

POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES.....9 June 1969

Present: Full: Robertson, Cunningham, Nelson, Henry  
Alts: Seymour, Small(late) Staff: Gordon, Salant, Rogers  
Absent: none  
Meeting convened 8:25 p.m.

- Agenda:
1. Minutes
  2. Personnel and Organization
  3. National Conference
    - a. Slate Discussion
    - b. Documents and Arrangements
  4. Press

1. Minutes: We have fallen behind again--the minutes of 24 March, 9 April and 12 May 1969 remain in draft.
2. Personnel and Organization:
  - a. "Klonsky vs. Stalin": This very good document by Nick B. and Leon D., dealing with the National Question in its relation to U.S. Negroes, was produced by our Southern comrades for a local Conference. It has been a wide sales success because it keys into the violent factionalism tearing apart the New Left.
  - b. CP: Leon reports information indicating Gus Hall and Dorothy Healy factions may have made a deal: Klonsky (Healyite) will restore SSOC (re-named) to CP control, will continue operations in SDS to push for expulsion of PL at next SDS Convention, in conjunction with SDS "National Collective"'s forthcoming anti-PL purge. The Healyites are a combination of soft and hard--e.g., soft on Czechoslovakia, hard anti-Trotskyism --both flowing from their general Third Worldism. The Hall faction are more "orthodox" pro-Russian Stalinists.
  - c. Recent Trips: Nick has completed his 90-day stint in the South. He made 3 stops in Tallahassee, Fla., where 6-8 people around Fla. State Univ. have independently evolved positions close to ours. This, combined with impressions from Gordon's and Robertson's visit to Ithaca, strengthens our opinion that the greatest impediment to SL growth outside our organized locals is the lack of a regular, frequent public press.  
Disc: Cunningham
  - d. Ithaca: McClellan Committee has subpoenaed the records of the Cornell YSL, which the Univ. has turned over without demur.
  - e. Boston: Comrade Bill G. and his wife plan to visit NYC soon. They have been quite satisfactorily active in their isolated circumstances; other similarly isolated comrades might profit from the model of type of activity and balance.
  - f. Bay Area: Comrade Kinder indicates he expects to be drafted in Sept. Two Bay Area comrades are visiting NYC for two weeks. Two letters recently received from Kinder. Robertson phoned Bay Area and discussed with Comrade Helene our intervention over "People's Park" issue. Bay Area leaflet on "People's Park" received; conveys quite well in content and emphasis our line on terrorism (although language has some Berkeleyisms). Comrades Lynne and Paul were arrested in these disturbances; bail bonds will cost \$160. The general population is deeply split over the issue. The action of the cops was a real atrocity--contrary to most publicity, it wasn't just bird shot

that was fired. For example: the cops pushed three senior professors into a building, threw in tear gas and locked them in; the people arrested in the mass dragnet operation included a mailman on the course of his rounds. A student strike resulted.

Apparently the Bay Area local's initial reaction to the Saling Case was solidarity with Saling, with Lynne evidently in the lead. We gather they are beginning to cool off from that, especially after seeing his latest document. We hope that a thorough treatment of the Saling Case at the National Conference (and before) may result in the kind of developments in the Bay Area leading to a presumption in the minds of the comrades there that the N.O. in its various activities is correct until proven wrong rather than the reverse.

- g. Saling: His "appeal" received. He demands a Commission at the National Conference. The "appeal" is only 4 pages long.

Motion: To circulate this appeal to the membership and note we had already made arrangements for a Commission to review the Turner case and related subjects. Passed

- h. Membership: We are again growing, although slowly. In May, we dropped 3 inactive members and accepted 4 applicants. The current figures--including actions to be taken tonight--total

49:	<u>West</u>	<u>Midwest</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>East</u>
	Bay Area 9	Illinois 3	New OrL. 2	NYC 17
	<u>Eureka 2</u>	<u>Michigan 3</u>	<u>Texas 7</u>	<u>E. Coast 6</u>
	11	6	9	23

- i. Gallatin: Recently received brief letter and Sustaining Pledge payment from Comrade Gallatin. His previously-noted non-communication with the center was as a result of illness culminating in hospitalization.
- j. Applicants: A second application from Austin awaits a meeting of the SRB for formal acceptance into the SL; we expect to admit two comrades shortly into the NYC local.
- k. Inactives: About two months ago, Miriam R. (Seattle) promised in reply to phone call from Robertson to write clarifying her membership status. She has evidently been unable to do even this. Maedee McE. (Washington, D.C.) phoned NYC recently; she intends to visit New Orleans for two weeks and also NYC sometime thereafter.

Motion: To drop Miriam R. for inactivity over a considerable period. Also, to note that if there are any others like Joyce B. who have been inactive for over a year but whom we have forgotten to drop, they are dropped. Passed

- l. Southern Reorganization: An SRB was held by phone, dropped Ramon E. (Houston) for grounds perviously noted. We very much want the other comrades in the area to move to other locals; otherwise they will simply drift out of the SL. We must try to reintensify our policy of concentration into Regional Centers. For example, in the Midwest we have 6 members split into two groups neither of which is self-sufficient, and one of which (Illinois) is no longer functioning at all. We have had some exceptional people who have lasted in isolation but for most people, and especially if they do not have a perspective that their isolation is temporary, it is a circum-

stance impossible to withstand. We only have the strength for three regional centers outside NYC.

Should Comrade Verrett be drafted, a decisive case can be made for shifting our center of concentration for the South to Austin: Comrades John and Anne S. are unmatched as a good core for a local group; they are not very mobile right now; the comrade remaining in New Orleans has more mobility; we have made better recruits in Austin and have generally tended to hold them longer; we have tried hard but without success to reinforce New Orleans--in particular, the comrades from Ithaca are unable to find any job prospects in New Orleans; it may be easier for the remaining comrades from Houston to move within the state. We note that, as we will have 4 comrades in Austin and 1 in New Orleans if Verrett is drafted, this projected shift of concentration is almost a fait accompli.

We note that the major cities of the South are New Orleans, Atlanta, Birmingham. While the party of the proletariat will have to conquer these places, we are not now the party. While we can't just surrender and all move to campus, we also can't pretend our Regional Centers are Birmingham, Alabama, Gary, Indiana and Richmond, Calif., where the workers are. Moreover, Austin is not centrally located by any means and has the tight job situation characteristic of college towns. Nonetheless, we have tended to do well in such places as Austin, Ithaca, Iowa City and (hopefully) Tallahassee, while we have been chronically unable to maintain a local in Chicago.  
Disc: Henry, Seymour, Nelson, Henry, Gordon, Robertson, Seymour, Gordon, Henry

- Motion: To raise with the Southern comrades, in the event that Joe V. becomes unavailable, that we plan to shift our perspective from New Orleans to Austin for concentrating our Southern forces and as a focus for additional colonization from outside into the South, for the next period. In this event, we might need a new Southern editor, should de-charter New Orleans as a full local and note that the SRB would be temporarily suspended, as it would have only one member. Passed
- m. Eureka: Vandals burned down Comrade Everett W.'s house; he is now staying in the Bay Area. The Bay Area has requested we help him out, but it would seem that his financial problems are beyond our means.
- n. Midwest: We should raise with the Michigan comrades the question of relocation to stronger SL centers.

[Meeting recessed from 9:25 to 10:05 to phone the Southern comrades]

### 3. National Conference:

- a. Slate Discussion: The considerations are that we should have an odd number of full CC members in the national center to form the PB and, thus, an even number of full CC members residing outside the center. We prefer to have more CC members outside the center than inside, so that the PB does not constitute a majority of the CC. The outgoing leadership has the obligation to make specific strong recommendations to the National Conference for the incoming full CC members. We pre-

fer to have as inclusive a CC as possible consistent with not having a top-heavy ratio of leadership to membership.

Disc: Seymour, Cunningham, Gordon, Salant, Nelson, Robertson, Seymour, Cunningham, Gordon, Nelson

Assuming no minority representation, the proposed slate for full CC was:

Cunningham (now full, NYC)  
Gordon (NYC)  
PB Nelson (now full, NYC)  
Robertson (now full, NYC)  
Seymour (now alternate, NYC)  
Kinder (now alternate, Bay Area)  
Sebesta (now alternate, Austin)  
Small (now alternate, NYC)  
Verrett (now alternate, New Orleans)

A number of comrades were suggested as alternates. The PB proposed to merely make a number of individual nominations, among others, for alternate rather than work up a slate, because too much specific information of choices is lacking.

b. Draft Document and Arrangements:

Motion: To have a meeting in two weeks in which a major point will be devoted to consideration of the revised draft. Comrades who wish to have material considered for inclusion must submit it to the Commission within one week. The document should be prepared for general circulation to the membership by early July, along with a Conference Call. Passed

Motion: That voting for delegates to the Conference be on the basis of 1 delegate for 3 members or major fraction. In order to vote for delegates or be seated as voting, alternate or fraternal delegates themselves, comrades must be in good financial standing with the organization and must have paid a ten dollar Conference assessment which will be used mainly to finance travelling expenses for distant delegates. We note that candidate members do not have a vote on national policy decisions and hence do not vote for delegates; members-at-large likewise have no vote. All members of the organization may attend the Conference but only voting, seated alternate and fraternal delegates have voice. Passed

4. Press: We must have an issue of SPARTACIST before the Conference.

Disc: Salant, Robertson, Gordon, Rogers, Seymour, Gordon, Salant, Nelson, Small, Cunningham, Rogers, Robertson, Henry, Robertson, Seymour, Gordon, Robertson

Motion: To have a stop-gap national mailing of recent leaflets and Spartacist-East numbers 1 and 2. Passed

Meeting adjourned 11:45 p.m.