

Pre-convention bulletin #12 / February 10, 2015 for members only

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Report from Asheville

Our experience in Asheville supports the National Office lead in the July internal bulletin for "developing a short and medium-term plan for recruiting and training a new generation of student organizers and leaders...and raising the ISO's profile on campuses and laying the basis for student recruitment." The shift has helped us recruit energetic young radicals to Revolutionary Socialism, train our members in patient (and ongoing) debate of Marxist theory, and generate a much larger and consistent periphery than we had meeting in the city. The University of North Carolina Asheville (UNCA) has about 4,000 students with a handful of political student groups, and no significant movements. Our branch (now 7 members) has had surprising success as well as puzzling challenges, which we will tease out in this document.

The Shift onto Campus

We began our first semester at UNCA with six members: four students recruited over the summer, and two cadre non-students. The new student members had seen our fliers on campus the previous semester or had heard about us through the grapevine. We kicked off the semester with a modest table at the activities fair, and moderate poster for our launch meeting. Our kick-off "Case for Socialism" meeting was attended by over 50 people, the majority of whom were students. In the following weeks, 15-20 students attended our weekly branch meetings. Each meeting had a section to discuss SW articles relating to current events, a section about the national organization, and a section about our branch plans in Asheville. We believed that this structure would be helpful in introducing our politics to our periphery and to help new members

develop confidence with our basic politics. Now that we have a core of members and a small periphery, we are considering changing to the rotating schedule (as laid out in the Campus Toolkit) to focus on our education and study groups.

Over the course of the semester we had a total of 4 public meetings: Case for Socialism; Capitalism is Killing the Planet: Ecosocialism 101; Justice for Palestine; and Marxism, Feminism, and Revolution. These were all modestly built (one tabling, several hundred posters/fliers, and a facebook group), and, with the exception of the final public meeting, each was attended by 50 or more people. We attribute these turn-outs to three factors: 1. an ideological radicalization. 2. We chose relevant and engaging topics (and had great posters), and 3. We are filling a political vacuum on campus. Many people came to our public and weekly meetings because we were “the only ones talking about _____” (the climate crisis, Gaza, marriage equality, police violence).

Challenges of balance: A Large Periphery and New Membership

The challenges of having a small branch of mostly new members with a big periphery were twofold: Firstly, keeping track of contacts. We established a Contact Coordination Team (one student member and one cadre member) in order to effectively pair members with contacts. This team met weekly, drafting lists of people to follow-up with, and assigning/assisting members to call each contact weekly. This consistent follow-up helped us win a van-full of students to join us for the People's Climate March. We built the trip explicitly as participating as the ISO in the Climate Convergence and the Ecosocialist contingent, which many contacts did. Upon returning to Asheville, close contacts joined a Where We Stand packet discussion of 8 people. One of the students soon became a member.

We organized a Socialist Coffee Hour on Sundays at the campus cafe. These Coffee Hours (usually just a handful of people) were like the Study Groups as described in the Campus toolkit: “an important way to familiarize people with the basics of Marxism and an intimate setting to debate out of or convince others of our ideas.” In the Socialist Coffee Hours we discussed the the newspaper and ISR articles. The most successful of discussions was of ISR articles on women's oppression the weekend before our publicized meeting "Marxism, Feminism, and Revolution". We intend to continue having these meetings in the spring semester.

A large periphery did not automatically lead to close contacts or new membership, but consistent follow-up did. Unfortunately, we let our contact work slip out of priority as we prepared to host the Day School in Asheville, and we have not gotten back in the groove yet. The importance of this work was very clear toward the end of the semester as our meetings dwindled and fewer contacts were coming around.

The second challenge of having a large periphery for most of the semester was balancing new members education and participation in meetings with gearing discussion toward contacts. We fell into a habit of focusing on non-member's questions every meeting (i.e. “Can't we reform Capitalism?” “What is Socialism?”) and we did not progress past the very basics of Marxist politics with new members. Prioritizing political education has been the most serious challenge for our branch. Our branch organizing meetings were often focused on the large layer of contacts, and not a place for members to work out ideas and next steps for the branch. It was not until the end of the semester as meetings got smaller that we realized this had been a problem.

We did not read a single book as a branch during the semester. Preparation of material for the Day School was uneven, and so participation was uneven as well. Over winter break we are reading Meaning of Marxism (with some close contacts) and relying heavily on the study questions (in the back of the new edition) to prompt all members toward a focused reading.

Routines, Movements, and an Outward Focus

Our challenges prioritizing political education have been clear in our participation in movements in Asheville. There has been no substantial, sustained protest movement in Asheville or at UNCA this semester (until the Anti-Police Brutality rallies began as many students were leaving for break, which we

will speak to in a just a moment). Still, we have tried to be involved politically in actions to the limited extent we are able: in February, we helped organize buses to Raleigh for a Moral March of 100,000. Our tiny socialist contingent was most certainly a left-wing pole of attraction. We sold dozens of SW's, carried a banner that said "Close Prisons, Fund Schools" and led movement-specific, energizing chants. When we are able, we participate in speak-outs, rallies, and marches in Asheville. The climate march was another good example. But our participation in movements is inconsistent and, as a branch, clumsy. For example, as the anti-police brutality movement has erupted in Asheville, it's clear that we have not established routines strong enough to respond in a coordinated and clear way. Our plan is to continue working with the paper and tabling to gain the experience we need to confidently participate as socialists in movements and win broader layers to Marxist politics.

HA and RE

Reply to "Believing Survivors"

The ISO should not counter-pose our commitments to due process and to solidarity with survivors, especially as a rule. The document "Believing Survivors: A Response to Concerns" in bulletin 9 proposes to codify a distrust of the political judgment of comrades tasked with adjudicating cases in which contradictory accounts require a decision to believe either an accuser or an accused person.

"Believing Survivors" describes a number of important and real nuances about the ways in which sexual assault takes place. Comrades adjudicating a case of alleged sexual assault should understand the propensity of rapists to lie, of survivors not to lie but also to not be able to recount every detail of their experience, and of women of color to be disproportionately revictimized by victim-blaming and denial. However, these considerations must not be codified into a predetermined judgment of all cases in which there is no evidence beyond complainant and respondent testimony. It has to be applied by thinking, living revolutionaries committed to respecting and understanding these realities while also respecting all comrades, including those facing a serious accusation.

The document also minimizes the harm of a false accusation leading to an expulsion. The fact this circumstance would be less traumatic than being raped or incarcerated does not make it an acceptable risk. We are a group of a few hundred dedicated revolutionary socialists. We need to value each other and each comrade's contribution to this organization. The document notes that stigma attached to accusing and being accused of sexual violence is relatively equal, and just as we do not take victim-blaming and rape denial lightly, neither should we take a false accusation and expulsion lightly.

Our organization as a whole shares a political responsibility to promote a fuller understanding of sexual violence among our membership but more importantly in the world around us. S's forthcoming article in the *ISR* will add to the speeches and writing JR, and TB and others have contributed at the national level. No doubt many comrades are contributing to this task in their local organizing and political education. I have not been to a consent training, so I can't speak to the value of workshops toward this project, but I disagree with treating this education as an individual responsibility of members, and the singling out of cis male members for particular responsibility. We have to make our organization politically sharp enough that due process does not inevitably mean that we fail to kick rapists out of our group.

My understanding of the outcome of last year's discussion at convention was that a) we need a system of due process that respect the rights of complainant and respondent, and at the same time; b) our standard for judgment must be a "preponderance of evidence" that is informed by our understanding as revolutionary socialists of all race, gender, and class dynamics of sexual assault; so, c) our trust must be placed in the elected leadership teams among our comrades, not in rules that predetermine judgments beyond the bounds of each specific case. There may be times when a "preponderance of evidence" means only that the testimony of the accuser is believed and the testimony of the accused is disbelieved. But the comrades hearing out both sides must be able to make that decision according to their own consideration of the specific case.

I am all for the exchange of documents and debate to deepen our understanding of the complexities of sexual violence, and I thank all the comrades who have contributed to this in the documents so far. I consider the guidelines above to still be the best framework for combining our commitments to due process and solidarity with survivors. We should not adopt Proposal 1 or Proposal 3 from the “Believing Survivors” document.

RC, Chicago

Suggestions on Organizational Practices around Disability Oppression

We want to start by thanking D, E, and R for opening up a discussion about disability oppression during this preconvention season. We agree with the premise of both documents that disability oppression is essential for the ISO to address. However, we disagree with some of the specific conclusions Elora and Rebecca draw.

We want to start by recognizing that as revolutionaries, we see no end to any oppression, including disability oppression, under capitalism. Disability under capitalism is defined as the inability to work. Capitalism has no interest in helping disabled people because it doesn't want the responsibility of caring for people and benefits from a reserve army of labor. An end to disability oppression is only possible with a massive redistribution of resources, but this necessitates a revolution. As a small grassroots organization, we cannot expect to overcome the limits of capitalism in order to preemptively make every possible accommodation people might need to participate.

We support the suggestion of an accessibility initiative to collect information about members' and contacts' needs, starting from the understanding that we may not be able to make all the accommodations we'd like to, at least in the short term. Nevertheless, such a committee will help prevent easily avoidable errors and will help shape future practices of the organization. There have been a number of useful documents in recent years regarding alternatives to the banking model of education that could help guide the work of such a committee.

We also agree with the spirit of the suggestion about member education, but we do not think the organization is yet in a place of agreement on this topic. For instance, we have spoken with members who do not agree that disabled people constitute an oppressed group. D's document and the several talks given at recent Socialism conferences provide a start towards a Marxist theory of disability oppression, and we have more work to do toward this aim. We encourage all members who are thinking about issues of disability oppression to speak and write on this topic, and we encourage the education committee to discuss it as well. A new member education session might include, “Pioneers in the Fight for Disability Rights” from ISR 90.

While we agree with E and R that language is not the primary goal in combatting disability oppression, we think it is actually an important starting point. For people with disabilities, particularly those coming from a disability rights framework, reading an article in Socialist Worker or attending an ISO talk littered with words like “crazy” or “idiotic,” words that may be considered ableist slurs, can be alienating. We have heard comrades object to requests to avoid these words on the grounds that it would be too difficult, that these words accurately describe capitalism, or that words like these are used widely on the left. We understand that it will take time for comrades to change their vocabularies, but we believe this is the bare minimum we can do as an organization to show our solidarity.

While the disability rights movement in the US is small and much of it has political flaws like ties to nonprofits and a focus on lawsuits, we have good reason to believe that this will not always be the case. We can prepare for such a change by contributing to the theorization of disability oppression and making some changes in our practices that will better position us to join and lead in future struggles.

MC and SS, Oakland

Boycott Autism Speaks

In our society, Autism is a dirty word, and it shouldn't be. The two writers of this document are autistic adults trying to self-advocate and fight the stigma autistics face while also fighting against the hate group Autism Speaks. This document will outline why we feel the ISO should stand in solidarity with the Boycott Autism Speaks movement, like it does with BDS. They must be opposed not only on the grounds of eugenics, but on the principle of self-determination for the oppressed, as well.

Autism has a strong stigma in our culture. Capitalism tells us that autistics are less than non-autistics, or "allistics," because of a lack of ability to fit in with social norms and lack of ability to work productively under capitalism. The recent anti-vaccination movement shows just how deep the hatred for autism goes in our society. People would rather see children dead than autistic.

Autism Speaks is an organization that speaks over autistic voices. They support ABA therapy, which is harmful and destructive. ABA is a harmful therapy because it trains autistics the way one would train a dog. It is medical abuse, often causes PTSD, and it's dehumanizing. They have no autistics on their board and are mostly comprised of parents of autistics. They supposedly raise money for autism research, but little of that money actually goes into science. In fact, much of that money goes to the personal bank accounts of their CEO and board of directors. They support "curing" autism and look on it as a disease, an imperfection which must be rectified. They ignore autistic voices when we say we don't want to be cured, and they use "high functioning" and "low functioning" labels, despite the fact that most autistics reject these labels. Functioning labels are rejected by autistics because all they really do is acknowledge how poorly or how well an autistic can act "normal."

They've also stood by parents who've discussed wanting to murder their autistic family members. They have one propaganda video called "Autism Every Day." About six minutes in, one of their board of directors talks openly about wanting to murder her autistic child and then kill herself. This was in the presence of that child. She then added that the only thing stopping her from doing so was that she would be leaving a non-autistic child without a mother—not because doing so is the murder of a child. She doesn't see her daughter as a child, just a puzzle to be solved. And if it can't be solved, the kids should die.

The Boycott Autism Speaks movement has not garnered much attention or reaction yet, but is led by actual autistics and allistic allies who believe that Autism Speaks is a repulsive organization. It includes boycotting not only AS, but also all corporations that have partnered with AS to raise money including Lindt chocolate, Zales jewelers, and Google. When you see that puzzle piece on retail products, understand that the money spent will go to an organization that is erasing and eventually wants to eliminate the voices of those they purport to be advocating for.

In order to move towards equality, and prepare for the revolution to come, we need to be fighting oppression in all forms. The writers of this document urge to ISO to stand in solidarity with Boycott Autism Speaks.

EP and RB

Using *Socialist Worker*

This is a document I recently wrote to the new SW coordinator. I thought it could be helpful for other branches that are thinking about this role and the document also lays out an assessment of the use of SW in Boston over the past year, which has played a big role in the political development of our branch.

Role of Socialist Worker Newspaper

The ruling ideas of society are those of the ruling class, socialists are in a constant battle fighting for our ideas. Socialist Worker is a tool for socialists to do this. Socialist Worker is a distinct news source that aims

to do the following:

- 1 consistently take the side of the oppressed and exploited,
- 2 reports on the struggles waged by working class people and puts those struggles into a bigger picture which helps explain why they happen, draws out lessons and a way forward,
- 3 aims to win people to getting involved in struggle and the fight against capitalism, i.e. the ISO,
- 4 activists on the left can debate the questions of the day that our struggles and movements face, and
- 5 provides political clarity for membership on the news of today.

Why do we table with the print edition of the paper?

- 1 To meet the radicalizing minority that is in our audience right now, whether or not they are already involved in activism. Tabling especially helps us meet folks that are not already organized.
- 2 We are the only people that will spread our ideas and sell the paper unlike capitalist newspapers that are sold in the store and publicized widely. Even if we don't recruit every person we meet on a sale, we are getting the word out about SW which helps us build a broader periphery beyond close contacts. These are folks that can and will come around us at some point in the future.
- 3 We use the paper as a tool to establish political relationships with people. Drawing out arguments from articles in the paper is a way to assess where the people we meet are at and if they agree with our politics.
- 4 The physical paper makes it easy to talk about the breadth of our politics. Just flipping through the paper and laying out what it includes from articles analyzing healthcare in the US, to US intervention in Iraq, to an analysis on the Black Lives Matter movement, can help broaden our conversations with people to talk about how socialists connect all these issues and gauge what issues that person is following or interesting in talking about.
- 5 The paper helps orient members for going into the sale. While it is helpful to focus on one particular article in a pre-meeting, members will feel the most confident in engaging with new contacts if they have read the entire paper and thought through what the ISO is trying to say about a wide range of issues and struggles.

Socialist Worker in Boston

I took up the role of SW coordinator in February of last year. I went into the role thinking about my main responsibility as being the comrade in the branch who was prioritizing time to really think through how Socialist Worker was being used by the entire branch. This meant:

- being in charge of thinking about when/where we were tabling,
- approach and work with other comrades to head up tablings,
- thinking about how I was setting a lead in the branch by drawing out arguments from SW and bringing them into branch discussions,
- following up with comrades about picking up their 5 copies for the month which are used for contact work,
- keeping track of sales, and
- receiving the papers in Boston and paying monthly.

Tablings

The SW coordinator is not in charge of organizing every tabling. Instead the coordinator thinks through which comrades in the branch should lead a tabling and works to set them up. I would usually have an article in mind for the tabling, propose it to the comrade I approach and have a political conversation about how we want to talk about the article and paper on the tabling. This helps set up the comrade heading it up

to think about what their kick off for a pre-meeting would look like. You also want to make sure the comrade heading up the tabling is in charge of figuring out all the logistic aspects – email announcement to branch, sign-up sheet for branch meeting, figuring out who is bringing papers, books, table, signs/material to make signs, and that they are prepared to make an announcement at branch meetings.

When we were first beginning to table more regularly at the beginning of last year comrades were very open about how rusty and under confident they felt at tablings. This is usually the case when the routine hasn't been kept up. This political confidence develops when you are consistent with tablings but it is also connected to the life of the branch. When the branch is using SW in branch meetings and contact work, people are more confident with talking about our politics. For example, through our work at NU last semester and constantly assessing and setting ourselves up for contact work, comrades talked about how confident they were at a Black Lives Matter protest and putting the paper front and center.

It is preferable that we have many comrades together for a tabling (at least 3 but more is definitely better!). This way comrades are able to pair up together to approach strangers and the branch is able to build a more collective assessment about the political opening for socialist politics and about what is on the minds of people – are people angry about US intervention in Iraq? Have people been following the fight for 15 movement? Do people think we should fight for a \$15 minimum wage? What do people think about the Black Lives Matter movement? What are the arguments we want to make to people? How are we connecting the questions of the day with the project of the ISO? These are all questions we have engaged with through our tablings over the past year.

It is challenging to organize tablings with the terrible weather but we should try and think creatively – maybe table inside T stations?

How are we using SW within branch meetings to make arguments?

The fall kick off meeting was a perfect example of how comrades have been thinking through more and more how we are using arguments from SW and directly referencing the paper when contributing to branch meeting discussions. Assigning SW articles for branch meetings has helped this process. For example, over a year ago we had a discussion in the branch on the occupy movement and there was a SW article assigned for that discussion. The discussion did not actually touch on the article and comrades were not actively trying to draw out arguments from the piece. Instead folks talked mostly about their own assessments and experiences. Of course these contributions can be useful as well but it was telling that most members didn't actually talk about the article. Contrast that with the fall kick off meeting at Northeastern last semester where there wasn't even an article assigned for the meeting but throughout the discussion comrades were referencing arguments from articles in SW, specifically articles from the paper edition which helped comrades confidently sell the paper to contacts. We ended up selling 14 papers at that meeting. Trying to assess branch meetings in this light will be helpful to think through how the branch is using SW.

5 for me's

I initially had a sheet of paper for every month with a list of all branch members and made sure everyone picked up and paid for their 5 for me's every month. This was really helpful but after a while I found that so many comrades would just take their 5 for me's at branch meetings and leave their money on the table. This was great because it was clear there was a shift in how people were thinking about 5 for me's, I didn't have to try and track down most folks like I did at the beginning though we should try and figure out a way to keep better track. Maybe a sign up sheet next to the papers at branch meetings? And an extended announcement at the beginning of every month motivating comrades to pick up the paper.

Instead of thinking about how you are following up with every single comrade about how they are using their 5 for me's I think these assessments should really be encouraged to be part of discussions of contact work which comrades have done and are still trying to do. Moving forward it will be important to more regularly assess within branch meetings how we are using 5 for me's and the paper more generally.

Keeping track of sales

The SW coordinator should be keeping track of how many papers are being sold through 5 for me's, tablings, and protests. This is one way to measure how successful the branch has been with using the paper and it helps you figuring out finances. Measuring the success of using SW is not just about numbers but we also want to think about how we are training ourselves in the branch to assess what it looks like to sell the paper. These assessments should be encouraged during wrap ups after tablings, protests, coalition meetings, etc. Any work that we are doing we should prioritize an assessment of how we were using the paper in that work and really talk through what it looked like to sell a paper along with what our conversations look like. For example, at the wrap up after the MLK protest, a comrade assessed how she was able to raise discussions about Todd's article, talked about that discussion looked like and how she was able to sell the paper out of many of those conversations. These kinds of assessments help lead other comrades to think more concretely about how to use the paper and how to assess the use of it. Reports are really helpful for training comrades to assess and generalize an experience such as a tabling. Making sure reports are being written about tablings will be important.

Socialist Worker Sales (I am missing protests that we sold papers at, especially Palestine protests, but this list includes every tabling we did during that time period. If the number of papers sold is blank, that means I am unsure of how many papers were sold.) Some of these tablings had more comrades than others which usually affects how many papers are sold.

Date	Location	Number of Papers sold
1/19/2015	MLK Day march	14
1/13/2015	Northeastern Student Fair	4
10/25/2014	Black Lives Matter Protest	8
10/24/2014	SJP Conference	18
10/18/2014	Northeastern	7
9/18/2014	Northeastern Public Forum	14
9/15/2014	Fields Corner	5
9/13/2014	Northeastern	4
9/3/2014	Northeastern	3
8/23/2014	Fields Corner	11
8/16/2014	Ferguson Solidarity Rally	4
8/10/2014	City-wide Palestine org meeting	4
7/25/2014	Fields Corner	7
7/25/2014	Clinic Defense	6
7/24/2014	Gaza Protest	2
7/8/2014	NARAL Rally	2
6/14/2014	Fields Corner	11
5/18/2014	Breaking Bread - Palestine event	2
5/17/2014	Fields Corner	8
5/10/2014	TAG conference	11
4/15/2014	UMass Boston	1
4/12/2014	Fields Corner	1
4/1/2014	SJP protest at Northeastern	-
3/27/2014	UMass Boston	0
3/22/2014	Fields Corner	5
3/8/2014	Fields Corner	9
2/22/2014	Fields Corner	-
2/19/2014	UMass Boston	3

AA

Chicago Elections Work

Leading up to the ISO's 2014 Convention, the Steering Committee appointed a national "Elections Committee" which produced a report designed to assist the organization in thinking through various questions regarding electoral work and to raise awareness of the potential for engaging in it.

Based upon that document the following criteria for determining whether or not we think we should participate in a given electoral project is as follows:

- It brings together activists we want to be working and engaging with.
- It gives our comrades a chance to develop politically, as organizers, etc...
- It gives a larger platform for us to project socialist ideas to a bigger audience.
- It contains within it the potential to build a bigger, better left.
- It allows us to cohere a periphery around the ISO.

The Chicago district put together a fraction to focus on opportunities for electoral work around the city, that fraction has been organizing around this project for over a year. The fraction was originally formed to investigate the possibility of supporting campaigns based on the above criteria and initially became involved with two campaigns: Tim Meegan in the 33rd ward and the Chicago Socialist Campaign which eventually selected Jorge Mujica to be the candidate in Pilsen's 25th ward.

The fraction expanded and included people who were involved with three other campaigns which also hold true to these standards. Those campaigns include: Tammie Vinson a teacher and CTU activist located on Chicago's west side majority-black 28th ward, Zerlina Smith a long time well-known community and parent activist, active in the school closure fight and anti-testing battle also in a majority-black 29th ward on the west side and Olga Bautista a longtime-ally and prominent activist-leader in the pet coke battle on the far southeast side 10th ward, she is running as an Eco-Socialist. Another commonality of all the campaigns we support is their distinct and stated independence from the Democratic Party. We have had from 1 to 3 comrades relating directly to each campaign.

Chicago elections are non-partisan so candidates do not have to declare party allegiance, they simply gather at least 500 valid signatures from registered voters who reside in their Ward. After signature petitions were submitted, two of the five candidates were challenged, Zerlina and Tammie. Zerlina was able to successfully survive the challenge and get placed on the ballot based in large part to a strong volunteer base. Tammie on the other hand was not able to fend off the undemocratic challenge to her signatures. All challengers in the 28th ward were challenged and kept off of the ballot. This is an extremely recent development and we have not had the opportunity to fully assess. It should be noted that the two candidates challenged had the lowest financial resources, the challenge process is often used to drain campaigns of limited resources and a tried and true method to subvert democracy in Chicago.

Our fraction meets on a bi-weekly basis to assess and evaluate our involvement in these campaigns. In addition the Mujica campaign has a weekly conference call in an attempt to navigate the development of the campaign. We generally have a portion of our fraction meeting addressing an educational topic as well in order to better develop our political analysis and contributions to the campaigns. This has been beneficial in developing ourselves as Socialists in an electoral framework. It has also been key in our ability to give a substantive political input into these campaigns. Just one example of this was that within the fraction we discussed the Black Youth Project 100's, "Agenda to Keep Us Safe," recommended that all campaigns adopt it and pursue building forums with BYP 100 on the issue of police violence. There was a successful joint forum in the 28th ward with Tammie and BYP 100 in which she was the first aldermanic candidate to sign onto their agenda.

We see this type of action as one way to relate to an emerging Black Lives Matter movement. A way to connect campaigns to movements as we have never intended for this electoral project to simply focus on "winning seats." We have also tried to find ways to cohere different campaigns around common issues important to working people including the Fight for \$15, fully-funded schools and a moratorium on

charters to name a few. We don't simply want these campaigns to be looking at Ward specific issues without broader context to the conditions of working people in the city of Chicago.

Before our initial organizational involvement with electoral work we made an assessment that there was an opening to the left of the Democrats in the electoral arena as exemplified in part by Sawant in Seattle and the Independent Labor Council victory in Lorraine, OH. We have found that analysis to largely hold true and was evidenced in the 3 campaigns that emerged after the initial 2 that we supported. It's also apparent that the Democrats have become aware of this opening on the left and have attempted to fill this void by branding themselves as "Progressive," "Independent," and "anti-machine" which has made it much more complicated to convince people of the need for an absolute break from the Dems. The electoral shift in the city was also a reaction to the loss of the school closure battle and CTU moving out of the strike into a shift to an electoral challenge to the status quo not necessarily a desire to break with the Democratic Party in general. Many allies outside our organization still see the task as simply electing "better" Democrats. We must patiently engage them on this issue and are using this work to do so. We aren't simply telling them what we are against but actively supporting an alternative.

This obstacle has been most evident first in the Mayoral campaign of CTU President and self-proclaimed Democrat Karen Lewis and following her withdrawal, CTU endorsed Democrat Jesus "Chuy" Garcia. Even people that we are organizing with in the Chicago Socialist Campaign, that has a platform explicitly based on breaking with the Dems, have argued that we need to align with these "progressive" campaigns in order to among other things have a united ticket or slate to challenge the status quo and garner attention that these campaigns have received. We have continually argued of the need to break from all Democrats and resisted efforts to develop such alignments. The absence of a large scale movement against police brutality has made countering Lewis' and Garcia's calls for hiring more cops difficult but the emerging movement out of Ferguson has helped us offer up concrete demands to put forward which is vital and again illustrates the need to not only tell others what we are against but offer up an alternative that we support.

The pull of "lesser-evilism" and the justification that it's in an effort to "get a win" has helped propel this issue. Mujica's personal history and connection to Garcia has made it difficult for those within his campaign to convince him not to endorse Garcia. In more than one interview Jorge has expressed his personal endorsement of Garcia. It seems as though he sees that connection as a way to draw more volunteers to his campaign which has struggled to gain a strong volunteer base in a majority Hispanic Ward filled with "Chuy" window signs. Were there a stronger more cohesive base around his campaign to hold him accountable it would be much harder for him to pursue this line. Mujica mentioned in an interview that he disagreed with Garcia's endorsement of hiring more police but that it would be his task to pull Garcia to the left, an inside/out strategy if you will. This is a very clear obstacle that is present in campaigns in which our allies don't necessarily share our exact politics. It increases our need to establish platforms on which we have clear common ground and attempt to stick to that focus.

The arguments around lesser-evilism are important and have been interesting in the way they've developed across campaigns, there's a serious question of relevance, or at least what winning those arguments represents. There are complexities to this, particularly around how those arguments could influence endorsements and so on but it's not simply a case of putting forward the right politics. There's a lot more to it--did we underestimate some of the legal barriers? Did we allocate resources appropriately? Did we pick the right races?--that we should continue to discuss as we evaluate our work in what is still to most of us a very new arena of work. These are some of the questions involved in our attempt to engage in this work and build campaigns from scratch. We see it as a positive that Rahm's PAC has chosen to support the incumbents in three of the four Wards where we are supporting challengers. Our candidates are definitely part of a threat to the status quo.

We have argued that running platforms that are in direct opposition to the Democrats is actually a way to win considering the level of distrust that average working people have in them. We believe that showing our campaigns distinction from the Democrats on issues that even "Progressive" Dems won't, such as not hiring more police, actually accentuates our ability to distinguish ourselves with voters.

It was definitely our experience in canvassing and discussing the Democrats with working people that they are disillusioned and interested in the platforms we are putting forward that are developed around working class issues. It was particularly evident when approaching residents on the majority-black west side in the 28th and 29th wards that said they didn't want to hear anything from any "politicians."

During the signature gathering phase of the campaigns to get candidates on the ballot we had comrades mainly from the Logan Sq and Pilsen branches come out and volunteer their assistance. Comrades were able to talk politics directly with working class people outside of the Chicago left milieu. We also observed that volunteers did wain as the deadline for signature gathering approached. There was not as much direct involvement from the Rogers Park branch which may in part be due to the smaller size of the branch and the location in relation to the wards that candidates are running in. We have talked within our fraction of the need to update branches on our activity and discuss possible assistance that the branches may be able to provide.

Through our participation in these campaigns we have not only engaged residents of the wards but other volunteers in the campaigns. We have developed political relationships with numerous other campaign volunteers and look to continue to strengthen these relationships after the elections. Moving forward in the push up to election day on Feb 24 we intend to engage the branches to come out and canvas the wards as well as developing ways that branches could use campaign lit in tablings and other possible roles comrades can play. Within these grassroots campaigns boots on the ground are our greatest asset and the most crucial component in overcoming the funding gap. We have engaged in limited fundraising for the campaigns which is symbolically important to show support but our greatest contribution has been our sweat equity.

Through assessment it has also become apparent that we cannot base our "success" solely on winning political arguments, because as we've found out, it's difficult to even make the argument if a great deal of resources don't exist to position a candidate within the discussion in the community at large. One lesson we may be able to conclude is that a strong platform alone does not translate into a strong campaign. One way of developing that support in the Meegan campaign was fundraising and volunteer recruitment numerous months before signature gathering even began. Tim while being very involved in personally organizing his campaign has also fomented an atmosphere in which volunteers around the campaign have formed a kind of advisory panel that discusses political issues and where the campaign should fall on certain issues. He is very open to input and making it a collective project while also strongly putting himself forward and taking personal ownership. This was a strong candidate that then built a campaign around him starting almost a year out and it has paid dividends.

Meegan, a CTU activist and high school History teacher is taking on Rahm Emanuel appointee, Alderman Deb Mell. Mell is the daughter of longtime machine Alderman Dick Mell who held the seat before she "inherited" it and her sister is married to currently incarcerated former IL Governor Rod Blagojevich. Running against Mell is the essence of running against Chicago's Dem machine. Because the Meegan campaign has used existing support networks (endorsers such as United Working Families, the IPO backed by CTU and SEIU as well as Reclaim Chicago the IPO backed by NNU and the People's Lobby) to make calls to get people out, to push it among their own membership and the CTU IPO \$30,000 contribution, he has a chance to win the seat. Current polling data shows him forcing Mell into a runoff. Tapping into those networks raised a lot of money and his campaign has been able to build a volunteer base, one of the big accomplishments of the campaign so far, which is routinely turning out 40+ volunteers on Saturday mornings. Volunteers from Reclaim Chicago and other organizations working on his behalf have been phone-banking for weeks. On a Saturday morning two weeks ago, they had, all said, 70 people working at once on the campaign.

Students for Meegan, a group of 17- and 18-year olds from Tim's school, have been some of his most consistent and enthusiastic supporters. The campaign started them off with putting up posters and door hangers. Then, as they proved themselves and won trust, they were given more responsibility; some of the 'leaders' were paired up with adults to go door knocking. Last week, the students who had knocked doors the week before did a training for the other students on how to do it, and now they're all out knocking doors.

This is self-organizing and movement-building 101, and it has been a significant achievement. Building a campaign team and a volunteer base that collectively has put in thousands of hours has built an audience in the ward and his platform has resonated. From the beginning Meegan came out as the teacher running a campaign built on saving public education and he used that platform to garner valuable union support. Meegan has run a strong campaign but it's impossible to underestimate the impact of the large financial contribution the unions have given him. CTU targeted him as a more "viable" candidate but his viability was clearly buoyed by their financial support and may have been moot without it.

Within the Chicago Socialist Campaign, a collection of random socialists and leftists from across the city formed, developed a platform and "recruited" a candidate to the campaign. One of the few Socialist Alternative members in Chicago originally organized the first open meeting to discuss the possibility of running a Socialist in an unidentified Ward. It drew in leftists from across the city, many unaffiliated and some former ISO members who are still less than "cozy" with us. What has basically been an attempted regroupment of the Chicago left has presented hurdles, the tasks of simply organizing a campaign has at times hindered the ability to have a political focus. We also need to develop a campaign that the candidate can have confidence in and vice versa. A committee of leftists with varying politics has struggled to draw residents from within the Ward to the campaign and many from outside the Ward who initially came out to CSC meetings including the Socialist Alternative member dropped off after a candidate was chosen. Many of these folks have gotten involved in Wards where they live or find more attractive for unknown reasons. The "Chicago Socialist Campaign" only exists in the current structure of the Mujica Campaign and its potential coming out of the election is yet unrecognized. Had this been a more formally structured apparatus a year sooner it may have greatly benefitted the possibility of running a better Aldermanic campaign.

The importance of the candidate cannot be over-stated. We are not an organization with a singular electoral focus that consists of getting one candidate in one campaign in office. We are in the very preliminary phases of attempting to build an independent alternative political party for working people which is part of the reason we have chosen to support multiple campaigns. We have also tried to do this in a process that puts forward and connects different budding movements. This process has also been a way to find out where the politically unaffiliated stand and if we can build momentum to draw those people into the organized left. We aspire to draw in broader layers beyond the existing left, find out who is serious about building power on the left and the ability to mobilize these people. Our political role within these campaigns has been balanced with actual nuts and bolts, time consuming, campaign work and through this process finding a more formalized approach to campaigns. We are not simply in these campaigns to put forward Socialist propaganda but to help illuminate the role of the Democrats in the oppression of the working class. Within the fraction we are continuing to assess what we consider to be "winning" and what the prospects of actually winning a seat may mean. How do we build "alliances" in order to avoid irrelevance in a city council that consists of 50 wards with a Mayor who has disproportionate control over the legislation coming out of the council? The role of the Chicago City Council has been to transfer wealth from the working class in the Wards to the ruling Class' preferred development of the Loop as well as funneling resources into gentrification. An integral role of any Independent Alderman would be in exposing this and the limits of the capitalist parties in changing this status quo.

The Chicago elections will take place on Feb 24 and candidates must win a 50% majority plus one or they go into a runoff which will be held in April. We intend to continue to assess our work throughout this process and look to have more clear-cut conclusions after this process has completed. We also plan to collectively assess this election with the broader left in Chicago.

MR and NB

Organizing a Successful Labor Notes Troublemaker's School in San Diego

The purpose of this document is to open up for consideration the recent work of the San Diego branch in building a successful Labor Notes Regional Conference, or Troublemaker's school, this last October in San Diego.

By way of an introduction, let me explain that the conference was organized by the Coalition for Labor and Community Solidarity, a group that we founded back during the Occupy era under the name of Occupy San Diego Labor Solidarity Committee.

OSDLSC/CLCS, hereafter CLCS, has been meeting almost continuously since late 2011. Its guiding principle is unchanged: to bridge the chasm between organized labor and social justice struggle. CLCS has been involved in both the Ourwalmart and Fight for \$15 campaigns. It has planned May 1st events; it has waged defense campaigns in solidarity with fired FF15 worker Leobardo Meza and ex-student Raul Carranza, a MS sufferer who was forced to leave UCLA after the state of California slashed the funding for his nursing care. CLCS has hosted a broad range of panels, demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, organized Civil Disobedience, occupied State facilities, and was foiled by the police in the act of occupying a private residence.

Last spring 3 CLCS members attended the bi-annual Labor Notes Conference in Chicago. On the last day of the conference we invited a handful of fellow attendees from the San Diego Educational Association to breakfast to discuss "next steps". The result of the breakfast was a collective vow to bring a regional "Troublemaker's school" to San Diego.

CLCS' current regulars are drawn from the ranks of the ISO, PSL, teacher's unions, graduate teacher's unions, student organizations, the IWW, Ourwalmart, the FF15, and the SEIU, amongst other organizations, but the coalition has gone through many permutations, with the ISO as the one constant factor.

In its first incarnation as OSDLSC, the committee was able to take advantage of the Left Space created by the Occupy movement to attract loose elements within labor to working with radicals on a social justice model of unionism.

After the demise of Occupy, OSDLSC lost its non-ISO membership and flickered on and off for a few months. Fortunately, a new organizational space was created in the Spring of 2013 when UFCW local 135 invited OSDLSC constituents to form a new solidarity coalition around their Ourwalmart work. In some respects this new coalition, CLCS, was an improvement on OSDLSC. UFCW 135 gave the coalition a lot of latitude, if not complete independence, and in return CLCS received material and logistical support for its projects.

Unfortunately, UFCW 135 pulled the plug on CLCS after a few months when the serial -groper Democratic mayor of San Diego resigned in disgrace and the Union swung into election mode around a brand shiny new Dem candidate.

Just when it appeared that CLCS was going to follow OSDLSC into the dustbin of local history, the SEIU started a 'pilot' FF15 program in San Diego and hired one of CLCS' members as a recruiter.

One of the workers that this CLCS member recruited into the first FF15 strike in San Diego in August of 2013 was a 6-year McDonald's employee named Leobardo Mesa. A few weeks after Leobardo struck, he was fired by McDonald's for breaking the store's un-observed rule against buying food for the homeless. Of course, Leobardo wasn't really fired for feeding the homeless—he was fired in retaliation for going on strike. But the pretext for his firing was so craven and inflammatory that it played a major agitational role in his defense. More on this below.

Because LM was recruited by a CLCS member and trusted him, he came to us for help. The campaign that followed proved to be a breakthrough for CLCS and the FF15 in San Diego.

Leobardo was fired from the Park Ave McDonald's in downtown SD directly across from City College. City's student body is primarily Latino. City has a well-deserved reputation for the militancy of its students and the ISO has both a student and a faculty presence on campus.

Having previously organized within the Occupy movement, alongside the UFCW, and the SEIU, CLCS swung onto campus for the first time. Over the next few months, Leobardo, students, CLCS, organized Labor, and community members rallied on campus and marched across Park Avenue to picket and occupy Leobardo's McDonald's.

The occupations were rowdy! They were timed to coincide with the daily campus exodus as well as the high school exodus next door to the college. Our strategy was to publically shame McDonald's as loudly as possible and we definitely accomplished that goal.

One of our chants, "Fired for feeding the homeless", received media attention from across the nation, including the McDonald's business news that shareholders read to monitor their investments. During the store occupations some of the bolder high school kids joined in with loud good-natured mockery. This, alongside the cops and the media, gave a circus atmosphere to the scene .

Later, Leobardo's campaign turned the shaming attack from the store to the owner's residence, only to be aggressively repulsed by the local police. Leobardo's campaign did not get him his job back, but it did bear other fruit.

--Students in Power. A militant student organization with which we enjoy a very strong relationship. SiP is still meeting and growing one year later with some 40+ members and has produced 1 new ISO member and a number of close contacts.

--TheFF15. Leobardo's campaign helped put the San Diego FF15 on the map. Following the decision to expand the FF15 from a pilot program into a fully resourced campaign in San Diego, CP, the regional director placed in charge of the transition, arranged a private meeting with CLCS, in which she was generous in giving us credit. Also worth mentioning: In the ensuing year the number of FF strikers has increased from a handful in August 2013 to over 65 in December 2014.

The development of SiP in late 2013 was crucial to the subsequent development of relationships with Latino Left Community organizations that had previously alluded CLCS. This progression unfolded in the course of several months of planning meetings for the 2014 May Day rally and march. Whereas in previous years both CLCS and the San Diego branch of the ISO had struggled to find traction in this committee, CLCS and SiP won widespread approval for a vision of Mayday stressing the intersectionality of the FF15 with May 1 themes established in 2006 when the worker's holiday was reclaimed by historic masses of immigrant rights supporters, i.e. the ongoing struggle against racist state oppression and the ongoing struggle against an austerity agenda that contains the dismantling of public education as a centerpiece.

SiP, as Latinos, students, and low wage workers engaged in each of these intersecting struggles , was chosen with overwhelming support to host the opening rally @ City College, while CLCS developed friendships necessary to take the next step in its progression: the regional labor notes conference.

Earlier in this document I mentioned the Labor Notes Conference in Chicago where CLCS/ISO members connected w/ San Diego Education Association teachers and staffers over breakfast. To this fact I can now add the following context: the breakfast wouldn't have taken place if we hadn't already forged a relationship with the de facto leader of the SDEA group during May Day planning. This underscores the many-sided value of coalition work, which consists not only in the end-product-the event itself-but also in the by-product—the yield of relationships that can be harvested and replanted back into future projects.

Troublemaker school planning meetings began in July of 2014. The SDEA connection, staffer JM, produced a strong yield, both in terms of the number of previously off-radar education organizations that he helped pull into the CLCS orbit, and also in terms of the critical bridging function he performed as the liaison between CLCS and the Labor Notes staffer assigned to the SD project.

There were, of course, points of disagreement along the way between radical led CLCS and LN.

In particular, Labor Notes argued for including a large number of a-political “nuts and bolts” panels, while CLCS radicals advocated for more politically potent panels. Labor Notes argued for less panels, while CLCS radicals argued for more panels. And Labor Notes was reluctant to schedule panels that didn’t send representatives to planning meetings, whereas CLCS radicals advocated for the inclusion of panels organized via e-mail or telephone, regardless of whether they could make it to meetings or not.

In order to take on a project of this magnitude, CLCS needed the fusion of non-radical elements within Unions, like JM, but this then entailed a new problem: a dilution of radical hegemony within CLCS.

The answer to this problem was an unspoken but efficacious across the table working relationship with Latino Left Community organizations that had previously born fruit back in May 1 planning.

In the earlier event, CLCS had found itself in a similar but even worse situation: on a planning committee dominated by union staffers and religious organizations peddling a Mayday vision that prominently featured ‘nice’ Dem politicians and ‘nice’ businesses that they have ‘nice’ relationships with.

As easy as it was at the time to challenge, nay, belittle the idea of trumpeting dems and businesses on Mayday-- “Is our goal this Mayday to make Spies and Parsons roll over in their graves?” Or, “Aren’t the other 364 days a year enough that the working class has to listen to this BS on Mayday too?”--CLCS would not have carried the room on this and more substantive question if it were not the Moral Authority of Latino Community groups in agreement with us.

Local context: the overwhelming majority of the best and most politically active union staffers in San Diego are Latino. Latino Left, particularly Latino Liberation Community groups have a Moral Authority with Union Staffers—whether they are Latino or not—that class struggle based groups like CLCS and the ISO simply don’t-not yet anyway-despite the fact that we do in fact possess a certain Intellectual authority.

When these Latino Liberation groups joined CLCS both in speaking out against nice Dems and nice businesses and speaking up for Students in Power, it carried a decisive moral weight and routed the opposition.

When these same Latino Liberation groups joined Troublemaker’s School planning sessions and spoke out unequivocally against Capitalism, it put Union staffers like JM in a moral bind and damned if they didn’t tack as hard as they possibly could to the Left.

When things like this happen it makes you think to yourself “Hey, that wasn’t so hard. All we gotta do is bottle this up and keep it in a cool dry room for the future”

The Troublemaker’s School took place In October of 2014 at Lincoln High School, home, like City College, to some of the most radical and politically active educators and students in San Diego. Our keynote speaker was another educator, Jesse Hagopian, who came down from Seattle to share his struggle against MAP testing .

The TMS was a success both numerically and qualitatively. With an attendance of over 120 we reached towards a par with larger and more radical cities across the nation. More importantly, the content of the one day event was encouraging overall from a radical standpoint, not just in terms of the political punch that the panels in the front of the sessions packed, but also in terms of the answering punchback in kind that the panels inspired from the audiences packed into the various sessions.

The biggest disappointment was undoubtedly the relative failure of the CLCS panel, which, against CLCS radical’s best arguments, was a) moved to the midday break, putting it in direct conflict with free Mexican food and lunchtime social networking, b) buried at the bottom of the event guide, and c) stripped it of its description blurb, with the net result that several people that knew about it had trouble finding it, and several people that didn’t know what it was wandered casually in and out, unsettling the conversation.

The CLCS panel had been planned to be a “next steps” discussion. The goal was the same as the overarching goal for the TMS itself: to give birth to a new coalition that would meet on an ongoing basis dedicated to the project of building a Labor Left in San Diego.

When that did not happen, CLCS repackaged the unsuccessful panel into a re-launch event for January 2015. This effort was hampered by the fact that despite numerous requests from numerous quarters, LN failed to forward to CLCS the TMS registration contact info that they controlled through their website.

Nonetheless, the re-launch was a success with 35 people, including 6 non-ISO radicals and 7 local unions crowding into the small CLCS meeting place. In the first part of the meeting they heard presentations from representatives from 3 current social justice struggles: the FF15, a grass-roots Ferguson- inspired anti-police brutality coalition, and Olin Cali, a cross-border maquiladora solidarity organization. In the second half of the meeting there was a wide coalescence of agreement that formed around the core CLCS project of growing a sustained organized campaign committed to the integration of organized labor into the fight for a better world.

In the words of a long-time ISO member in his report back to the branch: “The trajectory we (CLCS) are on is towards establishing an organized labor left in San Diego!!!”

While there has been a long series of stages that have fueled CLCS’ current trajectory, last October’s Troublemaker’s school is the single greatest propellant.

Jim B., San Diego

Questions about growth, perspectives, and strategy for 2015

The last year has undoubtedly been more positive than 2013 and we have real reasons to remain optimistic about the coming year, as TC’s Organizational Perspectives in PCB6 argues. Recruiting a new layer of students is certainly an important accomplishment and should remain an ongoing goal for the generational renewal of the organization. The UC Berkeley branch has already been revitalized by recruiting 5 new members in the past six months.

However, I don’t think that these successes have answered some of the larger questions that were raised in some of the more honest ‘soul-searching’ that was done in the lead up to last year’s convention: questions about the relationship between quantitative and qualitative growth and our project today. Questions that in my mind were - and remain - about strategy.

I am concerned that continuing to primarily focus on recruitment (i.e. quantitative growth) through theory and history will inhibit our ability to develop concrete strategies (e.g. electoral, labor, movement, student) for advancing the class struggle and recruiting on that basis. While we should be sober about our limited ability to ‘prove our theory in practice,’ neglecting strategic discussions today will inhibit our ability to grow qualitatively and recruit those who are looking not just for ideas but concrete strategies for changing the world today.

Reorienting our routines

There is no question - as the pre-convention period attests every year - that our comrades are engaged in a diverse array of struggles, each with their own challenges. Yet I’ve consistently felt that we spend too little time assessing the vast experience of the organization as a whole and having consistent and ongoing discussions that can help us synthesize these experiences, draw lessons, and develop strategies. How could we shift our core routines - particularly SW and political education - to accomplish this?

We should all strive to write more assessments about the work we’re involved in so that they can be published in Socialist Worker. Obviously security has to be taken into account but we should expect and want those who read SW to know what our assessments and debates look like - not only our analysis of

what is happening in the world. This will make SW (whether electronic or print) more of the collective organizer that we aim for it to be.

Our education plan(s) and day schools should incorporate materials to give us a deeper understanding of the world today that will help us develop strategies to change it rather than focusing more exclusively on history and theory. We should spend more time studying the state of the US economy and working class as well as recent political developments in Latin America and Europe, where various left parties provide lessons about the challenges that lie ahead for us.

Toward an electoral strategy

Todd mentions in passing a conference on independent electoral politics in March in Chicago with Socialist Alternative and Solidarity. This seems like an important place to lay the basis for collaboration in the 2016 elections. What is our approach to this conference? I believe this deserves its own discussion at our convention. In 2014 the ISO participated in a wide variety of electoral campaigns, guided mostly by our principle of independence from the Democrats but without a guiding strategy beyond that.

Dan Seigel - who only de-registered as a Democrats in the months leading into the campaign at our behest - ran a fairly traditional campaign with the hopes of actually being elected Mayor of Oakland. Howie Hawkins, on the other hand, is a staunch Green and ran a much farther left campaign that though very serious, never expected to win. Tim Meegan and a number of other candidates are running for City Council seats in Chicago - I assume with the intent of winning; although unfortunately little has been written about our perspective on these campaigns.

Socialist Alternative had a strategy when they elected Kshama Sawant; explicit or not it seems clear that they ran their own campaign primarily to build their own organization. There is nothing wrong with this and I am glad that R and S's report (PCB10) argues that her election has also been a step forward for the working class in Seattle. This bold strategy may not have been ideal from our perspective but it certainly captured the attention of wide layers of radicalizing people in the US and beyond.

While I wouldn't argue for us to adopt the same strategy - to go it alone and run as the ISO in 2016 - I do believe we need to move toward developing an electoral strategy and that now is the time to begin that discussion. I think the key questions are whether to run to win (and where), whether to run explicitly socialist campaigns, and whether to run our own members. There will not be a one-size-fits-all cities or states solution (national races should be ruled out at this point) but I believe we should consider taking the initiative as an organization to start coalitions - and potentially put our members forward as candidates - to win, as socialists, in certain strategic races.

We should be aware of the resources required to take more serious responsibility for such campaigns as an organization but we should also recognize the potential rewards. If independent radicals see that we are not just committed organizers with socialist principles and smart tactics but are part of an organization who brings clear strategies to the movement then we will be in a position to gain more from such campaigns than we put into them. This is of course not guaranteed but shying away from this possibility (and others like it) guarantees that we will not grow qualitatively.

In this spirit I propose that the question of electoral strategy be added to the agenda for convention in place of the debate over Charlie Hebdo. While the question of Islamophobia is not one to be taken lightly I do not think it requires a debate at our convention because - regardless of my opinion on the controversial SW statement - I don't question the ISO's commitment to fighting this particular form of racism. I also do not think this question is of the strategic importance it might be to French comrades and that I believe the electoral question is for us.

DR
