

HWRS Balance Sheet for Second Congress (to be held in June 2012)
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It has been roughly three and a half years since HWRS was founded, and two and a half years since our first Congress. (See Appendix, last page.) This document summarizes our accomplishments during that time; what we have failed to do; the mistakes we have made; and a few concrete proposals to be considered in connection with the Tasks and Perspectives document. It is intended as a jumping off point for discussion, not as a definitive analysis. Corrections and additions are requested.

What We Have Accomplished

1. We have a presence and reputation on the Trotskyist Left, internationally and in the Bay Area, that is significant, especially in proportion to our forces.
2. We have developed and articulated positions on numerous issues relevant to the class struggle that have arisen during our existence (e.g., Chinese imperialism; the Arab Spring, Occupy).
3. We have maintained and strengthened our Liaison Committee connection with the CWG-NZ and the RWG-Z, and are reaching out to CoRep, the RKOB/RCIT, the LOI do Brasil, and the LCT of Argentina.
4. We have made a strong connection with LBB.
5. We have recruited two people (BMcC and CdB), and developed a small periphery (C. in Iowa, M. in NY, TdB).
6. We have a robust website and a relatively active Facebook page.
7. We have published four issues of IT and two substantial pamphlets. We have done a good job of maximizing our use of content once it is written (e.g., recycling the various Occupy flyers into an IT article; posting IT links and flyers on Facebook and the website).

What We Have Failed to Accomplish

1. We have not been careful enough about choosing how to expend our limited resources.
 - a. We too frequently undertake tasks without considering how they fit into the organization's overall priorities. This is in part because we have not really *set* overall priorities.
 - b. CR, our best public speaker and de facto leader, spent way too much time on CAPS issues, particularly the election. In retrospect, it was an error for CR to run for union office. His credentials as a militant trade unionist could have been maintained without the campaign and surrounding drama, which was a drain on his time and energy that the organization could not afford. In addition, the expulsion of CR and his colleague, and their efforts to

challenge their expulsion, threaten to put CR in the politically untenable position of being an opponent of the union itself rather than just its current leadership and staff. Conclusion: A revolutionary organization cannot do caucus work in the trade unions, unless it can be consistent in this work, and can attract a substantial base of support among workers who are open to socialism. Without consistency and a base that can be relied upon, we risk losing the respect and support of the workers.

- c. We have attended left events and demonstrations haphazardly and reflexively, without reflection as to what is the best way to spend comrades' time and where/how we are likely to make real contacts.
 - d. We have devoted time and energy to UPWA without adequate consideration of the political character of that organization and its value relative to its demands on our time (especially CR's).
 - e. We put a lot of energy into supporting the progressive teachers in Richmond without assessing whether their politics were really aligned with ours, or at least could be moved in that direction.
2. We have not completed all of the tasks we have set ourselves.
 - a. We have generally operated in an eclectic and undisciplined manner. We have made plans and then not followed through with them in a timely manner, either because they were unrealistic in light of our resources and other tasks, or because no one took responsibility for making sure they got done. For example, when DW proved to be too ill to carry out the task of writing a document on Russian imperialism, the project just got dropped; the organization never discussed whether another comrade should be assigned to do that work, or how it should be handled.
 - b. We have not developed a mode of functioning that ensures correct priorities and follow-through. We do not regularly take notes or minutes at meetings; we agree to undertake a task or project without identifying an individual who can and will take responsibility for seeing that it gets done; and we do not hold comrades to their commitments regarding tasks they agreed to accomplish.
 3. We have not yet recruited any young potential cadre. We need to put some intense effort into taking advantage of our connection with LBB in this regard.
 4. We have not significantly increased our numbers, even in the Bay Area, and have not successfully recruited any additional comrades in NY or elsewhere.
 5. We have not held any public forums since the one on Afghanistan, and we have had only one semi-public class (EB's presentation on State and Revolution).
 6. We have not been systematic and focused in regard to international work. The Liaison Committee has not progressed beyond essentially two organizations. We are slow to answer emails and generate documents needed for international work. We have not sent anyone abroad or invited any visits from overseas comrades.
 7. Our weekly meetings are not always as productive as they should be. We are too dependent on CR to set the agenda and serve as chair. The chair is not sufficiently

proactive in ensuring that comrades do not waste the group's time by repeating themselves, making lengthy, disjointed speeches, or talking about matters that are not even related to the topic on the agenda.

8. We are too dependent on DW with regard to theoretical and international work. Progress has been made recently on this front, with DC and CR taking the lead on the CoRep letter. This needs to continue.
9. We are too dependent on SH with regard to technical matters (English editing, website, layout of publications and flyers). Other comrades need to work on their own technical skills in writing, and at least one other comrade needs to learn Microsoft Publisher.

Mistakes We Have Made

1. Investing time and energy in SB and A. from Detroit – We did not assess accurately whether these people were worth the time and energy we expended on them. SB not only did not help the group, but actively damaged it by contributing to driving KB away. (JL probably would have left anyway.) To some degree, this was inevitable; due to our current small size, and the nature of the period and American culture, we attract unstable people, and it is often hard to tell how bad they are in advance.
2. Joining the FLTI – We went into this relationship too quickly, and did not put adequate time and effort into investigating the organization before announcing our entry into it. This was probably attributable to our subjective desire to acquire an international connection, combined with CR's relative inexperience in international work. Our brief sojourn in the FLTI was not without benefits, in the form of a revival of our relationship with DB in NZ, as well as the acquisition of contacts with the RWG and the LOI and LCT in Latin America. Nonetheless, our continuing search for international connections needs to be conducted with care. We should not form relationships with other organizations without first conducting a thorough analysis of their method, as well as their program, and assuring ourselves that their leadership is capable of objectivity and dialectical thinking.

Proposals (to be considered in context of Tasks and Perspectives document)

1. Priorities: We need to articulate a set of organizational priorities, and *apply* them consistently going forward. Given our limited resources, it is critical that we focus our energy on what is important, not what happens to be going on at a given moment. Of course, we need to be flexible; priorities may shift as events occur. But we should always be operating from some set of priorities rather than from reflexive reaction to the events of the moment.

2. Leadership: We need a functioning EC, even if it is only two comrades for now, that meets weekly and stays on top of everything the organization is doing.
3. Accountability: The leadership should assign a comrade to be responsible and accountable for each task we undertake. That does not mean the comrade will necessarily accomplish the task on his or her own; it just means the comrade is responsible for ensuring that it gets done. The leadership (or branch organizer) should maintain a list of tasks and responsible comrades, and go over it at each weekly meeting, touching base with responsible comrades as needed to make sure things don't drop through the cracks.
4. Discipline: How people spend whatever time they have available for political work should be a decision made by the organization, not by the individual.
5. Meetings:
 - a. Agenda: The EC should meet at least briefly in advance of each week's meeting to set the agenda, prioritizing the most important points, and developing a proposal regarding routine organizational matters (e.g., who will do what in the coming week). This will help ensure that comrades' time is used productively, focusing extended discussion on what is important and contributes to comrades' growth and development, while keeping time spent purely logistical matters to a minimum.
 - b. International discussion: The recent adoption of a system of assigning a comrade to prepare the international discussion for the following week should be continued. This encourages comrades to take responsibility for educating themselves, and for following and analysing international developments.
 - c. Chairing: We should rotate the chairperson at each meeting, encouraging comrades to develop their skills in this regard. Our organizational culture should shift to giving the chair more authority to ensure meeting time is spent productively.
 - d. Minutes: Someone should be appointed at each meeting to take notes of who is assigned to do what, and of any significant decisions reached. Those notes should be typed up and distributed electronically, so everyone has easy access to a record of what we decide and who is supposed to do what.
 - e. Organizational Logistics: It is important to be focused when dealing with logistics. When we plan something, a person should be assigned to be in charge of that task, and the group should help that person think through clearly what will be needed to carry it out. We cannot skip a logistical task which is one in a chain of logistical tasks, because we can screw the whole thing up. To that end, all comrades should be encouraged to keep a written or electronic calendar and a notebook, bring those items with them to meetings, and *use* them. We are all getting too old to rely on keeping things straight in our heads.
6. Technical matters: When we are ready to put together the next IT, SH should train a comrade on Microsoft Publisher and how to do the layout. Someone in the Bay

Area needs to be selected to do this work. Eventually, someone should be assigned to assist SH with maintaining the website. This needs to be someone who has or is interested in acquiring the necessary computer skills, and has the time to use them.

APPENDIX
What *Has Been* Done: An HWRS Chronology

Sat. Oct. 18, 2008 – First group “class” and decision to continue meeting
Sun. Oct. 19, 2008 – First Open Salon post by “Organian”
Nov.-Dec. 2008 – Regular weekly meetings begin; name HRS is chosen
Fall 2008-Summer 2009 – CR involvement in West Contra Costa School District issues
Jan. 10, 2009 – Public debut of HRS at climate change conference at Laney
Late Feb./Early March 2009 – Website goes live
May 2009 – Intervention in WERC; Facebook page created
June 2009 – Fraternal relations established with FLTI
July (?) 2009 – CR to Argentina
Sept. 2009 – First Congress (?); name change to HWRS; intervention at NUMMI
Oct. 2009 – Intervention in public education conference at UCB; Dov to Denver (?)
Nov. 2009(?) – SB arrives
Dec. 2009 – First “Int’l Workers Defender”; public internal debate w/ FLTI re China
Jan. 2010 – First issue of IT; Dialectics pamphlet; JL resigns (?)
Feb. 2010 – March 4 organizing; March on Chevron; public forum on Afghanistan
March 2010 – SB leaves (?); KB resigns
March 4, 2010 – “Day of Action” for public education
Early March 2010 – Split with FLTI & formation of LC announced
Spring-Summer 2010 – Contact with A. in Detroit
Summer 2010 – Second issue of IT (education focus); Chinese Imperialism pamphlet
Fall 2010 – CR involvement in anti-furlough protests, UPWA
Spring 2011 – Wisconsin protests; Arab Spring; CR involvement in CAPS
Fall 2011 – Third issue of IT (Arab Spring focus); CR CAPS campaign; Occupy
Winter 2011-2012 – Occupy; CdB recruited; ties with LBB & Iowa connection created
Spring 2012 – Fourth issue of IT (Occupy focus)