

## ON THE WORK IN CAPS:

Our organization can not propagandize for one thing and practice another. For example you can not say to workers: “You should launch caucuses in your unions to take your unions back and turn them into organs of the class struggle.” while on the other hand you sit back and do nothing in your own union. The only comrade who followed the internal logic of their union situation doing exemplary work exposing the nature of the bureaucracy, its compliancy with management, its economist role and its inability to deliver to the membership has been chastised for wasting the organizations time by participating in a drama. To the contrary, the comrades in the unions are obliged to find a road to the membership and not be kibitzers scolding the workers from the sidelines. The artificial separation between the “revolutionary worker” and participation in the class struggle in their own work place concedes the struggle for the leadership of the working class without a fight. This has long been the method of “fake socialists” who maintain their “militant trade union credentials” by simply wearing the union colors and doing what is asked of them by the leadership, it is the task of the revolutionary worker to find a way to challenge the usurpers in their own unions not to simply polish their worker credentials by flying their union colors.

Struggle where you work! How many socialist workers are socialist outside of work and cave to the union at work? That is not our role. If comrades think what we have participated in is a drama they clearly comrades do not understand the impact that our work in CAPS has had. Not only has it exposed the role the corporate usurpers of CAPS and PECG it has shown that both the leadership and the corporate thugs are vulnerable and that workers don't have to lay down like sheep. Many workers came to understand that they were not alone in being mistreated by the thugs and despite dozens asking us to remove them from the email list hundreds did not! The leadership and their agents (B&B) under threat of exposure had to go on attack mode and exposed themselves as undemocratic and willing to use the courts against their own members. The current leadership is incapable of meeting any of its promises to the membership and will be exposed, for their cozy relationship with the very politicians who force concessionary agreements on the workers. They are so threatened by the fact that they can not deliver the goods that even after throwing us out of the union the President has had to do a hit piece on us on his web page because he has nothing concrete to offer the members except our heads on a platter.

It is sad to note that no one in the HWRS lifted a finger in defense of our comrade from the hit piece, no one from HWRS attended the court case against their own comrade, contrawise the IFUC comrades and Topaz of LB&B recognize the need to express solidarity when militant workers are being railroaded and sent us and letters of support and chastised CAPS leadership in separate letters. And it is sadder indeed that the HWRS comrades see this work as a waste of effort.

We are admonished for wasting so much time on the CAPS situation because there were no concrete gains for the organization. This is not only an expression of ignorance, pragmatism but of the classic opportunism. The trap of elevate our groups significance above the class struggle to the extent that we can justify abstentionism in our own unions because, in our twisted pragmatic viewpoint, the only real advance of the class struggle is measured in the consolidated contacts we make over the short term is a distortion of the dialectic. It is foolish to have a comrade in a union under attack and look elsewhere for them to participate in the class struggle. My experience in socialist politics has been that there is rarely a political struggle in my immediate surroundings (that is due to the relative backwardness of the working class consciousness) but then when some one shows up and opens their mouth with programmatic clarity –well, lets just say the cart follows the ox. An then all hell breaks loose. Some call it drama I call it intervening in the class struggle.

This method of only intervening where gains are guaranteed or waiting until you have a core of socialist workers ready to do caucus work is wrong in so many ways. When looking at the CAPS balance sheet comrades must consider that it was through the work in the Inter-Union Organizing Committee (IUOC) that we were guided to challenge what CAPS was doing (rather was not doing) in the first place. It was the do nothing attitude of SEIU, CAPS and the other State workers unions that propelled our comrade into a leadership position at the workplace. It was our initiatives to unite State workers and the Richmond teachers and students which filled the Richmond Bus to the Sacramento Rally building a unity which the unions ran from! Apparently it was these combined efforts which brought B into our milieu and challenged her to develop in our direction. It was the defeat of the workers in the contract of the summer of 2010 that resulted in the mass demoralization, the disintegration of the IUOC and the subsequent capitulation of CAPS to Jerry Brown's give back contract. It was this series of events that ultimately drove a group of CAPS militants to challenge the leadership in the name of democratic unionism and on the program of the CAPSFUC.

Our interventions at CAPS meetings had already established the undemocratic practices of the leadership but we were prevented from bringing this information to the membership. Indeed the pressure was building among those who could see the undemocratic violations and lack of representation which we had exposed. But the membership as a whole was kept in the dark. To challenge the democracy to function we had one option. The only way left to address our own union members was to run for office in order to put our program of struggle before them.

What has not been recognized, by those who disregard this work as a waste of time is that our actions have ripple effects across the state and across the various unions. Our run against the CAPS leadership and their corporate controllers not only inspired 25% of those participating in the election to vote for us (an amazing percentage based on our program and our being virtually unknown) but it invigorated workers in other unions who had been demoralized by the contract set

back. Recently we were approached by workers in San Diego from PECG who have similar experience with B&B. Our participation at the UPWA sponsored conference allowed us to tell the story of CAPS putting us in contact with indyTrot PT\* who also has a history to tell about B&B and who has since agreed to join the speak out at the PERB hearing. Everyone in the know about the State Workers movement knows about CAPS, PECG and B&B, they are seen as scab outfits and we are at the center of the attack on this for-profit corporation which is draining our co-workers of 10 million plus a year. Our agitation has pointed consistently at the role of B&B the strategy of the leadership and the class and political dialectic at play. Only an ignorant fool or stooge would mistake our fight for workers rights with a right wing attack on the union. Indeed when we consider the origin of the organization formed by the corporation which set to itself the task of organizing CAPS and writing itself a paycheck in perpetuity, the lack of any venue for workers participation, we have shown CAPS to be a union in name only. It functions as a union for negotiating purposes but is not a workers organization, as control over the workers ability to democratically participate has been effectively enforced. CAPS is a captive union and not a workers' organization rather it is a profit center for B&B.

Some consider the labor aristocracy a waste of time. Despite the scientists and engineers being labor aristocracy, many have pay no better than the CNA, lower than the best paid longshoreman and about even with San Francisco County Painters. They are a layer of workers who for a long time were the quintessential "middle class" but today are finding out that being bench or research scientists and drafting room engineers, they are really just workers selling their mental labor power. It is not surprising that we have anarchists and socialists of various sorts in these unions nor should it have surprised us to find our co-workers from CAPS and PECG at the Oscar Grant rallies and at the Occupy.

So comrades who are looking for the quick fix by cutting out the CAPS work are being short sighted. It is particularly because we stood firm and are taking the fight to its next logical step that we are gaining support and reputations as militant fighters for workers democracy. WW was already contacted by workers who will support him in the next run for office. The long term benefits from this kind of work can not be measured in weeks or months. The CLA would have been negligent if they withdrew the Dunne brothers and Farrell Dobbs from the work in Minneapolis in their early years when the CLA needed to consolidate the organization. We should not make that mistake either. Indeed if we are making a mistake in our trade union work it is in not being more active in SEIU 1021's contract fight.

\*PT may be a good contact but takes his leadership on Libya from Answer. Which means first we have to engage him on Libya then we may be able to defeat his Spart position on China.

CR & DJC  
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