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Labour
Journal of Canadian Labour Studies
Le Travail
Revue d'Études Ouvrières Canadiennes

The New Left at Work
Workers' Unity, the New Tendency, and Rank-and-File Organizing in Windsor, Ontario, in the 1970s

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Volume 85, Spring 2020

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1070904ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

ISSN

0700-3862 (print)
1911-4842 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Antaya, S. (2020). The New Left at Work: Workers' Unity, the New Tendency, and Rank-and-File Organizing in Windsor, Ontario, in the 1970s. *Labour / Le Travail*, *85*, 53–89. https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

Article abstract

This article examines rank-and-file organizing in Windsor's automobile factories during the 1970s. In particular, I look at the history of two organizations: Workers' Unity and the New Tendency's Auto Worker Group. I demonstrate how these groups were part of the North American New Left's broader turn toward Marxism and the working class that contributed to the emergence of radical rank-and-file movements that challenged both management and bureaucratized trade union leaders. In Windsor, New Left auto workers embraced forms of autonomist Marxist politics concerned primarily with working-class self-activity at the point of production, and these activists formed connections with influential theorists and organizations in Detroit and Italy. Putting these intellectual exchanges into action, the rank-and-file organizations in Windsor used direct action in an attempt to improve working conditions and develop a radical culture of democracy on the shop floor. Although these groups were relatively short lived, their history tells us much about the trajectory of the New Left in Canada and the ways that former student activists grappled with the radical potential of 1970s working-class militancy.

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Labour / Le Travail
ISSUE 85 (2020)
ISSN: 1911-4842

ARTICLE

The New Left at Work: Workers' Unity, the New Tendency, and Rank-and-File Organizing in Windsor, Ontario, in the 1970s

Sean Antaya

The 1970s tend to be portrayed as a decade of reaction and retreat – a snuffing out of the so-called 1960s youthful idealism, the end of the Keynesian postwar boom, and the beginning of a reactionary neoliberal order.[1] There is no doubt that the end of the 1970s was indeed characterized by a sharp right political turn, the consequences of which are still being felt today. But such narratives overlook and mask the incredibly rich struggle from below waged throughout the decade by men and women who envisioned a very different future, one characterized not by brutal inequality, a withering of workers' power, and imperialist wars but by higher wages, better working conditions, and ever-improving social services.

These working-class struggles signalled different things to different people. Some were no doubt waged to secure gradual, but materially meaningful, palliative reforms. Others saw in the class conflicts of the 1970s the possibility of proletarian revolution, the radical extension of democracy over all aspects of social and economic life, and the total liberation of human potential from the

1. Lane Windham offers a recent corrective to this perspective, noting that even the widely praised Jefferson Cowie largely interprets the 1970s as a period of labour's decline despite continued militancy throughout the decade. Moreover, public-sector unions gained ground during this period and, in many cases, these workforces were disproportionately composed of women and racialized people, who were often just beginning to reap the benefits of union membership for the first time. See Windham, *Knocking on Labor's Door: Union Organizing in the 1970s and the Roots of a New Economic Divide* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 3–9. See also Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

Sean Antaya, "The New Left at Work: Workers' Unity, the New Tendency, and Rank-and-File Organizing in Windsor, Ontario, in the 1970s," *Labour/Le Travail* 85 (Spring 2020): 53–89, https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003.

fetters of the capitalist workplace. Among this latter contingent was a revitalized New Left that turned its focus toward Marxism and turbulent workplace organizing after the decline and dissipation of the student movement and a meandering search for new revolutionary subjects. At the same time, this New Left struggled with the failures of its predecessors, hoping instead to develop a praxis that would transcend earlier errors and take advantage of the window for radical change that appeared to be open.[2]

Canadian historians have only relatively recently begun to examine the role of the New Left in Canadian workplaces during the 1970s in any great depth. The most prominent of these studies is Ian Milligan's *Rebel Youth*, which examines the New Left's engagement with the labour movement throughout the long sixties and shows how many New Leftists often ended up reconciling their differences with the mainstream labour movement in an attempt to reinvigorate it from within.[3] However, as Bryan Palmer notes in a review of the book, while Milligan correctly identifies the New Left turn toward Marxism, the working class, and ultimately the mainstream labour movement during this period, he largely ignores those organizations on the revolutionary left that attempted to engage with the working class outside of, and quite often in opposition to, the official labour movement. As a result, both the successes and, more often, the failures of these endeavours remain largely unexplored.[4] I likewise believe it is worthwhile to rescue such overlooked organizations from the "enormous condescension of posterity."[5]

Rank-and-file and oppositional union movements of both a reform and a revolutionary nature emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a result of the largely youth-driven upsurge in militancy against the poor working conditions and inattentive union bureaucracies that characterized workplaces

2. On the trajectory of the New Left in Canada, see Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 245–309; Ian Milligan, *Rebel Youth: 1960s Labour Unrest, Young Workers, and New Leftists in English Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); Peter Graham with Ian McKay, *Radical Ambition: The New Left in Toronto* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2019); Myrna Kostash, *Long Way from Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1980). Interestingly, much of the writing on labour and the New Left in the 1970s addresses women workers. See, for example, Joan Sangster, "Remembering Texpack: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Militancy in Canadian Unions in the 1970s," *Studies in Political Economy* 78, 1 (2006): 41–66; Julia Smith, "An 'Entirely Different' Kind of Union: The Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada (SORWUC), 1972–1986," *Labour/Le Travail* 73 (2014): 23–65; Meg Luxton, "Feminism as a Class Act: Working-Class Feminism and the Women's Movement in Canada," *Labour/Le Travail* 48 (2001): 63–88; Heather Jon Maroney, "Feminism at Work," *New Left Review* 141 (1983): 51–71.

3. Milligan, *Rebel Youth*.

4. Bryan Palmer, "Rebel Youth Offers Depth but Lacks Dimension," *Canadian Dimension* 50, 3 (2016), https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/rebel-youth-offers-depth-but-lacks-dimension.

5. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1968), 13.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

across North America.[6] They were also one manifestation of the broader New Left turn to the working class, and many former student activists sought out blue-collar jobs; they did so sometimes out of necessity and sometimes as part of a conscious political strategy to industrialize and embed themselves in working-class experiences and struggles. Once in the workplace, activists could link up with existing oppositional groups or attempt to organize new ones by forming alliances with other militant workers.[7]

While a substantial body of scholarly literature examines the significance of American rank-and-file movements like the League of Revolutionary Black Workers and the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, there is little focus on similar movements in Canada.[8] Though it is important not to overstate the similarities between these incredibly varied rank-and-file organizations, because of their very different contexts and end goals, parallels can indeed be found in their general struggles over union democracy, their use of direct action, and the repression that these groups faced from union bureaucrats during this particular historical moment for the North American labour movement and the left. The diversity of tactics represented by these groups also speaks to the heterogeneity and creativity of the New Left during this period; they illustrate the different ways in which former student activists sought to move forward and engage in working-class struggles during a time when the possibilities for social transformation and revolution appeared limitless to many.

This article will explore the history of Workers' Unity (WU) and The New Tendency's Auto Worker Group (AWG), two rank-and-file organizations

6. On the militancy of this period, see Stuart Jamieson, *Industrial Relations in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), 94–115; Palmer, *Canada's 1960s*, 211–241; Milligan, *Rebel Youth*; Peter McInnis, "'Hothead Troubles': Sixties Era Wildcat Strikes in Canada," in Lara Campbell, Dominique Clement & Gregory S. Kealey, eds., *Debating Dissent: Canada and the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 155–172.

7. See, for example, Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Che, and Mao* (New York: Verso Books, 2002), 132–134.

8. On the LRBW, see Dan Georgakas & Marvin Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); James Geschwender, *Class, Race, and Worker Insurgency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Kieran Taylor, American Petrograd: Detroit and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," in Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner & Cal Winslow, eds., *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below in the Long 1970s* (New York: Verso Books, 2010), 311–334. On TDU, see Dan La Botz, *Rank-and-File Rebellion: Teamsters for a Democratic Union* (New York: Verso Books, 1990); Samuel Friedman, *Teamster Rank and File: Power, Bureaucracy, and Rebellion at Work and in a Union* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). See also the discussion on the various reform movements that existed within other large unions, such as the United Mine Workers of America, in Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*, 23–74. In Canada, small independent unions such as Canadian Textile and Chemical Union and the Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada were militant, socialist, and feminist-oriented unions that likewise came into conflict with the corporatist and chauvinist CLC officialdom. See Sangster, "Remembering Texpack"; Smith, "'Entirely Different.'"

active within the automobile factories of Windsor, Ontario, during the 1970s. Relying primarily on newsletters, leaflets, newspaper coverage, and internal documents, in addition to interviews conducted with some of the most active members, I reconstruct the experiences of these once vibrant shop-floor organizations. WU provided the first working-class organizing experiences for a number of former student organizers in Windsor and directly challenged both management and an ossified labour bureaucracy – often using direct action tactics to secure improved working conditions and entrench a culture of resistance on the shop floor, especially within Chrysler's Plant 2. The AWG sought to build on these earlier experiences but was also linked to a larger New Left project as part of the Labour Centre (TLC), which functioned as the Windsor branch of the Canadian autonomist Marxist organization the New Tendency (TNT). The AWG's history therefore also reveals much about the broader history of the New Left and the ways that revolutionary organizations engaged in workplace organizing during this period. Indeed, the histories of WU, the AWG, and TNT is also interwoven with larger theoretical debates that proliferated within the New Left at this time, and this study illustrates the transnational development of New Left ideas and organizations by examining activists' connections to comparable groups active in Italy and the United States. Ultimately, however, internal theoretical disputes also contributed to the dissolution of both TNT and the AWG, as erstwhile comradely debate often hardened into rigid sectarianism.

While this history has obvious relevance to labour, the left, and the 1970s, it is worthwhile to examine these particular struggles in Windsor for a number of reasons. First, Windsor was – and remains, however precariously – an essential hub of the Canadian automotive industry. The auto industry and its workers played a central role in the development of 20th-century capitalism and class conflict in North America, as evidenced by the very concepts of Fordism and post-Fordism that tend to dominate political economy literature. Additionally, as Antonio Gramsci observed, auto factories in many ways represent capitalism's most highly organized and advanced productive capabilities.[9] Though one should be careful not to overemphasize the importance of factory workers among the working class, it is hard to deny that there is something about the mechanized factory setting, with its automation, high division of labour, and utter dehumanization, that seems to simultaneously evoke both the innovative potential and the sheer brutality of capitalist social relations. Reiterating an older Marxist argument, Mike Davis notes in a 2017 article for *Catalyst* that it is precisely these conditions within the industrial factory system that organize "the workforce as a synchronized collectivity that through struggle and conscious organization can become a community of solidarity."[10] While

9. Antonio Gramsci, "Americanism and Fordism," in Quentin Hoare & Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: Electric Book Company, 1999), 558–622.

10. Mike Davis, "Old Gods, New Enigmas," *Catalyst* 1, 2 (2017): 21.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

much of this production has now moved elsewhere, it follows that if one seeks to understand the inner workings of capitalism and class conflict in Canada, investigating the auto industry and the experiences of auto workers over the course of the 20th century will produce valuable insights.

Likewise, as A. C. Jones has argued, the United Auto Workers (UAW) represents the "vanguard" of the labour movement in some respects, as "its successes marked the progress of the movement, its failures, its retreats."[11] Though Jones was referring to the American labour movement, the quotation applies just as easily to Canada. To understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Canadian labour movement over time, the once mighty UAW (later the Canadian Auto Workers [CAW] and now Unifor), the workplaces within which it operated, and the union's relationship with the rank-and-file all ought to be important areas of research. At the same time, investigating both the organizations and the spontaneous revolts that challenged the UAW's legitimacy as the sole arbiter of workers' struggles on the shop floor extends understandings of working-class resistance and the consciousness of the rank-and-file, complementing conventional studies of union history. If Detroit's auto industry and the conditions of workplace resistance in the 1960s and 1970s have been the subject of numerous studies, little has been published on Windsor's working-class self-activity during the same period.[12]

Indeed, in Canada, the literature on the UAW and its successors tends to focus on the broader factional conflicts within the UAW between the Canadian and American sections of the union and the historic battles between the left and right union caucuses. When 1970s rank-and-file militancy and the New Left are explored at all, they tend to be filtered through the lenses of these

11. A. C. Jones, "Rank-and-File Opposition in the UAW during the Long 1970s," in Brenner, Brenner & Winslow, eds., *Rebel Rank and File*, 282. See also John Barnard, *American Vanguard: The United Auto Workers Union during the Reuther Years, 1935–1970* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004).

12. Instead, most of the labour literature on Windsor tends to focus on the 1945 Ford strike and the resulting Rand formula. See, for example, Herb Colling, *Ninety-Nine Days: The Ford Strike in Windsor, 1945* (Toronto: NC Press, 1995); Mary E. Baruth-Walsh & G. Mark Walsh, *Strike: 99 Days on the Line* (Manotick: Penumbra Press, 1995); Sam Gindin, *The Canadian Auto Workers: The Birth and Transformation of a Union* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1995), 98–105; David Moulton, "Ford Windsor 1945," in Irving Abella, ed., *On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada 1919–1949* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1975), 129–162; Irving Abella, *Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist Party, and the Canadian Congress of Labour, 1935–1956* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 144–148; William Kaplan, "How Justice Rand Devised His Famous Formula," in Judy Fudge & Eric Tucker, eds., *Work on Trial: Canadian Labour Law Struggles* (Toronto: Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2010), 77–110. On class struggle in Windsor during the period prior to the Ford strike, see John Manley, "Communists and Auto Workers: The Struggle for Industrial Unionism in the Canadian Automobile Industry, 1925–36," *Labour/Le Travail* 17 (1986): 105–133. One notable exception that does examine the 1970s is Jeremy Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear: Violence at Work in the North American Auto Industry, 1960–80* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017).

larger battles and the degree to which leadership factions were able to integrate demands from below.[13] There is no doubt that these conflicts had significant ramifications for both auto workers and the Canadian working class more broadly, and I certainly do not mean to downplay them here. However, for the most part, this research has not explored independent rank-and-file groups and their experiences on the shop floor in particular locales in any sustained way.[14] Similarly, with the important exception of the Waffle, the varied New Left politics embraced by auto worker militants is not addressed in any great depth in such studies.[15] A study of WU and The New Tendency's AWG thus takes us into largely uncharted territory.

Workers' Unity

Workers' Unity first emerged as a rank-and-file group based out of Windsor Chrysler's Plant 2 as part of a grassroots opposition to UAW Local 444 president Charlie Brooks and the system of patronage that he established within the local. Brooks had previously gained notoriety for splitting Local 444 from the more conservative UAW Local 195 in 1956. Early on, Brooks was a member of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and he remained on the left wing of the UAW bureaucracy for his entire life, often coming into conflict with the more moderate labour bureaucrats such as George Burt and others aligned to the social-democratic faction in the union.[16] Brooks, a firm proponent of social unionism, was well liked in the community for his support of various social justice issues and his ostensible continuation of the UAW's pre–World War II militancy and the legacy of the famous 1945 Windsor Ford strike.[17] Brooks was not unattached to the Canadian New Left and, in particular, the left-nationalist currents within it. Indeed, left nationalism was already

13. See, for example, Gindin, *Canadian Auto Workers*, 141–195; Charlotte Yates, *From Plant to Politics: The Autoworkers' Union in Postwar Canada* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 143–201; Bob White, *Hard Bargains: My Life on the Line* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987), 111–169. A somewhat different perspective can be found in Jason Russell, *Our Union:* UAW/CAW *Local 27 from 1950 to 1990* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011).

14. Milloy's work on Windsor is an exception here. See Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear.*

15. See the discussions on the Waffle and the UAW in Gindin, *Canadian Auto Workers*, 155–162; Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 149–157, 167–172; White, *Hard Bargains*, 112; Russell, *Our Union*, 60–69.

16. Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 90–93. While most scholarly works have only noted that Brooks was suspected to be a Communist, Mike Longmoore confirmed that Brooks was indeed a member of the CPC at one point, noting that Brooks played a role in recruiting him to the CPC. Longmoore, interview by the author, Windsor, Ontario, 29 June 2017. Burt had in fact been an important leader in the UAW's left caucus prior to World War II but gradually shifted his allegiances after the war, eventually purging Communists at Reuther's behest by the late 1950s. See Abella, *Nationalism*, 164–167; Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 98–99.

17. Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 148.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

one of the tools used by Communists and left wingers such as Brooks to retain support in Canada against the dominance of American Reutherites in the International Union who sought to purge them.[18] Most notably, he, along with other Windsor labour leaders on the UAW's left (often other CPCers or ex-CPCers), supported the NDP's Waffle faction before it was defeated by the right wing of the Canadian labour movement's bureaucracy.[19] Furthermore, Brooks opposed the Vietnam War, supported nuclear disarmament, and helped establish a firm antiwar position within the Canadian UAW.[20]

In the workplace and in the local itself, however, workers' perception of Brooks was more complex. While still enjoying a great deal of support because of his outwardly radical rhetoric, Brooks came into conflict with younger workers' resurgent militancy. For many young and radical Chrysler workers, Brooks became the symbol of the increasingly detached and repressive labour bureaucracy that too often held workers back in the post–World War II era.[21] Brooks' commitment to radicalism was indeed predicated on his own ability to hang on to power, and he was by many accounts extremely adept and efficient at co-opting and outmanoeuvring any opposition that emerged within the local.[22] Further, his objective place in the Fordist system of industrial relations meant that he was legally compelled to quell most workplace disruptions within the life of a contract regardless of his personal beliefs or convictions, and thus this system of industrial legality placed him in opposition to young wildcatters and dissidents who sought to take direct action on the shop floor.[23]

It was in this climate that Workers' Unity emerged in 1970. Formed by militant Chrysler workers John Horne and Al Dumouchelle, alongside Dumouchelle's

18. Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 90–104. It is important to note that left nationalism was not exclusive to the Communists in the union, even if they were arguably its most militant and principled supporters. Others, including those closer to the union's right wing who were ultimately sympathetic to the International leadership, such as George Burt and Dennis McDermott, deployed softer forms of left nationalism when they saw fit. See Gindin, *Canadian Auto Workers*, 159; White, *Hard Bargains*, 111–112. Left nationalism in the UAW's Canadian branch, of course, culminated in the CAW's split from the UAW in 1984 under Bob White's leadership.

19. Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 153–155. On the rise and fall of the Waffle, see John Bullen, "The Ontario Waffle and the Struggle for an Independent Socialist Canada: Conflict within the NDP," *Canadian Historical Review* 64, 2 (1983): 189–215.

20. Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 148.

21. Here it is important to note that social unionism and business unionism are, in some ways, two sides of the same coin in the context of postwar industrial relations. Bryan Palmer's discussion on this theme is instructive. See Palmer, *Working Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800–1991* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 370–378.

22. Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 90. In addition to Yates, this view of Brooks came across in the interviews I conducted with Jim Monk, Ron Baxter, and Jim Brophy.

23. See also Brooks' reaction to wildcats in "UAW Urges Stop to Illegal Walkouts," *Windsor Star*, 14 June 1971.

wife, Lucy, a New Left tenant organizer connected to the student movement, WU attempted to challenge the Fordist system of unionism. In the plants, Horne had a reputation as something of a wild man and remained a divisive figure throughout the 1970s. As Ron Baxter recalled, Horne had worked at the Heinz tomato-processing factory in Leamington, Ontario, before getting a job at Chrysler. While working at Heinz, Horne had gained notoriety for pelting a hated foreman with tomatoes, and he carried over this cavalier attitude to his job on the assembly line and in his union politics in the UAW.[24]

In the beginning, WU was primarily formed to take on the Brooks administration within Local 444. The organization retained its anti-Brooks orientation over the course of its short lifespan, but soon after its founding, members began to see WU as a vehicle to empower the rank-and-file and challenge the ossified union structure altogether. Unconcerned with the obligations of industrial legality that constrained Brooks and other labour bureaucrats, WU endorsed direct action on the shop floor, such as wildcat and sit-down strikes, and focused primarily on improving everyday working conditions and health and safety standards. When the organization first emerged in the 1970 Local 444 elections for union president, WU made it clear the group was running a candidate only to gain a platform and some recognition in the plants. Though Horne lost the election to Brooks, WU did gain 22 per cent of the votes, suggesting that it was tapping into real discontent among a segment of the Chrysler workers. Following the election, WU continued to leaflet workers on issues related to working conditions and further critiques of Brooks.[25]

While WU continued to build up popularity in the Chrysler plants, it also began to attract supporters from elsewhere in the community. In particular, former student activists Mike Longmoore and Joe Longmoore, and Mike's wife, Margaret, began to associate with the emerging group.[26] Mike, who got a job working in one of Windsor's Ford plants after graduating university, had deep roots in Windsor's working-class community and left-wing culture. His father had likewise worked at Ford, and as a child Mike was inadvertently involved in the 1945 strike when he and his mother got stuck in the now famous blockade. The Longmoores grew up on Drouillard Road in the working-class neighbourhood outside of the Ford factory on Windsor's East Side, and Mike continued to live there throughout this time.[27] In this climate, the Longmoores became well acquainted with many of Windsor's old radicals, such as Nels Dearing, Cliff Gunther, and Mansfield Matthias. These older radicals had memories of

24. Ron Baxter, interview by the author, Windsor, Ontario, 31 May 2017.

25. Ron Baxter & Bronwen Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," *The Newsletter*, no. 4 (1974): 3, 6–7.

26. [Bronwen Wallace?], Workers' Unity timeline, internal TNT document, Windsor, n.d. [1973?], personal collection of Gary Kinsman (hereafter PCGK); Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 5.

27. Longmoore interview.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

building the UAW and recalled the CPC's former strength, although many such veterans of the class struggle had either left the party by this point or otherwise loathed Stalinism's historical record.[28] While Matthias and Gunther were onetime CPCers, others had always remained independent despite their close relationships with Communists within the UAW's left-wing caucuses. These independent radicals included Victor White and the anarchist Spanish Civil War veteran Federico Arcos, whose antipathy to the Communist Party was rooted in his understanding of its role in the Spanish Republic's loss to Franco's Fascists. All of these figures were associated with the dissident CPC milieu at Ford Windsor.[29] The Longmoores were similarly sympathetic to the old CPC and tended to adhere to its theoretical perspective, but Mike was not particularly dogmatic in this sense and was very much involved in the younger generation of New Leftists, taking part in the rank-and-file revolts from below. Further complicating the situation, some of the older radicals on the executive of the Windsor and District Labour Council with whom Mike Longmoore associated were still quite close to Brooks owing to his old connections to the Communist Party and the left-wing caucuses within the UAW.[30]

The WU's New Left–inflected working-class politics also attracted young activists elsewhere in the province who were also turning toward workplace organizing. Most prominently, Ron Baxter and Bronwen Wallace, two student activists who later played essential roles in TNT, moved from Kingston to Windsor mainly because they were captivated by WU's organizing efforts at Chrysler and saw it as an important experiment in building working-class power outside of the traditional Marxist and social-democratic parties and organizations. They also believed that, because of Horne's and Dumouchelle's professed commitment to reflecting the direct will of the rank-and-file, the WU project had the potential to be somewhat different from the "boring from within" tactics of trying to take over a union executive and implement a radical program from above.[31]

28. Communist Party organizers were instrumental in organizing the UAW in Windsor and beyond, and union leaders associated with the CPC often maintained an organic connection to the rank-and-file prior to the postwar purge. See Manley, "Communists and Auto Workers"; David Fraser, "Years of Struggle: A History of Local 200 of the United Automobile Workers of America at Ford of Canada, Windsor, Ontario, 1941 to 1955," MA thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1983, 77–78, 87; Abella, *Nationalism*, 30–31, 49; Gindin, *Canadian Auto Workers*, 56; J. S. Napier, *Memories of Building the* UAW (Toronto: Canadian Party of Labour, 1975).

29. Longmoore interview. Jim Brophy helped to further explain some the political dynamics surrounding the group of older radicals. Brophy, interview by the author, by telephone, 3 August 2017. For more on Federico Arcos and his fascinating life story, see Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005), 400–407.

30. Nels Dearing and John MacArthur, for example, were members of the Brooks administration at Chrysler. Ed Baillargeon was similarly close to Brooks.

31. Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 3–15.

Both Baxter and Wallace attended Queen's University and were heavily involved in New Left activism and organizing on campus. Wallace had been a member of the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Student Union for Peace Action and was also heavily involved with the women's movement.[32] Baxter was similarly involved with New Left groups at Queen's, where he and his comrades faced significant repression from the RCMP, who raided radical students' apartments and collaborated with the university administration to expel Chuck Edwards, one of Baxter's closest friends, who served as president of the radical Canadian Union of Students–affiliated student council prior to his expulsion.[33]

Because of both RCMP repression and the changing theoretical trends within the student movement, Baxter and Wallace decided to leave campus politics behind. Baxter's turn toward the working class was largely catalyzed by reading Andre Gorz's influential tract, *Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal*, in which Gorz calls for the New Left to reinvigorate and democratize the labour movement and to organize around "non-reformist reforms" in the advanced capitalist countries.[34] Baxter was also increasingly interested in the emerging autonomist Marxist movement in Italy following the "Hot Autumn" of 1969, wherein students and workers fomented a near revolution by launching massive wildcat strikes across the country, organized independently of the traditional labour unions and the Communist Party.[35]

Italian autonomist Marxism was first developed by dissident theorists in the Italian Communist and Socialist Parties. In particular, a group of thinkers, including Mario Tronti and Raniero Panzieri, associated with the journals *Quaderni Rossi* (Red Notebooks) and *Classe Operaia* (Working Class) gave rise to *operaismo* (workerism) during the early 1960s. Workerism emphasized the importance of working-class struggles at the point of production and challenged the legitimacy of the traditional organizations that claimed to represent working-class interests and were hitherto understood by Marxists to be the vanguard organizations leading the class struggle. As the old working-class

32. Bronwen Wallace later became a celebrated poet. She explains her early political trajectory in Wallace, "The Cuban Missile Crisis and Me," in Joanne Page, ed., *Arguments with the World* (Kingston: Quarry Press, 1992), 26–37.

33. Ron Baxter, "Life, Love and Politics in the City of Roses," unpublished essay, Windsor, n.d., PCGK.

34. Baxter highlights the importance of Gorz in Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 7; Baxter, "Life, Love and Politics"; Baxter interview. See also Andre Gorz, *Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967). It is also important to note that the type of state repression that Baxter and his comrades faced was relatively typical amongst New Leftists and led many activists to drop out of student politics and even activism altogether. See Steve Hewitt, *Spying 101: The RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917–1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 93–172; Palmer, *Canada's 1960s*, 247.

35. Baxter interview. On the Hot Autumn, see Steven Wright, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 82–97.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

organizations proved to be increasingly inadequate at providing revolutionary leadership by quelling growing worker unrest, workerist theorists and organizations continued to gain popularity and further developed their theories of workers' autonomy. This referred to the need for working-class struggle to be organized completely autonomously from capital and therefore outside the bureaucratic organizations that were subsumed into the management of the capitalist system in the postwar era. This autonomism also stressed the independence of different segments of the working class from one another; thus, women and racialized workers, for example, each had the right to organize and partake in their struggles separately from the rest of the working class. The theoretical development of autonomism informed both the explosion of direct action and mass worker militancy at automotive factories in cities like Turin and the emergence of protest movements on university campuses – not unlike the waves of militancy from below that proliferated throughout North America at the same time, albeit on an even larger scale. This, in turn, led to the emergence of a number of autonomist Marxist organizations that sought to bring together this outburst of worker and student militancy and make the most of an ostensibly revolutionary historical moment.[36]

At Queen's, Baxter befriended a member of one of the largest and most influential autonomist Marxist groups, Lotta Continua (LC), and went to Italy to visit her in early 1970. Baxter was able to travel around the country, where he bore witness to the impressive revolutionary upheaval there among students and workers. As he later recalled, "There was this political stuff popping up everywhere – in every town we went, every place I went in Italy, it was just like politics, politics, politics! And it was the labour stuff, it was at Fiat, it was wildcat strikes, and students were organizing demonstrations." While travelling through Italy, Baxter also spent time living with Gianni Sofri, brother of influential LC leader and theorist Adriano Sofri, where he became further acquainted with LC's theoretical positions.[37]

After Baxter returned from Italy, he and Wallace took a trip across Canada. They decided to visit Windsor after getting in touch with Lucy Dumouchelle, whom they had met through a mutual acquaintance active in Kingston's tenant organizing movement. Though they initially stopped in Windsor only temporarily in the fall of 1970 to investigate WU, Baxter and Wallace soon decided that Windsor and WU offered them the best and most interesting opportunity to get involved in working-class organizing.[38]

36. For an intellectual history of the development of Italian workerism and autonomism, see Wright, *Storming Heaven*. A complementary study that focuses on the social and cultural history of the Italian left during this period is Robert Lumley, *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978* (London: Verso Books, 1990).

37. Baxter interview.

38. Baxter interview.

Upon Baxter's and Wallace's move to Windsor in January of 1971, the UAW was gearing up for a potential strike. The UAW bargaining team reached an agreement with Chrysler the night before the strike deadline, and the UAW planned to hold the ratification in Windsor Arena so that much of the membership could attend.[39] WU brought to the meeting leaflets and signs that criticized the contract as a "sell-out," although the other workers needed little encouragement from WU to express their discontent. The workers in attendance were already unhappy with the proposed contract because of the lack of input from the union's Canadian branch during negotiations and the contract's negligence of local issues.[40] Additionally, 650 workers were laid off a week before the meeting, and the contract included no provisions to protect jobs at Canadian plants.[41] As a result, the meeting began with a chorus of boos and chants that prevented Brooks from speaking for fifteen minutes. A full-on revolt against Brooks and the UAW executive soon broke out, once Brooks began to lecture the workers on the new contract while dismissing criticism from the audience.[42]

As Brooks continued to speak, workers continued to heckle and began to throw beer bottles and garbage at the executive. Other workers jumped onto the ice surface to protest in front of the executives at the centre of the arena.[43] This contingent of workers included members of WU who had brought anti-contract signs, making for a dramatic photograph that was featured on the front page of the *Windsor Star* the following morning.[44] As workers streamed toward the exits, many of the ballot boxes were tipped over or left open near the entrances, with ballots strewn across the floor and blowing out the windy hallways. Despite this massive display of rank-and-file dissent and clear disregard for democratic process regarding the ballot boxes, the contract was, according to the UAW, ratified with 68 per cent approval. Brooks meanwhile denounced WU as an "anti-union group distributing unsigned pink trash."[45]

39. Windsor Arena was a hockey arena with the capacity to hold thousands of attendees.

40. Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 3–5; Spiros de Bono, "Chrysler Pact Hope Still Alive, Workers Jeer Head of Local," *Windsor Star*, 29 January 1971. Yates mentions that these were general concerns among the broader Canadian UAW membership during negotiations. See Yates, *From Plant to Politics*, 147.

41. "Beer Bottles Fly at Union Meeting," *Globe and Mail*, 29 January 1971.

42. "Pickets Disrupt Meeting," *Windsor Star*, 29 January 1971; de Bono, "Chrysler Pact Hope."

43. De Bono, "Chrysler Pact Hope"; "Beer Bottles Fly"; "Pickets Disrupt Meeting"; and Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 3–5, all describe this scene in similar detail. Baxter's recollection of the event matched the textual sources. Baxter interview.

44. "Stormy Meeting," *Windsor Star*, 29 January 1971. The picture can also be found in a recent collection of historical *Windsor Star* photos; see Sharon Hanna & Craig Pearson, *The Windsor Star: From the Vault*, vol. 2, *1950–1980* (Windsor: Biblioasis, 2016), 124.

45. Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 5; Baxter interview. "Pink trash" is a reference to the colour of WU's mimeographed leaflets rather than a red-baiting slur, though

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

The whole experience was eye-opening for the members of WU. For Baxter in particular, the incident and its aftermath perfectly distilled the older labour bureaucrats' contempt for dissent and critical opinions within the union, simply proving the absence of any organic connection between the labour leadership and the rank-and-file.[46]

After the conflict over the contract, the members of Workers' Unity built up their base of power in Chrysler's Plant 2, where Horne, Al Dumouchelle, and others worked building engines. In-plant elections in March 1971 saw WU run a slate of candidates against the incumbent "Brooks men": Horne for chairman, Dumouchelle for chief steward, and Gerry Pacquette for midnight steward. Their platforms highlighted the necessity of responding to the direct needs of the rank-and-file, and WU members promised their constituents that they would be subject to recall at any time during their term. They criticized the former stewards for spending their time enforcing company rules rather than fighting to improve in-plant working conditions, and they continued their critique of the labour bureaucracy and the current union structure by suggesting that union executives in the international union had stronger ties to the ruling class than to the rank-and-file. As a testament to their New Left–inflected Marxist politics, WU also advocated for the formation of workers' councils in each department to democratize the workplace and allow workers to further assert control over the labour process.[47] In the election, WU found a great deal of support, and Horne and Dumouchelle were elected to their positions. This allowed WU to have more or less full control of union matters within Plant 2.[48]

In addition to leaflets, WU soon began to put out an eponymous newspaper – with its tagline proclaiming itself the "Voice of the UAW Rank and File" – and distributed it at the Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors plants in Windsor. Demonstrating the influence of Lotta Continua, *Workers' Unity* featured articles that stressed the importance of uniting the struggles of waged factory workers inside the plant with those of the unemployed, women, farmers, and students – essentially linking workers' particular concerns in the factory to a broader class struggle against capitalism.[49] Other articles pointed directly to the autonomist struggles in Italy and the conflicts of the UAW and the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the 1930s and 1940s as possible models for reinvigorating the labour movement via direct participation and

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the double meaning could have been intentional. The New Tendency's AWG similarly printed leaflets on pink paper after WU disbanded.

46. "Election 'Results'," *Workers' Unity*, May 1971; Baxter interview.

47. Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 5; Gerry Pacquette, "Brothers Unite!" WU election leaflet, Windsor, 1971, PCGK.

48. Spiros de Bono, "Labor," *Windsor Star*, 4 November 1971.

49. "We Will," *Workers' Unity*, May 1971; A Student Worker in Plant 2, "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All," *Workers' Unity*, July 1971.

militant action from the rank-and-file.[50] Furthermore, the WU newspaper encouraged disgruntled workers to write in with their stories and published a section titled "Rumblings from the Lines" that featured quotes from workers expressing discontent with factory life.[51]

WU also continued to denounce Brooks and the labour bureaucracy, often pointing out specific instances of Brooks' abuse of power and hypocrisy. One article referred to the tumultuous January ratification meeting and questioned the legitimacy of the election results, while another criticized Brooks and the international union for telling Local 444 members to cross Canadian Union of Operating Engineers (CUOE) picket lines when the Chrysler powerhouse workers went on strike. After workers in Plants 2 and 3 disobeyed Brooks by refusing to cross, the company soon agreed to a contract with CUOE. Brooks then claimed credit by congratulating Local 444 for helping CUOE obtain a better deal, despite the fact that he had ordered members to cross the picket lines and undermine the strike.[52] In response to these criticisms, Brooks continued to denounce WU as a group of anti-union wreckers in an attempt to crush their dissenting voices in the local, often resorting to the same sorts of slanderous attacks that the Reutherites had once launched against Communists and radical left-wing unionists.[53] As noted in *Workers' Unity*, at one membership meeting Brooks claimed to have receipts in his possession that proved WU was in the pay of malevolent – albeit unspecified – outside actors. When the membership demanded that he reveal his evidence, Brooks then claimed that he would have to "subpoena" WU. Meanwhile, WU in fact relied on donations from workers at the auto plants. In response to Brooks' accusations, WU subsequently published the numbers of donations they received and the corresponding amounts of each donation in their newspaper.[54]

Workers' Unity continued to participate in and encourage direct action in the plant, and these methods were often successful in improving working conditions for employees. Working conditions had continued to decline in Windsor auto plants during the 1970s, as production was reorganized along American standards in the wake of the Auto Pact and as companies constantly sought to cut costs through a combination of speed-ups, increased automation, layoffs, and poor health and safety standards.[55] It was in this context

50. "No More Good Losers," *Workers' Unity*, September 1971; "'A Happy Employee Is a Good Employee,'" *Workers' Unity*, June 1971.

51. "Rumblings from the Lines," *Workers' Unity*, May 1971; "Rumblings from the Ford Lines," *Workers' Unity*, September 1971.

52. "Negotiations Are Not Enough!," *Workers' Unity*, May 1971.

53. WU likened Brooks' tactics to "the McCarthy hysteria of the 1950s." See "Just for the Record," *Workers' Unity*, July 1971.

54. "Just for the Record."

55. On the auto pact, see Dimitry Anastakis, *Auto Pact: Creating a Borderless North*

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

that auto workers' militancy spread. One article in the WU newspaper chronicled workers' struggles within the motor test area in Plant 2. The motor test department was known for being particularly unhealthy owing to excessive fumes, smoke, and exhaust. To deal with the issues in the department, the WU-led plant union held mass meetings in the lunchroom so that the rank-and-file could determine a course of action, and they collectively formulated a proposal for the company to clean up the area. When the company claimed these proposals were unworkable, workers from Plant 2 held a large demonstration outside the plant to attract public attention, defying Brooks, who voiced opposition to any demonstration. Local media covered the protest and, as a result, the company cleaned up the area by installing better equipment and ventilation.[56]

In another instance, Horne sanctioned a walkout after an anonymous caller phoned both the union office and a local radio station claiming that a bomb was placed in the engine plant. Horne initially asked Chrysler to stop the line and let the workers out into the parking lot until security could verify whether a bomb was present. When the company denied Horne's request, he sanctioned a wildcat (though, technically, Horne himself never left the plant). In retaliation, the company fired Horne and three other workers, including one of the plant committeemen. After filing a grievance, Horne felt that Brooks was doing little to help him and the others because "[Brooks] wanted to get rid of us." Brooks rebuffed the accusation, claiming that "Mr. Horne and I do not see eye to eye on many things, but he is the elected plant chairman and it is our duty to stand by him in a case like this." Circumventing Brooks, Horne eventually brought his case to Douglas Fraser at the UAW international office. Fraser successfully convinced Chrysler to reinstate Horne and the others to their jobs.[57]

American Auto Industry, 1960–1971 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). The resulting reorganizing of Canadian production along American standards was a major point of contention for Windsor auto workers. See Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 69–72. Mike Longmoore also recalled that this was a significant issue. Longmoore interview. On rank-and-file militancy in the Canadian auto industry, particularly in the form of wildcat strikes, see, for example, Gindin, *Canadian Auto Workers*, 175; Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 85. In both the documents relating to TNT that I examined, and in the interviews that I conducted with former New Tendency auto workers, the everyday forms of resistance and direct action such as sabotage, sit-downs, slowdowns, and counter-planning were described as ubiquitous during this period. Windsor union officials were also concerned about various forms of direct action that proliferated throughout the 1970s and attempted to stymie these forms of resistance. See, for example, "UAW Urges Stop." See also the Canadian UAW's correspondence with management, which contains numerous examples of everyday sabotage and other direct action, in Martin Glaberman, "Marxist Views of the Working Class," in *The Working Class and Social Change* (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1975), 9–15; Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 85.

56. *Workers' Unity*, June 1971.

57. Horne and Brooks quoted in De Bono, "Labor." Fraser was then the head of the UAW's Chrysler department; he became the UAW's president in 1977.

In addition to addressing health and safety issues, WU used direct action to confront unjust discipline and foremen who abused their power. For example, in the same test department in Plant 2 that was previously the focus of health and safety protests, there were persistent problems with foremen and supervisors who harassed workers and denied them emergency relief. After one such incident where workers were denied relief, workers in the department launched a sit-down strike, and one worker was fired as a result. After another mass membership meeting in the plant, which determined that the plant union would offer the company an ultimatum, the in-plant union got the fired worker reinstated and the company agreed to deal with the abusive foremen and supervisors. Moreover, when the company began to use foremen to work on the line rather than bringing in relief men, the Plant 2 union similarly told the company that workers would walk out unless the company stopped this practice; as before, the company complied.[58] In Plant 3, when a foreman began to work on the line, the other workers in the department stopped working and were disciplined. In response, the Plant 3 workers launched a successful two-day wildcat strike. While Brooks came out against the wildcat at a membership meeting, WU endorsed Plant 3's actions and again argued that direct action tactics needed to be a normal part of union strategy, by pointing to the various instances in which workers had been able to achieve their goals quickly through such tactics.[59]

WU also established a women's group during this time, called Workers' Unity Women (WUW), led primarily by Bronwen Wallace. Though the organization never expanded beyond a core group of wives and partners of WU members, WUW published a regular column in *Workers' Unity* that emphasized the need for a women's movement rooted in the working class. The column regularly advocated for co-op daycare, criticized the deleterious effects of shift work on families, and emphasized the ways that women's socially reproductive labour was essential to auto companies' profits.[60]

Furthermore, WU gained popularity in the Ford plants during the summer of 1971 in the aftermath of a controversial wildcat strike that revealed further divisions between young workers and their union, which at Ford Windsor was UAW Local 200. In mid-June, a group of workers from the hot test area led a

58. "Hot Test Flares Up."

59. "The Way It Is!," *Workers' Unity*, July 1971.

60. [Wallace?], Workers' Unity timeline; internal TLC document, Windsor, n.d. [1973?], PCGK; "Salt of the Earth," *Workers' Unity*, May 1971; "Salt of the Earth, Two for the Price of One," *Workers' Unity*, June 1971; "Salt of the Earth," *Workers' Unity*, July 1971; "Salt of the Earth, Daycare Soon," *Workers' Unity*, September 1971. I am currently working on an article on the women's movement in Windsor during this period, in which I will explore Workers' Unity Women and the Windsor New Tendency's Socialist Women's Caucus in greater detail. On women's struggles within the Canadian UAW more broadly, see Pamela Sugiman, *Labour's Dilemma: The Gender Politics of Autoworkers in Canada, 1937–1979* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

walkout from Ford Windsor's Engine Plant 2, halting production as thousands of incoming workers honoured the picket lines.[61] The initial 50 wildcatters, including Mike Longmoore, were concerned with the plant's extremely poor working conditions, including inadequate ventilation, constant burn hazards, and slippery floors.[62] Similar to the issues that WU was dealing with in Chrysler's Plant 2, Ford had reduced the number of workers in its own hot test area and increased the workload for the remaining workers in the department while overlooking other health and safety issues.[63] The strikers demanded that the company rehire laid-off workers to reduce the amount of overtime that they were being forced to work and stop using job transfers to discipline workers. Like the struggles against Brooks at Chrysler, Longmoore and others were in conflict with Local 200's executive and wanted to be able to handle their own grievances in ways they saw fit, though the executive did not publicly criticize the striking workers.[64]

The wildcat shut down production at Ford for three days and attracted significant local media attention. Though Ford eventually addressed some of the workers' complaints by installing fans and repairing the dangerous flooring in the hot test area, the company came down hard on the walkout's participants by firing 10 workers, including Longmoore, and suspending 46 others.[65] The fired workers filed grievances, and the union was able to downgrade some of the firings into suspensions and other firings into resignations.[66] Near the end of the negotiations, only the employment status of Longmoore, Donal Gebbie, and a Mr. Knighton – one of the initial leaders of the walkout – remained to be decided. While Longmoore and Gebbie had not led the walkout, both of them had successfully agitated for extending the length of the strike past the initial Thursday walkout, served as part of an unofficial strike committee, and helped coordinate pickets for the length of the strike. Ultimately, Ford proposed to drop Knighton's discharge to a suspension if the union agreed not to move Longmoore's and Gebbie's grievances to arbitration. Both the union negotiating committee and the plant committee approved of these terms, in a depressing display of business-unionist "solidarity."[67] The union furthermore

61. Walt McCall & Gord Henderson, "Ford Remains Shut," *Windsor Star*, 18 June 1971.

62. Gord Henderson, "Wildcat Shuts Ford," *Windsor Star*, 18 June 1971.

63. Ford Awaits Union's Word," *Windsor Star*, 19 June 1971.

64. Henderson, "Wildcat Shuts Ford"; "Ford Awaits Union's Word."

65. Donal Gebbie and J. Longmoore v. United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, Loc. 200 and Ford Motor Co. of Canada Ltd., OLRB Rep. No. 519 (1973), 2.

66. Having a discharge on one's record could lead to a worker being "blackballed" by the other factories in the city, whereas if a worker resigned, they could still obtain a job at either GM or Chrysler relatively easily at this time. This issue is discussed in *Gebbie and Longmoore*, 3.

67. *Gebbie and Longmoore*, 1–4.

did little to alleviate other workers' suspensions.[68] Despite this setback, Longmoore later felt that the wildcat was important because it represented a continuation of Windsor's militant legacy: "We were all fired up and taking on the world. And people were getting burned in the foundry. And finally somebody got hurt bad and there was that walkout and that three-day wildcat strike, and that's how I got fired and everybody went back to work. But we had a history; I'm sure you're aware of the history of the Ford Strike in '45."[69]

In response to the firings and other discipline, Longmoore and other Ford radicals established the Ford Workers' Defense Committee (FWDC). It was an immediate rank-and-file movement to put pressure on the company and the union to reinstate the fired workers and alleviate suspensions, as well as a means to build rank-and-file power more generally at Ford, establishing a more permanent challenge to the labour bureaucracy, as WU had done at Chrysler. The rest of WU similarly began to direct more energy toward engaging Ford workers by using the walkout as a starting point, and the July and September issues of *Workers' Unity* included articles focused on Ford.[70] Despite generating significant rank-and-file pressure, the Local 200 executive refused to reconsider its stance on the terms of the severe discipline. As one FWDC leaflet reported,

> Now that we are back to work, we find that the situation around the firings of Brothers Longmoore and Gebbie has not changed. The Union officials still refuse to negotiate the matter with the Company; furthermore, they still refuse to send the cases to arbitration. Added to this they are still ignoring the unanimous membership directive (June 24th meeting) to hold a special meeting concerning any severe discipline resulting from the Walkout. More incredibly, the Union still ignores the signatures of over 800 members who demanded the meeting. Finally, the Union administration has made absolutely no attempt to help in any way the brothers who received long suspensions.[71]

As with Local 444's January ratification meeting at Windsor Arena, the Local 200 executive's actions revealed a jarring lack of regard for both the concerns of its membership and the democratic process and exhibited an affinity for class collaboration with the company in the face of genuine discontent and dissent among its membership. Under pressure from Mansfield Matthias and other older militants in the FWDC, Longmoore and Gebbie later brought their case to the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB), arguing that the union

68. "Where Do We Stand?," Ford Workers' Defense Committee leaflet, Windsor, 1971, PCGK.

69. Longmoore interview.

70. "Important Meeting Tonite," FWDC leaflet, Windsor, 1971, PCGK; "Where Do We Stand?"; "Ford Workers' Committee Report," internal TLC document, Windsor, n.d. [1973?], PCGK; "Learn and Fight Together," *Workers' Unity*, July 1971; "Rumblings from the Ford Lines."

71. "Where Do We Stand?" The union's official reason for ignoring the petition was that the petition asked for the meeting to take place during working hours, meaning workers would have had to wildcat to attend, and the union leadership did not want to violate the *Labour Relations Act*. See *Gebbie and Longmoore*, 10–11.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

violated its duty to fair representation in its negotiations with Ford.[72] However, in internal TNT documents, the FWDC later reported that Longmoore and Gebbie had taken legal action merely to expose to other workers the futility of pursuing workers' struggles through the courts under capitalism.[73]

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the OLRB found no wrongdoing on the union's part and, legally speaking, this ruling was rather uncontroversial. Longmoore and Gebbie indeed violated the terms of industrial legality by helping perpetuate an illegal strike.[74] Of course, this does not excuse the union executive for their deference to bourgeois codes of conduct. Rather, it is simply another example of the ways in which the postwar system of industrial relations had transformed unions like UAW Local 200 from militant working-class institutions capable of organizing mass action to further workers' interests into bureaucratized organizations too afraid to reject the absurd terms of the walkout negotiations in which Ford leveraged workers' livelihoods against one another. The fact that the walkout was entirely justified – morally, if not legally – by the dangerous working conditions that Ford allowed to exist within its factories in the first place was, under the terms of industrial legality, irrelevant.[75]

Workers' Unity was beginning to break apart by the fall of 1971, as differences over politics and personalities began to be overwhelming. According to Baxter and Wallace, Horne had done little work to contribute to the formation of the proposed workers' councils in each department and was also planning, along with other WU members, to run for city council in December on a slate called the Windsor Political Action Committee (WPAC). Believing that WU had veered too far from its original purpose, Baxter and Wallace left the group. It officially disbanded soon after.[76] The WPAC continued its municipal campaign, advocating for improved public services and the need for solidarity action between employed and unemployed workers.[77] Despite

72. "Ford Workers' Committee Report."

73. "Labour Centre Meeting – June 9, 1973," internal TLC document, Windsor, 1973, PCGK.

74. *Gebbie and Longmoore*, 11–12.

75. It is important to note that my accusations of class collaboration are not intended to refer to individual instances of conspiracy or collusion. Indeed, the OLRB ruling clearly emphasized that this did not occur, and this claim may very well have been correct – although these more overt and sinister forms of class collaboration are not exactly uncommon. Rather, I refer to the union's meek acceptance of bourgeois legality and codes of conduct, and a willingness to negotiate a "reasonable" settlement to retain the appearance of respectability, thereby valuing its relationship with Ford more than with their own members, rather than rejecting the unjust terms of the bargain and struggling in solidarity with the fired workers. For a scathing exposé of the UAW in this regard, written by a respected investigative journalist, see William Serrin, *The Company and the Union: The "Civilized Relationship" of the General Motors Corporation and the United Automobile Workers* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

76. Baxter & Wallace, "Anatomy of a Militants' Group," 6.

77. John Horne & Al Dumouchelle, "A Personal Message to Plant 2 Workers," WPAC leaflet, Windsor, 1971, PCGK; "Vote Windsor Political Action Committee Slate," WPAC leaflet,

their progressive platform, the WPAC candidates managed to obtain only a few thousand votes each.[78] Although WU ceased to exist as an organization, Horne and Dumouchelle retained their positions in Plant 2 well into the 1970s.

Though WU disbanded fairly quickly, it did give Baxter and Wallace their first experience of working-class organizing, provided them with a basic understanding of shop-floor politics, and helped them establish important connections to other radical organizers in the community. Additionally, the conflicts with the Local 444 and Local 200 executives demonstrated to WU members the outright hostility that established union leaders sometimes exhibited toward challenges to their authority from below and the numerous difficulties and provocations that any organized attempt to confront their authority would face. Both the lessons they learned and the connections they established proved integral to the formation of TLC and TNT in the following years. Most importantly, WU's actions helped to entrench a degree of democratic participation and a particular culture of collective militancy within the union in Plant 2 that did not necessarily exist in the other plants. Jim Monk recalled when he started working at Chrysler in Plant 2 during the fall of 1973:

> Nobody did anything at Plant 2 without a vote, whereas at the other plants, the steward or the committeeman or the plant chair [would make the decisions] – it was very top down. Somebody would call an action and it would be imposed whereas [in Plant 2] we were asked, "We'd like to do this, can we do a work to rule?" So I was really freaked out when I got to Plant 3 where they're cutting off the overtime and they're not asking me about it. In Plant 2, the engine plant, it was really radical compared to the other plants, under John Horne back then.[79]

Members of The New Tendency's AWG eventually contested Horne's own authority and viewed Horne himself as a representative of the labour bureaucracy to a certain extent; nevertheless, WU's organizing efforts seem to have created a qualitative change for workers at Plant 2 both in their day-to-day work experience and in their relationship with their union – no matter how uneven, incomplete, or temporary this may have been.

The New Tendency and the Auto Worker Group

FOLLOWING THE DISSOLUTION of Workers' Unity, some of the former members of the group linked up with other New Left organizations in the community to form the Labour Centre in February of 1972. TLC brought

Windsor, 1971, PCGK.

78. "How the Candidates Placed," *Windsor Star*, 2 December 1971.

79. Jim Monk, interview by the author, Amherstburg, Ontario, 2 May 2017. Horne was also still championing the idea of workers' councils at that point, albeit in a somewhat moderate form. See "Departmental and Area Councils," *Engine Plant Committee Newsletter*, 23 February 1973, PCGK. Even Jim Brophy, who was otherwise quite critical of Horne, noted that "Horne was successful in stopping the worst of the repression and giving the workers some space." Brophy, interview by the author, Windsor, Ontario, 3 July 2017.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

together members of hitherto disparate organizations: the Women's Liberation Movement led by the radical former nun Pat Noonan, which merged with former WUW members to form the Socialist Women's Caucus; the milieu of older radical auto workers like Matthias, Gunther, and White; and former members of the NDP's Waffle faction.[80] Another significant part of TLC was the Community Resource Centre (CRC), a radical bookstore established by Jim Brophy in 1972. Brophy was an American draft resister and former student movement leader, having served as student council president during his time at the University of Windsor during the late 1960s where he helped organize demonstrations and occupations on campus.[81] Brophy subsequently moved to Toronto, where he helped establish the countercultural magazine *Guerilla*, and took part in labour organizing through the Militant Co-op, a broad-left rank-and-file group.[82] Brophy soon moved back to Windsor to establish the CRC, believing that a radical bookstore could become a hub of resistance to capitalism and American imperialism and could serve as a common "community centre" of sorts for various left-wing groups and projects.[83]

TLC acted as a forum where activists organizing in separate working groups could come together and work through both the theoretical and practical problems that they encountered in their organizing, while the CRC offered an easy way to produce and distribute leaflets and radical literature within the city and beyond. This base of organizing set the stage for the establishment of The New Tendency once TLC connected with analogous groups in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Kitchener-Waterloo. In all of these places, activists were following similar paths in working-class organizing, developing comparable theoretical positions, and moving toward a unique New Left Marxism grounded in workers' self-activity at the point of production and a rejection of the Leninist vanguard party.[84]

80. Bronwen Wallace, "Community Resource Centre," internal TLC document, Windsor, n.d. [1973?], 1, PCGK; "Jane Doe Study Group"; Monk interview.

81. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017; Margaret Keith & Jim Brophy, "Your Health Is Not for Sale," in Staughton Lynd & Alice Lynd, eds., *The New Rank and File* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 189.

82. On *Guerilla*, see David Churchill, "American Expatriates and the Building of Alternative Social Space in Toronto, 1965–1977," *Urban History Review* 39, 1 (2010): 40–41. On the Militant Co-op, see, for example, "Filling the Vacuum: The Militant Co-op," *Guerilla*, no. 17 (February 1971): 8.

83. Wallace, "Community Resource Centre," 2.

84. Very little has thus far been published on the New Tendency. See John Huot, "Autonomist Marxism and Workplace Organizing in Canada in the 1970s," *Upping the Anti*, no. 18 (2016), http://uppingtheanti.org/journal/article/18-autonomist-marxism/; Gary Kinsman, "The Politics of Revolution: Learning from Autonomist Marxism," *Upping the Anti*, no. 1 (2005): 44–53; Kinsman, "Recovering the History of Canadian Autonomist Marxism," *Upping the Anti*, no. 19 (2017), http://uppingtheanti.org/journal/article/19-recovering-the-history-of-canadian-autonomist-marxism/. A valuable critique of TNT's theoretical orientation can be found in

During the summer of 1972, TLC members also struck up a close relationship with Detroit radical Martin Glaberman, a close collaborator and friend of C. L. R. James and himself a former auto worker. Alongside intellectuals such as James, Raya Dunayevskaya, and Grace Lee (later Grace Lee Boggs, after her marriage to James Boggs), Glaberman had been a member of the dissident Johnson-Forest Tendency (JFT) within the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).[85] The JFT emphasized the importance of working-class self-activity and the everyday forms of resistance, or "counter-planning," on the shop floor, which the theorists believed were prefigurative struggles that indicated workers' desire and ability to exercise control over production. The JFT, which argued that workers should organize outside of the existing parties and trade unions, believed the usefulness of both organizational forms was historically specific to earlier stages of capitalism. Instead of getting caught up in bureaucratic trade union politics that the theorists saw as holding back the working class and preventing workers from leading their own struggles, the JFT argued that under the right conditions workers' self-activity would give way to workers' councils as had occurred in Russia in 1905 and 1917 and in Hungary in 1956.[86] Therefore, the group maintained, it was the duty of Marxists to document these ostensibly prefigurative shop-floor struggles by compiling workers' inquiries. These inquiries were a tool for organizing rank-and-file workers that

Murray Smith, *Revolutionary Strategy in the Advanced Capitalist Countries: A Reply to the Spontaneists* (Winnipeg: Revolutionary Marxist Group, n.d. [1973?]). At the time, Smith was a member of the Revolutionary Marxist Group, a Trotskyist organization. The critique was written as a response to a pamphlet by the Winnipeg branch of TNT. See *Advanced Capitalism and the Revolutionary Left* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Labour Collective, n.d. [1973?]).

85. There is an abundance of literature on C. L. R. James and his influence. See, for example, Frank Rosengarten, *Urbane Revolutionary: C.L.R. James and the Struggle for a New Society* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2008); Paul Buhle, *C.L.R. James: The Artist as Revolutionary* (New York: Verso Books, 1989); Kent Worcester, *C.L.R. James: A Political Biography* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996); Selwyn R. Cudjoe & William E. Cain, eds., *C.L.R. James: His Intellectual Legacies* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995). Glaberman's role is discussed in most historical accounts of the JFT, including the aforementioned biographical works about James. However, the most comprehensive account of his life is a series of unpublished interviews conducted and edited by former TNT members. I am thankful to Jim Monk for giving me a copy. See Martin Glaberman, "Third Draft of Transcribed Interviews with Martin Glaberman, Detroit 1992–1995," interview by Ron Baxter, Jim Monk & Martin Deck, ed. Ron Baxter, unpublished transcript, 1996, personal collection of Jim Monk. On Grace Lee Boggs, see Boggs, *Living for Change: An Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

86. See, for example, C. L. R. James, Grace Lee & Pierre Chaulieu, *Facing Reality* (Detroit: Bewick Editions, 1974); George Rawick, "Working Class Self-Activity," *Radical America* 3, 2 (1969): 30–31; Robert Wicke, "Class and Class Conflict in the American State," PhD thesis, Washington University, 1971, 275–278; Bill Watson, "Counter-Planning on the Shop-Floor," *Radical America* 5, 3 (1971): 84–85. See also Martin Glaberman, "Workers Have to Deal with Their Own Reality and That Transforms Them," in Lynd & Lynd, eds., *New Rank and File*, 208–209.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

could demonstrate the ways in which the everyday resistance that fell outside the purview of the unions, such as sabotage, slowdowns, and wildcat strikes, were in fact struggles over control of the workplace.[87]

After leaving first the SWP (led by James Cannon) and then the Workers Party (led by Max Shachtman), the JFT formed the Correspondence Publishing Committee, which later morphed into Facing Reality (FR) after Dunayevskaya and the Boggses split to form their own respective groups.[88] Though FR had ceased to officially exist by the time TNT was established, the old FR milieu continued to associate with one another and Glaberman continued to publish Facing Reality pamphlets under his Bewick Editions imprint.[89] Glaberman's theoretical perspective subsequently enjoyed substantial support in the Windsor New Tendency and he became a close friend to members such as Monk, Baxter, and Wallace. Indeed, after befriending Glaberman, Baxter set up Mile One Publications to function as the Canadian branch of Bewick Editions. Through Mile One and the CRC, the Windsor New Tendency was able to play a key role in the circulation of pamphlets from similar organizations including FR, the Sojourner Truth Organization, Big Flame, and Lotta Continua, all of which TNT maintained at least loose contact with throughout its existence.[90]

87. For a history of workers' inquiries, see Jamie Woodcock, "The Workers' Inquiry from Trotskyism to Operaismo: A Political Methodology for Investigating the Workplace," *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 14, 3 (2014): 493–513. Examples of workers' inquiries from the JFT include Paul Romano (pseud. of Phil Singer) & Ria Stone (pseud. of Grace Lee), *The American Worker* (Detroit: Bewick Editions, 1969); Charles Denby (pseud. of Si Owens), *Indignant Heart* (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1979); Mary Brant & Ellen Santori (pseud. of Selma James), *A Woman's Place* (Detroit: Correspondence Publishing, 1954); Arthur Bauman, *Artie Cuts Out* (Detroit: Correspondence Publishing, 1954). See also Martin Glaberman, *Punching Out* (Detroit: Bewick Editions, 1973); Glaberman, *Union Committeemen and Wildcat Strikes* (Detroit: Bewick Editions, 1971). In addition to their workers' paper and pamphlets, Correspondence set up a "school" where rank-and-file workers shared their experiences while the JFT intellectuals simply listened and wrote down what the workers were saying. Similarly, to prevent the development of bureaucracy in their group, the members who were classified as workers were given the greatest priority to speak in general meetings while members classified as intellectuals simply listened, though at times this led to a degree of disfunction. See Grace Lee Boggs, "C.L.R. James: Organizing in the USA, 1938–1953," in Cudjoe & Cain, eds., *C.L.R. James*, 170.

88. Nicola Pizzolato, *Challenging Global Capitalism: Labor Migration, Radical Struggle, and Urban Change in Detroit and Turin* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 108; Glaberman, "Third Draft of Transcribed Interviews," 101.

89. See Ron Baxter, "Dear Newsletter," *The Newsletter* 2 (1973): 58–59. In 1973, TNT militants congregated at what was colloquially described as a Facing Reality conference. See Wally Dougherty & Suzy Vanderloop, "Leadership, Collective Practise & the New Tendency," *The Newsletter* 3 (1973): 11.

90. Baxter, "Dear Newsletter," 58; Baxter, "Correspondence," 63; Monk interview; Baxter interview.

Despite Glaberman's popularity, others in the Windsor New Tendency, such as Brophy, remained closer to the Toronto TNT branch, which embraced a theoretical orientation closer to that of Italian autonomist organizations such as Lotta Continua and Potere Operaio. For those who adhered to this perspective, the increasingly important theoretical concepts that underlie the principle of workers' autonomy were those of class composition, the social factory, the mass worker, and the struggle against work – all of which can be traced to Tronti's major theoretical text, *Workers and Capital*.[91]

Drawing on the JFT, the Italian theorists advocated in favour of workers' inquiries and "co-research" at the point of production. However, they differed by arguing that mass workers' struggles in the Fordist era were no longer defined by the struggle over control of the workplace, because the labour process had been made so undesirable by Taylorist production methods; rather, class struggle was defined by the struggle *against* work itself, as workers overwhelmingly demanded "more wages for less work" – a demand expressed both in overt large-scale strikes and in the aforementioned everyday resistance of absenteeism, sabotage, wildcats, and slowdowns that the JFT theorists had hitherto interpreted as prefigurative struggles for workers' control. Tied to this, autonomists believed that wage demands were an explicitly political struggle reflecting the specific nature of capitalist production under Fordism, not an economistic demand as Lenin argued.[92] For many early workers' autonomy theorists, it was the mass workers' struggles that carried the most importance, driving the workers' movement forward, though this aspect of the theory would change drastically over the course of the 1970s through dialogue with the social reproduction theories of Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Selma James, and Silvia Federici.[93] Additionally, the Italian theorists were less averse to certain forms of vanguardism and party building than the JFT. It was ultimately this Italian-influenced theoretical orientation that became dominant in the Windsor Auto Worker Group.

91. Huot, "Autonomist Marxism"; Peter Taylor & Judy Ramirez, "Elements for a Political Perspective," *The Newsletter* 3 (1973): 3–9; Harry Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically* (Oakland: AK Press, 2000), 66–77. While much of Tronti's work was unavailable in English, excerpts from *Workers and Capital* were available in the New Left journal *Telos*, and the later contributions from Adriano Sofri and others who drew upon Tronti's concepts were circulated within TNT. See, for example, Mario Tronti, "Workers and Capital," *Telos* 14 (1972): 25–62; Tronti, "Social Capital," *Telos* 17 (1973): 98–121.

92. This perspective is outlined in Huot, "Autonomist Marxism"; Taylor & Ramirez, "Elements for a Political Perspective"; Toronto New Tendency to TLC, 9 June 1974, PCGK; Potere Operaio, "The Communism of the Working Class," internal AWG document, Windsor, n.d. [1974?], PCGK; Windsor AWG, "Notes on Developing a Political Perspective: 'Refusal of Work,'" internal AWG document, Windsor, 1975, PCGK. "The Labour Centre Meeting, October 14, 1973," internal TLC document, Windsor, 1973, PCGK.

93. Wright, *Storming Heaven*, 36–37.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

The organization also had a smaller third faction based around the Longmoores and the older auto worker militants, which maintained a somewhat unusual, though not unproductive, relationship with the rest of the group. This faction retained sympathy for the CPC's Leninist party structure and trade union–focused perspective. On the face of it, such an orientation was ostensibly antithetical to TNT's core ethos, but this did not prevent these members from making contributions to the group's organizing efforts.[94] In fact, this faction was perhaps the least sectarian. For example, when Monk proposed that each working group ought to be split into three separate groups based on the three ideological perspectives, Mike Longmoore not only pointed out the obvious unworkability of this proposal for such a small organization but also emphasized the need for working-class unity in the face of increasingly concentrated forces of reaction.[95] Moreover, Brophy recalled that while significant theoretical disagreements existed, the older militants' expertise was often invaluable.[96] For example, in the wake of the UAW's 1973 contract, White and Matthias helped the AWG produce leaflets that contained detailed critiques of the contract, still framed in a language that would resonate with other workers. The younger activists had little experience with the legalistic details of collective agreements, but the older militants were able to identify weaknesses in the agreement that the others would have likely overlooked.[97] The other interviewees similarly spoke of their great respect for these older militants, demonstrating the continuities between the Old and New Left that other research has recognized.[98]

The Windsor New Tendency had a plethora of working groups focused on separate struggles in the workplace and the broader community; these included, but were not limited to, a women's caucus, a gay liberation organization, a high-school student newspaper with corresponding student working groups at local high schools, and a Palestinian solidarity group.[99] However,

94. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017; Monk interview.

95. "Labour Centre Meeting Minutes of December 9, 1973," internal TLC document, Windsor, 1973, 4, PCGK.

96. Brophy interview, 3 August 2017.

97. Brophy interview. See also "Historic Setback," AWG leaflet, Windsor, 1973, PCGK; and the discussion on the leaflet in "Labour Centre Meeting, October 14, 1973."

98. Monk interview; Baxter interview; Longmoore interview. On these intergenerational connections in the broader New Left, see, for example, Graham with McKay, *Radical Ambition*, 13.

99. Colleen Pacquette, "Dear Newsletter," *The Newsletter* 1 (1973); Ron Baxter, Mark Buckner, Sheila Dillon, Jim Monk, Pat Noonan, Stephen Sherriffs, Bronwen Wallace & David Walsh, *Out of the Driver's Seat: Marxism in North America Today* (Windsor: Mile One Publications, 1974), 1–2. Many TNT members in Windsor worked in the auto industry, but others, like Ron Baxter and Mark Buckner, worked for Canada Post. In Toronto, the situation was reversed, with more members working at the post office. Postal workers' struggles were the subject of

much of TNT's work took place at the point of production in Windsor's auto factories. In 1972, Brophy began to work at Chrysler, initially seeking to support the bookstore through his income. In early 1973, he began to organize a new rank-and-file group in Chrysler's Plant 2 with former Workers' Unity member Gerry Pacquette called the Rank and File Action Committee (RFAC), which also functioned as TNT's Auto Worker Group. Brophy and Pacquette put out their first leaflet on May Day, 1973, outlining the initial purpose of the group. The leaflet stressed the need for rank-and-file workers to organize to confront poor working conditions within the plant independently of the UAW, whose strategies they derided as "timid" and "bull shit." Noting that they were not looking to run against the current union leadership, Brophy and Pacquette instead encouraged workers to join the RFAC with the goal of organizing workers' councils so that workers could deal directly and democratically with problems themselves, much like the early WU though without the electoral component.[100]

While the RFAC began to see some positive, albeit skeptical, support in response to the first leaflet, the union representatives allied to John Horne were less than thrilled. In one incident, Brophy had been working at a dip tank station where spilled oil constantly corroded his thick work boots. Older contracts had made the company responsible for covering the costs of replacement boots, but concessions in this area in the most recent contract meant Brophy was on the hook to pay for his own replacements. After confronting the superintendent, Brophy attempted to get the union to file a grievance for him. Instead, Brophy was pulled into a meeting with Harold Newton, his Horne-aligned union committeeman, who also happened to be a former Canadian Football League linebacker. When Newton began to accuse him of being a "company stooge," Brophy suggested that Newton's anger had more to do with the leaflet and pointed out that Newton's allies Horne and Dumouchelle had made similar demands when they were in Workers' Unity. Newton then threatened to "kick the shit out of" Brophy.[101] A second leaflet detailed the

multiple Toronto New Tendency pamphlets and workers' inquiries published in *The Newsletter*. See, for example, Peter Taylor, *Working – and Not-Working – at the Post Office* (Toronto: The New Tendency, 1974), republished as "Working and Not Working at the Post Office," in Walter Johnson, ed., *Working in Canada* (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1975), 15–32; John Huot, "Workers' Struggles in Advanced Capitalism: The Post Office," *The Newsletter* 3 (1973): 40–55; "The April Postal Strike: Workers, Union, and the State," *The Newsletter* 5 (1974): 19–48. See also Huot, "Autonomist Marxism." It is also worth noting here that TNT members did not obtain these positions out of any centrally coordinated strategy to "industrialize" as was common in some of the Trotskyist and New Communist organizations. Certainly, there was a broad desire to organize at the point of production, but TNT members often chose the jobs themselves out of convenience. Monk, for example, noted that he initially sought out a job at Chrysler because "the money was so good." Monk interview.

100. Jim Brophy, "Organizing Notes," *The Newsletter* 2 (1973): 26–32. The article includes reprints of the first two AWG leaflets. I use the acronyms RFAC and AWG interchangeably.

101. Brophy, "Organizing Notes," 29–31. Brophy also heard rumours that Newton wanted to

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

incident to highlight how Horne's leadership and the UAW more broadly had devolved into using "strong-arm tactics to intimidate and silence rank-and-file members."[102] While Horne's initial tactics toward the group involved coercion and threats through Newton, he eventually left the group alone.[103] By contrast, Charlie Brooks initially attempted to co-opt or form an alliance with the group and offered to help them print their leaflets, perhaps seeing the RFAC as potentially helpful in his struggles against Horne in Plant 2. However, seeing Brooks as part of the labour bureaucracy and remembering his repressive actions toward WU, the group declined the alliance.[104]

Like WU before it, the AWG continued to build support by producing leaflets that spoke to workers' everyday concerns and realities within the plants; by October 1973 it had grown to seventeen core members.[105] Rather than attempting to impose a particular party line or lecture workers on abstract theoretical concepts, the group made a genuine effort to meet other workers at a concrete level and build a theory based on their everyday experiences on the shop floor. Indeed, almost all AWG leaflets contained critiques of the union and its ineffectiveness in the wake of constant speed-ups and layoffs that affected everyone in the plant. In particular, one leaflet noted,

> Our union doesn't seem to have any plans for fighting the layoffs, speed-ups etc that we have seen in Plant 1, 2, 3 and the Spring Plan. We all know the company is cutting out the B-bodies in Plant #3, and you can bet your bottom dollar the company will use the opportunity to cut out a few extra jobs besides. The union leadership in most cases waits until the company moves, guys walk-out, and then the union is forced into the position of fighting company discipline. Even Tricky Dicky knows the best defense is good offense. Once the fight gets out of the plant and into the office, we've lost control.[106]

As Jeremy Milloy observes, the AWG also linked this greater intensification of the labour process and poor working conditions with increased violence in the plant and the community.[107] One leaflet lamented the increase in industrial accidents in Windsor, as three workers had died over the course of two weeks, while another worker had been stabbed at Chrysler. Seeing the incidents as all part of the same phenomenon wherein companies force workers to withstand inhuman conditions, the leaflet argued that "the main responsibility must fall on Chrysler as the direct instigator of this stabbing by its ruthless exploitation of the workforce which pushed its workers to vent their frustrations by turning on each other. The day before this incident, the line

throw him into the dip tank. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017.

102. Brophy, "Organizing Notes," 29–31.

103. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017.

104. Brophy interview, 3 August 2017.

105. "Labour Centre Meeting, October 14, 1973."

106. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 8 April 1974, PCGK.

107. Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 62–63, 115.

where these men worked was sped up by over 10 cars an hour."[108] As usual, the AWG also blamed the UAW's complicity in the speed-ups, resulting violence, and poor conditions, noting that "our own union president openly brags how in Plant 3 with the same size workforce they produce over 3 times the number of cars [as in comparable factories]."[109]

To counter the union's inaction and the company's repression, the AWG detailed, engaged in, and encouraged workers' self-organized resistance. For example, one leaflet pointed to two separate instances wherein workers in the chassis department and metal shop, respectively, had conducted sit-down strikes in solidarity with relief workers who were suspended for refusing to fill in for workers who had been laid off. Both sit-downs had shut down the plant for the rest of the day.[110] In another instance, workers from one department had occupied the canteen and were soon joined by the rest of the plant to support the department's concerns. Highlighting the union's hypocrisy in responding to workers' self-activity, the AWG noted how when workers wildcatted in response to deteriorating working conditions and layoffs, the union labelled them "shit disturbers."[111] In contrast, when a union official was fired, the union encouraged a walkout that resulted in the company disciplining over 400 workers. Two weeks prior, the fired union official, Paul Forder, had told two workers that their only option to resolve their issues was to go through the grievance procedure. The AWG noted that when 27 workers led a walkout to support a relief worker who had been fired, the union accused them of "gutting the union." The AWG argued that the union should provide all workers with the level of support and solidarity given to Forder, rather than reserving such privileges for union officials.[112]

Critiques of the union bureaucracy based on the AWG's experiences were further elaborated in TNT's *Newsletter*. For example, one article about the 1973 Chrysler "non-strike" shows how the UAW actively stifled rank-and-file opposition to a massively unpopular contract. The article explains the union's repressive actions leading up to negotiations, such as mobilizing a UAW flying squad to reopen a plant in Detroit that had been occupied by workers protesting the firing of one of their colleagues.[113] Similarly, in Windsor, when workers wildcatted to protest the in-plant conditions during a heat wave, the union

108. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 7 May 1975, PCGK.

109. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 7 May 1975.

110. "At Last! Historic Breakthru!," AWG leaflet, Windsor, n.d. [1974?], PCGK.

111. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 8 April 1974.

112. This issue was discussed in at least three separate leaflets: *Rank and File Bulletin*, 8 April 1974; *Rank and File Bulletin*, 11 April 1974, PCGK; "To the Plant One Rank and File," AWG leaflet, Windsor, n.d. [1974?], PCGK.

113. Stuart Ryan, "Chrysler Non-Strike 1973," *The Newsletter* 4 (1974): 16. Ryan was a member of the AWG at Chrysler.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

simply ordered them back to work while UAW leaders Leonard Woodcock and Douglas Fraser assured Chrysler that they would keep the Windsor workers under control.[114] The article also notes that when the UAW came to an agreement with the company after a three-day strike, the union disallowed any dissent at ratification meetings. When a steward complained that he had too little information about the contract to answer workers' questions, Canadian UAW leader Dennis McDermott replied "that the steward's job was to 'police the contract' not to explain it," thus further revealing labour leaders' attitudes toward the rank-and-file and the constraints that even well-meaning stewards faced in their work.[115]

The AWG also used leaflets to highlight divisions within the working class and demonstrate the ways that such divisions held workers back in their struggles against the company. For example, when a wallet and watch were stolen from a worker in the factory, Brophy discussed the incident with other workers in the department, who encouraged him to put out a leaflet on the incident. This early AWG leaflet simply highlighted the importance of working-class unity and urged workers to help find the wallet and, more generally, to discourage one another from stealing. In response to the leaflet, workers in the department raised $90 for the worker whose wallet and watch were stolen. In his "Organizing Notes" column in the *Newsletter*, Brophy emphasized that it was important not to read too deeply into the workers' efforts to raise money, but he believed the process indicated that workers were taking the leaflets seriously and that the leaflets had the potential to directly help workers on the shop floor.[116]

Similar leaflets addressed racism against immigrant workers and other forms of discrimination that workers experienced in the factory. One leaflet noted that when the V-8 engine department had refused to work unscheduled overtime, the company brought in scab workers from a separate department. The leaflet countered the belief – widely held in the factory – that only immigrants scabbed in these situations, demonstrating instead that it was indeed "good Canadians" who scabbed on the V-8 workers and that the union did nothing to prevent their actions.[117] Another leaflet described the difficult position that immigrant workers found themselves in at the plant. An immigrant worker, the leaflet explained, was

114. Ryan, "Chrysler Non-Strike 1973," 16–17.

115. Ryan, "Chrysler Non-Strike 1973," 19.

116. Jim Brophy, "Organizing Notes," *The Newsletter* 3 (1973): 61–62.

117. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 8 April 1974. Milloy similarly highlights the AWG's antiracist activism and references the April 8 leaflet in particular. See Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 114. Though the group itself was predominantly white, Brophy recalled that the AWG worked alongside racialized workers in other ways. For example, the AWG helped defend a racialized immigrant worker targeted for dismissal by both the company and his union representatives after striking back at a racist white worker. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017.

in a foreign, hostile, repressive environment. In this situation he is penniless, scared shitless by the blue and white gestapo, and unable or severely handicapped in communicating his situation to anyone. He has already sensed the racist tension that exists and is very aware that if he is not a "good little worker" he will be fired and deported. … How many times have you seen management put the immigrant on the most repressive job in the dept.? How often have you seen immigrants used for speed-up? And how often have you criticized the worker and not the boss? … Discrimination and looking out solely for no. 1 divide our interests so far apart that the company could run us over with a herd of boy scouts. If you don't believe me look at the 6 line; up to 100 jobs a day and not a squawk heard.[118]

Leaflets like this one not only encouraged workers to empathize with immigrant workers, and humanized their predicament, but also demonstrated to Canadian workers why it was also in their own interest to fight racism on the shop floor and in the community. Indeed, the ability to link workers' particular lived experiences to the interests of the broader working class without moralizing or imposing abstract concepts was one of the AWG's main strengths, and it potentially allowed the group to attract a larger audience of workers than other active far-left groups. Brophy recalled that workers, at least in Plant 2 where the culture of shop-floor resistance was strongest, afforded the AWG a level of respect and support that other revolutionary groups, such as the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), did not necessarily obtain.[119] This is admittedly difficult to prove without any sort of statistical data; however, according to TLC and AWG internal documents, workers tended to take the leaflets home with them to read and often expressed positive reactions and feedback when the group handed them out.[120] Regarding the leaflets that criticized the 1973 contract, for example, the AWG reported to TLC that workers "lined up to get copies of the leaflet," with some even coming back to take multiple copies to give to friends and other workers in their respective

118. *Rank and File Bulletin*, 7 May 1975.

119. Brophy interview, 3 August 2017.

120. Monk notes that in contrast to union leaflets, which workers read and then threw on the floor or in the garbage, "leaflets [from the AWG] about the 'historic content' and work stoppages in a particular plant were read carefully and then folded up and taken home. I only rarely found one in the garbage or on the floor. The same is true of a leaflet two of us put into the plant the day after the walkout." However, he noted that two other leaflets "received disparaging remarks from workers, with many of them thrown away or posted up with uncomplimentary comments scrawled on them." Jim Monk, "Working on an Assembly Line," in Johnson, ed., *Working in Canada*, 55. An internal TLC document similarly notes that the response to the first three leaflets generally ranged from "favourable" to "very favourable." "Agenda: Labour Centre Meeting, Aug. 12/73," internal TLC document, Windsor, 1973, PCGK. Referring to a later leaflet, an internal AWG document noted that workers took it home to read and that workers' response while the group was leafletting was "very good." Windsor AWG, "Dear Brothers, Dec. 12, 1975," internal AWG document, Windsor, 1975, PCGK. In his interviews, Brophy likewise recalled that workers tended to be supportive of the leaflets. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017; Brophy interview, 3 August 2017. Another internal AWG document suggests that over time, the group moved beyond "just communicating struggles" and began to take on a leadership role on the shop floor. Windsor AWG, "Notes on Developing."

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

departments.[121] Internally, the group constantly evaluated the effectiveness of particular leaflets, attempted to gauge why a given leaflet was or was not liked by other workers, and incorporated these lessons into future work to ensure their message would resonate in the plant.[122]

Early on, the AWG had no distinct theoretical position, so when Monk began working at Chrysler in September of 1973, he too was involved in the group for a time, as was Mike Longmoore, who was also hired at Chrysler during this period. However, it did not take long for their respective theoretical differences with the rest of the AWG to become apparent, and Monk and Longmoore each split off from the AWG to do their own organizing work in the factory based on their respective orientations.[123] Despite the group's close connection to the rest of the rank-and-file, Monk felt the AWG was still too heavily focused on "nagging" the workers and assuming a vanguardist position in relation to workers' self-organization.[124] Monk sought instead to continue documenting the widespread resistance that already existed on the shop floor, not only in sit-downs, walkouts, and occupations but also in more subtle practices such as absenteeism and "doubling up" – a technique where a worker would do both his job and his partner's for four hours of an eight-hour shift, and then the partner would work both jobs for the other four, effectively halving the workday for both. In doing so, Monk wrote JFT-style workers' inquiries on resistance in his department, attempting to identify the prefigurative nature of these struggles.[125]

Despite his focus on investigating rather than organizing, Monk nevertheless participated in, and sometimes led, rank-and-file resistance at the point of production. For example, he organized slowdowns and sit-downs with the workers in his section of the Chrysler truck plant to improve safety conditions and lighten workloads.[126] These workers also psychologically "tormented" their hated foreman to get him moved to the night shift.[127] Furthermore, when other issues arose in the plant, Monk refused to use the grievance procedure and successfully employed various other types of direct action to resolve

121. "Labour Centre Meeting, October 14, 1973."

122. "Agenda: Labour Centre Meeting, Aug. 12/73"; "Labour Centre Meeting, October 14, 1973"; Windsor AWG, "Dear Brothers"; Windsor AWG, "Notes on Developing"; Ron Baxter, "Dear Comrades," *The Newsletter* 6 (1975).

123. Windsor AWG, "Notes on Developing."

124. Baxter et al., *Out of the Driver's Seat*, 40, 57–63.

125. His most detailed work was "Working on an Assembly Line," which was originally published as a section titled "Blue Collar Workers" in Baxter et al., *Out of the Driver's Seat*, 31–41.

126. Monk, "Working on an Assembly Line," 50–54.

127. Monk, "Working on an Assembly Line," 53. Jeremy Milloy also refers to this incident in his chapter on shop-floor culture; see Milloy, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, 85–86.

disputes.[128] While Monk was similarly opposed to working inside the union structure, he did have a more cordial relationship with the former members of WU than Brophy. At one point, Monk helped Al Dumouchelle research the dealings related to UAW's co-op housing project, Solidarity Towers, believing Brooks might have been involved in a corruption scandal, though they never found any evidence of wrongdoing.[129]

Splits in the New Tendency

THEORETICAL DIFFERENCES WERE also hardening in the Windsor New Tendency more broadly, ultimately leading to the organization's dissolution in 1975. The first split was from women who turned toward the Wages for Housework (WFH) perspective developed by the Italian theorists Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Selma James, and Silvia Federici, which argued that because the socially reproductive labour performed overwhelmingly by women produces value, women ought to demand wages in compensation and to engage in their own struggles against work.[130] The split mirrored developments in the Toronto branch of TNT, where women similarly left the organization.[131] Others, including the Longmoores, left to join the CPC, believing that a party was necessary to unite working-class struggles and that radical workers ought to organize within the unions rather than remain completely autonomous.[132] The final split was between the Glaberman supporters who now referred to themselves as Out of the Driver's Seat (ODS) and the AWG. The former argued that the AWG was wrong to interpret workers' self-activity as a struggle against work rather than a struggle for control of production and that, furthermore, the rank-and-file group was becoming far too vanguardist in its relationship to shop-floor struggles. The AWG, meanwhile, continued to embrace the struggle-against-work perspective and believed it was necessary to take a greater leadership role in workplace struggles, arguing that ODS made a false distinction between

128. Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014), 39.

129. Monk interview.

130. On the Wages for Housework perspective, see, for example, Mariarosa Dalla Costa & Selma James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* (Bristol: Falling Wall Press, 1975). For a comparative study of the WFH network in Canada and Italy, see Christina Rousseau, "Housework and Social Subversion: Wages, Housework, and Feminist Activism, in 1970s Italy and Canada," PhD thesis, York University, 2016.

131. Huot, "Autonomist Marxism"; Windsor-Detroit AWG, "Notes on Acknowledging the Class Perspective: Wages for Housework – Documents #2," internal AWG document, Windsor, 1975, PCGK; Brophy interview, 3 July 2017.

132. Mike Longmoore soon became a steward at Chrysler, and he has remained active on the left wing of Local 444 well into retirement. Longmoore interview.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

activists in TLC and the broader working class.[133] As Brophy later said of the spontaneism inherent in the ODS perspective,

> For me it was this main idea that the function of activists was to record what the working class was doing like you were a visitor or someone in the stands looking at the sport was ridiculous. And I just couldn't see that. And the other thing was that I was sharing in the exploitation. I was working on the plantation. So I had no real vested interest in just recording their exploitation, I was being exploited. So I just saw it as ridiculous.[134]

The AWG continued for some time even after TNT imploded. Through 1975, the AWG gravitated toward the WFH perspective despite some initial bitterness as a result of the splits that marked the previous year. Having split from ODS, the AWG made links with radical auto workers in Detroit who similarly adopted a worker's autonomy perspective.[135] While still upholding the struggle against work, the AWG declared that the perspective was insufficient on its own and that the WFH perspective was the legitimate "class perspective." The WFH perspective led to further complications, however, as the group became increasingly focused on the "hierarchies of oppression" within the working class itself, reinforcing the need for organizational autonomy and total rejection of the possibility of uniting men and women, white and racialized workers, employed and unemployed workers, and so on within any sort of unified organization. Instead, the AWG argued that they, as predominantly white, male auto workers, would have to attempt to understand the specificity of their class location and formulate some course of action to confront capitalism and dismantle oppression on their own.[136] There is indeed much to appreciate in the AWG's commitment to overcoming the hierarchies within the working class, yet adopting this separatist perspective did little to advance the level of class struggle in the workplace or improve the material well-being of the workers, racialized or otherwise, and instead likely exasperated the group's increasing isolation.

The limitations of the struggle-against-work perspective were further evidenced in Brophy's involvement with *Zerowork*, a journal project organized by former Toronto New Tendency members, among them Peter Taylor and

133. Baxter et al., *Out of the Driver's Seat*, 59–61; John Ford, Tim Grant, John Huot, David Kidd, Bruno Ramirez & Peter Taylor, "Statement on the Dissolution of The New Tendency," *The Newsletter* 6 (1975): 5–11.

134. Brophy interview, 3 July 2017.

135. Windsor AWG, "Notes on Developing"; Windsor-Detroit AWG, "Notes on Acknowledging." The Detroit autonomists produced the pamphlet, Millard Berry, Ralph Franklin, Alan Franklin, Cathy Kauflin, Marylin Werbe, Richard Wieske & Peter Werbe, *Wildcat: Dodge Truck, June 1974* (Detroit: Black and Red Notes, 1974). John Lippert was also involved in the Detroit/Windsor autonomist milieu. See Lippert, "Fleetwood Wildcat," *Radical America* 11, 5 (1976): 7–38; Lippert, "Shopfloor Politics at Fleetwood," *Radical America* 12, 4 (1978): 53–70.

136. Windsor AWG, internal AWG correspondence, 22 July 1975, PCGK; Windsor-Detroit AWG, "Notes on Acknowledging"; Windsor-Detroit AWG, internal AWG correspondence, 15 August 1975, PCGK.

Bruno Ramirez, and academics such as Peter Linebaugh, that grew out of the global autonomist Marxist network with which TNT had been associated.[137] The organizers hoped that the journal would help further develop and clarify the struggle-against-work and WFH perspectives. While the journal produced some worthwhile discussions on workers' self-activity and resistance, including an early article on the auto industry by Linebaugh and Ramirez that was largely based on the experiences of the Windsor auto workers, the *Zerowork* perspectives ultimately suffered from the same theoretical imprecision that characterized other struggle-against-work theories.[138] In a letter to *Zerowork*, for example, Glaberman highlighted the "theoretical confusion" of the journal's conceptual tools and understanding of class. Furthermore, he forcefully criticized the strategic conclusions drawn by *Zerowork* theorists by noting the utter banality of collapsing all working-class resistance and demands (whether revolutionary or reformist) into the simple maxim of "more money for less work":

> Much of it boils down to rhetoric, rather than substance, because there is no sense of a revolutionary working-class struggle for *power*, to destroy this society and to create a new one. … In any case, if the significance of working-class struggle is more money and, hopefully, an end to work, how does the working class establish its control over society and the means of production? That is, what does the revolution consist of?[139]

Indeed, *Zerowork*'s call for a "total wage," characterized by a guaranteed income and increases to programs such as unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, social security, and welfare, hardly constituted much more than a very heterodox presentation of essentially reformist demands, or perhaps as Lotta Continua once said of Potere Operaio's program, a call for "capitalism without labour."[140]

Brophy, too, again became disillusioned with the WFH perspective, which by this point now argued that waged workers' struggles ought to be not only separate from but entirely subordinate to women's struggles. Brophy noted that if *Zerowork* embraced such a perspective, it would never have any chance of relating to regular workers, because "they've heard that guilt and liberal shit

137. Bruno Ramirez and Peter Linebaugh both became accomplished historians. See, for example, Linebaugh, *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin, 1991); Ramirez, *When Workers Fight: The Politics of Industrial Relations in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1978).

138. Harry Cleaver, "Background: Genesis of *Zerowork* #1," Zerowork Online Archive, 10 September 2014, http://www.zerowork.org/GenesisZ1.html; Peter Linebaugh & Bruno Ramirez, "Crisis in the Auto Sector," *Zerowork*, no. 1 (1975): 60–84.

139. Martin Glaberman to Paulo Carpignano, 28 December 1977, Zerowork Online Archive, http://zerowork.org/GlabermanToZerowork19771228.html.

140. Harry Cleaver, "Background: From *Zerowork* #1 to *Zerowork* #2," Zerowork Online Archive, 10 September 2014, http://zerowork.org/Background-Z1-Z2.html; and Wright, *Storming Heaven*, 128.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

before and just don't need it."[141] Having experienced the numerous divisions in TLC, he also warned that the group was likely to split over the matter; indeed, *Zerowork* dissolved while preparing a third issue of the journal in 1977.[142]

Conclusion

After TNT's demise, former members of the ODS faction, including Monk, Baxter, and Mark Buckner, continued to collaborate with Glaberman. Most notably, Monk helped Glaberman revive Facing Reality's old leaflet *Speak Out* as *Speaking Out* in the early 1980s. Through *Speaking Out*, Monk and Glaberman continued to document workers' self-activity and resistance, and the leaflet was distributed at the auto plants in Windsor and Detroit. Monk, a lifelong auto worker, helped to print the leaflets and contributed to articles about auto workers' resistance and the UAW and CAW.[143] Clearly TNT had an impact on Glaberman, as he continued to refer to New Tendency documents and Monk's shop-floor experiences in Windsor in his own work.[144] Former TNT members also helped organize and participate in a series of "Blue Collar Work" conferences, conceptualized in part by former FR member Seymour Faber, which facilitated large discussions between rank-and-file workers, union representatives, labour historians, and activists concerned with worker's self-activity.[145] Indeed, through the 1980s, academic labour scholars continued to engage with the questions around workers' control, everyday resistance, and the labour process that were so central to the militants involved in WU and TNT.[146]

Brophy was similarly influenced by his shop-floor experiences. After the dissolution of *Zerowork* and the AWG, he became an important figure in the burgeoning health and safety movement during the late 1970s, realizing that

141. Quoted in Cleaver, "Background: From *Zerowork* #1."

142. Cleaver, *Zerowork* #1."

143. See, for example, Jim Monk, "Windsor Plant Occupation," *Speaking Out* 1, 2 (1982): n.p.; Monk, "Log of a Canadian Chrysler Worker," *Speaking Out* 1, 5 (1982): n.p.; Monk, "Canadian Wildcats against Chrysler and UAW," *Speaking Out* 1, 6 (1982): n.p.; Monk, "Another Historic Contract," *Speaking Out* 1, 8 (1983): n.p.

144. See, for example, Martin Glaberman & Seymour Faber, *Working for Wages: The Roots of Insurgency* (Dix Hills, NY: General Hall, 1998); Glaberman, "Marxist Views," 3–19. See also Faber, "Working Class Organization," in Mary Robinson, Bruce Levinson & Martin Glaberman, eds., *Work and Society* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 328–346.

145. Baxter interview; Julian Hayashi, "Rubber Band Man, Tom-Foolery Helps Defeat Job Boredom," *London Free Press*, 9 May 1977.

146. See, for example, Craig Heron & Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986); James Rinehart, *The Tyranny of Work: Alienation and the Labour Process*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Canada, 2001). See also James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

many of the AWG's concerns were in fact health and safety issues. In addition to the immediate physical hazards that the AWG identified as a result of speed-ups and layoffs, Brophy soon became aware of the scale of the toxic chemical emissions that he and other auto workers were exposed to on the job. Along with his wife, Margaret Keith, Brophy founded the influential Windsor Occupational Health Information Service in 1979 as part of a grassroots project to help workers exposed to asbestos at the Windsor Bendix factory; it soon exploded into a much larger health and safety project. Brophy built upon his experiences with workers' inquiries conducted by TNT – research that entailed detailed investigation of workplaces and a deep understanding of everyday routines, derived from interviews and discussions with workers to understand the problems they face. In his more recent work, Brophy has similarly retained an appreciation for the principle of workers' autonomy, believing that his projects and clinics ought to stay independent of the trade union bureaucracy while still remaining open to collaboration with unions, provided they allow him to work and research autonomously.[147]

In addition to the direct impact on members' lives and future work, these experiences represent an important moment for the revolutionary left in Canada, as New Leftists and militant workers sought to come to terms with the widespread factory militancy of the early 1970s in concert with their comrades abroad in other manufacturing cities. Experiencing and understanding repression on the job from not only management but also union officials led to a firm rejection of the bureaucratic politics that had plagued the Old Left and the mainstream labour movement, and this led these activists to imagine a number of creative alternatives to the old methods and avenues of organization. In contrast to other scholarship, here we can see that not all New Leftists moved into the mainstream of the labour movement, and, at its best, this independent organizing work led to improved working conditions, even if such gains were often short lived. Although WU and TNT were but two of many organizations that emerged in this period, their history sheds some light on an overlooked part of the trajectory of Canada's New Left.

We can, of course, find much to criticize in some of the New Left politics explored here. The New Tendency's sectarianism, hostility to party building, and ultra-left orientation toward unions, for example, have not aged well – even if its important critiques of the labour bureaucracy and the structural limitations of overly leadership-centric politics remain prescient. Indeed, it is increasingly clear that rebuilding unions and creating effective political organizations that can take seriously the question of state power will be crucial to any socialist political project going forward. But one does not need to completely accept the autonomist Marxist positions on the role of organization, leadership, unions, or parties to appreciate how these groups genuinely

147. Keith & Brophy, "Your Health Is Not for Sale"; Brophy interview, 3 July 2017; Brophy interview, 3 August 2017.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/llt.2020.0003

sought to develop a praxis that reflected the will and interests of rank-and-file workers. Such concerns will no doubt be essential to forging reinvigorated socialist and labour movements in the present and the future.

I would like to thank the Social Science and Humanities Research Council and Trent University for providing funding for this research and Gary Kinsman, Jeremy Milloy, Dimitry Anastakis, Sam Gindin, Joan Sangster, and Bryan Palmer for their help at various stages of this project. I also thank the anonymous peer reviewers for their insightful comments.