

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 21, 1977

No. 10

NEC Present: Archer, Berman, Brown, Farley, Green, Hart, Linder, Lubrano, Rodriguez, Williams, Zárate

Chair: Lubrano

- Agenda:
1. Sales Drive
  2. Death Penalty
  3. Madison
  4. Antideportations Fight
  5. Mujeres Unidas Conference
  6. Organization Tours
  7. Central Michigan University Defense
  8. National Office

1. Sales Drive

Williams reported that initial sales figures for March show that YSA chapters have sold approximately 1,709 Young Socialists or 28 percent of the March goal; at this point, 50 percent of the goal should have been sold. He also reported a target week being organized to make the 10,000 sales goal for the Militant the week of April 2-9, and plans for the YSA to participate in the Militant target week.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

2. Death Penalty

Hart reported on the YSA's participation in the Witness Against Executions being held in Atlanta, Georgia, April 8-10. The focus of the weekend activities, which were initiated by the Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons, is a national demonstration against the death penalty on April 9. Hart also reported that the National Student Coalition Against Racism is discussing a possible one-day steering committee meeting for April 10 in Atlanta.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

3. Madison

Berman reported on discussions of the YSA's security policy, which have taken place in the Madison chapter.

Discussion

4. Antideportations Fight

Zárate reported on Carter's new plan to crack down on undocumented workers, and the need for the YSA to launch an educational campaign on this issue, as well as encourage NSCAR to begin holding meetings on campus to discuss actions to defend undocumented workers.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

5. Mujeres Unidas Conference

Lubrano reported on a conference of 300 Chicanas that took place March 5 in Los Angeles. YSA members participated in conference workshops on "Women and Education" and "Abortion and Forced Sterilization."

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

6. Organization Tours

Berman reported on national office plans to organize the following organization tours: Lubrano, March 28 to April 2 in Washington, D.C., and Richmond; Brown, March 28 to April 1 in New York City; and Williams, April 4-6 in Newark.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

7. Central Michigan University Defense

Berman reported on recent legal developments in the CMU defense case.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion

Carried

8. National Office

Motion by Archer: To admit the following as at-large members:

1. Ellen E. in San Juan Capistrano, Ca.
2. Cathy F. in San Juan Capistrano, Ca.
3. Joe B. in Baton Rouge, La.
4. Cassandra M. in Baton Rouge, La.
5. Max M. in Baton Rouge, La.
6. Richard J. in Baton Rouge, La.
7. Kent B. in Springfield, Il.

Discussion

Carried

Motion by Archer: To transfer National Committee member  
Kear from Cleveland, Oh. to Miami, Fl.

Carried

Motion by Archer: To concur with the decision of the Mil-  
waukee local to reconstitute itself as  
one chapter.

Discussion

Carried

Motion by Archer: To concur with the decision of the Seattle  
local to reconstitute itself as one chapter.

Discussion

Carried

Meeting adjourned.

Report on the Mujeres Unidas Conference to the NEC  
by Andrea Lubrano

The Mujeres Unidas por la Liberación del Pueblo Conference (Women United for the Liberation of the People) held on March 4, 5 and 6 was attended by about 300 women. Mujeres Unidas is a Chicana organization made up primarily of students from the MEChAs on the various campuses in the Los Angeles area. The conference was held at East Los Angeles College.

It was opened with a plenary session to introduce the conference. The speakers were Evalina Marquez from CASA (a Chicano organization that started out as an anti-deportations organization but has since evolved into a sectarian group) and Victoria Yepez of Mujeres Unidas. Marquez's remarks centered on how women's fight for equality is subsumed into the general fight for "liberation." She went on to say that Mexicanas/Chicanas differ from white women in that they do not see men as the enemy -- men do not oppress women but the ruling class oppresses women. In general, her remarks set a confusing tone for much of the following discussion. Yepez gave a generally good talk on the current attacks facing women and the need to fight back.

Mariana Hernandez, a member of the SWP, chaired the conference. In her remarks she stressed the importance of responding to the current attacks.

The rest of Saturday was taken up with workshops. These included immigration and deportations, history of the Latina in the southwest, forced sterilization and abortion, international situation of women, education, women under socialism, labor, welfare, health, and rape.

The SWP and YSA were invited to have speakers at three of the workshops: forced sterilization and abortion, education, and women under socialism.

In the abortion and sterilization workshop, we helped to get a resolution passed against the Hyde amendment. Unfortunately, the workshop was set up in such a way that it focused on sterilization abuse and left little room for a discussion on the current attacks on abortion. This was a reflection of the view held by some currents in the Chicano movement that abortion is genocide -- that women's right to choose is not the central issue involved in both forced sterilization and in legal abortion.

In the education workshop there was a good discussion on busing. The Communist party had a speaker at this workshop, who introduced a resolution supporting busing. There was a lengthy debate in which CASA opposed busing. At the conclusion of the discussion, the pro-busing resolution passed.

The plenary session was on Sunday. It opened with the

reading of greetings from Pairie Fire Organizing Committee, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee, Olga Rodriguez of the Socialist Workers party and Poder Feminil, another chicana organization.

Then came the discussion on the resolutions. In all there were some 84 resolutions from the workshops. Due to the large number of resolutions, the limited time available for discussion, there was little debate on the proposals. Many important resolutions were passed including the resolution against the Hyde amendment; one calling for action against it and forced sterilization around May 5; and a resolution calling for sending these resolutions to the National Organization for Women (NOW), to open up lines of communication between Chicanas and the women's movement, were all passed with no discussion.

It was clear that Maoist and Stalinist forces -- who basically oppose an independent women's movement -- did not necessarily agree with these resolutions but didn't want to see a debate on them. Rather than have political discussion around the key questions of women's liberation, they preferred to subsume the issues under the general theme of "unity" among Chicanas. Perhaps they feared divisions in their own ranks on this question particularly among the women.

The majority of women at the conference, however, did not belong to any political tendency. These Chicanas were attracted by the idea of a conference on their problems as women, despite attempts by workerist and sectarian groups to give the gathering an "anti-imperialist" character.

Only on the busing resolution was there any discussion. Here both CASA members and others in the audience raised objections to supporting busing. Their objections reflected the general confusion in the Chicano community. They ran the gamut from the fear among spanish-speaking people that busing would cut across bi-lingual education to the argument that busing implied that Chicanos would get smarter from simply sitting next to white students. SWP and YSA members and representatives of the Communist party were the only ones who spoke in favor of the resolution. The resolution passed, however, CASA's fraction split on it -- with some abstaining and others voting against it.

At the end of the plenary session other motions were put on the floor. A woman from Radical Women, a sectarian socialist-feminist group in Seattle, brought a resolution to the floor condemning the Catholic Church's regulations on abortion, sterilization, and contraceptives as an attack on a woman's right to choose. It was voted down.

A representative from the Communist party then raised a substitute motion -- condemning the church's laws on abortion, sterilization and contraceptives but leaving out the part on

a woman's right to choose. This motion was passed although just prior to this the conference passed unaniously a resolution against the Hyde amendment as an attack on a woman's right to control her body. This reflects lack of political clarity at the conference.

Our participation in this conference was very successful considering the limited size of our forces. Eight comrades -- including four Latinas -- participated. We sold \$60 worth of Pathfinder pamphlets on the major issues facing women including: Last Hired, First Fired, Abortion Rights Under Attack, Chicanas Speak Out, Chicano Nationalism and Socialism, Women and the Socialist Revolution and Gay Liberation: A Socialist Perspective. We sold 50 Militants and 10 Ys. We also distributed statements by Virginia Garza, the Socialist Workers party candidate for L.A. School Board and Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers party candidate for mayor.