

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 23, March 26, 1976

Present: Barnes, Blackstock, D. Jenness, L. Jenness, Jones,
Lund, Lyons, Miah, Shaw, Seigle, Sheppard, Stapleton,
Thomas

Visitors: Morell, Petrin, Rodriguez

Chair: Barnes

- AGENDA:
1. Party Suit
 2. April 24 Boston Demonstration
 3. Garza Defense
 4. New York Local
 5. National Black Assembly Convention and Primary Elections
 6. Education
 7. Eastern European Dissidents
 8. World Movement Report

1. PARTY SUIT

Stapleton reported on new FBI documents turned over by government and on perspectives for case.

Discussion

Agreement on perspectives outlined.

2. APRIL 24 BOSTON DEMONSTRATION

(Bailey, Dixon invited for this point)

Miah reported on developments in building for April 24 anti-racist demonstration in Boston (see attached).

Discussion

3. GARZA DEFENSE CAMPAIGN

L. Jenness reported on progress of party campaign in response to shot fired into apartment of Caterino Garza and Mark Friedman.

Discussion

Motion to approve report.

Carried.

4. NEW YORK LOCAL

D. Jenness reported on his tour of the six New York branches and on discussions with leadership of New York Local concerning problems and progress in implementing party turn.

Discussion

5. NATIONAL BLACK ASSEMBLY CONVENTION AND PRIMARY ELECTIONS

(Bailey, Dixon, Smith invited for this point)

Smith reported on recent National Black Assembly Convention in Cincinnati and the party's participation.

Discussion

Agreement on articles to be carried in press on Black Assembly convention and developments in primary elections.

6. EDUCATION

(Feldman invited for this point)

Feldman reported on activities of National Education Department in response to party turn and on organizing educational activities in the branches and locals during the summer period in conjunction with party pre-convention discussion.

Discussion

7. EASTERN EUROPEAN DISSIDENTS

(Feldman, Novack invited for this point)

Novack reported on recent discussions with Eastern European dissidents.

Discussion

8. WORLD MOVEMENT REPORT

Shaw reported.

Discussion

Meeting Adjourned.

PROGRESS REPORT ON APRIL 24 BOSTON MARCH AND RALLY

by Malik Miah, March 26, 1976

As reported in the last two issues of the Militant, significant new supporters have been won for the April 24 march on Boston in support of school desegregation. This includes Tom Turner, president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO Council, and the National Education Association. To date, more labor leaders and unions have endorsed the April 24 march than the number that supported the earlier demonstrations for school desegregation in Boston. This represents an important step forward and comes at a time when some labor officials in Louisville are organizing a racist antibusing march on Washington, D.C., also for April 24.

Turner indicated at the Coalition for April 24's press conference on March 23, and informally, that he sees the Boston April 24 probusing action as a counterdemonstration to the racist one in D.C. With the labor movement under increasing attack from the government and the employers, some union officials have come to see the connection between the generalized assault on wages and the reactionary attacks on busing. Thus, April 24 in Boston is seen by some labor officials as not only probusing and pro-Black, but pro-Labor as well. Explaining this latter point may encourage more unions to back April 24 and busing.

Turner's endorsement of April 24 is also significant because he is a member of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP. He told the press conference that he would seek the National Board's endorsement at its April 12 meeting. He also indicated to the Coalition that seeking endorsement of other Board members and NAACP branches before April 12 would be important.

Another significant development concerns the Nation of Islam. Representatives of the Boston mosque have attended coalition meetings. And a representative of the Nation attended the first news conference. He did not, however, as reported in the April 2 Militant, state that the Nation endorsed April 24. The sentence quoted in the Militant was in reply to a question asked during the discussion. He came to observe the news conference and did not have a prepared statement. The fact that he came and has come to coalition meetings is significant in and of itself. But the Chicago leadership has not yet endorsed the action. This fact should be reported to all comrades.

Overall the march has won a greater list of endorsers than any previous pro-busing march in Boston. This represents a small but important victory for probusing supporters. It is important, however, not to equate this good endorsement, which doesn't include the Boston NAACP, with having a large demonstration on April 24. The potential is there but unless broader social forces than NSCAR and ourselves actively build the march -- for example, the NAACP, the Nation of Islam or the labor movement -- the action will be a modest one.

Presently, most endorsers have been conscious to state that

they can only give verbal backing to the march but little active support. Ellen Jackson and Ruth Batson, for instance, have made this clear. Of course, if the objective situation in Boston rapidly changes in the next few weeks, it is possible that some of these forces will become more active in building the march. May 17, we should remember, was as large as it was primarily because the NAACP called it even though NSCAR played a major role in organizing it. The fact that broader social forces haven't thrown themselves behind April 24 yet does not diminish the importance of the action. It represents the only counter mobilization to the racists this spring. No matter what the size of April 24, the broad support received will give added confidence to the Black community and their allies to continue to resist the racist violence.

It is thus important to help continue soliciting endorsers for the march and to organize community activists and leaders, unionists, church leaders, women's organizations, student governments, Black Student Unions, lawyers and others to march on Boston April 24. Even if only representatives from a broad cross-section of the population come to Boston, it would have an impact on the city of Boston. We should especially take advantage of Tom Turner's support for April 24 to gain union support. A theme to labor can be: this is a probusing and pro-labor march.

We should continue to seek the support of the Nation of Islam mosques and NAACP branches and other Black organizations like PUSH, the Urban League and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

An important side to April 24, unlike earlier demonstrations, is that it will assemble and march through the Black community. As well, it is tentatively planned that Black high school students being bused to racist areas will lead the march. And the march will be monitored mainly by Blacks and Puerto Ricans. Around the country, we should begin recruiting and training marshals, in particular Blacks.

Finally, because of the importance of letting everyone in Boston's Black community know about the march and rally, the last week before the action major saturation teams are being organized to leaflet and poster up the Black community. Blacks and others who can come in early to help carry out these activities should be encouraged to do so. Many Black students, including some of our comrades, will be on school break then and may be able to do this. This will not only help build the march but also will be an important experience for those who can do it.

Progress reports should be sent to the national office.