

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 9 OF 16

FOLDER 17

**MCLL REPORTS ON THE BWC
THE LDC**

Discussion Paper for Both Cadre Organizations - B.W.C. & M.C.L.L.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE LABOR-DEFENSE COALITION

Comrades in both organizations share in the confusion about the Labor Defense Coalition, and have many questions, concerns and criticisms expressed in relation to same.

In an attempt to focus some of the discussion and hopefully add some clarity to the discussion I would like to raise some questions.

Let me add that I am not going to go into a specific discussion of past meetings, etc., but will attempt an analysis that is prospective in character.

1. Is it possible to discuss LDC outside of the context of an analysis of the state of both the B.W.C. and M.C.L.L. as to the levels of both theoretical and practical development?

It is my opinion that in fact the development (or lack of development) in LDC precisely corresponds to the development of the organizations.

A. Neither organization has evolved a coherent strategy for organizing the working class, in the shops or in the community, nor has there been a systematic discussion either within or between the organizations of the extremely important work that has been done, whether that work has been comprehended as LDC work, M.C.L.L. work or B.W.C. work.

The principle strength of LDC flows from the fact that

Individuals from both organizations, both non-lawyers and lawyers alike, have done a great deal of work that has focused essentially on the role of the state apparatus as an instrument of repression. This has been more the product of "individualistic" responses to situationally determined pressures than a conscious planning process by both organizations. The necessity of those responses is not in question but the illusory paralysis of LDC is the result.

The obvious examples of this work in the repression area are of course New Bethel, S.T.R.E.S.S., the jury challenge, the Wayne County Jail Suit, the Charles Smith work, etc. In the Labor area much strength flows from the work in both James Johnson actions, "criminal" and the workmen's compensation case, B.I.C.C.D., Local 961, The Federation activity, attendance and participation in conferences, etc.

This incomplete sketch of activity has produced a number of very important things.

One, that a relatively principled political coalition of black and white forces, striving to apply Marxism-Leninism to the present pre-revolutionary reality has come into existence.

Two, that this coalition has at least a tentative view of the centrality of repression in the lives of black and other working class people, both in historical and present terms.

Three, that this coalition has organically involved itself

in worker organizations from which cadres have learned much about themselves, organizing and the nature of the society in which we struggle.

Out of these strengths grow some interesting possibilities.

For example, the knowledge of the role of the state apparatus as an instrument of repression must be imparted to workers so as to prevent our labor^{work} from being essentially economist or trade unionist in character.

Why have we not either taken this "expertise" ^{and} ~~an~~ analysis to the workers in Local 961, more systematically than has been the case in a few instances, i.e., the tentative contact with Jordan Sims in the State of Emergency Committee or the Eldon leaflet ~~that~~ connected the Smith case to working class struggle?

Conversely, why have we not asked the members of Local 961 to come and teach us of their experiences in the shop?

When we are approached on the question of participation in the U.N.C. conference on racism, why don't we think of participating through LDC so as to avoid the problems that flow from the absence of a significant cadre base in the U.A.W., the known history of some of the leading figures in the U.N.C. and the fact that while we don't have a conscious strategy for the April convention, they do.

The LDC provides the perfect vehicle for having contact with white and some black workers, and to discuss racism in the

community, at least, as well as racism in the shop, the labor movement, and the economy ^{while} ~~which~~ at the same time insulating us from the manipulation and cooptation of the essentially reformist leadership of the skilled trades based U.N.C., that would most certainly flow from individual organizational participation in such conferences at this stage.

But to discuss this function of LDC or any other cadre in both organizations we must assess at least the following factors:

1. The individual cadres' comprehension of each organizations overall projection for programmatic work.
2. The state of that programmatic work as it relates to the resources available to the organization.
3. The relationship of that work to our ability to direct and guide the development of ourselves as self-conscious cadres.
4. The concrete knowledge of and contact with, such work forces as the U.N.C., etc.

At this time our deficiencies in some of these areas ^{have} ~~has~~ produced considerable problems. In some instances a failure to systematically approach some of our difficult internal problems has produced a propensity for retreat into avoidance of the intense struggle that must precede the concretizing of programs.

Should we institute a service program that precedes

our joining that program with a program...
"providers" of the service and the "recipients" in a construct
that analyzes the causal relationship between the society and the need
for the service and further a construct within which action on
the parts of both "providers" and "recipients" results that moves
forward the workers' struggle.

To what extent do we feel that the people in the groups
we are working with, as well as the people generally, have the
untapped capacity to support materially our work.

Perhaps we have not investigated such a possibility as
carefully as we should.

Where are both organizations, in relation to unemployed
workers program, the Federation piece clearly providing an important
base for such activity among social service "clients" for example.

Do we have the cadre and if we don't, how do we see our
internal education programs as well as the labor school, speaking to
this problem?

How do we use our newspapers to assist us in our organizing
efforts, internally and externally?

What strategy do we have for the labor conference proposed
to be held in May, and what is its relationship to our organizing
work, the political projection of LDC, etc.

The process of answering these questions is under way,

and the precise character of the LDC program can only follow this process being concluded, but the objective strengths of both organizations suggest that we are quite a bit nearer the crystallization of a program than some might believe.

LDC--A meeting of the LDC Board and active and prospective participants from BWC and MCLL was held on Nov. 10. A healthy exchange of views and many, many projected ideas and programs were discussed at length, and it was agreed that no later than Nov. 24 a written program and the rationale for such a program would be developed by a task force comprised of 2 or 3 designated members of each cadre organization. It does not make a lot of sense for an individual reporter to try to lay out here a meaningful review of the many suggestions and proposals especially in light of the fact that a tight and developed program is imminent, and will be available for presentation and approval by GS and GM shortly. Just briefly, the current of thoughts flow around the development of a federated labor movement which can be tied to and supported by LDC - for example groups like BICCD, McNamara, WEU etc. - and around the development and organization of ongoing anti-repression activity. Integrated into these two programs and forming a possible ^{probable} framework for LDC tactics and strategies ~~and~~ ^{goals} is an electoral thrust that is also under discussion.

While there is and has been a tendency out there (but obviously not in here) to see as separate and distinct a labor program and an anti-repression program, the task force and all of us shall be pointed toward the avowed goal of creating a meaningful form to pull together worker and community struggles.

POWER TO THE PROLETARIAT/OFF THE PIGS