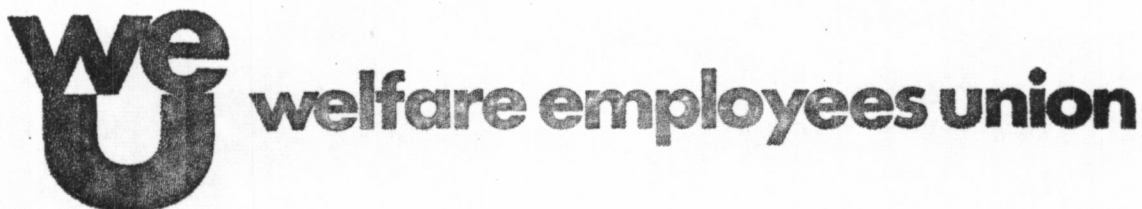


DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 5 OF 16

FOLDER 38

WEU FLYERS 1971 73



November 16, 1971

An Open Letter To WCDSS Employees:

The unity and solidarity expressed by some 250-300 employees and community people at the demonstration in front of 640 Temple last Wednesday was beautiful to see. Never before have employees and community people, in such numbers and with such sincerity, supported the right of fellow employees to be treated fairly, as was the case last Wednesday.

Of specific importance was the level of support received from the community from such diverse groups as Welfare Rights, Black Workers Congress, Citizens for Welfare Reform, Legal Defence Coalition, Motor City Labor League, The Alliance and numerous others. Their recognition that the employees of the Department of Social Services are engaging in a serious struggle with the State of Michigan, and their demonstrated support of the employees in that struggle is most important to our achieving success in that continuous struggle.

There are however, some among us who do not share that feeling of solidarity and who do not feel a part of, or the necessity of, employee solidarity in dealing with the state of Michigan. To you I would say, we need your support also, and we welcome it.

There were some disquieting happenings which detracted from an otherwise beautiful and significant demonstration of unity. Word was somehow spread that there was more to the firing of Catheryn Durden and Heze Earl than their failing an exam; that the real reason was they were not satisfactory employees. Some employees began to have doubts, others actively passed this word, without asking just where this information might have come from.

That information could come only from management and its agents. As to its truth? The administration has never hesitated to fire employees for unsatisfactory work, be they provisional, probationary or status employees. And by what method? They simply issue an unsatisfactory rating or two consecutive conditional ratings and fire the employee. In other words they rate the employee out. The simple truth is that Catheryn Durden and Heze Earl have been with the Department since 1968. If they had been unsatisfactory employees they could at any time have rated them out as they did many other employees during that same time period.

The fact that Catheryn Durden and Heze Earl have not been rated out of the Department leads one to the only logical conclusion that they were in fact satisfactory employees. The only basis of their being fired was that they were provisional employees who failed to pass an unfair and subjective examination. They were not fired because of unsatisfactory service. The spreading of the rumor, that they were, is nothing but vicious character assassination being perpetrated by the administration and its apologists to (1) justify their actions and to (2) confuse and raise doubts among the employees as to the facts, thus undermining employee unity and support efforts designed to get Catheryn's and Heze's jobs back.

It is hoped that you will consider what is said in this letter seriously. Perhaps it need not be said. Perhaps politically it is unwise. Whatever the case, it is said very seriously. It is said from the heart. There is no more beautiful thing than working men and women standing together for justice. There is nothing more heartrending than working men and women standing alone, divided from justice. We saw both last Wednesday.

Enough said,

Jim Bish
President



welfare employees union

218 MCKERCHEY BUILDING • DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48201

(313) 963-4859

March 8, 1972

Concerned Citizens
For Real Welfare Reform

Dear Friend,

As each day passes. the capacity of the Michigan Department of Social Services to meet the needs of the welfare recipients decreases. The situation here in the Wayne County Department of Social Services is especially critical and continues to worsen. In addition, time is very short in which we can do something about Nixon's Family Assistance Program. But we must do it.

We request, with the greatest urgency, that you attend an Action conference on Saturday, March 18th at the Stevenson Building, on Grand River near Monica. The conference will run from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Enclosed are two pieces of publicity which provide some of the conference highlights. We certainly hope that we will come out of the conference with a number of action programs around which all of who are concerned with real welfare reform might work, including support actions in behalf of NWRO's Children's March For Survival.

Again, we invite you to attend. We urge you to attend, March 18th at the Stevenson Building on Grand River near Monica, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Sincerely yours,

James Bish
James Bish
President

Enclosures



welfare employees union

218 MCKERCHEY BUILDING • DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48201

(313) 963-4859

JAMES BISH
PRESIDENT

HAYES DABNEY
VICE-PRESIDENT

ABRAHAM CRAYON
RECORDING SECRETARY

SANDRA TAMBOR
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

CYNTHIA MARITATO
TREASURER

PRESS RELEASE--PRESS RELEASE--PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release as Public Service Announcement

The Welfare Employees Union (WEU) is convening a conference on the "Welfare Crisis" in Detroit. The conference will be held in Detroit on Saturday, March 18, 1972, at the Stevenson Building, 10100 Grand River (at Monica), from 10:00am until 2:00pm. Some two to three thousand people from the Detroit area are expected to participate in this one day conference.

The purpose of the conference is to inform the people of Detroit about the specific provisions of Nixon's Family Assistance Program (FAP) and about the nature of the incredible welfare mess currently existing in the Detroit area, including its relation to the FHA Housing scandal. Based on the information that heretofore has not been provided to the citizens of the area, it is hoped that a plan of action will emerge from the conference to deal with the current welfare crisis and the threat posed by FAP.

Major presentations giving an in depth analysis of FAP and its likely impact on Michigan and Detroit will be made by Allen Houseman, Ozzie Edwards, and Don Ball. Mr. Houseman is an attorney and director of Michigan Legal Services. He is acknowledged as a leading authority in Michigan regarding the welfare reform legislation that will be voted on by the U.S. Senate. Mr. Edwards, president of the National Federation of Social Service Employees, headquartered in Washington, D.C., has testified before the Senate Finance Committee in opposition to FAP. Mr. Edwards, regarded nationally as one of the leading opponents of the national administration's welfare reform legislation and is an active lobbyist and organizer in opposition to FAP. Mr. Ball is on the editorial staff of the Detroit News and has been instrumental in bringing to light the victimization of the poor through FHA Housing scandals.

CONTACT:

Welfare Employees Union
James Bish, President
218 McKerchey Building
Detroit, Mich. 48201
963-4859

These People are Entitled to More Than They are Getting!



THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT WON'T TELL THEM BUT WE WILL

We are the Welfare Employees Union, composed of non-professional and professional employees of the Welfare Department. We believe that poor people are entitled to a decent standard of living.

We urge all poor people — black and white — employed and unemployed — youth and senior citizen — to attend this conference.

A CALL TO ALL POOR PEOPLE TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE THAT WILL EXPLAIN :

THE BENEFITS AND RIGHTS THAT PEOPLE ARE ENTITLED TO !

Nixon's evil welfare reform under his Family Assistance Plan (FAP)

- reduced benefits
- forced work (slavery)
- regulation of the poor

Ozzie Edward, President
National Federation of Social Services Employees

Allen Houseman, Attorney
Michigan Legal Services

The Welfare Department's Role in the FHA Housing scandal

Don Ball, Editorial Staff
Detroit News

For Information Contact

Saturday, March 18th
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Stevenson Building
10100 Grand River (at Monica)

Welfare Employees Union
218 McKerchey Building
Detroit, Michigan 48201
telephone: 963-4859

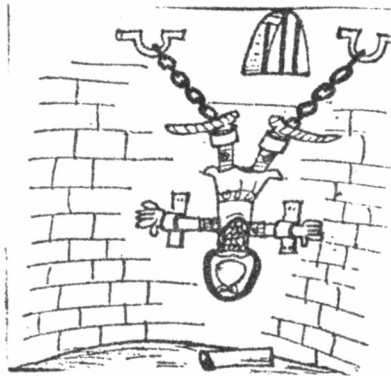
A MEETING

IN THE SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

*TO PRESENT AND DISCUSS THE "ACTION" PROPOSALS
OF THE BUILDING'S WORKLOAD AND SPEED-UP COMMITTEE*

Wednesday, June 13

11:45



We Need Each Other

Building Committee Meeting

Monday, June 18 at 11:45 to Meet
and Discuss Events That Will
Take Place This Thursday and
Friday!!

STAFF REPRESENTATIVES WILL REPORT ON COMMITMENT OF
WORKERS TO STAY FOR THE WORK-IN THURSDAY NIGHT AND
PARTICIPATION IN THE "BLUE FLU" FRIDAY.

A DISCUSSION WILL BE HELD AS TO WHAT ORGANIZATIONS
WILL BE CONTACTED FOR SUPPORT.

AN ATTORNEY WILL AGAIN BE PRESENT TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
FOR THOSE WHO EITHER WERE NOT AT THE LAST MEETING OR
WHO HAVE QUESTIONS THAT THEY HAVE THOUGHT OF SINCE THAT
MEETING.

THE MEETING WILL, OF COURSE, BE OPEN TO ANY IDEAS OR
FEELINGS THAT ANYONE WISHES TO EXPRESS.



WEU Supports United Kercheval Employees

The Welfare Employees Union pledges to support the collective decisions of the employees at the Kercheval Office regarding the actions of Thursday and Friday.

Organizational **S**upport around the demands raised.

Legal **S**upport W.E.U. retains the law firm of Glotta, Adelman and Dinges. In addition support from the National Conference of Black Lawyers and the National Lawyers Guild has been promised.

Community **S**upport which is broad based.

employees **d**efense **f**und is available.

Your courage, unity and solidarity is an excellent and necessary beginning to what will be a long and difficult struggle, which will expand to include employees throughout the service.

**Struggle With Dignity
And Unity . . .**

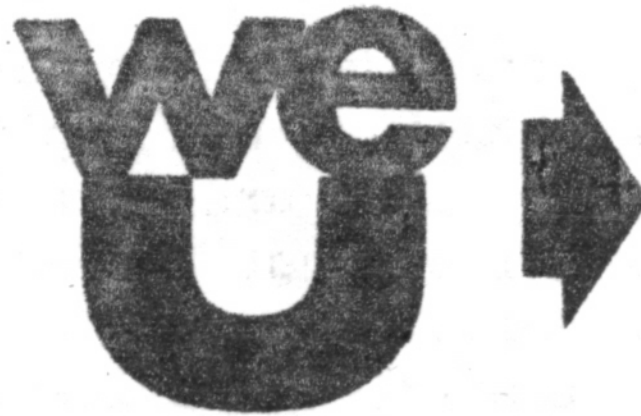
Join WEU

6-19-73

WEU HAS NO GIMMICKS

No gimmicks - just solid support for employees in their struggle for better working conditions.

When you join WEU you won't receive green stamps, a free oil change, or a name plaque. What you will receive is the security of belonging to the largest, fastest growing, most concerned, committed, and conceintious union in Wayne County Department of Social Services.





**WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT WEU
THAT MAKES IT IMPORTANT TO
YOU ?**

WEU HAS MORE MEMBERS THAN ANY OTHER UNION IN THE MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

WEU is nearly a thousand members strong with broad representation of all classifications below the 11 level-clerks, caseworkers, and first line supervisors, united in strength and determination to bring about needed changes in their conditions of employment. It is composed only of Social Services employees, whose sole interests it represents with the special knowledge, resources, and skills, needed to deal with W.C.D.S.S. problems.

WEU IS INDEPENDENT, DEMOCRATIC, AND LIMITED TO EMPLOYEES
WHOSE DUTIES ARE NOT PRIMARILY ADMINISTRATIVE

We do not believe that the interests of rank and file employees can be represented by an organization which includes the very administrators who make policy for the department.

We do not believe that the interests of employees can be best represented by highly paid union bureaucrats whose power, self-interest and interest in maintaining a comfortable status quo may come before employees rights.

Our constitution gives total power to the membership in deciding any job action.

Our constitution guarantees membership control by prohibiting any officer from occupying an office for more than two consecutive terms, by holding regular publicized meetings a minimum of seven times a year, by giving stewards an equal vote with officers, and by giving the membership the power to override any executive board decision. No other organization gives membership such powers.

None of our officers or stewards are paid. Paid staff consists of an office secretary and an organizer on leave from the Department, whose salary is less than he would receive on his job with the Department.

WEU IS COMMITTED TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

M.S.E.A. has traditionally opposed collective bargaining for state employees. It is therefore not a union at all, but an "employee association".

In contrast to other unions, WEU knows that no contract brought about by collective bargaining is enforceable without an aroused and aware membership, ready to see that its provisions are enforced and with the constitutional power to do so. This is why WEU cannot make deals with the administration - because WEU is the membership. WEU's strength is the membership.

WEU GIVES TOTAL REPRESENTATION TO ANY EMPLOYEE IN GRIEVANCES

We believe that an attack on any employee or group of employees is an attack on all employees. We give the employee full information regarding his situation and let him/her decide whether or not he/she wishes to pursue the grievance procedure. We never tell an employee he/she does not have a grievable issue. We feel all employees are entitled to pursue this procedure and that they are entitled to representation which will guarantee that their rights are fully protected under the Civil Service rules governing grievances; additionally, WEU challenges rules and practices wherever they can be shown to work injustice on employees.

WEU MEANS GROWTH IN MICHIGAN STATE EMPLOYMENT

As a member of the International Union of Civil Rights and Social Services Employees, WEU encourages the organizing of progressive union forces throughout state employment. A sister local, the Civil Rights Workers Union, is nearing majority representation in the Department of Civil Rights.

work speed-up

GA workers were instructed to attend training sessions on how to open Public Assistance cases. Upon the completion of the training they were to take on the added work of opening General Assistance cases to Public Assistance. In several offices they refused to attend the training sessions, charging the Department with violating its own policy and also engaging in an illegal work speed-up. Reprimands were issued by the Department to the employees. The W.E.U. represented the employees in the filing of two grievances; challenging the reprimands [they are being removed from the employees files] and challenging the violation of policy and the work speed-up [currently waiting for an arbitration date].

blue flu

Employees at the Kercheval District Office engaged in a work-in and blue flu that was 90% effective. The action was coordinated by a building committee which was representative of the Kercheval employees. W.E.U., which is pledged to support and defend employees against all action taken against them because of collective actions arrived at democratically supported the employees before, during and after the action; and is providing representation in the grievances that have been filed by many of the employees who were charged with lost time for the day they called in sick. The grievances are currently awaiting an arbitration date.

WEU Getting Stronger

These are a few, but a representative sample of the types of struggles W.E.U. is constantly engaged in defending all employees. That struggle has intensified as the Union's strength has increased. W.E.U. takes a back seat to no one in defending employees and defending them effectively. We are proud of our record. We stand on it. We expect to be judged by it. But it can be better because we can become stronger. We are becoming stronger, the better to defend employees. The importance of W.E.U. to employees rests on this fact.





**the importance of any
union rests in its
dedication and
unswerving defense of
the employees**



**w.e.u. was formed
by the employees
as a means of
protecting themselves**



WEU Formed For Protection

Working men and women, needing to protect themselves from the often unfair and arbitrary actions of management, usually organize themselves into unions. The Welfare Employees Union was formed in just this way by the employees in the Wayne County Department of Social Services. W.E.U. was formed by the employees as a means of protecting themselves when the Detroit, Wayne County and the State Welfare Departments merged in 1966.

The importance of any union rests in its dedication and unswerving defense of the employees. That is no less true of W.E.U. And to give you an idea of the intensity, the depth and the broad range of the struggle that has been going on, we cite the following illustrative facts:

pursuing c. b.

Pursuing the goal of collective bargaining, while others merely talked about it, W.E.U. obtained a court ruling that said "Employees of the jurisdiction of the Michigan Civil Service Commission have the right to collectively bargain with their employer as it pertains to wages, hours of work and other conditions of employment" within the authority of the Civil Service Commission. Civil Service appealed and were successful in getting the order changed to say that "the Commission is not required to extend to state classified employees collective bargaining benefits." We didn't get collective bargaining as a result of that battle, but a legal base on which collective bargaining can be achieved was established. For the first time it became very clear that the Civil Service Commission does have the authority to grant collective bargaining, although they are not required by law to do so. The Commission had previously been suggesting that they did not have the authority to grant collective bargaining. The decision leaves it up to the employees to put enough pressure on the Commission through organizing to force them to grant collective bargaining.

exams challenged

Two provisional employees with excellent work records were fired because they had failed their respective examinations. W.E.U. challenged the examination results on the basis that the examinations themselves were invalid and discriminatory. Both employees were reinstated; both are still with the Department and both have status.

transfers

W.E.U. was the first organization in DSS to take advantage of outside arbitration in grievance matters. An employee, living in Monroe County and working in Wayne County, requested a transfer to Monroe County. He was falsely told that there were no openings when in fact the Department had no intention of transferring him. W.E.U. took the case to arbitration and proved that the refusal to transfer him was arbitrary and capricious. The arbitrator ordered the DSS to transfer him.

suspensions

The Union is awaiting the arbitrators decision in the case of an employee who was suspended by the Department for two days for excessive tardiness. The W.E.U. took the grievance to arbitration and challenged the Department's non uniform time policy. They charged him with being tardy some 30 times in a 60 day period. Seventeen of the alleged tardies were from two to five minutes each.

wages

A special worker 01 was hired at \$1.69 per hour to replace a previous 01 who had been paid \$2.38 per hour. When she first complained, she was told that she knew what the pay was when she took the job, therefore she was stuck with it. W.E.U. filed a grievance at the second step. As a result she is to get a pay raise to the \$2.38 level retroactively to her date of hire.

firings

A P.S. Worker was involved in an alleged altercation with a co-worker. A letter of reprimand was placed in his personnel file and he was dismissed because he had "vacated his position without notice"; a grievance was filed and as a result the reprimand was removed and the worker was granted a three month sick leave of absence. The grievance has gone to the Civil Service Hearing Officer in an attempt to have the leave of absence extended.

defense fund

W.E.U. has a defense fund for the specific purpose of financing the defense of employees. The fund was established as a result of seeking public support for an employee who had been called to personnel, arrested, thrown in jail and fired without the benefit of any kind of a hearing. W.E.U. represented her both in court and within the grievance procedure. All charges against her were dropped. She was reinstated with full back pay.

GRIEVANCES

1. Caseloads are too large in every category of assistance.
2. Caseload size is determined primarily by the amount of paperwork required to maintain a caseload.
3. Employee vacancies are not being filled within a satisfactory length of time.
4. Vacant caseloads are being divided among already overburdened workers, or are sitting unserviced.
5. Caseloads are not being serviced because the workers allocated to maintain them are working in liason and warrant adjustment.
6. The 3.8% raise granted to civil service employees will not even adequately cover the increase in cost of living.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Enough workers should be hired to bring caseload size down to at least the levels recommended by the Michigan County Social Service Association.
2. Consideration should be given to the fact that clients need and expect services beyond the processing of eligibility forms.
3. Wayne County must be given authority fo fill employee vacancies immediately upon the departure of any worker.
4. Enough employees should be hired to service the uncovered caseloads immediately.
5. Lansing should allocate the immediate hiring of enough employees to adequately operate the warrant adjustment and liason departments.
6. Salary increases must attain a more realistic level.

W H A T ' S G O I N G O N ?

If the Administration would follow its own recommendations, four times as many workers as we have now would be hired to service our large caseloads. As workers leave the Agency for other positions in the department or in other businesses their positions are left vacant, often for two to three months before a replacement worker arrives. This is why you have to wait so long to see your worker at the office, wait to get your clothing orders, wait for your food orders, wait to get your address changed, wait for medical forms, and call again and again to reach your worker. There are simply not enough workers to handle the caseloads.

Caseloads will continue to rise without the Administration's help. Nixon's economic policies have seen the elimination of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Model Cities Centers, Neighborhood Youth Corp programs, and a general decline of available jobs in businesses everywhere. As long as we are in need of Welfare programs, we want to see to it that you, the client, get the services that we could offer, if we were properly staffed.

We are fed up, and we feel that you are fed up. We also feel that we both have legitimate complaints. We would like you to join with us in expressing our grievances by our actions Thursday night and Friday. Support our action by picketing the building from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. Thursday along with other community organizations.

Although the workers at Kercheval will not be at work on Friday, you can call 222-2700 in case of an emergency.

DETAILS OUTLINED FOR

THURSDAY NIGHT

All employees staying for the work-in Thursday night will meet in Intake at 4:30. Emergency phone numbers will be distributed at that time and other last minute instructions given.

ANYONE STAYING WILL FOLLOW THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS (proposed by the building committee in conjunction with WEU's lawyer)

1. The type of conduct normally followed at work during a regular working day is expected from all employees.
2. No alcohol or drugs are to be anywhere on the premises.
3. No one is to leave the building after 4:30 p.m. or before 8:00 a.m.
4. Only employees of the Department of Social Services are to be in the building (with the exception of the press).
5. Any type of rowdy conduct which might lead to a disturbance is not appropriate. (We can not give anyone an excuse for the charge of "disturbing the peace")
6. Employees are to stay out of private offices and any other place in the building where their admittance is normally unauthorized.

Employees are all reminded to carry at least a dime on their persons at all times. In case someone would be taken to the 5th precinct, a dime is necessary in order to make that "one phone call".

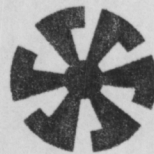
Employees are responsible to bring their own food. Some workers have volunteered to bring 'pot luck' dishes which will be served in the conference room. If anyone else would like to volunteer, it would be appreciated.



welfare employees union

4425 Second, Detroit, Michigan 48201

Speed-up Everywhere



Increasing caseloads, staff cutbacks, and work speed-up are becoming common occurrences at WCDSS. Your individual degree of frustration primarily depends on staff situation and work location. There's no place to run and even less places to hide!

How can we, as employees of WCDSS, stop the state from squeezing more and more work out of us and paying us less and less. There's only one way! Unity! Unity with fellow employees of all job classifications and categories - unity with employees in every district office in Wayne County! Unity is the only strength we have against the state apparatus. No one individual, no single staff, or even an isolated district office can defeat state management, but a unified Wayne County can pressure the state into making needed changes.

The dormant strength of Wayne County is almost beyond comprehension. Do you realize that the Lyndon District alone is larger than Genessee County (which contains Flint, Michigan's second largest city). Think of the effect a strong unified Wayne County can have on state legislation, job allocations, and work conditions in general.

Unity



Unity is begun by communication. Talk to fellow employees. Find out what's going on in WCDSS. Category problems and work speed-up are contagious. Don't isolate yourself, or your staff, because you aren't affected now. Your time is coming! In fact, if you'll take the time to listen, you'll hear that the complaints are the same, i.e., overwork, poor pay, work speed-up, understaffing, miserable working conditions, throughout all job classifications. It's just that we employees are so "hung up" with classification cliques (such as Supervisor 10 clique, P:W.W. 09 clique, A.P. worker 06 clique, clerical clique, etc.) that we refuse to communicate and cooperate around our common problems.

We can no longer afford the luxury of waiting for somebody else to form this genuine employee alliance. The problems we are experiencing are present today. To delay any longer is to continue to contribute to your own self-punishment. If meaningful changes are going to take place, they'll have to be initiated by us, and now!

Build



Support and participate in your building organizations. If you don't have one, start one! Support and participate in spontaneous job actions which all directly or indirectly affect you. Your individual participation will undoubtedly vary from person to person, and action to action, but the most important thing is to communicate and support. Participation and Communication is Unity. Unity which is needed for any meaningful change. Isolation and cliques ultimately lead to defeat. Defeat is a thing we should make a part of the past.

Support the job action of your fellow employees June 21st at the Kercheval Building. The Work-In demonstration is in protest to the inhuman working conditions under which we all labor. Picket lines will form outside the building (12700 Kercheval) from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Fellow employees who wish to participate in the actual demonstration must be in the building by 4:15 p.m. The other co-workers can assist by informing community organizations and the public in general of the reasons behind the demonstration. Pitch in, and be a part of events which will affect your life!

