

COPY

COPY

*Harowitz*

COPY

14 Charles Lane  
New York, N.Y. 10014

June 18, 1971

LOWER MANHATTAN

Frank Manning

Dear Comrade Manning,

This is to acknowledge receipt today of your letter of  
June 16, 1971.

Comradely,  
s/Jack Barnes  
Organization Secretary

cc: Susan LaMont - Lower Manhattan branch organizer  
Lew Jones - New York local organizer

COPY

COPY

COPY

June 16, 1971

Administrative Committee  
Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades:

The incident referred to in the enclosed letter occurred within the context of pre-convention discussion and is, therefore, being called to your attention. I trust that the Executive Committee of the Lower Manhattan branch will take appropriate action and that no action on your part should be necessary.

I will keep you informed as to the action taken by the E.C. of the Lower Manhattan branch in this matter.

Comradely,  
s/ Frank Manning

COPY

COPY

COPY

June 16, 1971

Executive Committee  
Lower Manhattan Branch  
Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades:

In the course of pre-convention discussion on the N.C. political resolution on Monday, June 14, 1971, at a session attended by most of the members of the Lower Manhattan branch and a large number of YSAers from the Lower Manhattan and Long Island locals, I was most viciously slandered and my remarks were grossly distorted by Comrade Steve Beren, a member of the Executive Committee of the Lower Manhattan Branch. I am now providing the relevant sections of my and Comrade Beren's remarks, transcribed verbatim from the tape of that discussion. Comrades wishing to hear these sections for themselves may do so by listening to the tape, which is in the branch tape library. All emphasis is added.

Comrade Manning: "In the section on the Black nationalist movement in the document, we are referred to the growing movements among Black workers, like the Atlanta AFSCME strike, the post office strike of last year, the Polaroid revolutionary organization within Polaroid and these sort of thing, and it is a fact that there is a great deal of nationalist solidarity in these movements and that there are very strong currents of Black nationalist in them; yet at the same time these movements evolved and developed out of the fact that these Black workers were among the most oppressed layers of the working class and they were struggling also against their oppression as workers -- primarily against their oppression as workers -- and you have this interplay here, where you have struggling on a labor level, namely that lousy jobs, lousy pay and lousy hours and so on, and also a very strong feeling of Black nationalism. Unfortunately, the document does not mention the fact that these were also very strong trade union struggles, organizing opposition caucuses in the unions and things of this sort, based on Black nationalism. It emphasizes merely only one side of it."

Comrade Beren: "Oh, and on Frank Manning's, the thing about the trade unions. In the document it answers you. It says that our opponents, even the ones that give some kind of support to these other movements, think that at some point the working class will come in and then that will become the main thing and that these current movements are only ephemeral -- if that, whatever that means. You also said about the strikes -- the postal workers' strikes and so on -- that it's true that with Black nationalist consciousness, but it really, the most important thing about that was class consciousness. Tony Montiero of the Young Workers Liberation League counterposed, he said to, you know, that Black nationalism was one thing, but what was really important was class consciousness, and I don't agree with Frank Manning and Tony Montiero, I agree with Tony Thomas,

who said that Black nationalism is a form of class consciousness."

Without judging the relative political merits of either set of remarks, it is nevertheless obvious that Comrade Beren distorted what I had said and then accused me of counterposing Black nationalism and class consciousness in the same way Tony Montiero of the Stalinist YWLL had done -- in effect, Comrade Beren accused me of being a Stalinist. In my remarks I explicitly stated the vital interconnection of the two trends among Black workers, precisely as Comrade Tony Thomas did and precisely as Comrade Frank Lovell did in his series of articles in last year's Militants relating to the postal strike.

Deliberately distorting a comrade's remarks and then accusing that comrade of being a Stalinist has no place in our party and especially has no place in pre-convention discussion. The purpose of such discussion is to exchange ideas and elucidate on particular points of a document, not to make vicious political and personal attacks on other comrades. The presence of YSAers at the discussion sessions further obligates comrades not to engage in backbiting, slander and other forms of personal attacks and non-comradely behavior. As a member of the branch Executive Committee, Comrade Beren should be well aware of this.

I, therefore, wish to protest as strongly as possible the slander and distortions of Comrade Beren. I request that the Executive Committee condemn the use of these foul tactics in pre-convention discussion and, specifically, condemn Comrade Beren's slander and distortions. I further request that the organizer announce the E.C.'s condemnations at the opening of the next session of pre-convention discussion. Finally, I request that the E.C. reprimand Comrade Beren for his slander and distortions and announce its action at the next branch business meeting.

As Comrade Hedda Garza expressed her indignation and outrage at Comrade Beren's slander and distortion to me, a copy of this letter is being sent to her. And, as this incident took place within the context of pre-convention discussion, a copy of this letter is being sent to the Administrative Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. A copy of the cover letter to the Administrative Committee is enclosed herewith.

If comrades would want me to be present at the E.C. meeting that will take up this letter, please inform me in advance so that I can be sure to attend.

Comradely,  
s/Frank Manning

COPY

COPY

*Harowitz*

COPY

14 Charles Lane  
New York, N.Y. 10014  
June 22, 1971

LOWER MANHATTAN BRANCH

Frank Manning

Dear Comrade Manning,

This is to acknowledge receipt today of your letter of  
June 19, 1971.

Comradely,  
s/Jack Barnes  
Organization Secretary

cc: Susan LaMont - Lower Manhattan branch organizer  
Lew Jones - New York local organizer

COPY

COPY

COPY

June 19, 1971

Administrative Committee  
Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades:

Pursuant to my letter of June 16 I wish to inform you of the action taken by the Executive Committee of the Lower Manhattan Branch in regard to the matter I referred you to.

After a long and fruitful discussion with the branch organizer, Susan LaMont, I withdrew my requests for condemnatory action and asked instead that a branch educational about our norms in pre-convention discussion be given at the opening of the next discussion session, which will be held on Monday, June 21. At its meeting this morning, which I attended and took part in the discussion, the E.C. concurred with this and has proceeded to organize such an educational. Thus, this matter has been amicably and satisfactorily settled and I consider it closed.

Comradely,  
s/Frank Manning