

Oct. 22, 1974

Barry Sheppard
New York, N.Y.

Dear Barry,

At our branch meeting of Oct. 21 we dropped three comrades --Bob M., Ralph L. and Ted D. -- from the party for inactivity. Two of the comrades, Ted and Bob, expressed agreement with the desire of the branch and requested that they be placed in sympathizer status. They indicated that they would continue to make a financial contribution to the party and help us in any way they could, but they felt that they could not be active at this time. Ralph wrote us a letter a copy of which I sent to you earlier.

The following is a report on the activity of the comrades in question over the past year.

Attendance at branch meetings

Bob 6 out of 40
Ralph 2 out of 40
Ted 7 out of 40

Attendance at forums

Bob 1 out of 31
Ralph 1 out of 31
Ted 0 out of 31

Finances

Bob \$15/mo sustainer, arrears \$15
Ralph \$1/wk sustainer, arrears \$67 (no payment over past year)
Ted \$3/wk sustainer, arrears \$24

Militant sales

Spring sales drive, 15 weeks
Bob 0 average per wk 0
Ralph 8 average per wk .53
Ted 45 average per wk 3

Summer

Bob 0 average per wk 0
Ralph 0 average per wk 0
Ted 0 average per wk 0

Fall sales drive, 6 weeks

Bob 0 average per wk 0
Ralph 0 average per wk 0
Ted 4 average per wk .66

Militant and ISR subscriptions,
past year

Bob 0
Ralph 0
Ted 0

Bob, Ralph and Ted did not attend any of the sessions of our spring educational series or any of the classes in our summer school. They have not attended any of the '74 campaign functions or contributed any money to the campaign. They have not participated in any branch mobilizations over the past year for: 1) support of the Sears workers, 2) in solidarity with the Chilean workers, peasants and students, and 3) for our subscription drives. None of the three attended the summer educational conference in Oberlin and none of the three came to the Cannon tribute we jointly sponsored with the San Francisco branch this past September.

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None of the three had a branch assignment during the past year. Ralph claims in his letter that he had not been offered one. That simply is not true. Since he came to almost no branch meetings I found it difficult to discuss any proposed assignment with him. After numerous attempts to reach him on the phone I managed to leave a message with his wife on one occasion for him to call me about assignments. He never responded.

Comradely,
s/Jeff Powers
Oakland/Berkeley Organizer

Oct. 18, 1974

Executive Committee
Berkeley Branch

Dear Comrades:

I have received a letter from Jeff Powers notifying me of my expulsion from the Socialist Workers Party. Since this is obviously a political expulsion, I am writing to request a trial and that the trial take place at the branch meeting of Nov. 11.

Powers, in his letter, cynically refers to the reason of "inactivity" while he is certainly aware of the fact that minority comrades in the Party have for years been denied assignments and responsibilities of any kind. In my own case, it has been over three years since I have been offered an assignment. Moreover, Powers never offered such an assignment and he is well aware of this fact.

In point of fact, I have been quite active for many years in the most pressing area of work for the Party: the struggle against the present petty-bourgeois, anti-Trotskyist leadership of the Party and the effort to restore the Party to the proletarian road of Trotskyism.

I will cite a little from my so-called record of inactivity to convince the comrades that a trial should be held before my expulsion.

My membership in our movement goes back 13 years, including several as a prominent civil liberties defendant facing six years in prison for my "inactivity". I am a former National Committee and National Executive Committee member of the YSA and a member of the local Party branch executive committee. I have taken several national speaking tours for our movement, written articles for our press and participated in the life of 3 branches. Most honorably, I was the political reporter for the Proletarian Orientation tendency at the 1971 Convention of the Party. I believe that the above would entitle a comrade to a trial before the Party ranks.

Let me mention two points here:

1). I am ready now and in the future to accept a responsible Party assignment, including and especially a full-time assignment.

2) If I am expelled, I intend to vigorously appeal my expulsion to the highest body of Trotskyism, the Fourth International.

Fraternally,
s/Ralph Levitt

cc: F.I.