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November 13, 1973

FOR THE INFORMATION OF NCers, ORGANIZERS, AND COMRADES INVOLVED
IN AFRICAN LIBERATION WORK

Dear Comrades,

The following is a summary of the report on recent developments concerning African liberation work, given at the October 30, 1973, meeting of the Political Bureau. It deals first with the Stalinist conference on African liberation and second with developments in the African Liberation Support Committees.

The Communist Party and Young Workers Liberation League called and held a "National Anti-Imperialist Conference in Solidarity with African Liberation" October 19-21 in Chicago. According to the credentials committee report, 847 Afro-Americans attended and 10 international guests. We had a fraction of 11 comrades.

The Stalinists and their periphery constituted a good portion of the participants, but there were a large number of unaffiliated radicals and nationalists -- many of whom initially took the conference for good coin. This large number of unaffiliated explains why we were able to sell 75 Militants, 8 ISRs, and \$18.50 worth of Pathfinder pamphlets (we were denied a literature table, so all of this was hawked outside the conference).

The conference lasted only a day and a half: opening plenary Saturday morning, workshops in the afternoon, rally that night, and a final plenary with workshop reports and wrap-up Sunday morning and early afternoon.

If the Stalinists were able to fool people in the initial call put out that this was a conference to build a united front on African liberation, this was somewhat dissipated during the conference proceedings. The conference proved to be a total fraud with workshop proposals prepared in advance supporting Soviet diplomacy at the United Nations and elsewhere as well as positions flowing from the reformist politics of the CP and YWLL.

The opening plenary featured Angela Davis and the night rally featured Henry Winston, CP national chairman. See the BAMN column in the November 16 Militant for a detailed account.

What the CP got out of the conference was a continuations committee that will act and issue statements in the name of the conference.

We will want to keep abreast of how the CP and YWLL utilize the conference in local areas. In some cases we will want to intervene if they call an action on U.S. complicity with Portuguese colonialism and the white settler states in Southern Africa, getting a sense of what they have and who they are attracting. In some instances, we may even be able to force them into genuine united front activity.

The African Liberation Support Committees

Because ALSC did not call another national action or week of activities this fall, the local committees have begun to splinter. Although the national steering committee of ALSC passed a motion last spring to launch a boycott of Gulf Oil because of its operations in the Portuguese colony of Angola, nothing has been done. This lack of a fall action focus gave the Stalinists a clear field for their conference, making it easier for them to steer clear of the forces in ALSC. If the Stalinists had called a conference last spring they would not have been able to avoid the forces building African Liberation Day, May 26, without looking very sectarian.

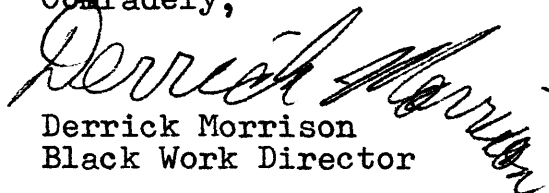
What has happened is that in some cases the local ALSCs, such as in the Bay Area and New York City, have been taken over by the Congress of African People or other Pan-Africanist sectarians. In many cases the local committees -- lacking an action focus -- have broken out in debate on a statement of principles passed by the national steering committee of ALSC on June 29-July 1 in Frogmoor, South Carolina. Maoist rhetoric -- an expression of the direction of some of the national leaders of the Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU) -- ran throughout the statement, although its purpose was to propose that ALSC be a formally united front organization. When the statement was printed up and circulated, the Maoist rhetoric drew adverse reactions from Pan-Africanist minded militants.

The ALSC originates out of the Pan-Africanist or nationalist movement but it has embraced Blacks of all political persuasions in the course of the African Liberation Day in 1972 and the African Liberation Day in 1973.

We want to make the point that a united front is built around action and as long as ALSC does not plan serious actions it will continue to go downhill. We want to continue to be aware of what local ALSCs are doing in case actions are mounted which we can participate in.

We want to continue to circulate the Young Socialist pamphlet on the U.S. role in Southern Africa by Malik Miah, set up meetings and forums on the topic, and try to build united activities on the Middle East with YWLL and the ALSC forces. We have found Black student organizations very open in some cases to Middle East work because of the similar natures of Israel and South Africa.

Comradely,


Derrick Morrison
Black Work Director