

confidential--for members only

8

MINUTES.....N.Y. SPARTACIST COMMITTEE

Date: 4 November 1964

Present: Lynne, Harry, Jim, Roger, Dave, Shirley, Al, Peter

Other: Paul, Harriet, and George

Absent: Shane, Edith, Charlotte, Loretta, Price, Tippy

Motion: that Paul be admitted to the meeting with voice.

Passed unanimously

1. Organization of meeting:

- (a) Chairman - Al elected.
- (b) Agenda adopted as amended.
- (c) Minutes of 10/31 read and accepted. (Al will submit a written correction to the 2nd part of the Cuba trip rpt.)
- (d) BA minutes and discussion summaries of Oct. 20 read.

Motion by Jim: That minutes of N.Y. local be mimeographed and marked 'confidential--members only' and used as an internal newsletter to members at large and other locals.

Amendment by Roger: that minutes be approved by local organizer before stencilling. Amendment accepted

Amended motion passed unan.

2. Personnel:

Motion by Jim: (1) to issue Larry a transfer to member-at-large status; (2) that steering committee should clarify Edith's status. Passed unanimously

3. General Information and Correspondence- Jim

- (a) BA correspondence available, from Marion Oct.15 and 31; from Geoff, Oct. 25. Also their leaflet on elections and against White Citizens Council.
- (b) Healy-Wohlforth:
 - (i) Letter from SLL, Oct.19, congratulating us on WIRL? pamphlet and ordering 200 copies in exchange for bks.
 - (ii) Wohlforth letter of Oct.24 - to be taken up by REB.
 - (iii) Mazelis was found distributing PL leaflet calling for boycott of elections, while their Bulletin calls for support to SWP. (Peter reported that a close contact who had been at a recent semi-closed PL meeting told him that Milt Rosen had called Trotskyists 'agents of the State Department' at the meeting.
- (c) SSE, the new welfare union of which Judy Mage is the leading vice-president, won the election over the incumbent union by a 2 to 1 vote (1200 vote margin). The SWP had no line toward the election with its members voting both ways. Support to the SSE was the issue over which Judy was forced out of the SWP.
- (d) Reply from Guardian - were not able to include all groups, hence SPARTACIST left out of editors' symposium.
- (d) SPARTACIST Election Supplement - 9 page issue prepared, 1000 copies distributed at Guardian Symposium, SWP rally, mailed to subscribers, etc.

- (f) Copy of letter to Barry Sheppard from YPSL received.
- (g) Letter from Steve S. available.

Disc. on b(11): Dave, Harry, Jim

4. YSA Work:

(a) Conferences for Independent Political Action:

- (i) New York - Al reporting. The opinion of the Steering Committee was that we didn't take adequate advantage of the opportunity either through underestimation of the importance of the conference or organizational sloppiness. While we distributed at most of the sessions and had members at a couple, there was not sufficient participation to make adequate contact with the large number of new youth present. YSA claims 10 recruits--this is probably the East Coast total from their entire campaign work. Disc. Harry.
 - (ii) Bay Area - Geoff was reported attending. Attendance of about 100 was probably poorest of the 3 confs.
 - (iii) Mid-West (phone reports from Marcia and Bob H., letter from Steve S.). Approx. 150 attending. Our 5 mid-west comrades intervened, sold lit, made contacts, etc. Most important is that our mid-west comrades met and worked together for the first time, and 2 of the non-Chicago comrades have committed themselves to moving to Chicago within a year and the other possibly so.
- (b) YSA Convention - Dave reporting. To be held in Chicago over Xmas. Steering Committee recommends the two expelled NC members (Al and Shirley) attend to present our appeal. Al will write NO requesting time for appeal (they did not reply to our original letter).
Disc.: Jim (suggested these 2 comrades could give Cuba talks while in Chicago area.)

5. Mass Work: (a)

New York CORE - Harry reporting.

Power struggle between conservative incumbent leadership and more conservative challenger was won by challenger (Funnye). Funnye expects that program, written by him, will not be voted upon and will only be tactically modified. Substitutes mobilization of people with changing image of Negroes, oriented toward making Negro more acceptable to whites and elevating upper strata of Negroes. We are for a struggle to reject program and substitute grass-roots approach.

- (i) Employment committee - Funnye's program concentrates on more office jobs rather than jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled. Committee will continue with plans for Ballentine beer boycott and is exploring approach to garment workers.
- (ii) Housing - Lynne reporting. Entire committee opposes Funnye's program and has had 3 caucus meetings to write alternate program; however, their will to fight seems to be ebbing. Our fraction is urging concentration on

tenants councils and rent strikes and have also submitted a plan which, in veiled language, calls for expropriation of landlords under tenants control.

(At this point Harriet entered.)

Motion: To admit Harriet to the meeting with voice.

passed unanimously

Disc: Jim, Lynne, Harry, Al, Peter

Roger reported that by accident he was put on the super-elite Membership Committee which screens new members. He has received a letter asking him to resign in the interest of 'unity.'

Peter will investigate Bronx CORE with an eye towards joining if the situation looks promising.

- b. RAM Conference - Shirley reporting.
(a tape of the report and following discussion was made and is available. Also, some notes are attached)

Motion: to extend meeting till 11:30 pm. Passed
(Roger opposed)

- c. PL Party - Several attended a PL party Saturday night. This sort of social contact is a necessary part of developing political united front activities.
- d. Earl Price group and Bklyn CR Defense Committee:
Al and Roger attended a Friday talk by Earl Price urging abstention from election.

Jim raised a serious criticism of Roger in connection with the Saturday night BCRDC party. Since there wasn't sufficient time for discussion and disposition this will be held over to next meeting.

The rest of the agenda was tabled.

(Tabled points were:

6. Campus Work:
a) MPI and City College
b) May 2nd Committee (Columbia)
c) Columbia Spartacist Club
7. Educational - brochure to be written and mailed and names of contacts given to Lynne
8. National Organization and Spartacist 3.
9. Finances. \$430 in treasury, over \$300 owed by N.Y. comrades, excluding Edith.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 pm.

Peter announced MPI march Sat. Noon from Columbia to UN in support of Puerto Rican students.

Supplement to NY-SC minutes of 4 November 1964

Notes on RAM Conference attended by Shirley, Oct. 30 - Nov. 1:

A Student Conference on Afro-American Youth, of which RAM (Revolutionary Action Movement) is a section, was held in Nashville Tenn., with 35-40 out of an expected 50 attending, mainly from the North. Purpose was to work out a program for the coming period for forming a Black Revolutionary Vanguard. Conference consisted of 3 main presentations and 3 workshops on the topics of the presentations.

General Line:

1. Afro-America is a captive nation.
2. Afro-America must be united with the 'Bandung World.'
3. General condemnation of imperialism and necessity for an anti-imperialist movement. Step forward in that leadership of African nations was criticized for first time, formerly had been considered progressive if not revolutionary.
4. Necessity for international struggle against imperialism.
5. China is the only place where revolutionists can turn.
6. The revolutionary movement will consist of urban workers, civil servants, and peasantry who will unite to fight for a Peoples' Democracy and the destruction of class societies.
7. The victory of the Bandung World will isolate the U.S.
8. The 'Ofay Left' has been left without a working class--they are parasites on the Black struggle (the line that was criticized was actually the CP line, and the example of bureaucratic Russia revising Marxism-Leninism was used.)

Program:

1. To challenge bourgeois values of Afro youth.
2. To spread revolutionary literature (like Crusade) on campuses.
3. To organize the ghettos.
4. To form discussion groups and clubs.
5. Educate Afro youth to their historical role and destiny.
6. To familiarize all with the 'nation within a nation' theory.
7. To build a cadre capable of carrying out the above tasks.

Contradictions:

Nationalism vs. international aspects. RAM does not call for a separate state.

Other tasks:

1. To create a Black Liberation Front.
2. To build a cadre capable of leading the new state.
3. To create a Stop-Imperialism Movement, i.e., non-cooperation with Imperialism, to carry on nation wide strikes and mass demonstrations for socialism in the ghettos.
4. To bring about a cultural-humanistic revolution as well as a social-economic revolution.

Tone:

The movement to be build will be Peking-oriented. Mao is held up as another Lenin. Proletarian Internationalism is spoken of but means non-white proletariat only. But the white working class must also be convinced imperialism is not in their interest (but this is not the responsibility of RAM). Distinction made between revolutionary nationalism and bourgeois nationalism.

Shirley's role:

Distributed Spartacist. On the reception of the Spartacist objection was made to references that the white working class had any future role and objection to implied opposition to Mao. Shirley participated in round table discussions.

Composition: The only southerners were from Nashville. Others present from Chicago, Detroit, N.Y., Cleveland, Boston and West Coast. Only 3 or 4 of those present had been around RAM 6 months before--mainly from CR groups and SNCC, disgusted with non-violent philosophy and rejection of 'Whitism' (middle-class reformism).

Prospects: They are not hostile toward us. Chance for United Front activity. Our program would be accepted as the best of the left-wing groups--but they don't judge groups on their program--lump them all together as Ofay Left. They see no prospect for any change in the American working class. Don't have a dialectical approach--empirical. The White Left should organize the white working class, but they don't think the white working class will participate in the American revolution.

NOTE: Shirley was the only member of another radical organization present. Attendance was by invitation only, and sessions were closed. WW and SWP sent literature bundles. No PL presence.)