

MINUTES, N.Y. SPARTACIST COMMITTEE.....5 May 1965

Present: Lynne, Sam, Jim, Shirley, Lyndon, Harry, Roger, Mark, Tippy, Price,
 Danny (late), Paul (late) Other: Bill (Ithaca YSL)
Absent: Dave, Shane, Peter, Al (Balt.), Charlotte (l.o.a.)

Meeting convened at 8:35 p.m.

1. Organization of meeting: (a) Chairman - Sam
 (b) Agenda adopted
 (c) Minutes of 4/21 read and accepted

Motion: To admit Bill with voice. passed

2. National Report - Jim

- (a) REB Meeting, 4/26- discussed Chicago proposal and adopted procedure for dealing with it. Also adopted Part (3) of motion on relations with other groups. This will be circulated.
- (b) Organizational criticisms- We made major default over Yale Socialist Conference, out of sluggishness and preoccupation; we did not get a lit. table. Ithaca has sent in written analysis of our weakness in organization at Washington March, also a political criticism, of continuance of 'tendency mentality,' particularly in NYC.
- (c) April-May Vanguard (POC organ)- devoted one column of 5 column to us, have apparently decided we are the most sinister element on the Left. View PL as a united front of Trotskyists and CPers.
- (d) Comrade Ron- has been jailed in Nebraska on the basis of Baltimore charges involving no breach of revolutionary morality on his part. Case given sensational treatment in Mid-West press because Ron was carrying 'communist' (our) literature when arrested. Partisan Defense Fund has come to his aid.
- (e) SSEU- Left-wing slate swept into office, though right-wing took the two top posts which were uncontested.
- (f) Areas- Bob S. has completed his swing through the country: BA, L.A., Austin, Houston, and New Orleans. In BA facilitated probable recruitment of a UC student. In L.A. found someone who will place SPARTACIST on the newsstands. Bob got our comrades in Houston and Austin together in a common meeting. Houston comrades believe mail from center has been removed from their P.O. Box to facilitate 'investigation' of Spartacist announced in local press. SWP has a new group (2) in Houston, sells Militant subs door-to-door. We may make some new recruits there. Leslie, our contact in New Orleans, has gone to England. Our other contact there turned out to be a disenchanted ASOC member, possible recruit for us. New Orleans now ripe for formation of a revolutionary branch for someone. Chicago situation improving, 4 active members plus 3 prospective recruits.
- (g) Hainline-Rader letter to Wohlforth- informs him they hold the Trotskyist position on defense of deformed workers states. Smashes Wohlforth's hope for a deep-seated division within Spartacist that would lead to our disintegration on which he had been banking.

- (h) SWP International Bulletins- May '64 and Feb.'65 on Pablo suspension received. Indicates Pablo quantitatively to the right of main bulk of Pabloists (e.g., believes Russian line superior to Chinese, denies application of democratic-centralism). He is still part of Algerian government. These documents prove the complicity of the U.Sec. in the Ceylonese betrayal.
- (i) 3-page letter from SWP oppositionists to non-SWP member (now Spartacist). Attacks both SWP and Spartacist as Stalinist. Grouping consists of L.Marcus, Carol L., and Steve Z.-- the three most rotten elements in the SWP, far to the right of SWP leadership, in rotten bloc with Wohlforth. Lynn letter represents attempt at 'triple recruitment' !!
- (j) Out-of-town minutes- BA, 4/13, 4/22, 4/29. Baltimore, 4/18. Point concerning Carl in BA minutes read and commented on.

Working points:

- (k) Finances- Jim acting as ad hoc treasurer, requests all comrades voluntarily see him before leaving meeting tonight.
- (l) SPARTACIST No.4- Work on paper progressing well, should be out Friday afternoon. 7,000 copies of 16-page issue. Weekend work parties needed: Danny, Sam, Lyndon, Harry, (Roger) volunteered.
- (m) Addressograph- 1,500 names on plates. Will do away with principal bottleneck in getting out the paper.
- (n) Cuban travel ban- Mark reported N.Y. Times article said State Dept. considering action against all who went on Cuba trips; includes 6 Spartacists.

Miscellaneous discussion.

3. Chicago Proposal:

Proposal has been read by everyone present. Balt. local for it. Ithaca opinion: we should do it if legal situation looks good. BA: rejects proposal unanimously. All on REB for proposal in principle, objections in three areas: (1) legal dangers to Spartacist organization; (2) physical danger to comrades from Stalinists in East Asia; (3) inability for us to carry it off in view of our organizational smallness and weakness and political distance from those governments and forces whose cooperation would be essential. Jim feels (3) is most serious objection. Shane feels (1) most serious. All present expressed their views, and the following motions offering opinions to the REB were made (listed in order voted, i.e., in reverse order). (Tippy left before the votes; Paul entered after discussion, but before the voting.)

Motion by Jim: That Spartacist not be projected as the independent organizing vehicle of any organizing activity in this country, that we seek to encourage other organizations of a broader character to play such a role, and hope our comrades and friends would be among those involved in such activities.

Amendment by Lynne: Insert after 'character': 'or attempt to set up a new, genuinely united front organization to organize participation.

Vote on amendment: For- Lynne, Harry, Price Opposed- Roger
Abst- Sam, Shirley, Lyndon, Mark, Danny, Jim

Amendment passed

Vote on Jim's motion as amended:

Passed unanimously
(Paul not voting)

Motion by Lyndon: That if Spartacist supports a proposal of this sort, that we support the International Brigade--tentatively, pending investigation of this international brigade--and that our consideration be directly solely toward this brigade.

For- Price, Shirley, Lyndon, Mark, Price, Jim Opposed- 0
Abstaining- Lynne, Roger, Danny, Harry (Paul not voting)

Motion passed

Motion by Lynne: That we consider instead the proposal for an International Labor Brigade (to rebuild U.S.-bombed bridges in N.Vietnam, etc.), on the grounds that it would have equal propaganda value, entail less legal risks, and probably be of more actual, practical value.

Amendment by Roger: To strike 'equal propaganda value.'

Vote on Amendment: For- Roger, Danny, Sam, Lyndon Opposed- Lynne
Abst.- Mark, Price, Shirley, Harry

Amendment passed

Vote on Lynne's motion as amended: For: Lynne, Harry, Mark, Sam
Opposed- 0 Abst.- Roger, Danny, Lyndon, Price
Shirley, Jim

Motion passed

Motion by Tippy: That we support no embarkation of anyone going with a military or political function (i.e., to play a political role within the situation as it develops within the VietCong)

Vote: For- 0 Against- All but Shirley, who abstained

Motion failed

[During the course of the discussion Jack G. phoned to say he would be able to be present for REB discussion Saturday.]

[Motion: To skip balance of agenda except elections and action points and to extend the meeting to 11:30. Passed.]

4. Local Elections:

Nominations were reopened for all offices.

Organizer: Shirley nominated.

Vote: For- 10 Abst.- 1

Shirley elected
(and ex-officio on Exec.)

Executive Committee:

Motion by Roger: That size of Exec. be reconsidered.

Motion failed

Nominations for Exec: Harry, Sam, Lyndon, Lynne, Dave, Roger

Vote: Harry- 10, Lynne- 10, Sam- 8, Lyndon- 8, Dave- 2, Roger-2

Harry, Lynne, Lyndon, Sam elected

Secretary: Lynne nominated. Vote: For- 11, Opposed- 0

Lynne elected

Press: Sam, Roger, Mark, Danny nominated; Roger and Danny withdrew.

Vote: Sam- 8, Mark- 0

Sam elected

[Motion: To extend meeting till 11:45 p.m. passed.]

5. Dominican Republic:

(a) Demonstration: Youth Against War and Fascism has unilaterally called a demonstration in Times Square on May 15. In view of the history of intensifying police action to enforce Murphy's ban on demonstrations in Times Square, Jim termed the demonstration 'deliberate suicide,' to create martyrs.

Motion by Jim: That our people not participate in a unilateral demonstration as called in Times Square, and that Exec. and Organizer be empowered to modify this decision if circumstances so indicate.

Amendment by Lynne: To check with Marcyites and PL to find out their attitude and policy toward the demonstration (plans, united front?, etc.).

Motion by Mark: That we participate in demonstration, prepared not to be arrested.

Vote on Mark's motion: For- Price, Mark
 Abst.-Roger Against- Lynne, Harry, Shirley, Jim,
 Not voting- Lyndon Danny, Paul

Motion failed

Vote on Lynne's amendment:

Amendment passed

Vote on Jim's motion as amended:

Passed unanimously
 (Lyndon not voting)

(b) Leaflet: Motion: To refer draft leaflet to Exec., and that Exec meet within 48 hours to take it up.

Motion passed

Announcements:

Party at 165 Morningside Avenue Saturday night. Important.

Demonstration by PR nationalists on Dominica Thurs. 5-8 p.m. at U.N. (Also demonstrations held Mon., Tues.)

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.