

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 3, 1970

No. 26

NEC Present: Lee, Tony, Susan, Jon, Joanna, Miguel, Caroline
NEC Excused: Carl, Norman, Derrick, Roger, Bob
NC Present: Carl Fi.
NC Alt. Present: Laura M., Cindy, Byron, Mike
Visitors: Linda, Andy, Peter

Convened: 1:00 p.m.

Chairwoman: Joanna

Agenda: 1. National Office Report
2. Fund Drive Report
3. Women's Liberation Report
4. Canadian Women's Liberation Conference Report
5. Red Europe Conference Report
6. Draft Political Resolution

1. National Office Report -- Laura M.

a. Membership

Motion: To accept the following applications for at-large membership:

1. Geoffrey G., Youngstown, Ohio
2. Edward T., Perth Amboy, N.J
3. Dave W., Corvallis, Ore.
4. Michael M., Corvallis, Ore.
5. Cheryl H., Corvallis, Ore.

Motion Carried

Motion: To approve the transfer of Tom H. from the LaCrosse local to at-large status in Menasha, Wisc.

Motion Carried

Motion: To transfer Tom S. from at large status in Chaseburg, Wisc. to the LaCrosse local.

Motion Carried

Motion: To drop the Flint local, since there are no longer any comrades there.

Discussion: Tony, Laura, Tony, Laura

Motion Carried

2. Fund Drive Report Andy

Scoreboard to appear in The Young Socialist Organizer.

Motion: To extend the fund drive through December 24.

Motion Carried

3. Women's Liberation Report -- Cindy

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion: Tony, Cindy, Peter, Cindy, Peter, Cindy

Motion Carried

4. Canadian Women's Liberation Conference Report -- Caroline

Written report enclosed.

Motion: To approve the report.

Discussion: Tony, Caroline

Motion Carried

5. Red Europe Conference Report -- Susan

Report to appear in The Militant

Discussion: Byron, Susan, Tony, Jon, Susan

6. Draft Political Resolution

Motion: To approve the general line of the political resolution.

Discussion: Peter, Jon, Carl Fi., Cindy, Tony, Caroline, Lee, Tony, Byron, Peter, Susan, Peter, Cindy, Caroline, Andy, Tony, Mike, Peter, Jon, Caroline, Tony, Susan, Joanna, Peter, Jon, Lee, Tony, Susan, Carl Fi., Peter, Tony, Jon, Susan

Motion Carried

Adjourned: 3:30 p.m.

Box 471 Cooper Station
New York, New York 10003

December 4, 1970

TO ALL YSA ORGANIZERS, NC MEMBERS, WOMEN'S LIBERATION DIRECTORS
AND AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Some women and groups in the women's liberation movement are attempting to build and consolidate what they call a "socialist, anti-imperialist women's movement," through building a series of "International Socialist Women's Conferences" in Canada in March, 1971.

According to our Canadian comrades, some North Korean and North Vietnamese women will be coming to Canada in March at the invitation of the Canadian Women Strike for Peace and another organization called Voice of Women, to participate in conferences sponsored by these groups in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Marlene Dixon and some other Canadian and American women have apparently convinced the Vietnamese and Korean women to participate in separate conferences of what they call "radical women" in each of the three cities.

In late October, a New York YSA member went to a New York planning meeting for the Canadian conferences as a representative of the Third World Women's Alliance. This meeting of about 25 women included women from Up from Under, the Women's Union, Youth Against War and Fascism, Rat (an ultraleft underground paper run by women) and Older Women's Liberation. The sentiment expressed in the discussion was that the conferences should be exclusive, by invitation only.

Then, on October 24-25 a national planning conference was held in Baltimore, where a report was given by three women who had just returned from a meeting in Budapest with Vietnamese women, and the nature of the conferences was discussed. Small numbers of women were present from 15 cities, coming from such groups as the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, Bread and Roses from Boston, YAWF, the Leila Khaled Collective from Toronto and the Committee of Returned Volunteers. No Third World women were present, but the meeting projected that one-half of the delegation of American women sent to the Canadian conferences should be Third World women.

An article on the Baltimore conference in the Nov. 23 Great Speckled Bird said the following about a decision of some of the women in Baltimore to organize a series of "anti-imperialist women's demonstrations": "East Coast women had met to begin planning for actions to be held December 20, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the NLF. This will be a day of demonstrating, celebrating and rejoicing at the birth of the revolutionary movement of women in the U.S. We will have actions against the immediate oppression of women in Atlanta, in D.C., in cities across the country, as women join in solidarity with the struggles of women in Vietnam and with women in other nations under the oppressive domination of U.S. money and power. Our comrades from Chicago report that an "anti-imperialist women's demonstration" was planned there for Dec. 20, but the women who first pro-

jected it finally decided that they couldn't work together and dropped the idea.

At the first national women's liberation conference held in Saskatoon, Canada on Nov. 21-22 it became clear what the perspective is of at least some of the women involved in planning the "International Socialist Women's Conferences (see article on Saskatoon conference in Dec. 4 Militant). Marlene Dixon from Montreal and Peggy Morton from the Leila Khaled Collective in Toronto outlined their idea of a strategy for the women's liberation movement. Their opinion is that the movement as it has existed up to now is "middle class" and "liberal"; that building coalitions around issues the movement can agree on, such as abortion, is reformist; that any protest over discrimination against women is reformist because it implies a desire to "make it" within the system; that the August 26 demonstrations were "a disaster"; and that the women's movement must be "split along class and race lines." They proposed that the women's movement should be a revolutionary socialist movement, excluding women who were not yet socialists.

On Nov. 14-15 a women's liberation conference of about 200 women took place at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa, in which Minneapolis YSA and SWP members participated. Marlene Dixon gave the opening speech, in which she put forth basically the same perspective she had spoken for in Saskatoon.

The YSA and SWP position is, of course, that we want to build a mass movement of women to fight against the oppression of women, and we oppose the exclusion of women who are ready to fight against their oppression but who are not yet socialists. Similarly, we are for a movement for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam and oppose exclusion of those who are not consciously "anti-imperialist". Sections of the women's movement have already taken objectively anti-imperialist actions by supporting and organizing contingents in antiwar demonstrations.

The perspective of counterposing a narrow movement of only revolutionary socialist women to a mass women's liberation movement is in no way a "radical" perspective. What is radical is the growing mass movement of women against their oppression; the fact that millions of women are beginning to awaken to their oppression and to act against it -- to take control of their own lives.

There may be many women in the movement who will be interested in these conferences because they are against the Vietnam war and have become interested in socialism as a system necessary for the liberation of women. It is important for us to take part in the discussion of whether or not the women's movement should have a socialist, explicitly anti-imperialist program. Our view is that socialists must be the best builders of mass movements both for demands expressing the most burning needs of masses of women and for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam. And at the same time, we are building a revolutionary socialist movement -- the YSA and the SWP.

We will want to get a better picture of the exact nature of these projected conferences before deciding in what way we will participate in them. Comrades should send in to the YSA and SWP national offices any further information concerning these developments.

Comradely,
Caroline Lund
Caroline Lund, for the
National Women's Liberation
Steering Committee