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3536 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, California 94609
June 25, 1971

Tom Cagle
2828 Eastman Avenue
Oakland, California 94619

Dear Comrade Cagle:

Recently I came into possession of some literature related to the recent UAW election at the General Motors plant at Fremont. Enclosed you will find copies of this material. The June issue of Labor Temple News, the official publication of Local 1364, as well as two pieces of literature issued by the United Action Caucus have listed your name as a candidate for Executive Board. The material put out by this caucus states that you are an endorsed candidate of the caucus.

The May issue of The UAW Hot Wire, the newsletter of the United Action Caucus, states, "All candidates endorsed by the United Action Caucus have read and approved this program and are pledged to work for the program if elected." In a phone conversation with me and Mary Henderson, the City Secretary, on June 23, you confirmed that you had agreed to run on the program of the United Action Caucus. This raises a serious question about your proper functioning as a party member in the union.

As you are well aware, this branch has on several occasions made clear our attitude toward the United Action Caucus. I will review those decisions for you.

The decisions were made in the context of the party's attitude toward trade union work in this period. The June 1968 "Memorandum on Trade Union Policy," point 16, reads as follows: "Although objective conditions are improving, our prospects in the trade unions at present remain modest. The key task is still one of propaganda and education aimed toward formation of left wing forces around a class struggle program. Since the workers are not yet ready for a general showdown with the bureaucrats, it is necessary to steer clear of premature power struggles in the unions. Critical support to an oppositional ticket may be in order here and there as a step toward loosening up bureaucratic control over the ranks. Concerning our comrades participating in power caucuses and running for union posts, the question must always be put: Will it help or will it cut across building left wing forces around a class struggle program? On this point delicate matters of timing may sometimes arise. In such cases appropriate tactics should be worked out in consultation with the party. In addition, wherever comrades are involved in trade union situations, the party should be kept informed of significant developments as an aid to the assessment of general trade union trends."

It was within this general framework that the branch formed its attitude toward the United Action Caucus.

Last September at the outset of the UAW strike there was a dispute in the branch over our attitude toward working in the United Action Caucus. Following lengthy discussions in the executive committee and branch meeting the branch decided that our comrades would withdraw from this caucus. Shortly thereafter, on September 27, Comrade Tom Kerry came out from the National Office and gave a presentation on the UAW strike to the branch. That report and the discussion which followed has now been published in SWP Discussion Bulletin number nine. There was no reversal of the branch's decision following Comrade Kerry's visit.

Last May 2 you came to the party executive committee with a proposal that you run on the slate of the United Action Caucus in the upcoming local elections. It was the unanimous decision of the exec that the branch had previously established a position on this caucus, and, although some members did not agree with that original decision, they were not in favor of re-opening the question on the eve of the pre-convention discussion, during which time more fundamental questions would be before the membership. At the following branch meeting, May 3, the branch concurred with the recommendations of the executive committee, even though you raised some objections to the decision.

This current action of yours has to be seen in the context of an incident of improper conduct on your part last fall. During our Socialist Educational Conference on November 21, you took the floor during this discussion period following a presentation on the revolutionary nature of nationalism and expressed opinions at variance with the party's position on Black nationalism. This was at a public meeting attended by non-members, including opponents. You asked to be excused for your behavior on the grounds that you had let your emotions get the best of you, and that you would never let such an incident occur again.

I write this letter in order to stress to you the seriousness of your recent actions. Your behavior in the union has not at all been in line with the norms of Leninist functioning.

Comradely,
s/Nelson Blackstock
Oakland/Berkeley SWP Organizer

cc: O/B SWP Exec. (Ashton, Bennett, Camejo, Feldman, Graumann,
Henderson, Levitt, Montauk, Rangel, Wald);
O/B SWP NC (DeBerry, Hill, Montauk);
SWP NO