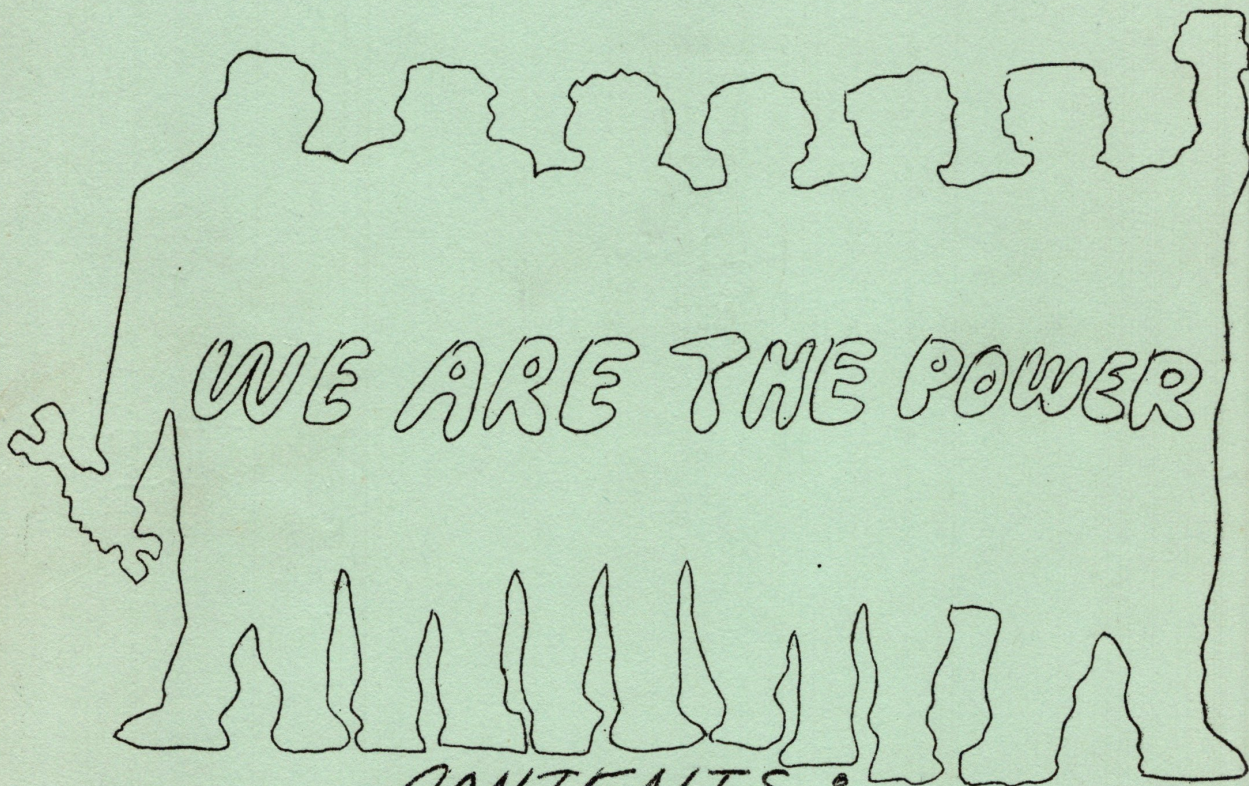


INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS  
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NATIONAL TEAMSTER PERSPECTIVE -- SC and KS --- 5-16-75

A year ago we adopted a perspective for our work which rested on strengthening our local fractions and laying the basis for a national presence and publication. We have been largely successful in that perspective, as the brief review of our work below indicates.

The quick return of deep economic crisis and uncertainty (and the changes in consciousness which accompany that crisis) make both possible and necessary a sharp change in ~~the~~ our work, aiming towards the expiration of the Master Freight Agreement next March 31.

The pressure on freight workers outlined below is mirrored in all industries. In all industries the employers will seek to consolidate their gains against the rank and file and to lay the basis for new attacks on conditions and living standards.

The MFA has a specific importance recognized not only by us. It is the opening shot in the 1976-77 bargaining round - which includes trucking, Auto, Phone, Steel and Miners. The employers regard these contracts as a decisive test of their ability to make the workers pay for the employers' continuing economic crisis.

The MFA covers 450,000 workers directly and nearly 500,000 more in "tandem" agreements patterned on it. An organized, public mass movement of Teamsters - even if it is confined to protest and pressure and its impact on the settlement is indirect - will limit the options of the employers and the government.

Its success will embolden other workers in auto, phone, etc to fight back. Successful organizing efforts by IS members will make the value of socialist politics and organization clear to our co-workers in a way not possible before. It is in this context that our effort to make the IS an organization of workers will succeed. Efforts we take on in the IBT will make more credible the efforts which will follow by our members and others in Auto, Steel, etc.

#### IMPACT OF THE CRISIS IN THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Trucking is directly keyed into the heart of the economy, particularly manufacturing. When layoffs hit auto and auto suppliers in November in Cleveland, IBT 407 lost 15% of its dues-paying members in 3 months (9400-8000). In most cities unemployment among freight drivers is 10-25%. Statistics on this are difficult since unemployment in trucking often takes the form of a reduction from steady to casual (part-time) work. The statistics and the actual impact of layoffs are further clouded by seasonal patterns of work.

Besides freight, layoffs have also hit hard in construction driving, warehousing, and retail distribution - all major sections of the IBT. In grocery employment is higher; layoffs there are due as much to productivity drives as to depression. In parcel, business and employment remain relatively high since manufacturers are now shipping smaller orders, using parcel services more often.

The economic crisis has a further impact on trucking. Traditionally, depressions culled small or inefficient companies from industry. Most U.S. industry is now too large for this. But the trucking industry still has thousands of small companies, many of which will go under. The few large companies will buy them cheap, further consolidating, rationalizing and monopolizing the industry. The resulting mergers, bankruptcies, and change of operations will be used to further cut jobs, speed up work, and undercut conditions. The recent Yellow-Republic merger is one example. There are many smaller examples; there will be more and more and their impact will add up.

Another broad area of pressure and conflict is working conditions of two types. First, those safety and equipment maintenance conditions that require money. Second are those work rules, dispatch rules, starting times, etc that protect workers and their jobs but restrict the flexibility of management in their speed up efforts.

In trucking this campaign for increased productivity is now accompanied by the threat of "deregulation", which neither the companies nor the Union (nor the rank and file) wants. (Deregulation would mean competition among companies, rather than the current licensing and fixed rates by the ICC, which treats trucking as a "public utility") While we do not expect deregulation, the threat of it will be used as a cover by both management and the Bureaucracy to further erode conditions under government and industry sponsored productivity drives.

While we can expect attacks on conditions and jobs in the contract negotiations, the employers are not waiting. The major mechanism is trucking's version of the runaway shop. While some service must be maintained where a company has rights, it is possible to shift significant portions of work from one city to another. This mainly involves breakbulk or resorting operations - the main points for the dispatch of road drivers. Also the substitution of many satellite terminals for one large terminal in large metropolitan areas. ~~Using this ability to shift work,~~ Using this ability to shift work, management utilizes historic differences in contracts and conditions, utilizes weak or corrupt locals to create new erosions, threatens militant locals and threatens workers - no matter what their seniority - with the sudden loss of a job or a forced move. This has always occurred. But with increased pressure on profits, with larger more flexible companies, and with a weakened union, it is used increasingly in fact or as a threat.

Another mechanism used more and more are the "reinterpretations" of the contract at the Area level grievance committees. Also the simple failure by the Union to process grievances upholding established practices. Finally, the companies have just obtained a 20% increase in the maximum load thru Congress.

One final area of impact by the economic crisis is the pension funds. In trucking contributions to a fund are negotiated - not the amount of pension money to be received. The drop in value of the stocks and real estate in which these funds are invested - added to the new legal funding and payout requirements - has increased the uncertainty surrounding IBT pensions.

#### THE RESPONSE OF THE BUREAUCRACY

As we know, the IBT bureaucracy, Fitzsimmons & co, are not going to fight back. They accept business unionism and class collaboration fully. Formal procedures even exist in contracts for companies to ask for "relief" when their profits fall. The 20% wage cut at GLX is the most dramatic example of this so far. Under the cover of the alleged threat from rail airfreight or dog sled competition, they will sell out conditions. Rationalization is part of their program too.

Fitzsimmons has responded to the depression and to Watergate by moving away from his close connection with the Republicans. The IBT "program" is similar to Meany's and the Democrats. It includes items like unlimited unemployment at 90% of wages and is reserved for speeches at irrelevant conferences. It distinguishes himself by making wage-price controls his main policy focus.

His even stronger than normal focus on government action added to his yearning for White House dinners, etc. mean he will cooperate fully with Labor Secretary Dunlop's primary contract round tactic of early negotiations tied to productivity deals.

At this point there are no significant divisions in the bureaucracy. There is no reason to expect any in the next year. Specifically, we don't expect a Hoffa or Hoffa-sponsored move against Pitz in '76, altho it remains a distant possibility as the ranks go into motion and begin the shake the lower levels of the bureaucracy.

While Pitz's hold on the bureaucracy is strong and he is no paper tiger, his credibility has suffered recently. Along with the general economic and political crisis, his close ties to Nixon to the end have hurt him. The UMW raid is an almost personal project and is not going well.

#### CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE RANK AND FILE

The pressures and uncertainties of the current situation have produced a marked change in consciousness among teamsters. Thruout 1973-74 we experienced a relatively conservative period. A bad contract went thru in '73. R&F publications got an overall passive response. There was resistance to the '73 MFA pattern by workers under tandem agreements and to the UPS part-time campaign, but it remained fragmented and failed to break thru.

Despite a three year Cost of Living Cap of 22%, the relatively high level of drivers wages slowed reaction to inflation. Also, the "boom" of '73 created a sense of prosperity - despite the impact of inflation and the attack on conditions.

The sudden collapse of the economy - with all the uncertainties listed in the previous section - has finally forced the ranks to begin taking a new look at the situation. In the background are important ~~xxxx~~ general political factors - Watergate, the oil crisis, the war, Ford's incompetence and the obvious bankruptcy of the democrats. All these combine to undermine confidence in the government and the establishment. The layoffs and speedup are leading more and more to consider fighting back for themselves.

In the past few months things have changed dramatically. All over the country we get reports of a molecular change in consciousness. More restlessness, more discontent at Union meetings, more people moving into opposition. The undermining of the contract thru rewrites in committee, the virtual breakdown of the grievance procedure, the feeling that no one is really safe from layoff. This was the main lesson of our recent nat'l tour.

~~xxxx~~ Our local fractions have in many cases come to life. A few months ago we were involved in 2 R&F papers. Now we are involved in 5, soon to be 6 or 7. A few months ago we were involved in no active, public oppositions in Locals. Now we are involved in 2 or 3. Until recently calls to attend union meetings, come out to demonstrations, etc. were rarely attempted or successful. Recently we have in several cities called actions, organized campaigns, mobilized people for April 26 and mobilized hundreds of members to local meetings, etc.

To sum up: Our assessment is that the current situation has activated a small, but sufficient, number of activists who are prepared to organize and a situation among the ranks in general which makes real mass organizing a concrete possibility.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL FRACTIONS

Not all the change in our work has been due to a change in Teamster consciousness. It has also been a period in which our fractions have developed into functioning units. All of our fractions are very new and have a lot yet to learn. But in most cases they are now involved in R& papers, caucuses, campaigns. In all our Midwest fractions we now have at least one member who is a recognized militant in their local.

A few other fractions - in the Bay Area, Seattle, and in NYC - have not been able to move as fast. This has been due to the weakness of our fractions in these areas - lack of people in key locals. These fractions will be able to develop into solid units, make their publications more real, meet new contacts, etc, especially with the help of a national campaign. Already the papers in the Bay Area and Seattle are improving in terms of quality and regularity. In the Bay Area a number of potential drivers are looking for work.

New fractions are continuing to develop. A year ago we had 6. Now we have 8, and soon we will have more, both thru our existing branches and the recruitment of new fractions. The increasingly national character of our work will make it possible to develop new local units rapidly and build them into strong groupings. In the immediate future we will be using IS Teamster Day Schools to train new members of the fraction and will be traveling more to bring our national fraction to the branches.

One general weakness of our fractions has been a lack of connection between our socialist politics and our rank and file activity. This has been understandable for people getting roots in the rank and file and with little movement around. There are 3 reasons why changing this must be a major part of the change in our activity.

1. Most important, it is in the context of this type of broad campaign and of this new situation that we will convince our co-workers of the relevance of socialist politics and organization. We cannot do that in this period without the broadest exposure of our politics which is consistent with security.

2. In the campaign proposed here we want (and would have no choice even if we didn't) to have an open socialist presence in the coalition. We now have few people who are in a position to carry ~~that~~ and defend that presence. By October we will need at least several more.

In that campaign we - and the coalition - will be red-baited from the bureaucracy and from inside the coalition. In order to turn these attacks to our advantage, we need to have not only some of our people out front. We also need to have discussed our politics thoroughly with as many people with whom we work as possible. Not only our close friends but others who definitely do not consider themselves socialist must be prepared for these attacks.

Developing our use of WP with contacts and where possible publically will be the major initial vehicle for this change. Within a week a letter on improving both the coverage and distribution of WP in the IBT will come out from the Steering Committee.

We will continue to try to get people into jobs in strategic sectors and locals. Our first priority is freight, in major locals. We will continue to help train people as drivers so they can get jobs as city drivers.

Secondary priorities are important regional and local bargaining units in key locals. In particular, grocery and UPS. UPS is hiring in this period and we should continue to place people there, both men and women.

Our primary orientation for UPS workers remains work in the locals, building caucuses jointly with freight workers, newspapers, Teamster Network, and the national contract campaign. This is especially true since in most cities UPS workers are in freight locals such as in Cleveland, Pittsburg, Chicago, Boston, Oakland or in other large locals such as Seattle and St. Louis. We aim to cut across "craft" and contract lines and build a unified movement of Teamsters.

At the same time, we recognize and organize around a certain special character of UPS. It is the largest single employer of Teamsters with over 60,000. It has separate contracts. And the social composition of its workforce is substantially younger and more racially and sexually diverse than freight.

To this specific group we address the following type of program:

- UPS National Contract negotiated by UPS workers;
- Specific Contract Demands
- UPS Council of the IBT; all officers elected by UPS workers;
- Bargaining Committee elected by meetings of UPS workers in all areas.
- UPS section of each (general) Local. Elected stewards;
- UPS workers elect their own BA(s), separate divisional meetings for UPS workers and stewards.
- For a national opposition in the IBT. Link up with other Teamsters to build a rank and file movement.

On the basis of such a program we plan to launch a National rank and file paper directly at UPS workers and designed to draw together the UPS people we already know and draw in new ones. The paper will agitate about grievances, conditions, etc in UPS.

A fuller elaboration of this general plan has been developed and will be sent out to the fraction soon.

#### NATIONAL PRESENCE

As our work has progressed recently, we have started to move toward national coordination in an active sense. The April 26 Rally for Jobs in Washington allowed us to mobilize Teamsters and bring them together in the Rank and File Coalition. This follows the Cleveland meeting of Teamsters from 4 cities and the national tour of 12 cities.

In a week we will mail out the first copy of an information-clearing-house-type bulletin. This was agreed on at the 4 cities meeting and will form the bridge to a more politically defined magazine to be launched in August.

In summary, the sudden crisis in the system, the challenge faced by the ranks of the IBT and the development of our own work make possible a dramatic change in our organizing activity. This involves two related tasks. First, to gather together those militants prepared to fight and to organize a broad rank and file response to the challenge of the 1976 contract. Second, to convince the best of those militants that a consistent class struggle approach is necessary and is possible to organize. We aim to emerge from the contract fight with a small, but solid class struggle pole which can emerge as an organized, public force within the Union and can organize the fights to come.

## NATIONAL CONTRACT CAMPAIGN

We propose to initiate a major campaign around the contract. We believe this is not only possible, but that it will be a success. The pressure on the ranks by the companies is intense. The performance and credibility of the IBT leadership at an all time low. With a minimal (but necessarily expensive) programmatic focus and with a solid, but simple organizational mechanism, it will be possible to organize the ranks discontent and uncertainty into a genuine mass pressure-protest campaign aimed at the contract settlement.

We are not projecting that we can actually dictate to or turn the tide against the employers (and the IBT bureaucrats) in terms of the contract settlement, though of course we are going to fight with all our might to push our organizing that far. We cannot precisely predict developments around the actual contract settlement now. What we aim to do is focus current discontent and organize it into a loose network that can relate to any developments. Minimally, we will aim to organize a serious agitational contract rejection campaign on the basis of our pre-contract work.

The general outline of the project, its general timetable, and the type of program should be considered a working plan to be amended as necessary. ~~It~~ Now and thruout we will need feedback from our fractions and from other militants on the general plan and on specific programmatic and tactical details.

We will launch a National Rank and File Contract Coalition (a new name is MANDATORY) on roughly October 1 in Indianapolis, or another central mid west location. We are aiming at a large, broad meeting of 1-200 activists, mostly from the midwest with representatives of more distant groups and forces. It should be called by the various R&F caucuses and papers and individuals in various cities, and by Teamster Network. We aim to bring people from Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Memphis, Akron, Dayton, Cincinnati, Louisville, Little Rock, Kansas City, St. Louis, Madison, New York, etc.

The sponsors of the meeting should meet a month or more in advance to agree on a program, so that the meeting can be as broad as possible without leading to confusion or sabotage by Int'l agents or opportunists. We aim to make the ~~new~~ coalition broad enough to include even some officials and various sorts of opportunists who are willing to work on the agreed-upon program.

We must be clear we are not launching a general rank and file organization with a full program or elaborate organization or funding. Neither political nor organizational developments in the rank and file could sustain such a general opposition at the beginning of this campaign. We will aim to build a simple and relatively loose organization around the specific contract program outlined below. Our assessment is that we can assemble a critical mass of activists to make the campaign credible from the beginign and that we can build even more widely on that initial momentum.

Proposed Program of the National Rank and File Contract Coalition

1. FIGHT INFLATION WITH DECENT WAGES! \$1 an hour to make up for losses to past inflation, plus an additional \$1 in new money. and AN UNLIMITED, FULL COVERAGE COST OF LIVING CLAUSE to protect against future erosion of our wages.
2. WE HAVE A RIGHT TO OUR JOBS! Companies to pay full Health and Welfare and S.U.B. for up to 1 year of layoff.

- ABSOLUTELY NO LAYOFFS due to change of operations or mergers.
3. NO EXCESSIVE OVERTIME DURING LAYOFFS! Double time for all overtime. All overtime to be strictly voluntary.
  4. A FIGHTING GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE! Restore the 24 hour strike clause. Innocent til proven guilty in the grievance procedure. Right to protect our lives by absolute right to refuse any unsafe job or equipment.
  5. RETIRE WITH DIGNITY. Gaaranteed Decent Pension Written into the Contract. At least \$600 with 25 years of service; FULL COL TO PROTECT PENSIONS.
  6. EXTEND BEST CONDITIONS TO ALL. Best Local Conditions extended to ALL locals, such as SICK LEAVE, and MONDAY-FRIDAY BIDS ONLY, which some areas already have. All TANDEM AGREEMENTS BROUGHT UP TO HIGHEST STANDARDS!

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WE BELIEVE THESE ARE WHAT WE NEED AND WHAT WE CAN WIN IF WE USE OUR POWER. WE THE UNDERSIGNED WHO ARE COVERED BY THE NATIONAL MASTER AGREEMENT OR BY A TANDEM AGREEMENT PLEDGE TO VOTE NO ON ANY CONTRACT THAT DOES NOT MEET THESE MINIMUM STANDARDS.

WE FURTHER CALL UPON OUR OFFICERS TO TAKE A STAND OF "NO CONTRACT, NO WORK" AND USE OUR POWER TO STOP WORK ON APRIL 1 IF THE EMPLOYERS WILL NOT GRANT OUR BASIC RIGHTS! WE ALSO DEMAND THE RIGHT TO A SEPARATE VOTE BY THE WORKERS COVERED ON ALL LOCAL SUPPLEMENTS, RIDERS, ETC TO THE MASTER AGREEMENT.

This program is offered as what should be submitted to the sponsors of the meeting. Its intention is a minimal and concise list of demands that can win wide appeal, and address the major questions in the contract. This program will be the basis of a mass petition campaign, which will be the main national focus for the NRCC. We should target for 50,000 signatures on the petition; if it catches on and spreads via the grapevine many more are possible. Initial successes with the petition in our strongest areas will be used to build the credibility of the campaign in newer areas.

Further tactics dependent on developments include: fights in locals for adoption; committing local officers to support it; sponsoring meetings with speakers from other areas, etc. There could be delegations to the negotiations; coordinated demos in joint council cities plus coordinated press conferences, exposes on major companies, etc. There will be a basic brochure explaining the demands and activity of the NRCC in the context of the economic crisis and the bargaining round.

It should be made clear that we aim this at all drivers and dock hands, not just freight. The basis of this is that most other contracts are "tandem" agreements. For example, the Central States UPS contract expires right after freight, and will get exactly the same wage and fringe package. Same for Cleveland Area Grocery Agreement, and many other local, regional and "house" contracts. Some are less directly tied to freight, but will be definitely limited by the increase won in freight. Therefore, we can legitimately involve UPS, grocery, tankers, etc in this. This should especially be possible where these workers are in the freight locals, as is often the case. The contacts gained by this can be organized later around rejection of these tandem agreements. In general we aim this as broad as we can get a response.



While it is too early to actually launch this program, even if we were ready, there is important groundwork to be laid. Since our publications will build this campaign and build themselves through it, steps to improve their quality, regularity and distribution help lay the basis for a successful campaign. Further thought it is too early to agitate around the contract in general issues can increasingly be dealt with in the papers in terms of the upcoming contract.

The heart of this campaign is the group of ~~xxxx~~ militants we can convince to begin it, to give it initial credibility and momentum. While here again we do not want to agitate around a program which is a ways off, our work with our friends should be regularized and our political understanding with them deepened. With our closest friends we should begin to get feedback immediately on the general outlines of this program and on specific detailed suggestions they may have.

Further we will continue to travel to interest new people in the project, thru existing contacts, PROD names, etc. Later we will propose to caucuse, oppositionists and Teamster Network that they come together to call for such a coalition and call the October 1 meeting and perhaps a west coast meeting as well.

This will increasingly become the ~~xxx~~ major agitational focus of our local and national work. It should allow our local fractions to strengthen ~~xxx~~ or build caucuses, and allow us to stimulate caucuses and groups in additional areas. The contract is the one area where a national link up is immediately necessary. As we move into the actual campaign and are responding tactically together, the character and functioning of our national fraction will obviously have to change. Before the end of May some initial proposals on organization will be mailed out.

This is a flexible campaign in terms of what comes out of it and how far it goes. We aim to come out of it with stronger fractions, local caucuses and the basis for a national opposition that will be recognized as the major R&P opposition in the Union. Organizationally this will be pulled together following the contract, perhaps the same time as the IBT Convention in Las Vegas in July 1976. (We do not anticipate having the strength to even permeate the Convention itself, but should use it for exposure & building the opposition.)

#### TEAMSTER NETWORK

Teamster Network (the proposed name) should be launched prior to October 1. We should aim for August 1. It will be the voice of class struggle unionism in the IBT. And the political core of the national R&P movement. The aim is to build a class struggle tendency within the union and a network of militants who identify with it.

Teamster Network will not be a publication of the NRCC, but will be one sponsor of the coalition. Many of the initial activists in NRCC will be the people we can gather behind Network, which is precisely what will allow it to be widely accepted as a legitimate tendency despite its openly class struggle approach. The magazine itself will be sponsored by a list of caucuses, publications and individuals and will have a clear editorial statement on our approach to the union.

The conception of Teamster Network that was laid out in the earlier perspectives paper (see bulletin #1) and the

National IBT perspective

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in the Proposal Class Struggle Publication in the IBT (bulletin#4) still stands. Also we have UAW Network as a model, altho we are aiming at something slightly more agitational than UAW Network is.

Teamster Network will be the main vehicle we use to talk politics within the context of the broad contract campaign. around it we will seek to gather those elements looking for a larger range solution and a more principled political approach. It will be our main tool in building a class struggle tendency.

Along with Workers Power it will also be a main tool in recruiting Teamsters to socialism and to the IS. Altho Network will not be a socialist publication, socialist will be openly involved in it.

We are expecting a frequency of bi-monthly. A format similar to UAW Network (or slightly more modest). It will be produced in Detroit and its editorial center will be in Cleveland.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON APRIL 26

The Rank and File Coalition on April 26 was generally quite successful. I feel that a couple of things need to be brought up, that may or may not be brought up in the EC's assessment, which should be before the organization, however.

I.

While the decision to hold the Rank & File Coalition was correct, it was not made in a correct fashion. The EC should have taken the time to consult with more people than they did prior to actually making the decision. I know that they had at least a day or two between when they brought up the idea and when they made the final decision. If in this time, each EC member had, say, called two or three people (eg., NC members, branch organizers, national industrial fraction convenors) to get their assessments, suggestions, criticisms, this would have been better. While the EC decision to go ahead with the Coalition was correct, it may in the future make an incorrect decision. Prior consultation help avoid such mistakes.

As an example, one area where I felt that the EC made the wrong decision was in its decision to have everyone on the Rank and File Contingent during the march and not doing other things. I understand the EC's reasoning, mainly that we were small, and did not want to be scattered about. However, we also have to remember that most people on the march would not be able to tell from our banners that we represented anything more real than groups like CULA, "Fight Don't Starve" etc.

The main perspective we have had is to concentrate on building in our unions. I know that many people on the march would not take additional leaflets. But I found steelworkers interested in the leaflets I handed them. I think it would have been correct for about 10-15 people to have not been on the march in the contingent, but to have leafletted or given newspapers from their rank and file caucuses to people from their own union attending. The steel committee did this to some extent, but not as much as we should have. I also think it is unfortunate that more of our caucuses, esp CWA, did not have leaflets of their own to distribute.

I think this would have been quite useful to building our rank and file caucuses, and would not have detracted much from our rank and file coalition contingent.

This decision was also made by the EC without consultation with fraction leaders. To my mind, I think there needs to be more collaboration from our collaborative leadership.

II

The I.S. prides itself on making a distinction between "party and class", as one of the points that differentiates ourselves from other leftist groups which confuse their party with the working class. This distinction was not very clear in the Rank and File Coalition. The I.S. pretty much did the work, made the decisions, told people -- both members and non-members -- what to do on the contingent, etc.

Most of this obviously could not be helped. The contingent was a last minute decision. Either the I.S. had to do or no one would. There was not a chance to get people from the rank and file groups together ahead of time.

However, we should not confuse necessity with virtue. In the future, the rank and file groups need to be much more involved in all aspects of a rank and file coalition.

Vince M.  
national steel fraction convenor  
4/30/75

Comrades,

What follows was produced by the steel fraction to stimulate discussion within the Rank and File Team, our major area of work. While it is not a perspective document for the IS, we thought it might be of interest to comrades. The reason is that throughout our rank and file work we confront a common problem. The older more seasoned militants we work with have developed a whole set of political habits, in general, from their experiences in times when rank and file groups were slow to grow, or had only minimal effects. Today, these habits have a conservatizing effect on their work, and tend to hold back their efforts, limit their sights. With a clear change in the political climate within the working class, we are in most cases forced to convince these activists to change with the times, become more aggressive, ~~more~~ bolder in building a rank and file movement. This document was prepared for RAFT to do just that.

In addition, RAFT has some peculiar features which complicate the picture. In a word, these features can be summed up as "spontaneism (sp?). Over the years, a loose, almost "new left", method of functioning has developed. It is anti-leadership, anti-structure, and anti-organization. (On the other side of the coin, however, it also contains some healthy rank and file philosophy which we are for). In slower periods, when RAFT was a small core of activists, this mode of functioning did not seem so unreasonable as it does today, when the real possibility exists to build a rank and file organization in USWA. So, this feature of RAFT (rather than programmatic items or specific issues) was chosen as the focus of the document, because it is the specific expression of the conservatism inherited from the past.

We have asked that it be reprinted here because it covers ground that may be common to other rank and file groups, it serves to familiarize comrades with this relatively new area of IS work, and because it deals with the role of the IS in building the rank and file group in a partial way.

Tom M.  
steel fraction.

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We wrote this to communicate the ideas which we have developed about the future of RAFT. We think, as you will see, that it is a pretty promising future. With tremendous pressures building on USWA members, the need for a rank and file movement that fights back will become ever greater. We think RAFT can meet the challenge offered by this situation. We are in a good position to help that movement come into being, channel it down the right roads, and build it into a real force. In this letter, we hope to provide some of our ideas on how we can do that, or at least begin to do that, in a concrete way.

To begin with ~~RAFT~~ RAFT is today faced with a situation ripe for organizing steelworkers. Over the next two to three years, two things stand out to make that true. First, the economy is headed for, and in fact already in, a severe crisis. This will have an important effect on USWA members, the company, and our leadership. Second, with Abel scheduled to retire, no strong successor candidate yet appearing from the International, and Sadlowski making waves, the top in our union will be faced with a potential power vacuum. This will create a lot of instability in the union with different forces vying to fill the vacuum. The political shake-ups could affect the union at all levels.

These two factors could mean that without a serious challenge to the policies of

Abel and fact many of the opponents who will come forward, the union will be further weakened, with the wages, conditions and jobs of the ranks even less secure. On the other hand, these next years also offer an opportunity to forge a real rank and file alternative in the union--an opportunity more real than at any time in the last decade or more.

The dramatic return of severe and prolonged crisis to the capitalist system after decades of prosperity will bring important changes to the policies of both the steel companies and of the current leadership of USWA. With respect to both, the rank and file will initially be engaged in a defensive struggle.

Increased competitive pressure, on the home and world market, plus inflation and the downward pressures on profits, will bring a heightened attack on the workers. It will come in the name of "productivity." Under various "covers", --recession lay-offs, energy or pollution controls, the consent decree, or just plain old job elimination--the companies will seek a substantial increase in productivity at the expense of steelworkers jobs and conditions.

Concretely, this will mean an effort to keep post-recession call backs to a minimum, slow replacement of retiring workers, job elimination and combination, heightened harassment and dismissal. The companies will resist even more than now any attempts to better conditions ("too expensive"), introduce safety of health reforms, or pollution programs.

All of this will be in the context of a general economic crisis which is only now becoming clear to people. The business publications are predicting both high unemployment levels and high inflation for the rest of the decade. Thus far, their predictions have erred on the side of optimism, so the future could be worse than they let on.

Beyond, the general changes in consciousness which steelworkers will share with all workers, the immediate recession lay-offs, even if somewhat less severe in basic, will shatter any remaining illusions about Abel's promised generation of prosperity for the steel industry and its workers. The idea that you can get anywhere from these companies by being "nice" with no-strike agreements and the like, will die a conclusive death.

As the pressure from the companies increases, two things will occur. First the bankruptcy of company unionism will be thrown into sharp relief. As the companies begin to forecast their imminent demise due to lazy workers or cut-throat competition (foreign), Abel will rush to their aid. We can expect to see a resurrection of productivity committee-Where's Joe type thinking from the International. Abel will try to convince the ranks to work harder than ever for the Democratic Party from whom reforms will flow. And at the same time he will heighten his attacks on the rank and file within the union.

The second, and most important effect of the company offensive will be the choice faced by the workers in the mills--eat shit or fight back. There will of course be two responses. One conservative. The power of the company will be increased, with the threat of dismissal or lay-off more frightening. The ability to shift production to unused facilities will make local actions more difficult, etc. Nonetheless, the pressure will be intense. No job will be really secure. Management's attempts to speed-up and cut costs will increase tensions on the shop floor. Many of the struggles against the companies on this will be dramatic, like Campbell or Steubenville. Most will be hidden, fragmented resistance on the shop floor. There will be some victories, but none will be secure.

These struggles an

These struggles and dissatisfaction with the International policy will begin to reflect themselves in internal union struggles--local elections, Convention delegate elections, the Convention itself, nominations and election of International officers. In facing these challenges, Abel and the "official family" will not lie down. However, their position is weaker and more isolated than at any time in the past. While in line with their general "mutual trusteeship" business unionism policies in the past, the I.N.A. and their pro-company handling of the Consent Decree are a dramatic shift to the right.

The impact of these and other policies has been initially softened by the greatest boom in the industry's history. During these past years, the rank and file, local officers, and even many staffers could believe the delusion of a generation of prosperity and job security. Now, however, in the most serious depression since the 30's, the tragic weakening effect of these policies will become clear. It will undercut the morale and confidence of local officials and staffers who backed them. It will further isolate the leadership from a broad spectrum of the rank and file, particularly the most active.

This isolation combines with a crisis of leadership within the official family itself to leave that leadership open to a challenge from below.

Already we have seen some opening up within the union. The small, but significant impact of RAFT at the Convention and relative timidity of the International's response, the Campbell and Steubenville wildcats, the increased response to RAFT leaflets, the successful Sadowski challenge, the response of the membership and local officials to the dues protest.

While these rank and file responses to the crisis will remain scattered overall, we will see an increase in the number and severity of localized struggles as compared to the preceding period. It is these struggles in the shops and in the union which make the construction of an organized rank and file movement both possible and necessary. Possible--because these struggles will produce a new group of rank and file activists who see the weakness of company unionism and the power of an organized rank and file. For example, these two guys in Steubenville, who came to a lot of important conclusions when they saw people they previously thought of as apathetic move in tremendous solidarity. Necessary--because these initial struggles will fail if they are left isolated and are confined to a local perspective.

Left isolated, the companies will recover any losses in one local or at one time; they will seek to divide the workforce and isolate the militants. Without a rank and file organization which can help these local struggles and offer a perspective for building beyond them, militants will face the International, the companies, and the more conservative of their co-workers alone. The danger is that they will become more discouraged and drop-out, or become co-opted into one or another variety of "politics as usual" within the union (like Sadowski?)

However, we know that this is not inevitable. Rank and file organization can aid them and build upon these struggles. Merely by publicizing them, it can defend them, spread their examples and lessons. The meetings, contact, and literature of a rank and file organization can overcome the sense of isolation fostered by the companies, the international, and the press. Through the organization new and inexperienced activists can learn the technical and political lessons of decades from more experienced militants and activists. In turn, a rank and file organization can learn from the struggles, experiences, and enthusiasm or "new blood".

In response to company offensives, a rank and file organization can predict, analyze, and expose the productivity drive. It can determine the specific form of attack

identify the first seemingly innocent steps, and suggest strategies and tactics to fight the company offensive. It can offer alternative views on how to respond to competitive pressures and falling profitability.

Against the power of the companies and the International, the view of rank and file militants are often viewed as "idealistic" by their workmates, however sympathetic. An organization can significantly strengthen the activities of even one activist in a local or plant. Through its visible activities, publications, etc. it can be clear that one need not fight alone or be satisfied with voting for the "outs". Other people exist who want to unite to make basic changes in order to effectively fight back. This in turn makes the recruitment of additional people easier, multiplying the resources, confidence, and influence of the rank and file. The isolated individual becomes a group, supporting and supported by each other and by other groups. Increasingly the group is able to influence the course of events both in their locals and in the union as a whole.

Most important, a rank and file organization can offer both a vehicle and perspective for the broader and longer range fight to move from the defensive to the offensive. It can offer a democratic, class struggle view of unionism. It is this vehicle, this perspective, and this alternative view which makes it possible to link up struggles, to generalize them, and eventually to win them. In other words, to create a rank and file movement that plans to win, to take over the union (or rather to take it back), and force things out of the companies in a way which we cannot do under the present union set-up.

At first, this will not be anything like a mass movement. The initial aim is to gather together an existing and emerging layer of militants who want to fight back in a systematic way. Over a period of time, we can unite this network of activists into an organization which can attract others to it, can integrate and educate them, so that a cohesive core exists around which a broader rank and file movement can develop. Such a cohesive network will allow such a movement to act in a more or less unified fashion--and that is what is necessary for success.

The kind of organization and activity sketched out above represents a future development which is a continuation of RAFTS & tradition. At the same time, there is no denying that even the initial steps suggested here represent a big investment which will stretch our already thin resources. This proposal is based on two assumptions in that respect.

1. A substantial, but realistic commitment of resources and energy by our currently recruitable network can multiply our resources substantially within a few months.

2. RAFT is in a unique position to take those steps which can draw together a solid network of dedicated rank and file activists to meet the challenges of the next two years.

Briefly, the assets which RAFT alone can bring are: (1) an active and consistent program on contract question, on union democracy, on the relationship of the union to the employers, and on racial discrimination. This "program" has been regularly and consistently put forward in an aggressive way not only at conventions, BSIC meetings, etc. but also in the day to day work in the Youngstown area.

2. a demonstrated willingness to work with others who may differ on some questions to achieve specific common objectives. 3. as a result, RAFT is well known and respected. It has a name and reputation which comes from consistent activity over a period of years. It also has a following, the beginnings of an active network--a vital asset in the next two years. 4. It has a core of experienced fighters who from their experience have much to teach the younger activists who will emerge in the next two years and who are known and respected to many steelworkers.

At the same time, RAFT in the past has been limited in its ongoing activities to the Youngstown area, and especially #1462. While the protests at the Contentions, et etc. have been important, they are unknown to almost all younger steelworkers. In the past it has been impossible to do much more. It has not been possible to build a real organization which people can join and which can map out policy, plan and implement programs, and recruit additional people to it.

The changing circumstances in the society, in the industry, and in the union should make it more possible to move beyond protest to organization. The proposals contained in this letter are designed to begin that process.

It would be nice if the kind of rank and file organization outlined earlier happened automatically. The task seems a very large one. However, the local struggles, can stay local. The movement can provide a basis for a rerun of the Abel-MacDonald election which will solve nothing and build no organization of the rank and file. Someone will have to begin to act on the proposition that rank and file organization is now possible--to project from the future from the present--to take concrete steps to realize that future. RAFT is in the best position to take that lead.

One final note before we outline some specifics. There is a vacuum developing within the union. The International is discredited. It has no strong leader to replace Able and its machine is tired. However, politics as well as nature abhors a vacuum. As the crisis in the society and the union becomes clearer, others beside the rank and file will begin to move.

The official family will try to regain its credibility. More important, politicians like Sadlowski will come forward. They will talk tough but be vague. They are political pragmatists who believe that is their leadership, rather than the active organization of the rank and file, which will change the union. To accommodate the sections of the local leadership and staff necessary to win without a real mobilization of the ranks, they will argue against programs that are too radical.

This will have a big effect on rank and file activists. Many people will, and in fact have, be sucked into changing this union by working for Sadlowski's election. They will be working for a program for change that is weak, which will result in only superficial changes at the top. Our job will be to convince these people that there is an alternative., point out that others, Abel, Leseganich, etc. have said a lot of the same things. RAFT is in an excellent position to provide that a alternative--a rank and file based movement that makes basic changes at the bottom, not just a change of guard at the top.

In order to succeed in this task, and have an impact larger than the one we now have, we need to be more clearly organized ourselves.

Before we go on, a few words on "being organized". Militants are and will be impressed with groups that are together, can put out literature, pull off actions, line up forces at conventions, affect the course of events at the local level, etc. That is, after all, how you get results, RAFT is in many ways well organized compared to, for example, the District #31 Committee, now virtually defunct.

But we also have a tradition of "looseness". For example, no formal membership, constitution, hardly any structure at all. Quite understandably people like this. Several people we have talked to recently thought it was pretty neat--"what could be more democratic, etc.". The reason is that all the institutions people are in or know about--the union, the company, schools, the government, etc.--are all rigid and bureaucratic. They stifle the individual. The natural impulse, then, is to get



a breath of fresh air, to be very loosely organized. This is nothing new. In the student movement and the civil rights movement, the same thing happened. For a time in the student movement, it was considered wrong to even have any leaders. The theory was that leaders always become too powerful, corrupt, bureaucratic, or sellout.

But the movements that rely on spontaneous decisions and action always seem to spontaneously die. No one is in charge of keeping them alive. That does not mean that we should rush out and form a committee, or become of second edition of USWA. In fact, the emphasis on relying on the rank and file, avoiding stifling structure is healthy. We want to encourage the democratic participation of people as much as possible. But we also want to act in a co-ordinated fashion, divide up responsibilities so that tasks get done, and to do this someone has to provide some leadership and co-ordination. It never happens on its own. The point is to avoid being too loose, so that everything gets left up to chance or to a small handful; or too rigid, so that your voice doesn't get heard unless you are in a leadership position.

There is another argument for organization worth mentioning. That is that the lack of organization can be very undemocratic. Decisions are up to whoever takes the initiative and makes them. There is then no way for the rest of the people to make their feelings known. In a small group, where everyone trusts everyone else, this is not a big problem. But we should not plan on forever being a small group.

That is why recognized leadership is important. If a decision is made, everyone knows who to praise or blame. And it is possible to recall anyone who is doing a bad job, not doing the job, or using the leadership position for selfish gain. That anti-leadership sentiment found throughout the Movement is well-founded. Leaders are human; they make mistakes, sell out, get out of touch. But many people miss is that if you don't recognize your leaders in some established way, you have now way to control them.

We can over a period of time, become a lot more prepared to deal with the challenge before us if we think about and begin to act on the need to become more organized. This doesn't mean we need to have a Constitutional Convention tomorrow. Rather, it means we make some small but important changes in the way we function now, and that we are aware of the problems and larger changes needed when we grow significantly larger. The changes we see include:

1. RAFT should be more of a "membership organization". We've been against formal membership due to the dual unionist charge. That is fine as a tactical decision. But we need to function as if we are members of an organization.

Really, there is a core that does. The question is important when it comes down; to recruiting new people. We want to bring new people in. When you recruit someone to an organization, you urge them to become members, to accept responsibilities, to get involved in decisions, and to bring others around. That is how you create an effective organization. If we adopt this view of ourselves more consciously, it will be easier to grow, to recruit people. And with growth, the burden on specific individuals is eased.

RAFT also has, and always will have, a periphery of supporters. People who give money, come to an occasional meeting, agree with the aims, but aren't really involved in carrying out the program. Our first aim should be to encourage supporters to become members. It will always be the core of "members" that carries the ball, keeps the movement alive. We need to convince RAFT members and supporters of the importance of their involvement--encourage a sense of responsibility to the movement. Secondly, in every organization, it is the members that should make the decisions. Presently, RAFT meetings are more like public forums for RAFT than

membership meetings. This has a definite role in any movement--it allows us to bring people around. But at some point, we will want to have RAFT meetings at which the actual members can make decisions about RAFT's programs, projects, etc.

2. We need to move toward some sort of organizational structure. Membership meetings are one important element. A small, functioning leadership body, sort of an executive board, is another. This would have the function of planning and setting up membership meetings, drafting proposals for the projects and activities to be undertaken, and making the day to day decisions that can't be done by consulting everyone. The advantage would be two-fold. First, someone would be in charge of keeping things moving, getting things done, coming up with ideas for projects, etc. Second, since the responsibility for making decisions will rest with clearly recognized people. If somebody doesn't like a decision, they know who to talk to.

A third element is how to be organized over a wide geographical area. At some point we will have to have some sort of chapter system. It will be impossible to have people in Chicago or Buffalo attend Youngstown meetings regularly. It will be necessary to be able to offer to these people some way of being in RAFT. This will mean that different regions will want a certain amount of autonomy, will want to decide among themselves what projects or directions to take. That is, of course necessary, but at the same time, RAFT as a whole will have to pull in the same direction on certain issues. For instance, if we decide, as a whole organization, to push a certain strategy around an event like the convention, it will be important for everyone to implement that strategy.

3. This brings up another important element. the need for a program. As RAFT starts to grow, develops chapters, etc. it may well attract all sorts of people who do not share our general rank and file philosophy of unionism. We don't want racists, for instance, because we are for uniting the workers, not dividing them. Racism is a company philosophy. We don't want opportunist politician types, office-seekers, because we've seen how destructive they can be to a rank and file movement. One of the first reactions to RAFT from rank and filers will be that we are like the rest, only interested in ourselves and getting office. We can't afford to have that suspicion confirmed by any "bad actors" that might come around. And we don't want sectarians. This American Labor Party group is a good example. They would wreck us. The behavior of some of the groups around District #31 Committee and Atlantic City is another. They were more interested in building their own groups than in building a rank and file movement. That is why there were two opposed demonstrations in Atlantic City.

At the same time., RAFT is never going to contain people with 100% identical politics. Clearly now there are lots of differences within RAFT. We need some sort of statement of principles or program that reflects our rank and file philosophy of unionism. Then we can say to people, if you agree with this program, you have a place in RAFT. If you don't agree, or act in a way that is contrary to it, you don't. It is not, in practice, that black and white, but in general a program exists to unite the right people and keep the wrong people (racists, sectarians, and opportunists) out.

4. To get people involved, it is necessary to have something to offer them that they can do. In other words, it is important to have a plan of action that people can get involved in carrying out. Right now, we have one in a sense. We are involved in the dues protest movement. And we are agitating around the unemployment issue. Though it is not that clear how, we can tell people we are doing these things, and invite them to participate in a concrete project. We need to always have this kind of direction, and to plan ahead to events and issues so that we are prepared to deal with them. For instance, a well-prepared fight at the convention.

5.

5. Finally, we have a concrete project in mind that is immediately possible. That is an expanded RAFT Reports, a one-sheet, four page tabloid paper, passed out at gates, union, meetings, delivered in bundles to friends and members to distribute in their plants, and perhaps thru steelhaulers we know in F.A.S.H. This we feel would create some real possibilities to influence events.

In our present RAFT Reports, we really can't involve people. The articles tend to be of a general nature. There is little room for details about specific plants, events, or issues. The newsletter has been useful in building some issues, advertising our existence, and spreading some news like the Campbell wildcat. A more ambitious paper would allow us to interview people about what's going on, involve people in writing or speaking about their situation. Steelworkers would read about their own plant or local. They would be more interested in this sort of literature.

In addition, we could be really useful to our audience. Spreading news is important. You don't find out about wildcats, or less spectacular events through the press or Steel Labor. Sometimes, a little news from down the road can cause people to think: we can do it too, or those guys have such and such a working condition, we should too.

How to fight back?? Ideas on this are important to people. What can we do is a common question. We can make suggestions on strategy and tactics thru a paper, that would be of real use to people. We can't through a leaflet. For instance, there are a lot of complicated contract angles around fighting job eliminations. An article laying them out might really help out a group of workers facing that problem.

We will want to build for the upcoming events in the union--local elections, the convention, International elections, contracts, etc. A paper would allow us to prepare our supporters for these things. We could go to a convention with a plan of what to push, not just in our heads, but in the heads of a whole network of militants. We could influence delegate elections. Get people to support delegates who support our program, and in this way build for these events well in advance.

Also, RAFT would be more than a collection of agitational leaflets to our audience. We could spell out in some detail what we stand for, what our program is. We could give a short history of what we have done, and show people that it is not useless to protest the direction the union is taking;

Finally, we could both draw an already existing network of people together around an activist organization, and enlarge that network. Supporters will be more likely to become more involved in RAFT if we have an on-going plan of action which we build through a paper. And the militants who begin to emerge in the coming years will be reachable. We can recruit people to the RAFT network through a paper, involve them in its distribution, in writing and seeking articles, etc. In other words, such a paper's most useful role will be that of an organizer. It will both make drawing already existing ~~contacts~~ contacts together, and meeting new contacts easier.

The big question is, do we have the resources. We think so. We propose that the production be left up to us in Cleveland, since we have the time and resources. We already have several friends lined up to help on the production. For writing and distribution, admittedly we could be in a stronger position. Our perspective should be, however, that once we get this project established, we can get more people involved in the leg work as we recruit more people.

It goes without saying that this will be a RAFT publication. We in Cleveland do not want to take all the responsibility for choosing what goes in, what positions are taken. We suggest that an editorial board be chosen, consisting of one or two Youngstown members, and one or two Cleve members. From Youngstown, we naturally would like all the support and involvement possible. But realistically, ~~exxx~~ we do not expect a major commitment. What we suggest is.....

(the resto of this paragraph is just some unnecessary, for us, details)

One of the reasons we have the resources to undertake this project right away is because we can rely on members and friends of the International Socialists to help in the production, and to a lesser degree, the distribution of the paper. The Cleveland branch will be the main source of this aid.

We point this out for a good reason. We want this to be a RAFT paper. The IS does not make decisions for RAFT. RAFT itself must be the authority on all positions taken. If such a paper comes out and relies heavily on non-steelworkers in the IS for assistance, we are open to the charge: well, : well, the IS has taken ~~x~~ RAFT over. It's running the show from behind the scenes. We want, from the start to be clear on this: we will rely on the IS people only for assistance in writing articles that take positions determined by RAFT, for production assistance, and for distribution at plant gates.

We, meaning Tom and Bob, know that the fact that we are members of the IS, a socialist political organization puts us in a sensitive position. Everyone knows that left groups have a tendency to "take it over". They try and build themselves rather than the rank and file group. Chicago was one example, so was Atlantic City.

We think the IS is different than other left groups. We believe that the important thing to do is to build a rank and file movement. We don't believe that groups like the IS have any business "substituting" themselves for that rank and file movement. Not that building the IS is not important to us--it is. But the only way socialist workers movement will develop is if it comes out of a layer of rank and file activists, who through their participation in a rank and file movement, become receptive to socialist ideas and a workers organization that fights for socialism. We don't think that will ever happen by manipulating people through "front group" type organizations. It will happen when people become convinced of the correctness of socialist ideas. In practice, this means that we try to function in such a way as to avoid manipulation from behind the scenes. We try to avoid putting the IS above building a rank and file movement. We have nothing to gain by operating in such a manner--in fact, it runs directly against our basic political ideal of a society run democratically by and for the working class.

Talk is cheap. We know that the only convincing argument that we are really different comes thru deeds, not words. For the last 08 months, we have tried to build RAFT. We are for as much democracy as possible. We are against sectarianism. Now we are looking forward to a period when our predictions about a rank and file movement can become a reality. And we want to do everything possible to make that reality happen. This statement is meant to make our ideas on how to do this as clear as possible.

We hope that you will consider these ideas, discuss them and that we can meet in the very near future to have a fuller discussion of them. We also hope the RAFT will make some of the changes we suggest. We have a bright future.

tom/bob.

## UPS PERSPECTIVE IN IBT

### INTRODUCTION

This paper has three parts: 1) background information on United Parcel Service(UPS), 2) a national UPS perspective and its relationship to our work in freight, and #) a proposal to make UPS an immediate national priority. It is being sent out in the national report so that people industrializing in the near future not in the Teamster fraction will have some information on UPS.

UPS is hiring quite a bit on the west coast now and doing some hiring elsewhere. We have just recently gotten 3 people in around the country with the possibility of more. They are mainly part-time jobs now, but the west coast is hiring drivers and other places will be hiring drivers later this year.

We would like all Teamster fractions to discuss this paper. Also we would like the Red Tide EC to discuss the question of industrializing their members into UPS part-time jobs, since it is currently the only of our priorities they will be able to get into in the present economic situation. People interested in putting in applications right away should contact AG in Cleveland for suggestions.

### BACKGROUND

UPS is the largest trucking company in the world and the largest employer of Teamsters. It is wholly owned by its management. It operates in 48 states and specializes in pick-up and delivery of small packages (under 50lbs.). Almost all its volume is from industrial shippers; it has made little attempt to compete with the post office for individual packages as this is not that profitable. It is possible in the near future that UPS will set up small sub-stations for people to "mail" parcels, just like the post office. They have competitive rates with the post office and have much faster service. Parcels are picked up and delivered inside each city by vans and shipped between cities by tractor-trailer rigs.

There is no national UPS contract like the Master Freight Agreement. Contracts are negotiated at a regional level, with the size of regions varying around the country. UPS workers are sometimes in their own local, but, more likely, they are in locals with other jurisdictions. Many times this local is the major freight local in the city. When in the freight locals, the UPS workers usually form the largest block, though they are usually less involved in union politics.

UPS is known nationally among truck drivers as a terrible place to work --- with constant harassment, speed-up, time studies, etc. Most freight drivers would rather be unemployed than work at UPS.

There are three main job categories at UPS that are in the Teamsters: road drivers, city drivers, and sort and load workers. Road drivers (or "feeder drivers") are selected by seniority from the city drivers and are not hired from the outside, in most cases. City drivers are the ones that everyone has seen around town with the brown trucks and brown uniforms. They are hired off the street in some cities and in others they are selected by seniority from the inside workers. This depends on the individual contract. The inside sort and load workers are divided into full time and part time categories. The part timers are young and many are students. The percentage of part timers varies from city to city, but the UPS management is pushing to turn all inside jobs into part time jobs. They can get more work with less hassles and less money from these part timers than the equivalent number of full timers. The part timers work approximately 20 hours per week in approximately 4 hour shifts. All inside jobs are at night while the city driving jobs are during the day.

There is usually considerable anger and frustration directed toward the part timers by the full timers. This happens because the part timers are usually rate busters and are a large voting block at contract ratification time. UPS plays off the part timers

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against the full timers all the time. They can more easily get the part timers, who have no real long term interest in the job, to ratify a contract than the full time people. The last NEW YORK strike was a basically unsuccessful attempt to stop any use of part timers.

There are other inside jobs such as clerical, mechanics, janitors, and truckwashers, but these are less central to the operation and/or most likely are not in the union.

Women have been hired for both the inside jobs and the city driving jobs in the last 2-3 years. UPS entered into a voluntary agreement with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) to hire women into the previously all male categories. The women hired are generally harassed by the lower level management, who don't think that these women should have these jobs. There is a relatively large turnover of women because of this harassment, but many are staying because there is not any other place they can work and make as much money. The women who stay are tough and aggressive and are often women's liberationists in the loose sense. The male workers are usually hostile to these women at first, but accept them after a while.

UPS has a much higher percentage of blacks and Latins than any freight company. This hiring pattern is also presumably to keep UPS out of trouble with the government and the EEOC.

UPS maintains a large Industrial Engineering Dept.. These people time study every aspect of the operation. These people set and reset production norms that the employees are expected to meet. The company maintains a large number of supervisors relative to the number of hourly employees. Like the telephone company, they move these supervisors in from all over a region to break a strike at any one terminal. Almost all lower level management are promoted from among the workers. They are paid less than a driver to start, but are given stock in the company and the promise of an easier job and the chance to "make it" in the company. In the absence of any rank and file alternative, many good militants take this way out of a job that they know they can't live with the rest of their lives. All stock is owned by management and bonuses are given in stock to encourage supervisors to push their workers for more and more production.

Drivers are required to wear shined shoes and keep their hair short or pinned up off their collars and off their ears. There are regulations regarding the length of sideburns and mustaches. The whole operation is run like the military. People have been suspended for wearing their turtleneck sweaters under their uniform when it is cold, for instance. The constant harassment, speed-up and the military discipline have created an atmosphere of constant tension. Small and large revolts happen all the time at UPS terminals across the country. Because of this we probably know more groups and individual militants in UPS in various cities than any other industry where we don't have people ourselves.

We have one member working in UPS in Cleveland NY and Seattle, and two in Detroit and LA. Three of these are drivers and four are inside part timers. We are in contact or know of groups or individual militants in the Bay Area, Portland, St. Louis, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Boston. There has been some limited communication among these people. All would be open to national cooperation to fight UPS, since it is clearly the only strategy to take on this giant.

## NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Where we have people now our perspective is, of course, to build local groups that operate on the shop floor and in the union. However, we need an immediate way of working with the many militants we know across the country. We propose to start a national UPS newspaper. The stated purpose of this paper would be: 1) to fight inside the Teamster's Union for a uniform national UPS contract with a common expiration date and 2) to build a national rank and file movement inside UPS to bring together the various militants around the country. The political program of the paper would be:

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- 1) For a national contract
- 2) Rank and file control of bargaining committees and bargaining demands.
- 3) UPS divisional meetings inside locals where UPS is a minority.
- 4) Full wages and benefits for part timers. Preferential hiring to full time jobs. No more part time jobs, elimination of the part time category and all jobs to be full time. (Present part timers have the option of a full time job or keep their present job, but no new part timers.)
- 5) An end to the military regimentation, dress standards and appearance standards.
- 6) Build a rank and file movement in UPS and the Teamsters to carry out this program.

We are for a national contract in UPS. This could either take the form of being under the MASTER FREIGHT AGREEMENT (MFA), or a separate national contract. We believe that most UPSers would oppose entering MFA because they would have even less control over their contract than they do now. (In fact, some UPSers will be against a national contract for the same reason.) We now believe that a fight for a separate national contract for UPS is the correct tactic now. The current low level of rank and file activity nationally would insure that UPS entering MFA would mean less control over the contract than they have now. However, events in freight could change this assessment. If a large, sustained rank and file opposition developed in freight fighting for a decent MFA and a democratic union; we would push for joining forces for a comprehensive MFA for UPS and freight. This is a tactical question to be decided by events in the coming years.

Although we aim for a national contract, one of the important roles of this newspaper will be communication between militants in the locals covered by regional contracts. Now contracts are settled by local by local voting, where militants only have rumor and what their union officials tell them is happening with the voting in other locals. Union officials in local by local force inferior contracts on the rank and file by keeping them in the dark. The initial phase of the fight for a national contract will be the fight for decent local contracts in the regions. The best elements of each contract around the country can be put together in the paper to show what others have won from UPS. The paper will act as a coordinator of activity around the regional contracts. The paper will promote regional meetings to push for rank and file control of bargaining demands, etc.

Since UPS workers are usually in larger locals, we are for divisional meetings of just UPS workers to act on specific UPS problems. We see these meetings as a chance to organize a real fight against UPS on the local level with at least the token endorsement of the union.

Part timers were brought in by UPS as ratebusters and cheap labor. They are paid less than the full timers for the same work, and usually don't get any health and welfare benefits. This means the company saves money four ways: it doesn't have to pay as high a wage, it doesn't have to pay the health and welfare contribution, it doesn't have to pay the pension contribution, and it can push these young part timers harder and faster than they could a full timer with a lot of seniority. The union officials get a pretty good deal too, since all these part timers usually pay full time dues and don't cause too much trouble in the union.

The rapid trend in UPS is to replace all inside workers with part timers. We want to reverse this trend by eliminating the part timer category, but we don't want to fight the part timers themselves. Therefore we have a two prong approach to the question -- fighting for full wages and benefits and preferential hiring into full time for all part timers while, at the same time, we fight to eliminate all part time jobs. Many part timers want full time jobs, but are passed over for people hired off the street into these jobs. Also part timers have led struggles and slowdown in some places (namely Boston) We want to build a working alliance between the full and part timers to fight the company and union officials instead of the present separation and resentment the full timers have against the part timers.