

Harowitz
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October 8, 1971

FOR THE INFORMATION OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ONLY

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are a series of items relating to the trial recently held by the Boston branch of eight members of the Communist Tendency, which resulted in their expulsion from the party. These items include: (1) The original charges filed together with a statement of the Communist Tendency which was the basis of the charges; (2) Reports, minutes and related material of the branch meeting which heard the report of the trial committee; (3) A report by Dave Wulp on the activity of the Communist Tendency after it was expelled; and (4) Copies of letters David Keil sent to the national office.

Comradely,

Barry

Barry Sheppard

STATEMENT OF COMMUNIST TENDENCY

On August 15 Richard Nixon announced a wage-price freeze. The crisis of capitalism has reached an acute stage in the development of its own "death agony." The era of the post war boom and class harmony has drawn to a close. The theory of Neo-Capitalism and the hula hoop are laid to waste. Even at this moment an offensive is being undertaken against the working class on a world wide scale. The contradiction between production for profit and human need will force the capitalist class to use every weapon in its arsenal that it needs, from the "labor lieutenants" to imperialist war, in a direct attack on the proletariat. The working class will not stand idly by and watch its wages, living standards, right to strike, and even its right to live be destroyed. At precisely the time that the Socialist Workers Party reads the eulogy of the working class, the American proletariat threatens to drown the SWP in its wake.

At the 24th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party the leadership stated that the American working class would become politicized but not through economic means. On the International scene it informed us that dual power was on the agenda in Bolivia. Never before in the history of the communist movement have the perspectives nationally and internationally, of a degenerate Menshevik leadership, which includes such infamous predictions as, "After Hitler us", and the "Self-reform of the Stalinist Bureaucrasies", been destroyed in so short a time.....a period of one week ! Some Mensheviks were revolutionary by comparison!

And now the Socialist Workers Party has a proletarian orientation. The SWP and George Meany marching arm in arm toward the General Strike. It's paper filled with articles about an alien class. YSA'ers migrating from the campuses to the factories to explain to the poor workers of their plight. But isn't this the turn that you comrades in the Proletarian Tendency fought for? Look at it comrades. See through it. The leadership is bankrupt! Don't let the death agony of capitalism become the death agony of the Socialist Workers Party.

At the most critical period in the history of the SWP the leadership of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency is about to lay down it's arms and build the party for 21 more months. The Communist Tendency has no intention of giving up the fight. We ask you to join us in the final battle because the life or death of our party rides on the outcome.

We intend to remain a faction, submit a document to the International discussion, and fight for the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International "by any means necessary"!

The Communist Tendency

CHARGES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST TENDENCY

At the meeting of the Boston Branch, Sept. 7, 1971, Comrade Neal Grover read a statement on behalf of the Communist Tendency and requested that this statement be included with the minutes of the meeting.

On the basis of this act, the Executive Committee files the following charges against the Communist Tendency:

1. Indiscipline

The introduction of this statement into the branch was an attempt to re-open the discussion on questions decided by the recently concluded 24th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party in violation of the organizational norms of the party.

Article VII (sic), Section 7 of the party Constitution states:

"Questions decided by the Party Convention may be subjects of new discussions only when such discussion is formally authorized by the National Committee, or in the established pre-convention discussion period."

Furthermore, The Organizational Character of the SWP, adopted by the 1965 Convention of the party states:

"The decisions of the national party convention are binding on all party members without exception and they conclude the discussion on all disputed questions upon which a decision has been taken. Any party member violating the decisions of the convention or attempting to revive discussion in regard to them without formal authorization of the party, puts himself thereby in opposition to the party, and forfeits his right to membership. All party organizations are authorized and instructed to take any measure necessary to enforce this rule."

2. Disloyalty - This charge has two counts.

A. The "Statement of the Communist Tendency" clearly indicates that this faction has no intention of building the party and actively participating in its work. This amounts to a declaration of disloyalty. This "Statement of the Communist Tendency" says:

"At the most critical period in the history of the SWP, the leadership of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency is about to lay down it's arms and build the party for 21 more months. The Communist Tendency has no intention of giving up the fight. We ask you to join us in the final battle because the life or death of our party rides on the outcome."

The Organizational Character of the SWP states:

"While a decision is being reached, comrades holding dissident views receive all normal minority rights including the right of organized dissent. After a party decision has been made, the democratic rights of the majority take precedence. All members are required to accept the majority decision and help to carry it out. Comrades holding minority opinions are not disqualified from serving the party in any capacity; nor are they asked to give up their dissident views. They must simply await a new opportunity to present their views when internal discussion is again formally authorized."

To actively work to build the party on the basis of the majority decisions is a minimum test of loyalty to the party and of membership in the party. Article III, Section 1, of the constitution states:

"Every person who accepts the program of the Party and agrees to submit to its discipline and engage actively in its work shall be eligible to membership."

In addition, The Organizational Character of the SWP, states:

"... the party requires of every member the acceptance of its discipline and the carrying on of his activity in accordance with the program of the party, with the decisions adopted by its conventions, and with the policies formulated and directed by the party leadership."

B. The second count of disloyalty -- The "Statement of the Communist Tendency" concludes, "We intend to ... fight for the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International "by any means necessary": (emphasis in the original). This is a clear statement of intent to

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violate the norms and procedures of the party and is thus a declaration of disloyalty.

The Organizational Character of the SWP states:

"... loyalty is far more than an abstract idea; it is a standard of political conduct. The party's whole democratic centralist structure is founded on the rock of organizational loyalty. Without loyal members, the party, as a voluntary organization, would have no basis upon which to maintain the necessary discipline in carrying out its revolutionary tasks. Disloyal people don't believe in the party, they won't pitch in selflessly to help build it, and they will resist and evade discipline. That is why the organizational resolution adopted at the SWP's founding convention specified that unconditional loyalty to the party is required of every member."

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The "Statement of the Communist Tendency," is not signed by individual comrades. Thus, the trial committee which will hear these charges will summon individual members of the Communist Tendency and ask them to state where they stand on the "Statement of the Communist Tendency."