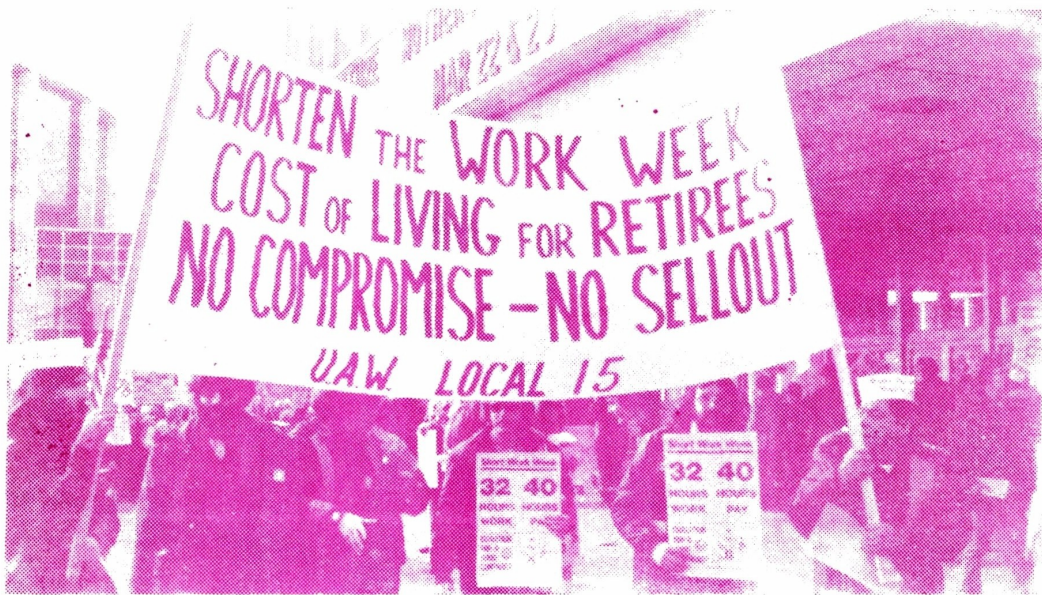


MARCH



March 19th—Over 1500 UAW members demonstrate at their union's bargaining convention, demanding a shorter work week and cost of living for retirees. The Coalition for a Good Contract[CGC] was one of the supporters of the demonstration.



TDC Day of Action—March 13th. Over 400 demonstrate in the Bay Area. Over 2100 Teamsters took part nationally.

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

As was reported in the last IS News of the Month, we have been suffering an overall loss of members since the new year. This has been a result of a relatively low level of recruitment at the same time as a proportion of the new comrades recruited during the fall membership campaign dropped out. While it is true that the number of drop-outs was larger than we had expected, it also now appears that we are over the worst. The organization is showing welcome signs of consolidating at a considerably higher level than we were before the recruitment campaign.

One of the signs of this consolidation is the attention the branches are now giving to ensuring that socialist education goes on in our meetings. We have tried to help the branches from the center by production in the last month of an education handbook, a bulletin, and an intermediate class series. The outline of the summer school has also been published. This school will be an extremely worthwhile investment of time for those comrades who can get off right after the convention to attend. Check out the details with the branch organizers.

The agenda for the July 4th weekend convention is to be found in another part of this publication. This convention will be both extremely important and interesting. It also has a new format, more in keeping with the new IS. The changes in the organization over the last year will all be summarized and the plans laid for the next year, which promises to be equally exciting and successful. We would like every member to attend, but we know that that is unrealistic. Our new members, however, should make a big effort to come to Detroit for this, it's quite an experience. Among the delegates to our national convention will be teamster leaders from all over the country. Over the past few months, the success of our initiatives to create the Teamsters for a Decent Contract has thrust many of our teamster members into leading positions in what is undoubtedly a mass movement of some significance. As we publish this report, the TDC is about to face its biggest test, as the Master Freight Agreement expires. The exact situation and therefore the outcome is still unclear, but one thing is certain already--tens of thousands of teamsters have moved into action because of the lead we have given, without us this could not have happened. The whole organization, and particularly the teamster fractions, have every cause for real pride at this accomplishment. This is also a good time to remember that this work will not end with the new contract. There will be an IS teamster speaking tour, a new teamster recruitment pamphlet, initiatives for the ongoing rank and file movement, etc., etc., before the end of April.

In other areas of work, the Coalition for a Good Contract (UAW) has now established its presence during the Special Bargaining Convention. This opens up possibilities for a campaign with no less impact on the auto industry than the TDC has had on the trucking industry. Our work in telephone has suffered from gross neglect by everyone but the most committed CWA members. We are now taking steps to change that,

probably not a moment too soon, given the set-backs we have received in some areas over the past period. The last month has seen some successes, too, however, as comrades will have seen in WP and we will be able to build on these. Finally, on our industrial work, jobs are opening up in the steel industry at last. We have people going in in the two major centers, Gary and Pittsburgh, and allied to the small base we have in Cleveland, there is now the possibility of a real fraction. A new steel pamphlet will be out in May.

Comrades following the news from Portugal in WP will have seen that there is the beginning of a new working class upsurge. An upsurge in which our comrades are playing a significant role. There will be a major article on the lessons of two years of revolution in Portugal in WP in April, and we are investigating the possibilities of a new pamphlet on the same subject, as well as taking steps to raise money to defend the PRP from the broader movement in this country.

In conclusion, there is one other observation about what has been happening in the organization in March, and indeed in January and February, too. Unless we have set it up, from the center (as with International Women's Day), there have been very few political public meetings of our branches. This is something we have to change over the next month. The emphasis we have been putting into our agitational work in industry cannot be allowed to squeeze out our political work. For the economic struggle is pointless without a political struggle to build a workers' revolutionary party.

Glenn Wolfe
March 31, 1976

NEW BRANCHES CAMPAIGN

The new branches campaign is proceeding according to plan. Branches are now being set up in Cincinnati and Indianapolis. At the same time, the EC has taken steps to move the New York IBT work to New Jersey, and begin a branch there.

The Cincinnati branch, established just last month, is beginning to get off the ground. Workers' Power is sold at UPS and CF, despite problems with management at both places. At UPS, thanks to a little help from the stupidvisors, the paper is already well-known, and a number of workers have rallied to our defence against company harassment.

Workers' Power was also sold at the successful Cincinnati UPSurge meeting, as well as 30 copies of the Conspiracy pamphlet. As a result, the branch now has a small but growing periphery of UPS workers, including one possible recruit.

The branch also has a postal contact and plans to use the Rank and File Postal Worker to build a rank and file organization there and bring these postal workers to the IS. Plans are also underway to distribute Network at the GMAD plant in Norwood and at Ford.

In Indianapolis, the comrades have concentrated (successfully, it seems) on getting priority jobs. They have also done mass distributions of Network at Ford, Chrysler, and GM. On March 29th, they held their first successful forum--Milt F. spoke on Portugal, and several contacts were made. The branch is now discussing future forums. This week, three more comrades will arrive in Indianapolis, and the main activity will be intervention in the freight strike, for Indianapolis has been reported to be a hot spot for strike sentiment.

The comrades from the New York Teamsters branch will join members already in New Jersey. They plan to concentrate on teamster work in northern New Jersey, though there are already auto and postal contacts in the area as well.

These three branches could be established in the next month, so that by the time of the next News of the Month, they will be listed along with the other branches. Plans are now underway for beginning the branches in Buffalo, Atlanta, and Baltimore, though the timetable on these branches may be set back slightly, because of the resources that have been required to carry the teamster campaign.

BRANCH REPORTS

AMHERST: Through doing teamster work in the area, the branch has successfully begun to transform itself from a university-based student branch into a branch oriented toward the working class and the surrounding industrial area. A solid education program is in process. One comrade has successfully built a rank and file caucus in a non-priority shop. A successful IWD event was held, with a film shown and several good speakers.

BAY AREA: The postal paper has received a good reception and inside distribution is now organized. A successful IWD event was held, with an excellent slide show used. The fraction involved in the organizing drive continues to function well and to bring contacts ground. The branch also has almost completed the new members class, which has been extremely successful. Two teamsters have been recruited, with approximately 5 more likely to join. A Portugal fund-raiser is planned for April.

BLOOMINGTON: The branch held a successful IWD celebration, and new contacts were gained. The branch also participated in a left coalition to hold a very good anti-CIA demonstration on the occasion of a CIA recruiting visit to the campus. Numerous WP's were sold, the IS speakers were the best, etc. The branch was also involved in strike support activity at a local GE plant, where there was a wildcat (see WP coverage)--WP leaflets analyzing the situation were widely distributed and received an enthusiastic reception; WP sellers sold out, and contacts were made. The branch plans a Portugal forum at the end of the month, and a '76 elections forum in the middle of April, right before the Indiana primary at the beginning of May.

BOSTON: The branch is completely involved in TDC work, in spite of having no comrade in the industry. A forum was held with a speaker from Great Britain IS--Socialism and the International Workers' Movement was the topic. A PRP fund-raiser was held with terrific entertainment, including a Portuguese musical group.

CHARLESTON: The branch is planning a public forum on Portugal in May with a member who recently returned from Portugal as the main speaker. With this, they hope to move forward with their contact and recruitment work. Several new members have moved to Charleston to strengthen the branch, but several members have been lost. The branch is mainly working on industrializing.

CHICAGO: Re-establishing and re-building of the teamster work continues. A very excellent IWD event was held. Several comrades have recently gotten steel jobs and there are still more openings.

CLEVELAND: As you all might imagine, totally devoted to teamster work.

DETROIT: The work of the branch continues to center around Auto and Teamsters, with emphasis on building the CGC; successful participation by the CGC and our auto comrades at the recent UAW bargaining convention. Red Tide continues to grow (!) and Women Against Racism work continues at slow but steady pace. A Stop Wallace demo is planned at the beginning of April, when Wallace will be speaking in Detroit.

LA: The branch is functioning quite well at present; successful teamster work proceeding, with a rapidly developing periphery of quality IBT contacts. Beginnings of openings in auto, although too soon to tell much. Busing and city financial crisis soon to be issues in the area.

LOUISVILLE: The IBT branch has just gotten the Women Against Racism work off the ground. WAR has taken part in a press conference on a racist bombing, a forum on school suspensions, and a confrontation with school officials over racist suspensions. A member of Detroit WAR spoke recently here at a potluck dinner. The fraction has been hampered by the loss of several new comrades. The TDC work is still shaky and small because of no comrade in freight, but a number of contacts are now committed to following up a strike with a local newsletter.

The CWA branch--the UBW fraction is discussing with contacts the possibility of putting out a city-wide anti-racist paper. The CWA fraction is trying to re-organize UA locally and set up a system of stewards' newsletters. The company threatened recently to fire one comrade and the fraction responded with a leaflet and a motion at the local meeting.

Both branches took part in a successful IWD celebration.

MADISON: The branch was recently re-organized with much help from comrades in Chicago. Since then, the branch's work has mainly centered around the teamster campaign. CONVOY is being widely distributed throughout the city, there was a TDC rally on March 13th, and local teamsters voted 3-1 at the last union meeting in favor of a strike. There has been little interest from local UPS people after they were harrassed about buying WP. A contact at the PO is distributing the postal paper from the inside. Another contact in UAW is being approached about Network and the CGC. Of the comrades in Madison, one is moving to a new branch in a few weeks, and two others will be moving this summer.

MID-HUDON: A strong connection between Mid-Hudson and the NY branch continues; an IS dinner for black and puerto rican contacts was held, with speakers from the NY branch.

PHILADELPHIA: Some branch members have gotten or are getting priority jobs in the Philly area; the opportunities look quite good. Cadre development is proceeding at a healthy pace, and uniformly good branch meetings, with contacts in attendance, are being held. The branch is running a four-part educational on class struggle unionism

to train newly-industrializing members and close contacts, which so far has been a big success. A Portugal forum is planned, and a radio interview on southern Africa, with comrades from NY, was taped although not yet aired, through a black contact of the branch.

PITTSBURGH: The branch continues to have very solid teamster work, although no recruits are in sight from this arena. The branch recently recruited a postal worker, so the possibility of a real postal fraction is developing. Hiring in steel, finally-- the branch requests comrades to come and put in applications.

PORTLAND: The branch has been almost entirely focussed on teamster work, with most other work on hold till the contract settlement. Red-baiting has had some negative effect here, but we are coming back from it in both TDC and UPSurge. The local TDC committee has just sent the second issue of its local paper to the press. Response to it has been very good. Recruitment has not happened for too long because of the overwhelming practical tasks. However, we have several extremely good prospects. Currently the branch is in the process of developing new perspectives to carry it through till the convention. There are a number of strikes and organizing efforts in the area which they are attempting to follow up, as a couple of them tie into our work, in IAM and in health care.

SEATTLE: The branch now has some good teamster contacts; successful barn meetings have been held, and TDC buttons worn at many work places. The IWD event was a success. The telephone caucus continues to attract people, and the postal paper is being distributed.

SOUTH BEND: This brand new branch held a good IWD event, and plans a Portugal forum at the end of March with Milt F. Most of branch activity centers around teamster work. The branch has several good contacts, and recruitment seems likely soon.

ST. LOUIS: The branch was involved in a major wildcat strike in telephone (reported in WP). Most original UA members were disoriented by the defeat and the role of the union officials, but a revived UA is being built out of militants who learned the lessons of the sellout. The Coalition of Public Employees is developing more slowly than planned, as Rank and File, of AFSCME 2463, has primarily focussed on the issues of the organizing drive in recent weeks. A new newsletter (Highway Blues) is being published among workers at St. Louis County Highway Department.

TDC is growing slowly due to our shallow roots (no members covered by the MFA) and the effect of previous defeats. The IBT fraction is prepared to intervene as the struggle picks up. Sales at UPS remain between 40-50.

The women's caucus is sponsoring a coffee/discussion on the '76 elections at the beginning of April. The branch is participating in a broad demo against S-I on April 4th. A talk on "The Attack on Public Employees" is planned for the end of April. The branch recently started a functional office; it has greatly improved the efficiency and focus of branch activity.

CONVENTION AGENDA

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT A . . . "A New Era of World Revolution" . . . Joel G.

Resolution A1 . . . On world-wide revolutionary potential.

Resolution A2 . . . On the revolution in Spain and Portugal.

Resolution A3 . . . On the struggle in southern Africa.

Resolution A4 . . . On the status of the world revolutionary movement and the development of our tendency.

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT B . . . "The Domestic Political Situation" . . . Gay S.

Resolution B1 . . . On the state of the economy and economic perspectives.

Resolution B2 . . . On the political impact of the election on the class.

Resolution B3 . . . On post-election political perspectives.

Resolution B4 . . . On busing and the fight against racism.

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT C . . . "The IS in the Class Struggle" . . . Kim M.

Resolution C1 . . . On the present employers' offensive.

Resolution C2 . . . On the lessons of the struggles in the teamsters.

Resolution C3 . . . On the potential of the rest of the bargaining round.

Resolution C4 . . . On the functioning of revolutionaries in the R & F movement.

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT D . . . "Steps Toward Building the Party" . . . Glenn W.

Resolution D1 . . . On mass work and recruitment to the party.

Resolution D2 . . . On the integration of new members and the development of new leadership in the party.

Resolution D3 . . . On the role of the newspaper in building the party.

Resolution D4 . . . On the creation of a youth section of the party.

PLEASE NOTE: The documents which accompany each session are for discussion only; there will be no votes on these or any counter-documents which may arise in the pre-convention discussion. Votes will be on the resolutions only. All these documents and resolutions will be circulated to the NC two weeks before the May NC meeting, along with the rules and regulations for the convention. Pre-convention discussion will start in the branches one week after the NC meeting on May 8th. The documents will be between 4-6 pages long. The resolutions no more than one page long each.

INDUSTRIAL REPORT

TEAMSTER WORK--Information as of 11:30 am on Thursday, April 1--

Understandably, a full report is unavailable at this time, as this publication goes to press. It would also no doubt be hopelessly out of date by the time it reached the members in the branches. Comrades should read Workers' Power coverage, and also watch the straight news.

Basically, the fact that the strike is a national, authorized, Fitzsimmons-sanctioned one changes things quite a bit for us. Unlike the conditions during a wildcat, when there is an enormous amount of activity, with this authorized strike, the level of activity at this time seems fairly low. TDC continues to be the pole around which the militants gather, and TDC will continue to counter-pose its program to Fitz's program, which is now called the "interim agreement" or the "union's final compromise offer" (see CONVOY #7 for details). The word on the street here in Detroit, for example, is that Fitz can stuff his interim agreement--TDC is staying out till we get what we want.

The "interim agreement" strategy being used by Fitz is as follows--by allowing any individual local company (large or small) to sign the interim agreement and thus not be struck, Fitz is trying to drive a wedge amongst the employers, splitting some off-- a divide and conquer tactic, a rather feeble imitation of the tactics Hoffa so brilliantly used in the past. So far, however, the strategy doesn't seem particularly effective; almost all the employers, particularly the big ones, are sticking together. Exceptions include LA, where the bureaucracy claims that 65% of the companies locally have signed; and Chicago, where Fenner and Peick claim almost all the companies locally have signed.

However the employers respond to this interim agreement strategy, what is most important for us is that this is a strategy which creates monumental confusion amongst the ranks-- some places are struck, some aren't, no one seems to know what's going on, no one's giving out information, etc. People are divided, and don't know what to do. TDC will argue that this interim agreement (which, by the way, is complete garbage) will inevitably become the final agreement, that NO ONE has had a chance to VOTE on any such agreement, that the minimal TDC program is the one people should fight for and stay out for till they win, etc.

Check with Cleveland for more up-to-date information.

Auto Fraction Report

The Coalition For A Good Contract has just completed its intervention at the UAW bargaining Convention and is continues to move forward.. The convention itself was a rather terrible affair, with the leadership filibustering for two days by reading a 69 page book of resolutions. The main political message that emerged was we need to elect a democrat in november to solve our problems like job security.

Before the convention began the CGC held a meeting of delegates which drew 100 delegates. This meeting decided that the CGC would concentrate its efforts on bring the question of the short work week to the floor of the convention. On friday the CGC participated in a demonstration sponsored by the 30 and Out committee. 1500 people, mostly retirees, were at the demonstration. The main focus of the demo was over the question of COOLA on the pensions and a short work week. The CGC was never able to get a short work week resolution to the floor out of committee, but never tthe less a big impact was made.

As a result of the actions of the CGC at the convention we are no longer an outlaw group within the UAW. We are recognized as a small tendency with a legitimate voice. The CGC was able to get a name for itself as the group that is united and the most persuasive supporters of the short work week. In every event it was active in it made an impact, the delegates meeting, the demonstration, activity on the convention floor. During the convention the various participants of the CGC learned they could work together well in action. It is significant that a degree of trust was built up.

The CGC meeting itself was attended by 100 people and was a successful meeting. A steering committee of all the supporting local groups was elected to lead the campaign. We have a majority of the people on this body. A campaign strategy up until the expiration of the contract was adopted. Over 1,000 signed pledge cards were turned in at the meeting. The plan adopted was to hold a mass rally of the CGC that will be billed as a festival in early June, followed by intervention at the June membership meeting, pushing for local endorsement of the CGC. This will be followed by plant gate rallies the week before negotiations begin, and a national UAW rally in Detroit around labor day.

The CGC has also now opened an office in Detroit that has an independent paid staff. All the trapping of the campaign the buttons, bumper stickers will be ready soon.

As a result of the success of the activities mentioned above and the changing relationship between the various CGC forces we are now entering into negotiations with the other forces in the CGC to come out with a unified CGC newspaper. We are prepared to drop Network and put are energies behind a united CGC newspaper provided certain guidelines are met before hand and an editorial board can be agreed upon. As soon as a decision is reached it will be published.