

confidential -- for members only

draft

MINUTES, NY LOCAL COMMITTEE .....26 May 1966

Present: Jim, Shelly, Price, Jack, Roger, Sam, Al, Bob S., Hugh, Shirley, Helen, Paul, Tippy, Lyndon (late), Winnie (late), Danny (late).  
Others: Jim M., Bob H. (Columbus O.C.), R., Donna H., Judy.  
Absent: Lynn M. (ex.), Carol (ex.), Harry (ex.), Dave (ex.), Lynne H. (ex.), Peter, Ron.

Meeting began at 8:25 p.m.

Motion: To admit Bob H. of Columbus O.C. with voice and consultative vote. Passed.

Motion: To admit R., Jim M., Donna H., and Judy with voice. Passed.

Motion: To extend to R., a good friend, a standing invitation to attend. Passed.

1. Organization of meeting: (a) Chairman - Jack  
 (b) Temporary Secretary - Helen  
 (c) Agenda adopted  
 (d) Minutes of 12 May adopted as corrected.

Corrections: Page 1, point 3, sub-point (d), line 4, change "present" to "president"; and p. 1, point 3, sub-point (e), line 5, change Bob B. to Bob K.

2. Membership:

Motion: To accept transfer of Bob H. of Columbus O.C. to N.Y. Local Committee. Passed.

Motion: To accept Judy as full member of Spartacist.  
Disc. Jim. Judy was contact of ACFI and Spartacist, joined ACFI after class series, and resigned because of fundamental dishonest nature of Wohlforth's organization. Passed.

Motion: To accept Donna H. as candidate member of Spartacist. Passed.

Motion: To reconsider Donna's candidate membership, as she operated in Columbus O.C. as "official sympathizer" for some months.  
Disc. Winnie, Helen, Al, Jim. Passed.

Motion: To accept Donna H. as full member. Passed.

Motion: To table Jim M.'s application for membership to REB in accord with the ruling that applications of former members must be passed on by the national organization. He has resigned twice previously from the org. Passed.

Note: Tippy's LOA has now expired and she is available for work.

2. Local Organization (cont.) Al.

It is noted that, as it stands, the downtown local will have more members active in local work than the uptown, so Jack should be in the uptown local. In addition, Jim M. will be uptown, as will Doug, Helene, and Liz for the summer. Even though they are already locals, for this initial period the two committees will in effect be going through the same tests as an Organizing Committee, becoming active, stable, self-sustaining political units. In addition comrades are reminded of the motion of N.Y. Local Committee, 16 Dec. 1965 concerning membership:

"That the requirement of members to attend meetings be given the following minimum interpretation: Any member who, without adequate excuse, misses two consecutive Spartacist meetings shall be subject to being dropped from membership after a warning.

("meeting" includes regular meetings of a fraction or higher body of the organization.)

Passed unanimously."

- (1) Motion: To divide the N.Y. Local Committee into Uptown and Downtown Local Committees.
- (2) Motion: To endorse proposals (a) through (k) implementing the division. (See minutes of N.Y.C. 12 May 1966, Point 5.)
- (3) Motion: That the present Executive Committee continue as City Committee, pending each local's election of executive committee and organizer.
- (4) Motion: To adjourn the N.Y. Local Comm. and reconvene as joint meeting of uptown and downtown l.c.'s.

Disc. Al, Jack, Sam, Hugh, Bob H., Roger, Jim, Helen, Roger, Bob H., Jim.

Jim stated that, since the N.Y. Local Minutes will no longer be mimeographed, the REB minutes will include reports from N.Y.C.'s. We will have 30 people in N.Y. for the summer, out of a total of 79 members nationally, at present. (Before London conference we had 72; before Montreal, we had 67.) In addition to increasing the level of activity of comrades, we should get back into the habit of wearing Spartacist buttons. The only difference between the structure of the N.Y. L.C.'s and that of other L.C.'s, is that decisions of each N.Y. local will be subordinate to those of the City Committee, and the City Committee will be subordinate to a joint meeting of the two locals, and to the national bodies of the organization.

Disc. (cont.) Sam, Roger, Jim, Jim M., Bob S., Sam, Jim, Al, Jim, Hugh, Jim M., Shelly, Sam, Helen, Jim, Jim M., Al, Helen, Bob H., Shelly, Al, Jim, Roger, Bob S., Bob H., Hugh.

Motion by Roger: To divide motion (4) from the other motions.

Passed.

Amendment to (2) by Roger: That joint meetings be held a minimum of once a month.

Failed.

All opposed except Roger for, and Paul abstaining.

Vote on Motions (1), (2), (3):

Passed Unanimously

Vote on Motion (4): All for, except Roger and Jack opposed.

Passed.

Motion: Uptown local committee will meet on Tuesdays, and downtown on Thursdays, the first meetings to be on 7 June, and 2 June respectively.

Passed.

Meeting adjourned. Joint meeting of the N.Y. Local Committees convened.

4. General Information and Correspondence: Jim

- a. REB - Met 16 May and 23 May, minutes not yet available.
- b. Spartacist - S.W. 3 & 4 mailed out to subscribers and most of gen'l mailing list on 14 and 15 May. We are halfway through production of Spartacist #6, which should go to printer 31 May. Layout and pasteup will be done weekend of 4 June, and paper should be off the press around Wed. 8 June. Our new comrade Managing Editor is doing an excellent job of pressuring comrades for copy, printable copy.
- c. SWP - 3 members of the Detroit branch were gunned down on 16 May by a madman. N.O. and two locals sent condolences; and an exceedingly large sum (i.e. 2/3 of one month's pledge) was reported sent by Bay Area L.C. New York comrades should make every effort to attend memorial meeting at N.Y. SWP Hall, Friday 2 June.
- d. Historical sketch of British Trotskyism sent in by Mark T. Mark also sent a sharp rebuttal of Healy's personal attack on him. Both will be mimeo'd.
- e. Spanish-speaking comrades and sympathizers - We now have comrades, contacts, etc. in NYC, New Orleans, Houston, Calif. (after June), Chile and Puerto Rico (for summer). Also, we have possibility of establishing contact with Spanish-speaking groups internationally, including POUM (in south of France), G. Muris' group, and V.O., who have Spanish-speaking cadre. We now propose to put out a Spanish language newsletter, like Spartacist West in format and perhaps using the Berkeley print shop. It would include both articles concerned with struggles, such as the grape strike, and theoretical discussion with other Spanish-speaking Trotskyists. This will be of the greatest value in our work internationally, and in this country with some of the most exploited sections of the working class.
- f. Last Saturday, 21 May, the following took place:
  - (1) We received a \$1000 check from comrade Dee, nearly one half of a bond she received on turning 21. The remaining \$60 was received on 25 May. This is in accordance with policy that comrades donate to the national organization one-half of any inheritance or other windfalls; we very much commend Dee and Chris.
  - (2) Comrade Judy applied for membership, a valuable ex-ACFLite.
  - (3) One half of SPARTACIST #6 was written.
  - (4) Comrade Joe V. informed us that he is staying in New Orleans, and that he and the Austin comrades are enthusiastically looking forward to their joining him, John Sw. shortly, and John and Anne sometime later.
  - (5) Doug Hd., close contact of Steve S. of Chicago, showed up in New York; is an elitist and thinks Healy's methods are just what the movement needs. Is trying to decide whether to join ACFL.
- g. SW #5 was received, dated 21 May; contains an article on the anti-war movement, and a review of movie "To Die in Madrid," discussing the betrayal of the Spanish working class.
- h. ASOC connections: We have received copy of letter written by Bob Brown (ASOC cadre) to Joe V.; letter is sympathetic to Spartacist, although differs sharply with Trotskyism historically. We must follow up this and other contacts with the most political and best cadres of now-defunct ASOC, hopefully to accomplish another small fusion.
- i. Dan M., the East Coast Fraserite, phoned up and wants documents and conversation with Spartacist.
- j. Spartacist organization nationally has had for several years as main area of activity the Civil Rights movement and the Black Ghettos. Now that this work

has largely dried up, comrades are likely to have feelings of disappointment, emptiness, irritability, and faultfinding, compounded perhaps by disappointment over lack of unity with I.C. This poses problem for new comrades not used to ups and downs in the class struggle. Our most fruitful new area of work is the South. We must be able to make sober appraisals of objective situation; not be like Healy, Wohlforth, and SWP in always putting a good face on situation. Should be quicker to orient toward new opportunities; the NO and NYC have not oriented directly enough toward anti-war movement, although all locals have been deeply involved in it. Comrades' reactions to this objective situation and to faults of the org. could be a pre-condition for incipient factionalism. NYC cliquism and encysting into little groups can lead to unprincipled factionalism -- i.e. combination of people with perhaps incompatible grievances "against the leadership" which they hold responsible for their grievances. We must have ventilation of criticisms and avoid social exclusiveness. We must not become distracted from the opening we now have. Left wing of radical mvt. is providing excellent opportunities for recruitment. We have just had our second small fusion with some very valuable comrades from ACFI. We want to go forward from the first fusion (YPSL-RT) and for the second to be successful, particularly in its providing us with a frequent and regular press. We have Fox, Fraser and ASOC fragments crying out to be approached, as they have no national orgs. To get any of them, we need continuing involvement in struggle and ideological discussion, not internal bitterness and loss of headway.

Disc. Danny, Lyndon, Bob H., Bob S., Bob H., Jim M., Jack, Helen, Al.

Roger left at this point.

5. Welfare Report and Discussion continued from 12 May:

Report by Lyndon:

- a. Caucus has been asked by union negotiating committee to submit proposals for the next contract bargaining program. Will submit basic demands -- 30 hour week all year, as now in summer, sliding scale of wages and public assistance grants, union review and approval of departmental procedures affecting workers and clients, and workers' review board on personnel actions by City; also demands unique to our job.
- b. SSEU may become involved in the SANE Labor Committee. We plan to urge union to take position against the war and for withdrawal of U.S. troops.
- c. There is now a Committee of Unified Labor Organizations against Tripartite holding rally at City Hall, 1 June. SSEU leaders are urging a substitute proposal for Tripartite, which will still be a set-back as it calls for compulsory binding arbitration of grievances. Spartacist issuing leaflet for the rally.

Continuation of disc. of 12 May: Al, Jim, Bob H., Jim M. Lyndon.

Summary by Tippy: Is not advocating loyal opposition; but fraction is ambiguous as to character of leadership. Work of fraction is irrelevant to and has no basis for a bid for leadership in union. Fraction shows "Third Period Stalinism" in generalization and then blind application, which is usually wrong. Client-organization unrealistic; union should only ask for support, for union actions, from existing client orgs., even if these are creatures of the Gov't. or of religious groups.

Summary by Lynne: We are in total opposition to leadership, because they are within the framework of capitalism, although we may, and do, support them on specific actions which are correct. Tippy's opinion of our work is based on contact solely with leadership and hanger-on section of union, not rank-and-file. Leadership has

attempted to bind us to compulsory arbitration of grievances, which is very bad, as grievances are the only way of enforcing contract. We fight for the right to strike, and raise the demand for a Labor party, as political action is only ultimate solution to labor problems. Leadership has been weak in organizing in each welfare center to fight the City, because they are becoming a bureaucracy, with interests ever further removed from those of the members. We would urge clients to form their own independent groups and break all connections with arms of ruling class.

Motion by Jim: To accept the report of the welfare fraction presented at the last N.Y. Local Comm. meeting and concluded at this one; centering on the following specific points:

1. (a) Building a left opposition to fight and replace existing SSEU leadership;  
 (b) Meanwhile seeking to recruit to Spartacist at each step along the way;  
 (c) To congratulate our fraction for its courageous and, to date, successful struggle for caucus rights and general democracy within the union.
2. In addition, it is important to stress comrade Marcus' point that with the small number of our present forces in the union, the development and propagation of the correct political line is the key to our activity at present, rather than organizational pre-occupation, manoeuvres, etc.
3. The Local Committee rejects the criticism by Tippy of the fraction as being a call to support the Mage leadership in essentials and as motivated by a presentation of the view of the union and society as seen by the incumbent reformist-liberal SSEU leadership.

Motion divided after Point 1.

Point 1: All for except Tippy opposed.

Passed.

Points 2&3: All for except Tippy opposed and Bob H. abstaining.

Passed.

Motion: Reports on remaining agenda points be given and discussion tabled to the next local meetings.

Passed.

Motion: To extend meeting to 11:35  
 All for but Price abstaining.

Passed.

Price left at this point.

5. Worker's Action: Sam

Worker's Action began as PL front, with Steve Martinot and George Stryker in charge. Has been struggle in it and is no longer a PL front but a strange mixture. Steve has gone to Calif. Group has no organizational or theoretical base, mainly action group, with people from 15 unions. Very good and open opportunity for our people and influence. Their bulletin no longer controlled by PL but must consult with Exec. Bd. and Editorial Bd.; Sam is member of Exec. Bd.

6. Harlem Viet Nam Comm.: Paul

This two-month old organization now has about 9 people who consistently come to meetings. Started as group of friends around SWPer Paul Boutelle, Dorothy Pitman, etc. PL sent David Douglas and SWP sent 4 people. Paul B. pushed thru idea of a party at SWP hdqtrs. which flopped. He's tried to maintain control of committee; wants mass rallies and publicity rather than community organization effort against the war. Took opinion poll around block organized by HOC and got very good response. We are pushing for community organization. Rally 30 May

(see announce.) at which Paul will speak for HOC.

7. CORE, Teamsters, etc.: Hugh

N.Y. CORE voted not to accept poverty funds. Voted against Viet Nam war and for withdrawal of troops (the amendment by Harry). A minority is red-baiting, but gives us good opportunity to express our views. Employment Comm. of N.Y. CORE is critically backing a "pool" system of hiring truck drivers, to do away with present "shape-up" system, which discriminates against non-union Negro and Puerto Rican drivers, with complicity of corrupt Teamsters Local. We are pushing for drivers control of "pool" instead of City control, and for striking out discriminatory written testing provision. Job Conference 21 May had about 50 people. Construction workers, Harlem Unemployment Committee and auxiliary groups, N.Y. CORE and NAACP. Gov't. speakers spoke about improvement in job situation; everyone else opposed to their optimism about doing away with unemployment. Decided that solving unemployment would depend on workers developing their own struggle for jobs.

8. Jailing of Trotskyists:

Polish and Mexican T.'s have been jailed recently. Carol L. contacting Monthly Review to see if they will have mtg. to defend Mexicans, possibly with Deutscher.

Motion: To contact ISC (Draperites) to build a broad demonstration at Polish mission.

Passed.

Motion: To intervene in YAWF rally blaming CIA for Indonesian events, by passing out sample copies of S.#5, and a leaflet criticising PKI program and Chinese complicity.

Passed.

9. Announcements:

- a. YAWF rally, MacMillan Hall, Columbia, 2 June 1966.
- b. Harlem Viet Nam Committee rally on 7th Ave. between 125 and 126th on 30 May.
- c. March of black groups against the war down Lenox Ave. on 25 June.
- d. SWP Memorial meeting, Friday 27 May 8:00 p.m.
- e. Picket of Dow Chemical Co. for napalm mfg. 28 May, 12 noon at 45 Rockefeller Plaza.
- f. Tompkins Sq. party 4 June at 8:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50.