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December 14, 1970

To All Organizers, NC Members, and At-Large Members

Dear Comrades,

On December 13th, the National Executive Committee decided that it would not be practical to present a resolution on the Chicano struggle for a vote at the convention.

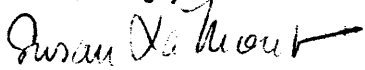
A decision not to submit a resolution prior to the convention was made in order to allow for the incorporation into the resolution of a number of developments which have occurred this fall in the Chicano struggle. Because an analysis of these developments, such as La Raza Unida parties' election campaigns, must necessarily be included in our first resolution on this important struggle, the early publication of this resolution was precluded.

It is now so close to the convention that some locals have already elected their delegates, and would not have the opportunity to discuss a written draft resolution.

There will, of course, be a report on the Chicano struggle to the convention, which will be discussed and voted upon.

The YSA convention will make the decision on how to proceed with the drafting of the Chicano struggle resolution.

Comradely,


Susan LaMont
National Chairwoman

Antiwar Report by Larry Seigle, December 14, 1970

The purpose of this report is to outline our key tasks in the next few weeks.

The NPAC Convention decision to call for massive, legal, peaceful, non-confrontational demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco on April 24 was a victory for the mass action perspective for the antiwar movement, and provides the framework for a major expansion of the antiwar movement over the next few months. The large size and political breadth of the conference (See December 18 Militant for details) means that there is significant authority behind the call for April 24th.

The only significant opposition to April 24 came not from within NPAC, but from the NCAWRR leaders who attended the conference. (SDS, which made a lot of noise at the conference, had no serious proposal and was completely isolated.) NCAWRR is not a homogeneous group, and there are different perspectives within it on what type of actions should be organized this Spring. But the NCAWRR leaders present (Sid Peck, Sid Lens, Jack Spiegel, Ron Young, Irving Beinen, Carl Davidson, Abe Weisburd, and CP fraction leader Gil Green) all wanted to prevent NPAC from issuing a definite call for action. They proposed that NPAC defer any decision to the NCAWRR invitation-only meeting, scheduled for January 8-10 in Chicago. NCAWRR has a general perspective of organizing an early May, multi-issue, civil disobedience oriented action in Washington. The details of this action remain vague.

To accept their proposal would have meant that 1200 antiwar activists from all over the country would have gone home without settling anything, left to wait and see what national action NCAWRR would call, if any. This would have been a big blow to NPAC's prestige and authority and a default from its role as the national antiwar coalition. This perspective was unanimously rejected by the convention.

Declining to openly discuss the political question of the character of the Spring action, the NCAWRR representatives confined their activity to meetings and "negotiations" with the NPAC coordinators. Unlike most recent national antiwar conventions, therefore, the main political battle was not fought out on the floor, in spite of our efforts to draw out the political issues involved.

Throughout the conference, our position was one of doing everything possible to pressure NCAWRR into a united front action. Experience has shown that truly massive demonstrations can only be built by the broadest possible united front of the antiwar movement, one that includes both the SWP and YSA, and the Communist Party, along with other forces. Although NPAC is in a position to organize demonstrations of major national impact on April 24 even if NCAWRR opposes them, the potential exists for mammoth

actions organized by a united antiwar movement -- and that is what we want to see.

We are also in favor of a united front with the forces in NCAWRR because of the opportunity it would give us to establish political contact and relationships with the young people in and around the CP and the YWLL. Through political discussion and debate with them, we can hope to break some of them from Stalinism and even recruit some to our movement.

The best way to get that unity in action now is to maximize the pressure on NCAWRR to go along with April 24 by getting endorsers and publicity as quickly as possible, and by doing everything possible to make April 24 an established fact prior to the NCAWRR meeting in January. Especially important are endorsements from individuals and local chapters of groups that have tended to go along with NCAWRR in the past, such as local welfare rights organizations, affiliates or members of the New University Conference, SCLC members, etc. We will also want to lead the local PACs and SMCs in getting prompt endorsement from individuals and groups that are prominent in Third World, GI, women's and trade union movements. Every potential supporter should be contacted, regardless of which coalition they have supported in the past.

In addition to endorsers, we want as much local publicity as possible, through campus and underground newspaper stories, press releases, leaflets, etc.

The more April 24 is built before the NCAWRR meeting, the more pressure there will be on NCAWRR to join in supporting the action on the 24th.

The second major task we face is building the SMC national convention that will be held on the second or third weekend in February, probably in Washington, D.C.

It is quite likely that the political debates which remained somewhat submerged at the NPAC conference will be out in the open at the SMC convention. We should anticipate a mobilization at this SMC convention of all the opponents of mass action.

The SMC will be the driving force behind the success of April 24, and its national conference will be the key building block for the action. We will want to see as large a convention as possible, and want to begin now to encourage independent activists and other antiwar students to attend the convention and participate in organizing the April 24th actions.

The continued growth and development of the SMC on a national and local scale remains crucial to the future of the antiwar movement. A successful conference will be the biggest step in that direction.

Work on building the April 24th action and the February SMC conference must be begun in local areas right away. A call for the April 24th action will be out shortly, and the time and place for the SMC conference are being pinned down. Even before these materials are ready, however, initial contacts, publicity and fund-raising can be begun.