

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, NO. 1, January 22, 1974

Present: Barnes, Britton, Camejo, Finkel, A. Hansen, J. Hansen, Horowitz, Jenness, Jones, Lovell, Morrison, Shaw, Stone, Thomas, Waters

Consultative: Kerry, Novack

Visitors: Scott

Chair: Stone

AGENDA:

1. YSA PC Representative
2. Texas and Colorado Election Campaigns
3. Indiana and Ohio Campaign Proposals
4. Langston, Langston, Rothschild Correspondence
5. World Movement Report

1. YSA POLITICAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

Scott reported that the YSA NEC has elected Finkel to be their member on the Political Committee.

2. TEXAS AND COLORADO ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Britton reported on the development of La Raza Unida Party in Texas and Colorado and on the thinking of the Houston, Austin and Denver branch leaderships on our election campaigns.

Agreed that Texas and Colorado comrades should move ahead and rapidly announce candidates for major state offices.

3. INDIANA AND OHIO CAMPAIGN PROPOSALS

Stone and Finkel reported.

Discussion

Motion: To concur with the request of the Bloomington YSA to conduct, in collaboration with the other Indiana YSA at-large members, a 1974 state election campaign on the SWP ticket. (Attachment 1)

Carried.

Motion: To concur with the Cleveland branch proposal to add Rick Mitts of Cincinnati to their election campaign slate.

Carried.

4. LANGSTON, LANGSTON, ROTHSCHILD CORRESPONDENCE

Barnes reported.

Discussion

Motion: To send the attached letter in response to Comrades' Langston, Langston and Rothschild's letter to the Political Committee. (Attachments 3 and 4)

Carried.

5. WORLD MOVEMENT REPORT

Waters reported.

Discussion

Meeting adjourned.

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Attachment 1

10 January 1974

Dear Comrades:

At the recent YSA convention a number of comrades from the Michigan-Indiana region met with Doug Jenness to discuss the possibility of a 1974 Socialist Workers Party campaign for Indiana. There was general agreement with the opportunities a campaign would provide. This report is to outline the problems and potentials posed by such a campaign and requests permission from the Political Committee to conduct it.

We have projected a campaign for the U.S. Senate, a campaign for Indianapolis School Board and possibly a campaign for Congress from the Seventh Congressional District (which includes Terre Haute and Bloomington). Senator Birch Bayh will be running for re-election. We propose to run as our candidate, David Colton, a 31-year-old comrade who has been in the YSA for three years who has done good work in the anti-war movement (in Glasgow, Scotland as well as Bloomington), and, more recently, in the UFW support committee. He is a good speaker and has agreed to run although his job as math professor makes it difficult for him to do too much travelling. The Indianapolis comrades are planning to run a 15-year-old high school comrade for School Board. The high school comrade attends a 60% Black inner city high school in a city where there has been a major racist campaign against busing. We are yet uncertain about the Seventh District Congressional candidate.

Getting on the ballot requires a minimum of 8,500 signatures. The Indiana comrades understand that they will have the responsibility of financing the campaign and intend on fund-raising outside the locals internal finances. Petitions have to be presented to the Secretary of States office no later than August 31st. There is no filing fee that I know of. It would probably be a good idea to do petitioning in March or April during a time when there are campuses in session and much interest in the elections since the Indiana primary occurs during the first week of May. We won't have to worry about loyalty oaths since the U.S. Supreme Court has recently done away with them.

We are planning to work without our limited resources, particularly financial, but we think that the campaign can provide us with some very valuable political gains. It could be used to build movements such as UFW support work which has recently shown some hopeful although awkward signs of expanding state-wide, and we can also use it to build support for the case of political prisoner Arthur Burghardt-Banks. The campaign can be used to do PRDF work, by making our suit known throughout the state, and giving us the opportunity of giving the socialist view of Watergate and our strategy for fighting back. An Indiana SWP campaign has a unique opportunity to "localize" PRDF work through focusing on the history of repression of the Indiana Trotskyist movement through the

Bloomington 3 case and Watergater Tom Charles Huston who resides in Indianapolis. And, of course, the campaign will provide us that platform by which we can explain our socialist ideas and program to vast numbers of people.

In Bloomington we have had unexpectedly good response to initial talk about a campaign, among independents as well as comrades. We see as a very good possibility a campaign support group composed largely of independents, with a considerable burden of the work being assumed by non-comrades. This will facilitate contact work as well as assuring that the campaign will be quite effective without unnecessarily taxing the local's resources.

The Campaign will also serve as an important tool for aiding and extending regional work throughout Indiana. A SWP campaign support group can serve to bring together contacts and at-largers throughout the region into integral involvement with an important aspect of our work. The possibilities for a "Young Socialists for Colton" committee in cities such as Gary, South Bend, Fort Wayne, Lafayette and Terre Haute are quite good. Such groups could be developed through the work of the YSA teams, the regional organiser, and the Bloomington and Indianapolis locals (particularly in the case of Terra Haute).

So these are the perspectives that we have for an SWP campaign in Indiana this year. Please let us know if you need any further information or have any suggestions.

Comradely,

/s/ Steve Millen, Organiser
Bloomington local

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Attachment 2

4420 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44103
January 15, 1974

SWP N.O.
New York

Dear Comrades,

The Cleveland branch voted unanimously tonight to recommend to the Political Committee that Rick Mitts of the Cincinnati YSA be included on the SWP slate of candidates in Ohio. We would like to run Rick as a candidate for Congress.

Rick has been in the YSA for more than two years and has functioned as the main YSA spokesperson in Cincinnati and has gained experience in presenting our politics publicly. Comrades from Cleveland who have worked with him feel he would make a very good candidate.

Rick's personal situation is such that he will have to remain in Cincinnati for the next two years. Therefore, being a candidate from Cincinnati would not be a factor in keeping him from transferring to a regional center.

The YSA local in Cincinnati is the strongest and most stable in the region. Many of the comrades are high school students, so the main body of the local will be remaining in the city for the duration of the campaign. The Cincinnati comrades are quite confident that adding Rick to the slate will not cut across any of the YSA's activities or finances, but could be a great help for recruitment.

Comradely,

s/ Dave Paparello
Campaign Director

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Attachment 3

January 6, 1974

TO: The Political Committee

Dear Comrades,

The recently published educational bulletin on the Arab East contains a reprint of a document we submitted to the 1971 SWP convention in opposition to the national committee document on Israel and the Arab revolution. In the educational bulletin, we are identified as the authors of the minority document. Moreover, other documents in the bulletin refer to us by name as holding a position different from the one adopted by the convention.

Some months ago, Comrade Gus Horowitz mentioned to Jon that the educational department intended to issue a bulletin that would contain our 1971 counter document as well as his reply to us. None of us, of course, had any objection; it never occurred to us, however, that an educational bulletin would be made available to the public which included our names in association with a minority position.

In general, we still hold the positions defended in our 1971 document. Since this bulletin has now been made public, for us to publicly defend the line of the party against the positions we personally hold would be tantamount to making a public recantation of our views. Such a procedure is, of course, wholly alien to the Trotskyist tradition.

Thus, since the party has chosen to make the discussion on the Arab East public, we can no longer be bound to public defense of the party's positions on the question.

Comradely,

s/ Berta Langston

s/ Bob Langston

s/ Jon Rothschild

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Attachment 4

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
January 23, 1974

Berta Langston
Bob Langston
Jon Rothschild

New York

Dear Comrades:

In your letter of January 6 you register a complaint about the publication of some of the discussion on Israel and the Arab revolution in an educational bulletin available to the public and conclude with a declaration of intention to be "no longer bound to public defense of the party's positions on the question."

There are two separate questions involved here. One is the party's decision to publish the educational bulletin. Any validity to your complaint escapes us inasmuch as you state that you had been consulted prior to publication and had agreed to have your views included.

The second matter is your declaration that you "can no longer be bound to public defense of the party's position" on Israel and the Arab revolution. We assume you are fully aware of our organization principles concerning public statements by members of the SWP on questions of party policy, as well as our history and tradition on matters of this kind, and so are familiar with the consequences that flow from any deliberate violation of party practice on this score.

Comradely,

s/ Jack Barnes
for the Political Committee