

WORKERS' Power

Teamster Special

THE TEAMSTER CONTRACT BATTLE

by Jim Woodward

A lot was won during the 1976 Teamster strike. Only a tiny part of it had anything to do with what the negotiators put down on paper.

The biggest gains were the increased confidence, aggressiveness, and organization of the rank and file.

Here's what that means. Years ago, in a city like Detroit, the Teamsters Union was boss. The employers were in a distinctly subordinate position. Any grievance the union wanted to win was won.

In recent years, that changed. The employers got stronger; the union weaker. And the rank and file got pushed around—even in Detroit.

At the Roadway terminal, for example, 28 grievances were taken to the grievance board in March. The union only won two of them—for about \$100 total.

The strike this year has started to change that relationship around again.

After a three-day official strike and a two-day wildcat in Detroit, a decision was made to go back to work. Immediately one employer tried to fire Pete Camaratta and Ray Lewis, two of the strike leaders.

Within a few minutes none of that employer's trucks were rolling.

One Teamster told *Workers' Power*, "If they're not rehired, the whole city will be shut down again by tomorrow morning."

It wasn't long before the boss was talking about how the firings were all just a "misunderstanding."

HARD WORK

The boss's changed attitude was not the result of any tough talk by Teamster officials. It was the result of seven months' hard work by members of Teamsters for a Decent Contract.

The movement begun by TDC in Chicago last August is shaking things up in the trucking industry. It has begun to spoil the cozy and corrupt relationship between the employers and top Teamster officials.

TDC had a profound impact on this year's contract negotiations, even though the terms of the settlement are largely a



The confidence gained during the strike was evident even as these Local 299 members voted to go back to work.

sellout.

Last fall, Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons said there would be no freight strike. All parties were talking about an early, peaceful settlement.

This spring there was the first national freight strike in history. That's because of TDC.

Last fall, Fitzsimmons announced that he wasn't going for wages in 1976. It was widely reported the union's opening wage demand would be \$1.50 over three years.

Under pressure, that was raised to \$2.50. The final settlement was \$1.65 over three years, plus cost-of-living in the second and third year.

The improvement is because of TDC.

The movement that TDC started was still too young and too weak to get its own way in this year's contract. But the strike put TDC on the map.

PAST ISOLATION

Before the contract fight began, rank and file fighters in the Teamsters Union were isolated and disorganized.

In most locals they didn't have any organization. Nationally they didn't even know each other existed.

To most of them, the idea of a

national movement that could actually influence the outcome of a contract was extremely remote. TDC and the struggle for a decent contract have changed that.

At the January 10 national meeting of TDC in Washington, one activist said: "We felt we just didn't have the strength to fight until TDC." And now Teamsters are fighting, for sure.

The strike was an opportunity for rank and filers to use their new strength, to test their organization, and to build for the future.

During the strike, TDC grew. It grew in cities like Detroit, where it ran the official strike as well as the wildcat.

And it grew in smaller towns, like Wheeling, W.Va. and Billings, Montana.

Many Teamsters learned that their brothers and sisters could and would fight along side of them.

As one Detroit Teamster put it at the end of the wildcat there: "I worked 12 years with those guys and I never really knew them."

"In the last couple of days I've gotten to know them better than in all that time. When we go back to work now we are going to be like we never were before." □

Here's What It Says

CONVOY, TDC's newspaper, summarized the proposed settlement well in a headline: "There's a contract out on YOU! Vote NO!"

With the exception of the wage package and a few relatively minor points, the proposed Master Freight Agreement is a pure and simple sellout. The major points are as follows:

- Nothing on the grievance procedure;
- Nothing on forced overtime;
- No change on road drivers' 70-hour slavery (a 70-hour, eight-day work week);
- No guarantees on pension or health and welfare improvements;
- Three sick days, instead of the ten demanded. But a doctor's note is required;

• A provision for pension contributions on casual employees that could encourage the use of more casuals rather than less under certain circumstances;

• Mileage increases for road drivers that, in percentage terms, are lower than hourly workers' raises. Road drivers will get air conditioned cabs by 1978 and single room accommodations while on the road.

WAGES

The wage provisions are quite significant. The raises are 65c-50c-50c, in the first, second and third years respectively. There is no cost-of-living in the first year.

In the second and third years, there is an "unlimited" COL, under a formula that will compensate for about half the inflation in the first year and two-thirds in the second.

The wage and cost-of-living provisions are first of all inadequate. By the end of this contract (1979), Teamsters real wages (buying power) will probably be at—or below—their 1973 level.

In addition, the cost of the contract is less than the employers were prepared to pay.

That came out April 5. The Wall Street Journal reported that, "Some trucking groups lowered requested rate increases pending before the Interstate Commerce Commission because they had anticipated a more costly labor settlement with Teamster members than resulted."

Nevertheless, the wage settlement is the biggest any major union has won in years.

The only reason it's not smaller is Fitzsimmons needed some way to sell the contract to the ranks.

Without the fight TDC put up, even the wage increase would have been peanuts.

RANKS' EFFECT

The size of the wage settlement shows that it is possible to have an effect on contract negotiations through rank and file organization.

This fact will have significant implications for workers in other industries whose contracts expire in coming months.

The size of the Teamster settlement, while inadequate, is large enough to encourage rank and filers in other unions to organize and fight.

TDC's impact will extend far beyond the Teamsters Union. □

A REAL HUSTLER?



"If Jimmy Hoffa was still around we'd never be in this mess." That was a popular sentiment among some Teamsters on the picket lines. But if Hoffa would have done things differently, his son apparently didn't know it. James Hoffa, Jr., now director of organizing for Local 299, gave newsmen his assessment of the settlement. "It's a good contract," he said.

THE STRIKE IN

AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

by Steve Kindred

Last week for the first time ever, a nationwide Teamster freight strike took on the giants of the trucking industry.

The credit for this strike goes to the 400,000 rank and file Teamster members in freight. Their pressure and the organizing work of Teamsters for a Decent Contract (TDC) forced the strike.

Special importance in analyzing the strike focuses on Detroit. That's where the best rank and file organization emerged, and where independent action kept the barns shut and the trucks off the road—solid—for two extra days.

The successes and failures of the Detroit strike contain important lessons for Teamsters and workers in every other industry. Here's the story.

Between Wednesday, March 31 at 6:00 pm and Tuesday, April 6 at 10 am, the real power of the Teamsters Union lay in the truck drivers, dock and clerical workers of Teamsters Local 299. For those five days they had the power to stop the never-ending drive by the employers to get more work out of fewer people for less pay.

The contract was up at midnight, March 31. But TDC had been talking about the issue for months. Since Pete Camaratta of Earl C. Smith Freight showed up at a TDC planning meeting in Cleveland on November 22, TDC had been distributing literature, holding meetings, hitting the mike at union meetings, educating and involving a growing number of rank and filers.

Victories had shown what could be done. At the December meeting they had forced passage of a resolution calling for separate votes on the supplements. On March 13 at the TDC/UPSurge Day of Action, 600 TDCers had taken over the 299 hall and called for a strike to win a decent contract.

At 6:00 pm in Patton Park, 300-400 gathered to prepare. Dispatch points were set up at Watkins coffee shop down by the river, at Town and Country by the airport, and at the Big Six coffee shop on the east side. Groups from different companies were assigned barns to picket. Some decided to picket their own, even in a wildcat, to make sure everything was peaceful and no unnecessary damage was done.

While the rally was on, Dave Johnson, President of Local 299, tested the water by floating a rumor that a settlement had been reached. The water was hot. It made no difference. No contract had been seen or voted on. Everyone knew the union's final compromise left many things uncovered.

Forced overtime in the city and seventy-hour slavery for road drivers. The grievance committee where the contract is continually rewritten and out of the members' reach. Increased health and welfare payments would not mean increased health and welfare coverage.

The union's Final Compromise had been printed in full in the most recent CONVOY, national newspaper of the Teamsters for a Decent Contract. Because of TDC in Detroit and around the country, the members were not in the dark as they went into this fight.

STRIKE IS ON

The strike was on—there was no doubt about it. For Frank Fitzsimmons, who had earlier said there would be no strike the choice was clear. He had to either step out of the way or place the union officials at the head of a token strike.

At 11 pm the word that a sanctioned strike was on was definite. In most locals the officials had control, kept the members in the dark, and made promises about a fight.

They then used their control to undercut the strike with the "interim" agreements with small outfits. These agreements allowed them to run. Then the officials were able to pull a well-organized and lightning quick back-to-work movement. It began within an hour of the announcement on Saturday of a tentative overall settlement. No details had been told to the

membership.

In Detroit, most BA's didn't show their faces. The rank and file ran the strike. And they ran it solid. Nothing with more than four wheels came across the bridge from Canada.

To protect their jobs from scab outfits at the airports, the rank and file kept up a continuous battle to shut the whole airport down.

When drivers for A-Z refused to work Thursday morning under an interim agreement, they were fired. Thursday afternoon, Dave Johnson had to assure a meeting of strikers that no jobs would be lost from strike activity. The A-Z men were reinstated.

Down on the docks, a new outfit with an "interim" started to pull out containers normally handled by Angelo Cartage. Major, the Angelo steward, appealed for help. Forty to fifty men from all over town were on the scene. The problem was straightened out.



Steve Kindred is a member of Teamsters Local 407 in Cleveland and a member of the I.S. A laid-off driver for the Kroger Company, he has worked as a volunteer traveling organizer for the Teamsters for a Decent Contract.

He was active in Detroit during the strike, maintaining TDC communications nationally.

The views in this article are his own and do not necessarily represent either the TDC or the Detroit strikers.

These actions did more than keep the strike solid. By showing the people in smaller companies that they would get backing, the active forces of the strike were swelled and everyone's confidence was increased.

The word is "solidarity," and it's been too long forgotten in the Teamsters Union.

OFFICIALS MOVE

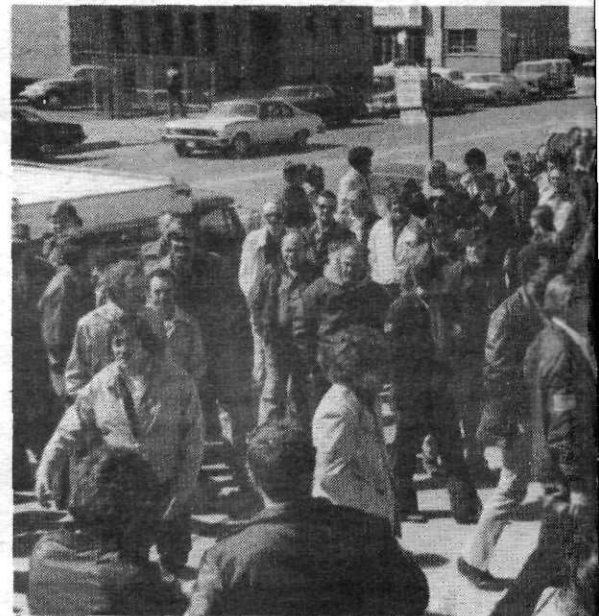
But Dave Johnson and the other officials weren't twiddling their thumbs. At the meeting with strikers Thursday afternoon, he showed he'd say anything to break the ranks—to deliver to the companies the work the interim agreements promised.

In one breath he argued the interims didn't make any real difference; that it was only outfits hauling phone books. And then he said these agreements would break the front of the employers and prevent Taft-Hartley.

To stall for time, he offered to let the strikers negotiate another interim agreement locally. Yet he knew full well the interims were laid down in Chicago and putting together the best interim agreement in the world in Detroit would have zero effect.

A primary tactic of the officials during the strike was to create confusion.

After a rally had been called by the rank and file for Friday at 2 pm at the Hall, Johnson announced on the radio that it was cancelled.



Local 299 members march in front of the union hall

The turnout was small.

The strike was solid. Its backbone was the well organized barns. Interstate and Earl C. Smith held their line, helped others out, and manned the phones at the Big Six on the East Side. Shippers and Express Freight were together in the Watkins area.

On the west side, men from Key Line, Gateway and Roadway kept freight down and provided troops for the battle at the airport under the direction of an airport steward.

The steelhaulers and others covered the bridge from Canada and operated crews on the road to inform anyone running that a strike was on.

But by Friday, the lack of a centralized body representing the strikers began to show.

Dedication did not prevent exhaustion. The pickets tended to swell around 11 pm and then fade. Scattered strongholds were crucial but they need to be gathering into a strong unified pole.

With the negotiations in Fitz's hands in Chicago, and a well-oiled rumor machine going out of the Hall in Detroit, the lack of a representative and democratic body of strikers to answer these moves and rumors left the Hall a lot of room to move.

SATURDAY MEETING

Such a body never got solidly formed. But a meeting of 60 people from 20 barns on Saturday noon blunted any effort to move the MCLAC carriers who signed a national interim agreement Friday night.

After that meeting it was also clear that the back-to-work move Saturday evening, after a complete tentative agreement was signed, would fail.

Sunday afternoon a rally at 2:00 drew 300-400 strikers. A Convoy special describing the deal was discussed. It was clear there would be no quick return to work for what Fitz was offering.

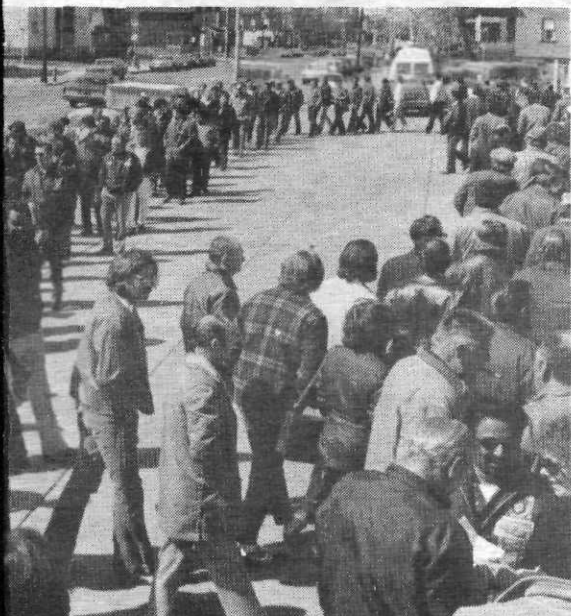
The back-to-work movement Saturday had been largely successful in other areas. But there remained the possibility that when those areas learned the details of the proposed contract, the strike would resolidify. That would be during the crucial Sunday evening road dispatch and dock start period and the Monday morning return to work by city drivers. Detroit's firm stand was the backbone of this possibility.

Sunday night hundreds of pickets gathered at the Town and Country and the Big Six. Crews were dispatched to cover all the barns. When it became clear where the trouble spots were, forces were required to concentrate.

At ATL, the company made a determined effort to move some freight out. As you drove up there was a set of double trailers with the front one on its nose. Apparently a defective hitch. Soon a force of 100 faced a police riot squad of as many. Trucks ready to roll were withdrawn into the yard.

After two road rigs from out of town stopped at the picket line, the cops cleared half the driveway for the safety boss to pull the rigs in. In

DETROIT



the day they decided to continue the strike.

his excitement he plowed one rig into a management car.

For several hours the large picket kept anything from moving out. Later in the night most forces were withdrawn and six pickets held down a much larger force of police. A few rigs went out in a convoy, but it was clear the battle of ATL had been won by the rank and file.

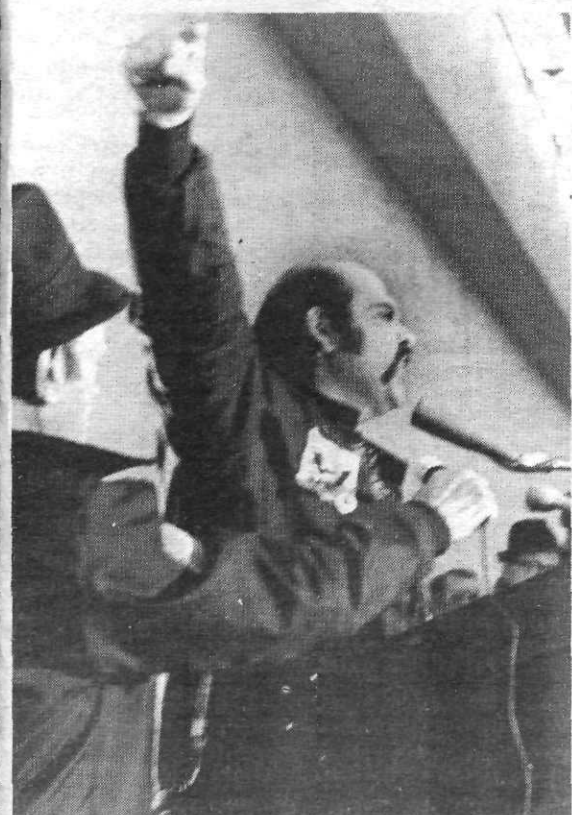
By Monday morning it was clear the rest of the country was rolling. Detroit had led but it was not enough. The mobilizations of the night before had stopped the scabs, but the morning lines were thin and in several places replacements for tired pickets were hard to come by.

"MEET WITH US ALL"

Dave Johnson asked for a delegation to meet with. The ranks said, "Meet with us all," and a meeting was set for Cobo Hall at 2:00 pm. For days the press and the union had been calling TDC a dissident minority. Three thousand members of 299 showed up. When the officials tried to kick out the press, a guard was thrown up and the press stayed.

Dave Johnson and International VP Bobby Holmes tried to sell the tentative agreement. But as soon as it was clear there was no COL the first year, the anger of the rank and file at the settlement and handling of the strike began to come out in boos and catcalls.

Holmes made clear where he and the rest of the officials stood by shouting from the stage,



As Dave Johnson and Bobby Holmes left the stage, TDC leader Pete Camarata took their place and the boos and catcalls turned to cheers and a standing ovation.

"We don't need you." Then they left in their Cadillacs, turning off the sound system the members had paid for on their way out.

With a huge meeting, no sound, and an exhausted hard core, an organizing opportunity was lost. An overwhelming vote to continue the strike was taken, but the fresh people from the meeting were not organized into the strike activity.

Right after the meeting, the press announced an injunction had been gotten. The gatherings at 9:30 at the picket centers regarded the injunction as the worthless piece of paper it is when opposed by an organized rank and file. The lines went up again. The employers had seen the coverage of the Cobo meeting and made no determined efforts to run it Monday night.

When it was clear there were few fresh troops present and that some of the hard core were near exhaustion, a unified back-to-work move was discussed among those leaders on duty. It was now clear Detroit was holding alone. While the companies and the cops had moved cautiously Monday night after the Cobo meeting, it was clear they would get more aggressive.

NO FIRINGS!

A meeting was set up with the officials for that morning to obtain assurances that no one would be fired. After a clear demonstration that it is the rank and file and not the officials who hold the real power in 299, Holmes and Johnson were glad to end this embarrassing rebellion which showed that their Cadillacs, big salaries, and sun tans mean nothing when the rank and file is ready and organized to move.

They were glad to meet, answer questions and give assurances of their backing to anyone fired. Anyone who thinks the rank and file crawled back to work is sadly mistaken.

The Earl C. Smith Co. learned this quickly on Tuesday afternoon when they tried to fire Pete Camarata and Ray Lewis. The barn was immediately closed by the rank and file, by BA Pete Caragosian who until last year had been the steward at Smith's, and by the Hall.

The picket line formed, exhausted strikers from Express Freight and CCC pulled up along with a carload of BA's, and the firing became a "misunderstanding." It may not have been intended, but this can and should serve as a precedent for all firings—those from smaller or weaker barns most importantly.

Other business remains undone. Both the Steelhauled and the Clerical Workers backed this strike solidly. Their contracts are not settled. A well-organized strike might have been able to convert the strike into a legal one by uniting with the office workers.

But in any case, the solidarity of these groups will be weakened in the future if they do not get full backing from the rank and file of the freight workers.

RANK AND FILE VICTORY

The strike by the rank and file of 299 was a tremendous victory. It showed who the real Teamsters are—the workers; not the gangsters, parasites and dictators. It pushed before the public and the officials what our real problems are. It showed the power of an organized rank and file.

In Detroit and nationally the rank and file was not organized enough to break this sellout with one solid blow. We were not organized enough to break through the power of the officials, the companies, the courts, the government and the press. There's no shame in that.

If anyone thought this war to regain our rights and our union would be won in a single battle they were chasing a dream. The only shame would be in giving up the organization, communications, leadership, and solidarity we have gained. In failing to learn the lessons of this strike.

We will have the same fight in three years and many more before that. We've won a lot and laid the foundation to win a lot more. LONG LIVE THE TEAMSTERS' RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT. □

Using the Press To Break Strikes

by Gay Semel

When 400,000 working Teamsters hit the bricks April 1, they knew they were up against heavy odds.

- The trucking associations were out for blood.

- The Federal government stood ready to invoke Taft-Hartley to "save the nation's economy."

- The union leadership had promised the industry they wouldn't strike.

Within hours after the first strike began, rank and file Teamsters learned the odds were even heavier.

Spreading the anti-strike case for the bosses, the government, the courts, and the union officials was the national news media.

Their supposedly "objective reporting" was aimed at terrifying working people into opposing the strike.

Stories warning of impending food shortages filled the pages of the national papers and the pictures of our TV screens.

All the plants that would shut down if the Teamsters struck were listed.

The message was: if they strike, you'll lose your job--and then you'll starve!

OUR NORMAN
THE GREAT THING ABOUT THIS COUNTRY



IS THE FREE PRESS...

IT'S NOT LIKE RUSSIA-- YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU LIKE... AS LONG AS...



Teamsters union is run by crooks.

The message was, "Why should you support a bunch of crooks on strike."

Little time was spent on the membership, its needs and why the ranks were ready to strike.

AFFECT EVENTS

But far worse than the concerted attempt by the capitalist press to diminish sympathy for the strike was the actual attempts to affect events.

When Fitzsimmons announced a settlement April 4 and ordered Teamsters back to work on Sunday, Detroit Teamsters refused to return without a ratification vote.

Their lines held. Detroit trucking was shut down--solid.

But the banner headline of the Monday morning Detroit Free Press read, "Teamsters Return to Work/But Dissidents Urge Strike--Two Local Firms Still Picketed."

The clear impression given by the headline and the story was that the wildcat was weak.

The purpose was to scare Detroit Teamsters into going back.

The attempt failed. Teamsters who were unsure of what was happening came to work and met picket lines. They stayed out.

HIGHWAY VIOLENCE

CBS radio told us hour by hour how the Teamster strike was bringing "violence to the nation's highways." They made it sound like you'd get shot if you left the house.

In an obviously desperate search for a hard luck story, NBC's Detroit TV news found 6000 pineapples with a transportation problem.

The pineapples, intended for sale by a local charity, were not delivered from the airport because of the strike.

The rotting pineapples were given equal time to present their cause. Actually the pineapples got more time than the tens of thousands of Teamsters.

NBC's attempts to lessen support for the strike should have come as no surprise.



The week before the strike, NBC ran a news special on corruption in the IBT.

Every night, five nights running, NBC spent five minutes informing the viewing audience that essentially the

NOT OBJECTIVE


But there is a very important lesson to be learned from the attempt. A lesson that must be learned by more than Teamsters.

The newspapers are not objective. Neither is the TV or radio. They are owned and controlled by the same class that owns the trucking industry, the auto industry, rubber, electrical--the company you work for.

During strikes, and at every other time, they take a side--the bosses' side. They are used to influence public opinion.

They are not neutral. They cannot be trusted.

Read Workers' Power



You can't afford not to. Workers' Power is the only paper that has consistently given the true story of what's happening to Teamsters--before and during the strike. . .and after.

We report from the point of view of the worker--not the big shots. Maybe that's why Fitzsimmons denounced Workers' Power at a recent meeting of Teamster officials.

We're now offering special reduced rates for Teamsters--a years subscription for \$7.50. Find out what's happening every week.

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Workers' Power, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, MI 48203
Write if you want to order bundles.

Which Way Forward?

by Kim Moody

Seven months ago the International Brotherhood of Teamsters appeared to have an unbreakable bureaucracy at the top and a passive membership below.

But recently things have changed.

Rank and file dock workers and truck drivers have appeared on TV, been interviewed on the radio and had their pictures run in the newspaper.

This did not happen because the press and the media prefer workers to grinning celebrities.

It happened because a movement was born that is shaking things up in one of the nations most important industries, trucking.

This movement is led by organizations like Teamsters for a Decent Contract and UPSurge.

This movement brought about the first national freight strike in history.

The strike won the biggest wage settlement any union has won in years.

MORE TO DO

But there is much more to accomplish.

Although wages have been pushed far ahead of both the industry's and the union's first offers, it is not enough.

And the contract does not even begin to deal with the real issues Teamsters went out for: job security and improved conditions.

The next test for this movement will be the fight for a rejection of a contract that still

offers little protection for workers on the job.

And the word from TDC is that it is all geared up for just that fight.

But win or lose, sooner or later there will be a new contract. It is a tragic certainty that it will not end the problems faced by the rank and file.

The 1976 negotiations showed that the employers are out for blood.

In the best of times, any employer is out to maximize his profits at the expense of the workers. That is what capitalism is all about.

But we don't live in the best of times, even for capitalism. Although the U.S. economy is now in a recovery, the system that underlies it is still in crisis.

DEPRESSION

This recovery will be followed by another depression. In good times and bad the employers must squeeze harder and harder to keep the profits rolling in--and they know all of this.

Just as in the past three years, the employers will fight to rewrite the contract through the grievance procedure, through mergers and changes of operations, and through contract violations.

The shame of it is, the leaders of the Teamsters Union will let them get away with it. In fact, Fitzsimmons and his pals will help them more often than not.

The Teamster officialdom, pretty much from top to bottom, shares the concerns of the employers.

They want the employers to be fat and healthy and they are more than willing to let the workers foot the bill.

Fitzsimmons and his friends are more like businessmen than like trade union leaders.

To them the Pension and Health and Welfare Funds are money to invest, a pork barrel to plunder.

The growing rank and file movement that has grown in the contract fight can change this.

NEW LEADERSHIP

A new leadership is emerging. Those who have the strength and determination to continue the fight, to pick up the many issues that will follow the contract settlement, will eventually emerge as leaders capable of running a fighting, democratic union.

But it is not enough simply to replace one set of leaders with another, even if they are more honest and sincere than those they replace.

What is needed is a different program for the union, indeed a different idea of what a union is.

If the needs of the rank and file are to be met, the union cannot be a business, as today's leaders seem to think.

Nor can the union be a partner in the bosses' business.

The union's only reason for existence is to defend the interest of the workers and that means fighting against the interests of the employers.

It is workers who create all the wealth and products that the employers take for themselves.

Wages are only a small portion of that wealth.

The idea that the union should look after the bosses' profits is not only self-defeating, but based on a false understanding of reality.

Workers create the wealth, workers have every right to fight for all of it they can get.

Today the union and the employers rewrite the grievance procedure in favor of the employers.

A democratic, fighting union would rewrite it, every day, in favor of the workers.

Today, the union comes in with an inadequate contract after only two days on strike.

A real, 100% union would have brought the trucking bosses to their knees.

MILITANT, DEMOCRATIC

The fight is to make the Teamsters a militant, democratic union.

That means throwing out Fitzsimmons and all his kind.

It also means putting in a rank and file leadership that has the confidence of the membership and is democratically responsible to them.

But all this will take organization--a good deal more organization than TDC has today.

Solid chapters in every local must be built. Local steering committees that meet regularly need to be organized.

So does a national committee composed of those who have emerged as the real leaders of this movement.

This is the minimum that Teamster ranks need to carry on the fights ahead.

That kind of organization and that kind of leadership do not just appear overnight. They are forged in real battles and real campaigns.

TDC has a good start to build

on. But many fights lay ahead.

The fight to stop Fitzsimmons from making all Business Agents appointed, the local fights for elected B.A.'s, the shop floor fights at each of the trucking companies, are a few of the fights that the rank and file movement will face in the coming months.

Each of these must be used to grow and become better organized. □

"Who is this I.S. outfit, anyway?"

by Steve Kindred

"The International Socialists"—since the beginning of TDC, union and company officials have whispered this name along with vague accusations and slanders.

They hoped that a "red scare" would make Teamsters shy away from TDC and stop demanding more from the union and the companies.

The red baiting campaign failed to keep TDC from growing into the most powerful and well organized rank and file movement in the Teamsters in decades.

It failed because everyone could see that the charge that TDC is a "socialist movement" is a lie. People joined TDC to accomplish its stated goals.

TDC members wanted to work for these goals with any and all Teamsters who were willing to fight for them.

BROAD MOVEMENT

And from its beginning TDC was a broad movement with a broad leadership.

TDC included young and old, city and road, and Teamsters with beliefs ranging from conservative to the revolutionary socialists of the International Socialists.

The rank and file Teamsters in TDC refused to let the whispering campaigns of the International dictate to them who they can associate with and who they cannot.

And the red baiting campaign failed to destroy TDC because TDCers who are IS members refused to let the whispering make a mystery of the word "socialist."

Teamsters who are members of I.S. have been open about their views.

Some of the brothers and sisters felt that it would be easier for the movement if we hid part of our views.

But we knew that if we did that, when the red-baiting began, we would look like spies or secret agents. Then people would feel deceived. That would have made the red baiting very effective.

OPEN ABOUT BELIEFS

The other reason I.S. members were open about their beliefs is that we are not spies or secret agents. This is what red baiters want people to believe about socialists.

We are proud of our politics and activities and we want people to become convinced of them.

If we hid our light under a bushel, we would never take a single step toward convincing our co-workers.

At the same time that we have been open about our views, we have never misused positions of leadership in TDC to gain narrow advantage.

While we have felt it was important to inform those we work

closely with of our general views, and to answer all questions honestly we have not used our activity in TDC to try and convince anyone who didn't want to talk about it.

With those who were interested in finding out more about socialism, we were glad to discuss it. We love to discuss our political views. They are the center of our lives.

The final reason that we were open about our beliefs has to do with the content of those beliefs.

IMPROVE CONDITIONS

I.S. members are militants at our workplaces for the same reasons people joined TDC: to improve our living and working conditions.

But we believe that to fully succeed at this, the whole system of capitalism needs to be changed.

We believe that it should be changed into a society in which people who do the work decide democratically how to run it. Today's society is run by the people who own the corporations and run the news media.

We also believe that society can be changed.

But it cannot be changed for working people by any well meaning group, be they experts, scientists, or people who call themselves socialists.

It can be changed only by working people themselves, and only when the vast majority of people feel they can and must rule their lives.

As long as our unions are controlled by dictators and parasites, working people will not feel they can run society.

This is the connection between our goals of a socialist society and our commitment to building TDC.

CONFIDENT

We don't need to force anyone to accept our views.

We are confident that over time many will come to agree with us that socialist politics make you most able to fight effectively.

In some areas people have shied away from TDC because of the slanders of the International. Where this happened, the rank and file movement was weakened.

It has been a long time since revolutionary socialists played a leading role in the labor movement, as they did in the foundation of the Teamsters Union.

But when this happens, it both strengthens the rank and file and brings closer the day when working people will control society. □

[This I.S. has published a special Workers' Power supplement which answers the slanders of the International and explains the connection of our socialist politics to TDC in more detail. Write to: Sun Distribution International, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, MI 48203.]

They're Looking Ahead



Tony Candela, Local 299, Detroit. Earl C. Smith Freight Terminal

"This strike did a lot of good, there's no doubt about that. It put a lot of fear into our union officials after all these years. There was never a show of strength like there was this year as far as I've been in this union. It's the first time everyone showed some decent unity.

"We accomplished a lot for being together only six months. The TDC was formed in August of '75. And since then we've put a lot of pressure on, and you can see what happened. As far as

this contract goes, it hasn't been settled. It hasn't been ratified and I can almost positively say it won't be by 299.

"Now what we're looking forward to is the three years that we'll have to organize for the next contract. The TDC will be much bigger by the next contract. Everyone that I've talked to so far wants to make sure that we're not stopping here. And these were people that were in the beginning against TDC."