

LATE '74 - EARLY '75

EBLE CASE I

NOTE:

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⑤ Winnipeg

THE CASE OF COMRADE JOHN E

"For us the party must be a combat organization which leads a determined struggle for power. The Bolshevik party which leads the struggle for power needs not only internal democracy. It also requires an imperious centralism and an iron discipline in action. It requires a proletarian composition conforming to its proletarian program. The Bolshevik party cannot be led by dilettantes whose real interests and real lives are in another and alien world. It requires an active professional leadership, composed of individuals democratically selected and democratically controlled, who devote their entire lives to the party, and who find in the party and in its multiform activities in a proletarian environment, complete personal satisfaction.

"For the proletarian revolutionist the party is the concentrated expression of his life purpose, and he is bound to it for life and death. He preaches and practices party patriotism, because he knows that his socialist ideal cannot be realized without the party. In his eyes the crime of crimes is disloyalty or irresponsibility toward the party. The proletarian revolutionist is proud of his party. He defends it before the world on all occasions. The proletarian revolutionist is a disciplined man, since the party cannot exist as a combat organization without discipline. When he finds himself in the minority, he loyally submits to the decision of the party and carries out its decisions, while he awaits new events to verify the disputes or new opportunities to discuss them again.

"The petty-bourgeois attitude toward the party, which Burnham represents, is the opposite of all this. The petty-bourgeois character of the opposition is shown in their attitude toward the party, their conception of the party, even in their method of complaining and whining about their 'grievances', as unfailingly as in their lightminded attitude toward our program, our doctrine and our tradition.

"The petty-bourgeois intellectual, who wants to teach and guide the labor movement without participating in it, feels only loose ties to the party and is always full of 'grievances' against it. The moment his toes are stepped on, or he is rebuffed, he forgets all about the interests of the movement and remembers only that his feelings have been hurt; the revolution may be important, but the wounded vanity of a petty-bourgeois intellectual is more important. He is all for discipline when he is laying down the law to others, but as soon as he finds himself in a minority, he begins to deliver ultimatums and threats of split to the party majority."

-- J. P. Cannon, The Struggle for a Proletarian Party (pp 14-15)

Comrade John E, has been in the organised ostensible Trotskyist movement for nearly four years. Splitting from the Socialist Workers League with the Communist League he was won to us from the CL via the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency. Although on the National Committee of both the SWL and the CL, he did not play a key role in either organisation. John has posed a number of apparently unconnected and sometimes seemingly inexplicable organisational problems to us from the earliest period of our association with him. Since his return from overseas the comrade has for the first time been expected to integrate himself thoroughly into our day-to-day work, and this has confirmed for us that he has a number of severe inadequacies as a Bolshevik. In a subjective response to criticisms of his functioning in Europe, his delayed return from Europe, and his functioning since his return, the comrade has put up a mass of defensive and disloyal evasions, and now, having generalised that performance into some sort of a program, has both given us some powerful new insights into it and has set out on a dangerous political path. This document is an appeal to the comrade to draw back from the consequences of inability to face his political record squarely, and from the unprincipled use of factional methods of struggle to which that inability has led him.

It is no mere coincidence that it is only now we are trying to complete his integration that the programmatic consequences of the comrade's weaknesses are becoming clear (though they are as yet far from rounded or finished). ~~Comrade John's~~ agreement with us, though apparently sincere and principled, of necessity had somewhat of an abstract and untested character.

Too Much Trouble?

If our rank-and-file thinks that we are taking too much trouble over an isolated and feeble element who has on a number of occasions laid himself open for summary expulsion, then let it be remembered that in comrade John we see only an extreme and concentrated form of the problems which, in less crippling manifestations, beset many members when they first enter the organisation. The fight against John's resistance to the authority of the party is of course, extremely important, but the fight can have a far greater importance if it can also help the whole party understand better (because scrutinised in concentrated form) those lesser forms of resistance to the authority of the collective which constitute a real impediment to the advancement of the organisation.

Leaving aside for a time the background to ~~the incident~~ ~~comrade John's~~ in this particular case, let us look at the comrade's general political argument as it unfolded: first in a discussion with me on the evening of Thursday 18 July, then, after pressing for the discussion to be delayed for a fortnight, in a discussion held on my initiative in the Sydney Local meeting of Sunday 21 July, and finally in a partial form in his letter to Susi of 21 July.

On 18 July, one night after asking me if and when I could arrange for him to be able to live in Britain with comrade Susi (of the Berlin Committee), John discovered his letters had been read by me, precipitating first a discussion on the question of the right of comrades' privacy of correspondence, and ~~the comrade then went on to argue that the Spartacist League generally interfered too much in the personal lives of its members,~~ and that he had believed that for a long time. Although it did not come as a very great surprise to us, he had never expressed this view before, so I carefully explained to him how, ~~where a comrade's personal needs intersected those of the party they became legitimate subjects for the interests of the party,~~ but that in situations in which it is desirable that personal needs be subordinated it is far better to rely on the consciousness of members than on discipline. Thus we quite frequently try to argue a comrade into moving from one city to another, but unless he were a member of the Central Committee we would not order him to move. I explained to him that in view of our conjunctural difficulties we unfortunately have to put more pressure on comrades than is usually desirable, and I then asked John what had caused him to develop this criticism of the Spartacist League leadership, and to give examples of how we had illegitimately interfered in the personal lives of other comrades. He answered only after fully five minutes of evasions such as "It is what I have observed" but finally came out with the same example as he did later, at the Local meeting on Sunday July 21, when it was so effectively rebutted by Vicky. He said she should not have been forced to give up her baby to foster parents.

The Ogre of Bolshevik Consciousness

Poor John is starting to see himself in a nightmare, terrorised by the same Red Ogre who steals little children and gives them away to strangers. Presumably the care and attention given the mother by the Ogre, the supply of baby clothes we made, and our care for the child -- in some periods as much as sixteen hours a day, five days a week -- are merely particularly devious touches. Presumably the fact that we did not force the comrade to have an abortion suggests not that we rely on the consciousness of comrades but only that we wanted, out of pure vindictiveness to cause the maximum possible personal suffering. Likewise the fact that we then waited until the child was five months old to "force" the mother to have it fostered must be seen as positively diabolic.

The truth is that our advice to Vicky -- that her contribution to the revolutionary movement would be very limited if she kept the child -- started to carry much more weight with her as it became clear in practice that she was going to have continuing difficulty coping. It was the realisation of this which led her to find a means of having the child far better cared for than were she to keep it and remain a professional revolutionary. Comrade John seriously denigrates the consciousness represented by a very difficult decision for which Vicky must take full credit.

If the same choice were before him, John would have found it more important to bring up his own child than to make a revolution. As he said to Vicky on the night of Saturday 20 July "I'd never allow any child of mine to be adopted." The comrade had attempted to make an idealistic distinction between politics and some particular intimate personal sphere in which the party has no business whatever. This really reduces to his plaintive plea -- there are some areas in which John E is sure he could never allow politics to prevail. "Please", he is asking, "could the party refrain from the struggle over my weaknesses as it would expose them to the light of day and be most uncomfortable." That these areas are in fact somewhat larger than any intimate personal sphere is shown by his actual functioning. John has got to learn that the party can cope with all kinds of weaknesses in comrades, that it can make all kinds of concessions to comrades' personal needs. We can certainly even accept comrades having children, despite the difficulties which our small size puts us under. But we can never brook a principle which says that there are some areas in the life of a comrade which the individual has the right to hide from the organisation, and in which the organisation must refrain from arguing for its needs.

Every comrade must be dealt with as having specific needs, and is able to give his most to the party under different conditions and with different allowances being made for those needs. We must accommodate to the personal needs of every comrade but to say that many personal needs of members must be accommodated to by the party is not to justify those needs or render them immune to the influence of the party. Once last year after a long argument over his functioning the comrade came to me and in a remark of rare self-perception confessed: "There is something you should know about me. I always find it difficult to admit I was wrong." I told him, rather gently, that most people did find it a bit difficult, but that he, like everybody else, would be wrong very often, and if he were going to contribute fully to useful debate we would have to push him a bit to help him learn to admit when he was wrong. The comrade's reply at the time was astounding. We would have to accept the comrade as he was -- we could not expect any change. Now although John has a high opinion of his political development, he doubtless believes that he will continue to develop politically. But the horror of also being pushed to develop by growing out of such intimate and personal attitudes as self-pride is just too much. For John E that has just got to be put beyond the sphere of the party. Of course he would find this more difficult to argue openly than an absolute principle of keeping his personal relationships out of the sphere of the party -- but nevertheless he has in fact argued for it.

Anything the comrade says about agreeing that "everything personal which affects the functioning of a comrade is political" is contradicted by the above example in practice, by the example of the child which he used both in discussion with me and later at the Local meeting, and also by a whole range of examples, including his maintenance of an absolute right of privacy in his relationship with Susi while at the same time using that relationship as an argument that he should be transferred to Britain.

While of course the Spartacist League normally has no interests in, for example, the sexual attitudes or habits of its members, even these cannot be given absolute immunity from scrutiny of the party. In extraordinary cases the party must intervene. It is not for nothing that we have our lifestyle rule: "Members will not in their personal appearance, habits, conduct or lifestyle be either a serious or chronic detriment to the SLANZ."

Some extremes require rules and discipline, but it is not only in extremes that the party is interested in overcoming those traits which come into conflict with the needs of the party. The whole task of building a revolutionary party is a task of putting together and training cadre. At every stage the building of the party requires massive "personal sacrifices" on the part of every member; there is no political task whatever devoid of a personal content. A Bolshevik struggles for an integration of his personal and political life, and his party struggles to help him in that development.

It is to be noted that the party was kept in ignorance of comrade John's belief that there are some personal things beyond its province for a long time -- probably a year (if it developed about the time the child was born) but at least seven months (when it was fostered). While there is a consistency in keeping his position from the party, it is the consistency of one who takes politics and the party unseriously, who doesn't think it really matters that the party has a deeply flawed conception of itself. The corollary of comrade John's view that the party should not touch his own most personal concerns is that his concern for the party is not very deeply personal.

The Local Meeting -- On the Blurring of Factions

At the Sydney Local meeting of 21 July comrade John's views on the right to privacy were developed considerably beyond what was presented to me the previous Thursday night. After presenting his views on the inviolability of intimate personal affairs including personal correspondence, he went on to merge these views with a conception of the rights to secrecy of non-factional political correspondence. His argument was that while this right was unnecessary in a healthy organisation "such as ours", it had to be maintained in case our organisation degenerated when the absence of such a right could lead to the smashing of a revolutionary minority. Although in fact such a minority would be, surely, a faction, the idea that a decisively degenerated party will maintain for Bolsheviks any rights of political struggle -- factional or non-factional -- is of course sheer utopian-liberal nonsense. The more interesting implication of the view that we need special rights in case we degenerate is, however, as comrades Dave S and others pointed out at the meeting, that there is no qualitative difference between a healthy organisation "such as ours" and a degenerated organisation such as (to use the comrade's examples) the CPs in the late 1920s and the SWP in the early 1960s. Comrades noted that John was equating me with Stalin.

In a bureaucratically deformed centrist or reformist party revolutionaries must often deceive the apparatus by carrying on secret correspondence, but it would be ridiculous and anti-Leninist to base the norms of a revolutionary organisation on such conditions. As I said at the Local meeting, degeneration will not be prevented by any organisational rules, but only by the consciousness of the membership developed through open political struggle. While it is necessary to preserve the right of factional secrecy, the transmission of secret documents must be viewed as an attack on open political struggle and justifiable only within the membership of a faction based on declared principles.

John further argued that "pre-factional" material should be privileged, and implied that the party should be able to do nothing to intersect the development of factions -- that they were good things. In fact factions are useful only in that they reveal something wrong in the party -- something wrong in either the leadership or the minority. The leadership of the party has the responsibility -- and must have the means -- to prevent the disruption to the party that factional warfare precipitates by wherever possible correcting the wrong before it develops to a factional stage.

A blurring of the distinction between factional and non-factional situations can only lead to the worst kind of manoeuvring, unprincipled hiding of differences, and playing of one group of comrades off against another. Secret non-factional political correspondence, like other practices blurring this distinction (all associated in our movement with the development of Pabloism) cannot preserve the party from degeneration, as John would have it, but can only weaken the party and lay the very conditions which prepare it for degeneration. Comrade John's attempt to break down that distinction can of course by no means be accorded the status of a conscious attempt to prepare the party for degeneration, but it does reflect his primary concern for the establishment of rules in which he as an individual can operate, when he feels it is necessary, against the party, rather than for rules in which the party can as a collective best operate against the bourgeoisie. This, like his campaign for an absolute rule of privacy, reflects his distorted scale of values: John E before the party!

It is an extremely important principle that if a comrade wants to correspond secretly he must first win his correspondent to a faction on the basis of open struggle for a principled position. You can't have the "advantages" of factional rights without the "disadvantages". As was noted at the Local meeting, the comrade simply does not understand the party and furthermore is not particularly interested in it. He said he had not even read the Cunningham-Moore-Stuart documents, and since then he has also confessed to not having read the Ellens-Turner documents.

The Letter to Susi

During the Local discussion comrade Joel Salinger handed me a note remarking with extraordinary prescience that John was really asking how he could gain the advantages a faction has in being allowed secret correspondence. We were later to learn that in fact the Local meeting had interrupted the writing of his 21 July letter to Susi, which was to be -- for as long as possible -- a secret, ostensibly non-factional document designed to line up the Berlin Committee against the leadership of the SLANZ.

This letter defines a narrower area of privacy rights, confining itself to the question of correspondence, and is more careful than his verbal formulations. He tries somewhat inadequately to identify Lenin in 1903 with his own view "that personal correspondence of an intimate nature has a right to privacy". Now any organisation would be stark crazy to want to make a habit of looking at its members' more intimate correspondence. It is something which must be reserved for extraordinary situations. But there are such situations -- situations for example in which either the intimate takes on a political importance or it is believed possible that what is held to be intimate is not in fact so intimate.

It is simply not possible to draw an absolute line between the personal and the political. This is the real lesson John should draw from 1903, when Lenin split the editorial board of Iskra primarily because the personal habits and lifestyles of Zaslitsch and Axelrod had become a political obstacle (see Trotsky's comment in My Life, pp 161-163).

With his letter to Susi of 21 July he sent also Sharpe's letter of 30 May 1974 and his own reply to the letters of Sharpe and Brosius dated 6 July, which had at that point not even been sent to Sharpe and Brosius. He had given an untyped copy to the organisation and it was in the process of being stencilled for circulation. Although he had not previously complained of the delay (occasioned by the need to fit the stencilling into our press typing schedule) he later claimed that he was entitled to go outside the proper channels for the distribution of such a document because the organisation had failed in its duty to type his letter earlier. Challenged as to whether he held we had "sabotaged" his document he said "I will have to think about that." He gave little heed to the party's need to decide on the priorities for its few competent typists.

While previously we could extrapolate something of our comrade's view of the party, his now expressed political positions and his method of fighting for them allow us a far higher understanding than we previously had of the inadequacies of his day-to-day functioning. No doubt some of these views only became fully conscious as we struggled against that low level of functioning, but they nevertheless encapsulate in generalised form the political thrust responsible for it. Let us look at the record.

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comrade first learnt (through "passing remarks") that comrade Brosius thought it would be all right for him to go to Vienna, and that he later approached her saying something like "Comrade Robertson doesn't think it's a good idea for me to go to Vienna -- What do you think?" It is equally clear that comrade John did not tell comrade Brosius that he had agreed with comrade Robertson's "advice" or that both comrades Sharpe and Hannah had given him quite explicit instructions not to go to Vienna.

Although at one stage he was certain he had mentioned comrade Sharpe's views and at another he thought he had told Brosius that he had agreed with comrade Robertson, he has since that time acquiesced to this resumé at least three times, and on the last occasion said "Yes, but that is not bad. You sometimes don't tell comrades everything either." (!)

(Incredibly -- comrade Brosius' instruction for him to keep his mouth shut notwithstanding -- when the comrade returned he was boasting of the good work "we" did in Austria, explaining to the benighted Austrians the proper organisational norms!)

Of course he says he is sorry he was not more honest with comrade Brosius, but he still tries to mitigate his mistakes by saying

- (a) Brosius was very busy so he didn't have time to tell her what he should have. He didn't have the gall to put this in writing.
- (b) He claims to be the victim of the indisciplined norms of the organisations he has previously been in. It is simply untrue that the SWL is undisciplined. And
- (c) He didn't know that the SLUS used democratic centralist norms in its European work.

Thus he can claim "I did not 'play one comrade off against the other' or told 'half-truths' or use 'deception'." The comrade evidently prefers to be believed stupid.

The comrade's views as he has expressed them do not go so far as to argue for a general right to indiscipline however they are perfectly consistent with the comrade's actual exercise of such a "right" to indiscipline and both the views and the functioning stem from an impulse which puts the individual before the party.

The late return to Australia

The comrade had explicit instructions to return to Australia as quickly as possible and a letter from Adaire of 5 May 1974 told him to try to find a means of cutting his stay off before expiry of the 45-day minimum period in Europe allowed by his air ticket, that is before 4 June. While it was not possible for him to return before 4 June, he failed to arrive in Sydney until 24 June (thereby missing an important national gathering at which we had hoped for a report from him on the European situation). The contempt in which he held his instructions was best expressed in the excuses he gave rather than the lateness itself.

- (a) He had to stay in England a few extra days because he wanted to see some

more contacts. That the organisation saw it as more important for him to get home was of no consequence; that he would have had plenty of time had he kept to the itinerary given him rather than going to Austria was forgotten.

- (b) The comrade, by way of exception, honestly admitted that his personal affair in Berlin was responsible for part of the delay, but only the part between 7 and 14 June. (No doubt he could have secured permission for the much longer delay he actually took had he tried to do so on this ground alone -- despite the disruption it would have caused to the work of the SLANZ, and no doubt also the Berlin Committee. At one stage the comrade argued that as telephone was the only way this could have been done it would be too expensive, though there seems to be no lack of telephone calls between Sydney and Berlin these days.)
- (c) Great play was made of the ticket difficulties. They in fact account at most for only the days from 14 to 19 June, and one wonders if pressure on the airlines office in Berlin could not have produced a speedier result by telex.

It does appear that the comrade tried at least to announce to the SLANZ some of his delays by telegrams which failed to arrive owing to strikes. For a time, of course, he pretended this exonerated him.

In the delayed return of comrade John we see quite clearly the real meaning of his position that the party should not look into the personal lives of its members. Let us be clear on this: we will not have such indiscipline again, but if a comrade honestly discusses out with the party what he wants we will be pretty generous in making allowances for personal needs.

Functioning in Australia

The questions of the comrade's functioning in Europe and his delayed return would be matters which would be considered closed if they did not form part of a pattern which has continued unabated since. But while his failures overseas are in substantial matters, the same mode of functioning has since been expressed in a myriad of petty incidents, most of which taken separately, would hardly be cause for comment. Together, however they have constituted a totally unacceptable pattern, resistance to which has put the comrade under some considerable pressure. His response has been subjective rather than coming to account with his general mode of functioning.

The point must be made that the triviality of the incidents in which the comrade has, since his return to Australia, erred, in no way suggests that his problem is trivial. We have not assigned him areas of work in which his problem could find its fullest expression but he has been invested with a real authority as "commissar" responsible for the supervision of domestic tasks and general tidiness in the larger of our organisational communes. John's performance in this role has not been too bad, although I know that the comrades have to consciously suppress a subjective reaction to his methods of leadership there. John should take their example and restrain his constant complaints about the supposed arrogance of his comrades (including John Sheridan!),

about their "tone" (Dave Reynolds!) and "attitude" (at different times all but the most junior comrades). His own criticisms of the SLANZ must start from what it does, its programme, moving to personal criticisms only when he can show that they are essentially linked to programmatic errors.

Comrade John has not yet chosen to link his personal and political criticisms of the leadership and he is probably not yet conscious of the links but the strength of his feelings about the personal styles of the leading comrades has a programmatic thrust -- the programmatic thrust of failure to recognise the primacy of programme and the organised fight for it. This is in perfect consonance with his belief that the political needs of the party must be subordinated to the personal preferences of individual members -- whether it be to a personal desire to live in Britain or a personal distaste for the attitude of leading comrades.

Trade-union work -- A Question of Discipline

The comrade's trade-union work is most notable for simple disobedience. Right from the day he applied for the job (when it was explained to him why he must get out to the factory by 9 am and was found still in bed at 10.30) he has simply failed to see the importance of the work and his instructions. Thus when a problem arose over men on the plant seeing him as an outsider (and expressed this in rather rude and unambiguous terms), comrade Sheridan as trade-union director, gave him a whole series of explicit instructions. One of these was to read at the factory the trashy Daily Telegraph, a newspaper directed at the working class. It was explicitly and clearly explained that no other paper should be read.

The next day the comrade did in fact buy a Telegraph and read it on the train going to work, but he also bought an Australian, a paper directed at a rather better class of readers, and it was the Australian he read at work.

The comrade's indiscipline has been shown on many other occasions, most seriously in respect of his instructions -- necessary at this stage -- to refrain from talking politics. At one point he asked a worker from a deformed workers state if he had escaped from his homeland. (According to John's account the worker responded that he asked too many questions.)

The Press -- A Question of Care

In many cases such subordination of the needs of the party to his own needs becomes an outright attack on our functioning. This is seen most markedly in slipshod work for our press. The comrade has two jobs in this area:

- (i) looking after press clippings (which, as he has been explained, should if performed conscientiously expand to doing research jobs) and
- (ii) finding suitable photographs for publication.

On the clippings, supposed to take an hour a night, John now does the job in half that time, but the clippings are often rendered unreadable through

sheer thoughtless stupidity. So far he has only been on the job long enough to do the photographs for one issue of ASp. The comrade was told three weeks in advance what kinds of photographs were needed, then he was prodded by the editor a week before the deadline to set aside time, which he claimed was unnecessary. He then promised to spend the afternoon of the deadline date on the job, but failed to do so, trying to finish the job in ten minutes late at night. He failed to look adequately at even the sources directly suggested to him by the editor, made no attempt to select the best of what he found, and gave the whole operation so thought whatever. It would seem that the comrade simply does not care what the party's press looks like.

Eagerness to Please -- Enemy of Truth

His habit of saying what he thinks his comrades want to hear gets him into constant trouble. Possibly the most startling instance of this occurred at the Political Bureau meeting of 26 June 1974 immediately following his return when I asked him how he thought the leadership of the SLANZ compared with that of the SLUS. He replied that they were on the same level, to which I guffawed, so he hastily modified with a string of qualifications about our need for experience, etc. A related habit is his excessively wishful thinking. A typical example occurred when a close sympathiser reported that members of the Communist League accused John E of failure to pay his dues while in that organisation. Leading comrades could not remember the facts for a time, and questioning the comrade it was first posed that he had, of course, paid by cheque. He agreed, and it was therefore suggested that he should request (in Australia one must make a specific request) the bank to return the cancelled cheque. He immediately became absolutely certain that he paid in cash. Looking at the correspondence between the comrade and his former organisation, however, it is quite clear that he never paid it at all, having agreed only to pay when he was shown a proper accounting of his debts, which he had not been shown at the time he was expelled from the Communist League.

It is one of the comrade's good qualities that he wants desperately to do well, but this usually takes the form of trying simply to impress. In debates it is often a matter of scoring points with dates and definitions rather than serious political argument. He always claims to understand an argument or instruction for work long before he does. This habit gets him into trouble when he is shown not to understand his instructions. The editor tells that at least twice on his press tasks he has first claimed to understand his instructions perfectly, he has then failed to do the job properly, and blamed this consecutively on not remembering that the instructions had been given (implying that they had not been given at all) and then after an argument, on not understanding them (implying that they were not clear -- but presumably also that he had not bothered to clarify them). Exactly the same kind of pattern is reported by the head of the trade union fraction.

A further problem with the comrade is that when one is talking to him and he becomes worried by a point he stops listening. The most recent example was when I read to him slowly and explained -- with painstaking care -- a PB motion which both recognised him as a candidate member and set up a Control Com-

mission to look into allegations of his dishonesty. The Control Commission was worrying to him, so five days later he telephoned me to ask for his membership status to be clarified. He thought he would not be a candidate member until the Control Commission had reported!

How Wilful are his Deceits? -- And how Much does it Matter?

Defensiveness, evasions and factual inaccuracies are so much part of the comrade's pattern of functioning that John may actually be viewed with sympathy by comrades who have seen his petty and often simply stupid departures from the truth so incredibly frequently that they are inclined, and comrades have expressed this to me quite sincerely, to wonder if he is really capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood.

In fact comrade John's desire to please, his general defensiveness and his inattentiveness -- and the examples above are but the smallest fragments -- make it very difficult to distinguish wilful deceit from a mire of low consciousness and unconsciousness, but whatever the psychological motivation, when his words are in contradiction to the truth, as when his actions are in contradiction to his instructions, it is clear that this stems ultimately from a failure to recognise the authority of the party. Whether in a particular case the comrade was motivated by a desire to please so strong that his judgement of the truth was warped, or by some more wilful process matters little; likewise it matters little if an instance of his frequent failure to carry out instructions is a result of deliberate disobedience, lack of sufficient attention, or simply failure to have had instructions clarified. In any case the comrade does not care sufficiently that the party is told that which it must know in order to operate, and he does not care sufficiently that the operations it decides necessary are properly carried out.

One of the most politically destructive forms of what I shall call the comrade's objective deceitfulness (in order to avoid the question of wilfulness) consists in his attempts to play leading comrades off against one another in order to achieve decisions satisfactory to himself.

Possibly the clearest case occurred when he came to me -- I am generally believed to be very soft in such matters -- late one Saturday night to say that a task he was to have completed under Adaire's eye was still unfinished and he was very tired. Could he go to bed and finish it in the morning? I simply said that he should ask Adaire as she was familiar with his and the Local's tasks for the next day. He then repeated his request, saying he was sure there would be time for everything the next day. I again said he would have to speak to Adaire. He left me and went right on with the job, carefully avoiding Adaire, and not going to bed for possibly three more hours.

As with other forms of objective deceit, some instances of playing leading comrades off against each other are apparently more wilful (like the one above) than less blatant ones, which are simply petty and time-wasting. For example, the comrade fails to explain his responsibilities in one area of

work which conflict with needs in another area; he can always blame the trade-union fraction when he is late to work on the press; or the press for keeping him from his household tasks. But he has never tried to avoid the situation, he never tries to discuss out the levels of priority of his different tasks or their inter-relationships, despite all encouragement. If a comrade were expected to be at a meeting from 5.00 until 6.30 and also to start a press job twenty minutes walk away at 6.30, he should discuss it urgently.

That apparently unconscious sliding into a situation in which differing responsibilities come into conflict with one another -- and if it were not for an understanding of the problem the leading comrades in charge of these differing responsibilities would also come into conflict -- amounts to a failure on the part of the comrade to take a proper part in collective decision-making. This can only result from an attitude of unconcern as to whether correct, efficient organisational decisions in harmony with the broadest needs of the organisation are reached. It would be impossible to hold any organisation together unless most of its members struggle to organise it. I think it is our common perception that comrade John is not a comrade who struggles to organise the party, or even his own activity in the party, and so, although I am sure his workload seems very heavy to him, and I am sure he is kept quite busy, he has been entrusted with a workload which is, I would think, somewhat smaller than that of any other comrade in Sydney.

On Supplying Necessary Political Information to the Organisation

In his 21 June letter John tries to argue that he was not given sufficient opportunity to supply me with the political material from his correspondence, either through not being made sufficiently aware of it or through not having sufficient time. First, it should be noted that it is quite clear he knew of our norm, which he explains accurately to Mary-Ann in a letter of 6 May 1974, a copy of which he sent to our Central Office in the correct way. Second, not only did Adaire speak to him "about two weeks" before his letter of 21 July, I also spoke to him on 25 June, saying that I would be very interested if he could type up the political sections as soon as possible, at which time he promised to do so in the next couple of days. On Saturday 6 July I reminded him, saying that if time were a real problem, although naturally I would prefer typed copies, if they xeroxed reasonably well that would do and that he could mask anything personal. Again he said that it could be done in the next few days. I reminded him again on Monday 15 July. The Local Organiser reminded him on, I believe, at least two occasions (on one of which the comrade said he did not see why he should copy out the political sections of his letters.) And as for time, well the comrade has found things pretty busy, and he certainly would have found it difficult to type extracts from the letters in the first week of July during which we had a crisis in our trade-union work, but since that time he should, for example, have been free by 7.30 pm or 8 every weeknight except when there have been meetings to go to. Thus by 17 July I could no longer believe that he intended to give them to me.

The Problem Worsens

The events which led directly to comrade John's letter of 21 June, and thence to this document must be seen in the light of our experience of the comrade's extraordinary functioning and objective deceitfulness on the one hand and our inability to find a way to deal with them on the other.

The comrade was naturally under a great deal of pressure to perform better but was reacting more and more defensively and getting decidedly worse, and while my own view of the comrade was rather soft (for which I was harshly berated more than once), there were distinct rumblings in the ranks -- and not only in the ranks -- to the effect that we would be better off without the comrade. In short he posed a massive personnel problem which was coming rapidly to a head.

When in this situation on Wednesday 17 July the comrade told me that he wanted to live in Britain so that he could live with Susi we were more than somewhat worried. When asked why not the United States or Australia his only answer was that Susi would not want to live too far from Germany. I felt I could not ask "And why not Germany?" for fear of a "Yes please" answer, handing our problem right over to the Berlin Committee. At the time I simply told the comrade that Britain was a long way off, that international transfers involving members from the smaller groups could be made only with the most careful consideration, that any decision would have to be made in the international centre, and that if the relationship proved stable over a long period of time, then something could doubtless be done to enable him to live with Susi. Before our short discussion ended I again asked him about the sections of his correspondence with political implications, and said that in view of his request it might be a good idea to let me look at the whole of the correspondence. As usual he said he would get the political parts typed up in the next few days. In view of the comrade's record his request did not look like one which could be taken at face value. The tendency certainly could not allow this comrade to live in Britain, at least until an extremely stable and solid organisation is built there (or the comrade himself is utterly transformed), but the matter did not end there as the choice of Britain obviously had some relationship to the dynamic of the comrade's demoralisation. While on the one hand it was quite apparent that Susi and John wanted to live together -- though nobody could know how much -- on the other hand it looked very much as if the ~~comrade was~~ making a plea to get out of any structured organisation into one in which the division of labour was extremely primitive.

It was in this context that I decided to look at the comrade's correspondence without his consent. Now while that decision cannot in any way be condemned in principle it must be judged in the light of an important general policy against such invasions of privacy, the violation of which can lead to serious breakdowns in the relations of trust necessary for the functioning of the organisation. These considerations seemed to be outweighed by the need to find some way to turn him from the absolutely hope-

less path he was on. Factors to be remembered are the comrade's gross indiscipline in Europe, his egregious political functioning here, his contempt for the authority of the party, the barrage of communication with Susi in Europe (something almost every second day, of which we heard nothing), his expressed desire to move to Britain (which has serious consequences for the tendency), and the need to intersect the situation before it got completely out of control. My hope was that we could, without completely smashing any remnants of confidence he had in the organisation, discover some of the things he was obviously hiding, and thereby help him to start playing a useful role in the organisation.

As a plan this broke down when the arrangements made to detain the comrade elsewhere broke down. Furthermore I could find no carbons of his own letters. (It is clear that he never had any intention of giving me political extracts from his own letters.)

In fact we learnt what was motivating John from the subsequent events: most immediately from my discussion with him that night.

What followed can be dealt with briefly.

The minutes of the Political Bureau meetings of Saturday 20 and its decisions (which I read to him on the morning of Sunday 21) and of Monday 22 July (the changed decisions of which I read to him on Tuesday 23) are clear enough. The Local meeting of 21 July has been described. The next relevant event occurred on Friday 26 July when the comrade for the first and only time actually volunteered a copy of a portion of a letter, his letter to Susi of 21 July. On reading it I immediately discussed it with the available leading comrades and called a Political Bureau meeting, the minutes of which explain some of our considerations in controlling the discussion which John had started, whether he was fully conscious of it or not, in an unprincipled factional way.

At a later point of time John tried to prove that he had all along intended to give the carbon to me, but the fact is he did not do so until the night after forming the impression, as a result of a telephone conversation with Susi, that his letter had already caused the Berlin Committee to write a document in his defence. Only when he came to the belief that he had established a bloc in his defence did he dare to give us the letter, and of course at that time he had to, as we would learn about it anyway. However, as evidence of good faith, John later claimed that although it was not on the carbon as given to me, it was noted on the original that a copy was to be given to me. The Berlin Committee was thus given the impression that he was acting in an entirely principled way, and they must still be wondering why the hell they never received from us a note saying "The situation is more complicated than John's letter would indicate; please wait until we have time to tell you what has been going on."

Bill Logan
4 August 1974

POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES (NO 7) 20 July 1974

Present: PB: Bill, Adaire, Joel
alt CC: John, Dave R, Dave S, Marie
other: Keith (Sydney Local Organiser)

Meeting convened: 8.00 p.m.

Agenda: 1. Melbourne
2. Trade Union
3. Personnel
4. Finances

1. Melbourne: Report by Bill

Discussion: Adaire, Bill.

2. Trade Union:

Discussion: Bill, Keith, John, Adaire, Dave S, Adaire, Dave S, Bill, Adaire, Bill.

Motion: To table the motion from the previous PB on the control by the Sydney Local of the trade union fraction.

passed unanimously

3. Personnel:

Discussion: Bill, Adaire, John, Dave S, Marie, Joel, Dave R, Keith, (4 rounds),

Break 10.10 to 10.30

Motion (Adaire): That the PB will not accept John E as a candidate member.

tabled

Motion (Dave R): That the PB notes that there is a serious question as to whether comrade John E is qualified to be a candidate member and that the Sydney Local be advised accordingly.

[put in counterposition to a later motion]

Motion (Joel & Adaire): That the PB suggest to comrade John E that he seek clarification of his status by applying for membership in the SLANZ, and that comrade John E's application be decided upon by the PB.

Motion: To divide the Joel/Adaire motion, first counterposing the second part to Dave R's.

passed unanimously

Motion (Dave R): For: full PB: Bill
alt CC: John S, Dave R, Dave S, Marie.

failed

Motion (Joel & Adaire as divided): That comrade John E's application be decided upon by the PB.

For: full PB: Adaire, Joel.
other: Keith.

passed

Motion (Joel & Adaire as divided): That the PB suggest to John E that he seek clarification of his status by applying for membership in the SLANZ.

passed unanimously

4. Finances: The organisation is in a serious financial squeeze, finding it necessary to cut back in expenditure

Discussion: Joel, Bill, Dave R, Adaire, Marie, John, Dave S.
(2 rounds)

Meeting closed: 12.00 p.m.

FROM THE MINUTES OF POLITICAL BUREAU/SLANZ 16 DECEMBER 1973

...

4. International Information:

...

(b) Personal international communication within the Spartacist Tendency: As the International Tendency develops we must be conscious of the possibility of the development of Pabloite-type cliquist international manoeuvring through secret correspondence, whilst on the other hand we must preserve the right of confidentiality of internal factional communication internationally.

Information about other sections ~~shall be generalised~~ within each section as far as possible, except when this would directly violate the confidentiality of factional communication. Letters and other material communicated internationally should generally be available to the leadership of the section from which they come, particularly when they are from ~~geographically~~ isolated or junior comrades, in order to allow the correction of misleading statements due to low or partial consciousness and in order to provide section leaderships with an additional measure of the political views and attitudes of members.

The history of our tendency has repeatedly emphasised the dangers and general undesirability of international communication kept from section leaderships (N.B. Ellens, Gager, Moore). Ken M.'s cop-out shows another possible variant. With the likelihood of a rapidly increasing number of personal links crossing section boundaries (in itself extremely desirable) we must establish clear guidelines.

Although where possible personal relationships must be accorded some privacy this is secondary to the demands of the development of the international tendency.

Moved: We note that section leaderships have the right of access to non-factional correspondence of members where it is important to the functioning of the organisation. In contrast to the SIUS that the tendency should expect that leaderships of both sections be supplied with copies of letters between members of two different sections, including organisational informational and personnel material. The copies should omit only material which is strictly and narrowly personal to the people directly communicating. This cannot be a rule, but is an expectation which must be given very high authority. The exception to this expectation allows the confidentiality of internal factional communication.

passed unanimously

TBT JULY 24 89.

⑤ Winnipeg

LETTER INTRODUCING JOHN E

Sydney, Australia.

4 January, 1974.

To members of the CC,
Bay Area, Chicago, and New York.

Dear comrades,

John E is a member of the RIT who works in solidarity and close co-operation with the Spartacist League....

Widely read, cosmopolitan and capable of learning to write, John is Polish (with Australian citizenship) and identifies strongly with the tradition of Polish communism, having, among other things, an affection for Isaac Deutscher. He has held on his own merit positions on the National Committees of the Socialist Workers League and Communist League in the past, but unfortunately this reflects only on the low level of those organisations and the Australian left as a whole. He has some inadequacies in fully sharing in the organisational division of labour, lacks consciousness on the question of security, is defensive, and protects over-much his self-pride.

It was resolved by the PB SLANZ "That we recommend that [he] spend approximately two weeks on the West Coast, the bulk of his stay in the US in one of the larger and better-functioning locals outside New York, such as Chicago, and that he spend a few weeks in New York." It is particularly important that he spend at least two months in a single situation to gain experience in a tight organisational framework and a thorough understanding of local functioning.

...

John's round the world concession ticket expires on July 4 and he would like to spend as much time as possible overseas although the organisation here would prefer he were back a month before this. His tentative itinerary: arrive San Francisco 4 January; to Chicago 19 January; to New York 1 April; to London 18 April; to Paris 30 April. We would look upon it with the utmost disfavour if, beyond this, he were not to either return, be on assignment from the International Commission, or be granted leave of absence by the SLUS. He would like to look around Europe.

There are two things regarding his plans after leaving the US which require the special attention of the SLUS leadership: (i.) he wishes to visit Tamara Deutscher in London; and (ii.) he would like to spend some time in Poland. These things may be allowed only with the approval of the SLUS and under its guidance.

John is extremely important in that if he thoroughly assimilates Spartacism he can give the SLANZ a dimension it would otherwise lack

Comradely,

Bill Logan.

TBF JULY 24 '89

⑤ Winnipeg

REYNOLDS' LETTER TO CHICAGO

Sydney
January 8, 1974

Steve G.
Chicago

Dear Steve,

Things are about to become somewhat hectic here very shortly, so this may be the only letter you'll get from me for a while. The organization here is in pretty good shape but a lot of demands are being made on it. To wit: an organization of ~~all comrades~~ -- very dedicated but with little political development in many cases, and a certain lack of technical/organizational skills -- are going to produce an 8-page monthly paper, build an industrial fraction, do systematic campus work (in Melbourne), and carry a heavy load of public work. On the positive side: a pretty solid leadership, a high degree of personal commitment, basic political clarity, a lot of potential and a lot of opportunities.

All comrades here must tolerate -- out of political and economic necessity -- personal impositions much greater than are made of rank & file members in the U.S. The party barracks (commune) in Sydney consists of about 9 people in 2 houses with a common budget, etc. The houses are very like the B. St. house in Detroit, only more primitive. One has ~~no running hot water and an outhouse~~ (although the other has both hot water and indoor toilet). Most comrades are being systematically taught how to type by the organization (1-2 hours practice on a regular schedule). The cost of living is not substantially cheaper here than in the U.S. -- in certain respects, and relative to the income of comrades, it is higher. Consequently, the pledge schedule is substantially steeper here in real terms. (E.g., minimum dues = A \$2 per week = A\$8 per month = US\$12 per month at a roughly equal real value). (All this ammunition if people start bitching.)

As for me, I am managing editor (!) of the paper to appear in March (!) (under Bill's supervision) and for the time being also the following: (1) on Sydney local exec; (2) Sydney local secretary; (3) interim House treasurer; (4) must be used for interventions and contacting; (5) have to perform the functions of ed board rep; (6) will be used for internal educational. All leading comrades have similar kinds of loads. Dave S. will be Sydney local organizer but must at the same time work full time as a part of the projected industrial fraction in its initial stages. Added to this is the short-term necessity of finding new living quarters for expansion in Sydney and the long-term (year or two) necessity of colonizing London. (Not to mention the world-wide paper shortage!)

The experience of working in an organization of this size, but a national organization is completely different from that of working in a local, which is part of a national org., has a delimited range of worries, etc. JR has referred to us as the Sydney local, which is in a sense true -- but the problems are entirely different and require the development of a feeling for the situation which cannot be fully gained in NY. Superficially, Australia is highly Americanized. But it is a distinct culture, with different traditions, wholly different class traditions and labor movement, a different configuration of class forces, etc. General social attitudes parallel those in the U.S. but are closer to Britain and slightly askew from both, sometimes in subtle ways. Despite superficial similarities, at bottom the left is entirely different here. The influence of the Labor Party is an extremely important factor in this. Outside of us and the Healyites, the entire left wallows in a mushy "family of the left" conception.

This is all really background for the main purpose of this letter, which is to inform you about the comrade who will be coming to Chicago from Australia via S.F. on about Jan. 19 -- John E, a member of the RIT working in solidarity with the SL. You should be receiving a copy of the letter of introduction Bill wrote for him (which he has read) and which will give you an idea of what he is like. John will be a certain problem. He has been on the NC of both the SWL (SWP-ites) and CL (Mandelites) before being won to the RIT. He is basically pretty committed to us; but his wide reading of Marxist literature is not a measure of his political understanding, which is much less extensive. He is organizationally sometimes atrocious, while capable of a minimum of organization if badgered. He really has no idea of what Bolshevik functioning is. He has been very careless about security in connection with the RIT. It is still doubtful that he understands security, although he has had to be fought on this several times by the other comrades here. He exhibits a strange combination of complacency and self-satisfaction with defensiveness and sensitivity. He tends to think that correct ideas are sufficient, and not to take a serious attitude toward the work of building the party. For example, when on the Sydney local exec he played entirely a passive role. This ties in with his irresponsible attitude toward security and assignments (which is not the result of bad faith or disloyalty). Politically, this is manifested in a tendency toward objectivism which is also in part a hangover from Pabloism. Although he can recognize intellectually what is wrong with this, it persists on a less conscious level. Because of his past (he emigrated from Poland in his early teens -- his father was a functionary in the Stalinist bureaucracy) he identifies with the traditions of Polish Communism and retains an affection for Isaac Deutscher; he will defend Deutscher by trying to deny Deutscher's revisionism and also by excusing Deutscher's political abstentionism in the post-war period. He does

not, however, defend any of Deutscher's programmatic conclusions (e.g., admits he was wrong in 1938) when pressed. He is also a little soft on Luxemburgism (as distinct from Luxemburg). He has little self-discipline, letting things go to the last moment. He can be very defensive about criticism, although he has improved some in this respect.

It is important to keep in mind that John's prior political experience has been with the rotten unprincipled cliquist scoundrels who wallow around in the almost apolitical Australian left. Political groups rarely 'split' or 'fuse' here -- they sort of ooze together and ooze apart. For example: when the CL split from the SWL, there were no factions in existence -- just a couple of minor organizational atrocities by the leading SWL clique, after which the 'minority' -- which had never been an organized faction and consisted mostly of a group of people personally loyal to John McCarthy, who were in his organization prior to its fusion with another to form the original SWL -- just walked out, without even resigning, and later started a publication without bothering either to hold a conference or to explain why they split! There is nothing remotely like the SWP here. Such an atmosphere scarcely promotes political clarity. Furthermore, John was apparently to a certain extent an unwitting tool in the cliquist maneuvers of the SWP-ite Percys and the McCarthys, so that his leading positions reflected primarily his superficial erudition, self esteem, good public speaking, and naivete rather than a real leading political role or organizational competence. Accordingly, his vices were encouraged and his virtues undeveloped.

We wanted John sent to a local like Chicago so that he could have the experience of hard work in a real, active political organization among political equals and betters, to get some discipline, organizational competence, perspective and humility. We do not expect a qualitative personal transformation; but if he can improve sufficiently quantitatively he will be a very useful comrade here.

The best thing would be for him to become the servant of the local. He should be available full time. He will undoubtedly want some time to look around Chicago, etc., which would be worthwhile, but he should not be given a free rein. You should not hesitate to use him and to limit his activity in this area if it conflicts with his political activity, or with the needs of the local. He should be given some responsibility which is not too important, and which he will probably f--k up at some point. When the first f--k-up occurs you should be very hard on him (privately). (Possibly this will sink in over there where past scoldings here have not). There is a certain danger that comrades will go easy on him because he is a foreigner. This would be bad; better for him to be smashed (in a comradely and friendly way) in some political argument. In general he should be integrated as much as possible into the work of the local and encouraged to play an active and leading part wherever he can. It might be a good idea to assign him to lead an external class. He is good

enough that with some prodding it will be at worst only mediocre and dull. He tends to forget about preparing for educationalis and then tries to bulls--t his way through. If you don't like this idea it would be good to give him some responsibility in an area like this where he can't do much harm; it will help in his development. If he responds well you might find him quite useful. In giving assignments you will have to be absolutely clear about what is expected of him or (a) it won't get done and (b) he will attribute his own irresponsibility to misunderstanding and thus learn nothing from it.

I would strongly suggest that John not stay with cdes. F and C (particularly in combination). John needs to live in a situation where he is in an organized framework and is not permitted to be too sloppy, and where he can be watched over. There is room for the development of political deviations in John which either F or C might unwittingly fuel and which would tend to feed into and exacerbate the other problems. He must not be encouraged either to spend all his time reading and talking or to be disorganized personally. The ideal would be to put him up at Win., where B and M.F. in particular could have a good effect (partly just by example) -- M.F. being very good with people generally and highly organized, and B being hard and aggressive in political argument -- tending toward left rather than right -- without being unfriendly or insensitive to easily bruised egos -- and where you and Susan could easily keep an eye on him.

...
John should be encouraged to attend all meetings he can -- all RCY meetings, at least some TU Fraction meetings (ideally all, which will help give him a sense of security, at least) and definitely one or two exec meetings so that he can get a feel for the organization and how it works, in addition to Local meetings. (You ought to take him aside and explain to him early on that TU security is a life-and-death question! It is hard for anyone to develop a security sense in Australia.)

This letter has necessarily dwelt on the negative side of John. Among his most redeeming qualities are a basically political outlook, and clear desire, if somewhat abstract, to make a revolution; and a genuine, strong enthusiasm about his trip to the U.S. He can be a good public speaker (when he isn't mainly trying to impress). He has the ability to write, but at such a painfully slow pace at present that he is not yet useful. He is also not very perceptive about politics. He is articulate and literate, though, and has a good basic grasp of Marxism; and an important political history. It is not accidental that he has come to us. He must not be underrated. We need this comrade!

...

your comrade and friend

Dave Reynolds

cc: SLUS-CO, SLANZ-CO, files.

TBT JULY 24 1989.

⑤ Winnipeg

SHARPE ON CORRESPONDENCE

New York
29 March 1974

OBL
Berlin group

Dear Comrades,

...

In the matter of correspondance, we discussed our prior experience, both within the SL/US and internationally over a period of several years with the SL/ANZ. Within the SL/US, every comrade has the right to written political communication with any other comrade. This is an essential part of the political discussion which can eventually lead to forming factions: any limitation on this right would pose a threat to the ability to carry on a political discussion and eventually to form a faction. Naturally, particularly where sensitive questions are concerned, comrades who are not in a factional situation should communicate to their local leadership the essential political content of their letters. We have occasionally had the experience of sensitive information being spread further than was wise. In addition, comrades sometimes make errors of fact or in interpretation which it is then the responsibility of the leadership to correct so that incorrect information is not spread through the organization.

Although the problem of correspondance is more complicated on an international level, it is not fundamentally different. As you no doubt know, several comrades from the US have gone to Australia. They naturally write back to their old friends, in addition to the reports from the Australian leadership which come to the center in New York. This has in the past sometimes led to a situation in which SL members in the field possess more information about events in Australia than does the center. The Australian comrades therefore passed a resolution recommending that all comrades who are not part of a factional formation give copies of the political part of their personal letters to the leadership. While it would be totally improper to restrict the right to personal correspondance, this enables the leadership to pass on information to the center as well as to correct any misinformation or errors which comrades may write. It goes without saying that in a factional situation, a minority faction has the right to private correspondance among its members which is not shown or communicated to the majority leadership.

It was with this history in mind that the international group voted to bring to the attention of the Political Bureau of the SL/US the following motion:

The international group notes that violation of the right of comrades in a common international tendency to com-

BS!

municate privately is a breach of international discipline; that for comrades not part of a common faction internationally to undertake a secret correspondance behind the backs of local or section leadership is a violation of procedure which, if persisted in, is suggestive of cliquism rather than inexperience. Comrades who do show such correspondance to their local committee are under no further obligation to their local or section. If the local committee disagrees in fact or interpretation with such correspondance, it has the full right to circulate within the international movement contrary opinions and assertions.

I should perhaps clarify our conception of the difference between a violation of discipline, and a violation of procedure. A violation of discipline takes place essentially toward the outside and is counterposed either to political positions of the organization or to clear organizational directives or rules. This is relatively clear. A violation of procedure, on the other hand, is qualitatively different. It represents a departure from the norms of the organization, but is not necessarily in direct contravention of an actual rule. Thus, for example, it is an organizational norm for comrades to consult with other comrades before taking an important step: not to do so would be a breach of procedure but not necessarily of discipline. Similarly, to fail to inform leading comrades of important correspondance would be a violation of procedure but not of discipline. Again, organizational information normally is passed from one local to another via the responsible comrade (e.g., local organizer). Other circumstances being equal, not to do so would be a violation only of procedure.

A violation of procedure is normally subject to warning, or even, in the case of repetition, of censure, but not of expulsion, whereas a violation of discipline may result in expulsion, even on the first occasion if it is sufficiently serious.

We believe that our position, in addition to being derived from our own experience, is in accordance with the experience of the communist movement as evolved by the Communist International of Lenin's time and by the later experience of Trotsky and the Fourth International. The question of correspondance, as was pointed out in our discussion, was a major point at issue between the SWP and the British RCP in the post-war period, in particularly in the major fight of 1946.

Comradely greetings,

Sharpe
International Department
SL/US

TBT JULY 24 1989.

⑤ Winnie Peeg

LETTER FROM SHARPE

New York
30 May 1974

SLANZ
(Personnel)

Dear Comrades,

Certain problems arose concerning comrade John E during his stay here and his trip through Europe about which we wanted to inform you. These revolved around a number of specific incidents, each of which is difficult to assess clearly when taken in isolation, but which taken together form a pattern.

The first problem arose when John arrived in New York after his stay in Chicago (during which time he apparently did very well) in relation to his desire to visit Eastern Europe. In an international group meeting, comrades raised the arguments against his going very strongly. Although John immediately stated his agreement with the arguments, we had a sense that he capitulated to us rather than actually agreeing with the basic political positions. At that time, it was more feeling than anything concrete.

On several occasions I attempted to discuss with John his opinions of the prospects for ANZ, colonization of England, his opinion of the leadership, etc. He was extremely reluctant to express any opinion whatsoever on any of the above subjects, and it was only after I insisted on the need to "get different viewpoints" and even insinuated that various members of ANZ might unconsciously be subject to the pull of self-interest concerning England that he ventured even timid opinions. My whole impression was that of uneasiness, manoeuvring and lack of forthrightness. He seemed to react out of a combination of careerist ambition and a fear of "~~what would Bill and Adaire think~~". His deference to Adaire's opinions seemed forced and contrived to cover real opinions, rather than genuine

2 Bet!

The other major series of incidents surrounded his return to Australia. The first concerned the baggage question. We attempted to ship 105 lbs. of literature to Europe for the big Chile conference (24-27 April). I explicitly told John to make sure that it would go with him on the plane on the Monday prior to his Thursday departure. When he came back to the office on Monday, he said the clerk told him there would be no problem, and I failed to push him about it. However, when I called the airlines on Thursday morning, the baggage department said it was impossible, that they were all booked up for three days, etc. When John and Cory went to the airport, they found a "cheaper" rate for magazines, and shipped it that way. However, instead of going on the plane, it went the next day and not to Paris, but to Frankfurt (al-

though clearly marked "Paris"). How many of these difficulties could have been overcome -- by insisting, going to the airport on Monday instead of Thursday, giving the baggage man \$10 -- is of course hard to say.

In any case, the literature did not finally arrive in Paris until the following Thursday. In the meantime, John had left for Frankfurt, which was a mistake (mainly on the part of the Paris leadership), since it was shipped in his name. He should have stayed to get it. There was then trouble with the customs/police, and the literature was shipped to Brussels.

I had told John to go back to Paris after Frankfurt to help sell at the OCI meeting on 3 May (at which our comrades did in fact have some trouble). Instead, however, he went to Berlin, and on his way back to Paris through Brussels he did manage to get the literature.

I had also discussed with John the question of going to Vienna. Adaire I believe told him that it wasn't a good idea to go; Jim told him the same thing, and he apparently agreed that he should not go to Vienna. I told him explicitly not to go to Vienna since he would be in the middle of a very difficult situation, the dynamics of which he was not familiar with. He agreed that that was correct. However, in Paris he asked Helene, who said she didn't have anything against it. So off he went to Vienna, having successfully played one comrade off against others.

I am not at this point interested in whether it was in fact correct to go to Vienna or not. The point is that his behavior throughout has been extremely individualistic and highly irresponsible. He has consistently told (or assured) comrades one thing and then proceeded to do the opposite. Thus it is only good luck and presumably extra work on the part of other comrades that the series of addresses for England got to him, since they were sent to Paris (where he said he would be) and not Vienna (where he said he would not be).

Lastly, the tone of his letters concerning his efforts to get around the ticket provisions leads, I believe, to the conclusion that he either did not try very hard or, in any case, was very happy with the result.

As I said, any specific incident would by itself be somewhat unclear: taken as a whole there is a pattern. A pattern of disregard for disciplined functioning in favor of "free-lancing", together with an unwillingness to be frank and open with his comrades, and in particular with leading comrades. Under such circumstances, while I don't believe that there is specific basis for taking any measures against comrade John, I would be very hesitant to put him in a position of

leadership without a lengthy period of testing and the accumulation of evidence contrary to the above; that is, until he shows that he can work responsibly and in a disciplined fashion as part of a collective.

Comradely

Sharpe

JBT JUL 24 1989

⑤ Winnipeg

LETTER FROM BROSIUS

23 June 1974
Paris

SLANZ
Sydney

Dear Comrades,

A few comments on cde. John E. who has just returned to SLANZ after a lengthy stay in Europe. John did some competent political work while he was here. At the Frankfurt Chile demonstration he was very effective in the sales work and found the most promising contact that we made at that event. In Paris he took a lot of the responsibility for chasing around to find the 52 kgs. of Chile and Cuba bulletins he was supposed to have brought with him from New York. Later he made a special trip to Brussels to pick them up, made the proper arrangement with the Custom's officer to get the material and lugged them singlehandedly back to Paris. Of course, had the boxes gone as originally intended as part of his personal baggage, this whole mess may have been avoided. John came up to England for the Chartist conference which was useful, considering our perspectives, and he was a help at the conference. Later, in England he seems to have done an outstanding job of following up our contacts there including bringing Nick to many of the sessions, helping to integrate Nick into the tendency. In the main, it seems that he has improved a great deal through his work both here and in the US.

John left Paris on 7 June for Berlin, making this trip for primarily personal reasons. At the time of his departure he said that he intended to be in Australia no later than 10 June because he was aware of the fact that he was badly needed in SLANZ. You can imagine my surprise when, arriving in Berlin two weeks later, I discovered that John had not yet left for Australia! The first question I asked him when I saw him was "Does your central committee know you're here?" He assured me that it was all approved by responsible persons in SLANZ. Furthermore he explained to me that this prolonged stay in Berlin was necessitated by difficulties with his ticket.

Since my return to Paris, and discussions with Sharpe, it has become clear that John used a tactic of half-truths and (unconscious or not) deception vis-a-vis the leadership of the SLUS as represented by Sharpe, on the one hand, in New York and myself as representative in Europe. The clearest example of this was regarding his proposed trip to Vienna. He had received explicit instructions from Sharpe not to go to Vienna. ~~None-the-less~~, he approached me and asked my opinion on the subject without mentioning Sharpe's instructions. I told him, having just come back from there, I thought it would be all right for him to go, as long as he kept his mouth shut. As far as I know he did that. The other example

is, of course, his failure to follow Adaire's instructions to return to Australia as soon as possible.

The comrade seems to have very little conception of what discipline means in these cases. For him it seems to be getting some person in authority to tell him what he wants to hear. While he certainly has the possibility of becoming a fine bolshevik, a profound gap in consciousness now separates him from that.

Communist Greetings,

Brosius

cc: Paris, NY

⑤ Winnipeg

REPLY BY JOHN E

Sydney,
6 July 1974.

Dear Comrades,

The following letter is in reply to cde. John Sharpe's letter of 30 May 1974 to SLANZ and to cde. H. Brosius's letter of 23 June 1974.

Whilst agreeing and disagreeing with various points expressed in the letters, and after a discussion of the matter at a SLANZ PB meeting I have come to the conclusion that my functioning in Europe has not been disciplined in the way it should have been. It is a thing which I shall strive to overcome: not simply by assurances, but by deeds.

Before beginning, a word of apology for going through the letters point by point but unfortunately, this is the only way I feel the questions will be clarified.

First to deal with the various questions arising in John S's letter.

(1) The second paragraph dealing with the question of going to Eastern Europe and the discussion of this matter at an international group meeting.

The circumstances of the meeting should be pointed out. Early that day, April 27, I had arrived after a night's ride by train from Chicago. Sometime after my arrival at the office I had asked cde. Adaire that I would prefer the meeting postponed, or if I could possibly attend at another time. At the time I was feeling groggy and not very capable of arguing or thinking too clearly.

Moreover, the question of the trip had been discussed between cde. Bill and myself and cde. Adaire, and in his letter of introduction cde. Bill L. stated as he stated to me - that he would leave it up to the SLUS PB to make the final decision. Furthermore, I had also discussed this question with cde. Adaire at the C.C. plenum and very briefly with cde. John Sharpe also at the plenum. After getting back to Chicago I was weighing the various arguments: ie. that it would be foolish and reckless for me to go to Poland at this time versus a desire, basically subjective and emotional of wanting to go there; a desire which I know ignored political reality and was trying to assure me that I would be safe.

Subjectively I suppose I was still hoping to go; but on the other hand, rationally I realized that that would be dangerous and reckless. Therefore my argument on the first round only, at the international department meeting. I was very tired, otherwise I would have put forward further arguments to make sure that I was absolutely convinced. However, I did feel that my wanting to go was basically a desire rather than

a well thought out decision. Consequently, it was not a "capitulation to basic political positions" but rather the conviction that I really had no rational arguments to offer for me going.

(2) The third paragraph dealing with the question of the discussion of leadership in Australia and colonization of England. As far as I can recall we discussed these questions at cde. John Sharpe's place on two occasions over breakfast.

Concerning the colonization of England, I said during the first discussion that I thought that it would be possible for a number of comrades to go to England, provided however, that we developed a secondary leadership. Also, I mentioned that the whole question would have to be considered and reviewed towards the end of the year. During the second discussion I asked whether he thought that cde. Adaire had been too optimistic about colonizing England. To that cde. John Sharpe replied that SLANZ leadership may have been subject to the pull of self-interest and I replied that possibly that was true, but that it was an important priority to colonize England. Again I pointed out that the whole question would have to be reviewed towards the end of the year, to determine whether we had developed a secondary Aust. leadership capable of leading the organization if cde. Bill & Adaire departed. We then had a brief discussion about various comrades in the SLANZ.

This is what my memory tells me and I have tried to recall it as frankly and honestly as I possibly can. First I should state that at the time I was unsure of the question of discipline and exact relationship between SLUS & SLANZ -- ie. of comrades of the SLANZ or SLUS in U.S. & Aust. respectively, regarding discussion of political questions & personnel matter. I had been made unsure regarding some comments of cde. Tweet about the Russian question -- ~~he~~ she said that cde. Bill L. had not stated whether he has agreed or disagreed with the arguments against his position. Thus primarily, I felt that my discipline laid with SLANZ and thus the cause of my reticence. Still, it was my fault that I did not consult cde. Sharpe and cde. Adaire to discuss this question with them.

Further on this point to deal with the question of "careerist ambition", although I think the above largely explains it.

First of all I shall state that I am ambitious. It is a quality that most professional revolutionaries have in common. Above all it is not an ambition which is careerist. My ambition is to make a Socialist revolution and to act in the process which will begin the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, thus enabling mankind to progress further to the eventual establishment of communism. Consequently I want to contribute as much as I possibly can towards the achievement of this goal; being at the same time aware of my potentialities and limitations and having them judged by other comrades.

Secondly, I shall state that ambition which is not firmly tied to the wheel of the revolution is brittle and useless; it is an ambition which will end up in academic or parliamentary halls buttressing bourgeois society. Indeed when I did decide to become a profession revolutionary, to dedicate my life to communism, I did not do so lightly but after a careful, thoughtful and weighed consideration. Had I been simply after a career I would have found it with the confines of bourgeois institutions.

(3) The fourth paragraph dealing with the question of baggage.

The alarm I heard was sounded by John Sharpe on Thursday morning, 18 April. He said that he rang the airlines that morning and that he had been told that the planes were booked up for the next three days or more. Immediately I rang the shipping office number at the airport of TWA and was told that they had room aboard the plane on my plane. Moreover, I related the conversation to them of John Sharpe with the other airline officials and was given the answer that the other airline officials were wrong.

Before explaining what happened at the airport, I should clarify that I rang TWA office on Monday, as instructed by cde. John Sharpe and was told that I should bring the baggage to the airport at least one hour before departure. Furthermore, I went to the TWA city office on Monday just to make sure, and asked them about shipping the boxes on the same flight. Again, they checked for me and gave me the same answer as the people at the airport.

The rate for magazines was cheaper than for other baggage and that is why it cost less. I asked the baggage man at least three times in the presence of cde. Corey whether they were going on the same flight as the one I was taking. He assured me most decisively that this would be the case.

The other question in relation to this concerns the picking of literature by cdes. J-- & J---.

I had to go to Frankfurt to be there for Thursday morning. The conference was to start then and I was instructed to go there and meet cde. Eric from Berlin. Before leaving for Frankfurt I wrote a letter (for TWA officials) authorizing cdes. J-- & J--- to collect the baggage and giving as proof my International Driving Licence. The problem arose with the police and J-- decided to ship it to Brussels immediately. I wrote a number of letters to cde. John Sharpe asking him to be more cautious in the future in sending so much literature aboard a plane and suggested a number of alternatives.

(4) This point will deal with para. 5 in the letter. I do not recall cde. John Sharpe telling me to sell at the OCI meeting on May 3.

Had I been instructed to do so, I would have straight away noted it down in my diary, as I did the OCI's election meeting of April 20 and the Frank conference of April 24-26. The first time I heard about it was when I was told of a telephone conversation that cde. Eric had with cde. Sharpe, in which cde. Sharpe asked cde. Eric whether I had attended the OCI meeting of May 3.

(5) The question of Vienna in para. 5.

First I did break discipline, however, it is something which still stems from my experience in centrist organisations -- i.e. I was not fully aware of the gravity of the conversations I had with cdes. Adaire, Sharpe, & Jim R.

In Frankfurt and Paris comrades in passing remarks, encouraged me to visit Vienna. I had asked Helene on Saturday May 11 after the OCI intervention at home, whether it would be advisable for me to go to Vienna. I said that cde. Jim R. and other leading comrades in the C.O. have said that it would not be advisable for me to go at this time. Perhaps I did not stress it sufficiently and this was, of course, my fault. However, I did not "play one comrade off against the other", or told "half-truths" or used "deception".

The fact is that I was not aware of the relationship of authority between cde. Helene B., John S., & Jim R., and this again is my fault because I should have found out. (I knew that cde. Helene was the PB rep. in Europe and that is why I told her about the advice of the leading cdes of SLUS).

Moreover, I realize that it is up to me to overcome such deviations as soon as possible and to realize and be highly aware of such questions.

(6) The question of addresses which were sent to Paris in para. 5.

I had asked cde. John S. in New York explicitly to give me all addresses which I would need when in Europe, I had been given the French and Nick's in England only, I was not told that any addresses would be sent to Paris. It was also known that I would most probably go to Berlin, and then definitely again to Paris before my departure for England.

Lastly, in conclusion to John Sharpe's letter I shall say that while disagreeing most emphatically with his characterisation of "manoeuvring" and "careerist ambition", I do agree that there is quite a lot of room for improvement in disciplined functioning and openness towards comrades in political and organisational matters generally.

The problem for me has been that I kept many questions within myself, instead of bringing them into the open, with the exception of

what I consider major political questions. To be sure, this is a trait which stems from my past experience in Pabloist organisations, where personnel questions and changes of political line were never discussed in the open, but rather behind people's backs -- something which has always repelled me and has, I feel, been the cause of my lack of openness.

It is a trait which I must overcome in order to become a functioning Bolshevik.

Just a brief note arising from cde. Brosius's letter dealing mainly with the question of departure from Berlin.

At the time of my departure from Paris on the night of June 7 I told cde. Helene that I wanted to be in Australia on the tenth, or a few days later. This I also wrote in a letter to cde. Bill L. of May 31. In Berlin I decided to depart for Aust. on the 14th, wanting to stay four more days because of personal reasons. I booked my ticket but when I went to confirm it at British Airways they claimed that it would cost 165 M extra. In short what happened was that the ticket had to be sent to the Frankfurt Qantas office to be confirmed without me having to pay extra money, as there is no Qantas office in Berlin. This took five full days till Wednesday June 19 and then I decided to prolong my stay two more days to attend cde. Brosius's talk on the transitional program and trade union. This was a break of discipline and I do not seek to excuse myself.

The other question which arises from the letter is the conversation we had in Berlin upon Helene's arrival on Friday 22 June. Cde. Helene B. has said what she has written in her letter. I replied yes and walked off to the next room at Susi's and Albert's place as we were busily preparing for the intervention. By her question I understood that she had been asking me whether I had informed the SLANZ leadership of my whereabouts and the reasons for my late arrival. I am not sure whether I told Helene that I had sent telegrams informing SLANZ that I had difficulties with my ticket and that I would be arriving as soon as possible. As far as I am aware I did not assure cde. Helene B. "that it was all approved by responsible persons in SLANZ". This would have been impossible on my part because it was not the case. All I did was simply to send one-way telegrams. There were other Berlin cdes. in the room and they should recall what happened. Having had a conversation with cde. Bill L. on this matter ie. of cde. Helene's question and my answer, I can see that my answer could possibly imply that it was approved by "responsible people in SLANZ".

This, however, again points to more openness and discussion of questions on my part.

With Communist Greetings,

John E

TBT 24 JULY 89

[This is a draft of a letter sent, changes minimal told]

Sydney, July 15, 1974
22.00 pm

My dearest dearest Krysia,

Have just received your letter of June 28. Bill gave it to me tonight. I was very surprised that it took so long to get here. I shall try to enquire what had happened. Also, tonight I got your postcard dated July 10.

Yesterday, I sent off an aerogramme to you. Moreover I was intending to write finally that long letter, but again I had to prepare a t.u. report, clean the house, and prepare for an educational at night. This letter will hopefully cover many things.

...

I sent a letter during my flight -- ie. I gave it to the airhostess at Bombay. It seems that you have it because you said over the phone that you have got one bearing a postage mark of Singapore then, upon my arrival, the next morning I think, I sent one from Sydney, this letter was partially written on the plane and partly in Sydney. After that time I sent another one from Sydney dated, I think 30 June and after that a few more. I promise every minute that I shall find I will write -- if only a few words on a postcard. One of my greatest wished is for you to develop into an outstanding revolutionary and anything that upsets you upsets me also.

Krysia, I do see a perspective for our mutual future. I shall apply for 'work' in England. this will be probably at this time next year; and how will I be able to tolerate this span of time without you, I just do not know. the only small consolation perhaps will be frequent correspondence. If work in England is not possible I shall go/come to Berlin. On Wed. night I am having a discussion with Bill and shall discuss this question at length with him.

...

I am awaiting for more of your letters with great impatience. the one dated June 28 is the latest I have plus the postcard of 10 July. In your replying letter list down what you have sent, so that I can make sure that I have everything. I shall do the same from now on.

...

The work in the local has been consuming all of my time. I would have written more frequently, and more extensively if I have had just a little spare time. But this has not been the case until now, still, no matter what happens I shall find time to write to you as much as I possibly can.

...The pace of life here at present is such that there isn't even time to masturbate.

John

ps the reason why my first letters from Sydney arrived late was probably because of the mail strike which ended around 1 or 2 July.

The letter which I wrote to you last Sunday and sent it late Monday afternoon (yours) as yet I haven't given to Bill the reason for this has been that in this letter I wanted to use the 21.7.74 letter to elaborate on the things that I stated there. The reason also was for the delay of this 24.7 & 25.7 letter has been due to (1) Monday night t.u. fraction meeting (2) On Tuesday after having finished clippings and talking with Bill, I went to bed at 22.00 because I was totally wiped out -- physically and lack of sleep. (3) Wed. I managed to write a part of it. Tomorrow, I shall give Bill a copy of the 21 July letter and relevant parts of today's.

On Wednesday 17.7.74 I had a "discussion" scheduled with Bill. The "discussion" was arranged a week perhaps five days beforehand. It was part of the discussions that Bill had with all individual comrades in the organisation. The questions that I was asked and other comrades also was how we felt the org. was going and how I felt other comrades have been functioning and developing. It is part of our practice here from time to time and has also given me the opportunity to talk to Bill about us. I suppose I should have done it (ie. talk about you and me) earlier but the atmosphere towards me -- ie. a PB meeting (I shall describe it perhaps in the next letter), a local meeting and a t.u. meeting (will also describe them). all dealing with me -- made me reluctant to speak about my personal problems. This is no excuse, of course and I shall try to rectify it in the future. Anyway I took brief notes after that "meeting" with Bill -- ie. dealing with the discussion about us -- because I was shocked about what Bill had said about you. Here they are with addition of the first person and one remark which I forgot to add.

(page 8 of
his draft)

(1) When I said that you and I wanted to live together, I stated that you asked in a letter that I come to Berlin, possibly in Dec. for a holiday. I remarked that the way things were now, it was pretty much impossible because of my trade union work.

(2) Bill stated that he would write a letter to B.K. asking them whether it would be O.K. to let you go in April. We also talked about the possibility of you staying longer than 3 weeks in April so as to get to know the situation better.

(3) Bill remarked that "Christina has had affairs with at least four comrades in the tendency" (approx. quote but pretty much exact if not completely so). I said that I was aware of that and that I knew of three (ie. W, R, & me). Moreover, I said that you had told me about them. Bill also stated that "Tina has fallen head over heels over a number of comrades in the tendency" and that he wanted to see if our relationship still held out in a few months time. Furthermore he stated that the international organisation has no objections for comrades to live together if they want to strongly enough for a period of time. He also asked me whether I knew that you have had a relationship with Richard. I said that I did and answered, "what about it". I was taken aback and didn't know what he was getting at in making these remarks about you. They are trivial, stupid and have a flavour of petit-bourgeois respectability about them.

The thing that worries me about these remarks is that they are what I said above they are, but more the reason why they were said. Either Bill believed them or he was trying to prove what he said (not explicitly) he proved on Friday night. (It should become clear if you will read what happened

on Friday).

You see, until then I have had full confidence and trust in Bill; I therefore, was taken aback when he made these remarks. What I should have done was to scream and make him admit that he was engaging in petit bourgeois gossip. At that time I had no inkling whatever of what the other possible motive in Bill's part may have been and which emerged on Friday night.

-9-

(4) He said that he saw it as impossible for Ch. to work in Aust. and for me to work in Berlin. (ie. that you are needed in Berlin). I also said, from what I can recall that Wedn., that you could'nt live in Aust. because of your mother.

(5) England -- "perhaps this time next year, but only two leading comrades will be going for quite some time and it would be unlikely that I would.

(6) I told Bill that we wanted to live closely together -- ie. close physically.

(7) Bill insisted that I show him my letters to which I said that I would have the typed up parts ready by the weekend -- the political ones in other words. I said that I would have had them ready sooner if I had been allowed to write them longhand. Bill said that he was prepared to read you handwriting but not a rewritten scrawl. then we agreed that I would type out the political parts and sometimes if political parts were handwritten I would give them to him. Bill claimed that he was worried about what you said in your postcard (the open one of July 10) and that consequently it was important for him to see correspondence.

In the postcard you say "there is nothing to console me besides your very real presence in Berlin or my real presence in Sydney." and that you are very lonely without me). At the time he said that this was the only way he could see in helping us.

On Thursday the incident of reading my mail, which I describe in my letter of 21.7 occurred. Bill's remarks (some of the, the one's that I can remember that night were that: (1) in principle there was nothing wrong with what he did; (2) that in a larger party you and I could possibly form a clique; (3) said that I should "bitch to you how badly they have been treating me" to which I replied that I was in fact intending to write to you about what happened and of giving Bill a carbon.

-10-

On Friday another discussion occurred; Bill suggested it that Thursday night.

-9-

(4) He said that he saw it as impossible for Ch. to work in Aust. and for me to work in Berlin (ie. that you were needed there). I also said, I think, that Wedn. that you could'nt live in Austr because of your mother and I definitely

said it on Friday.

(6) England -- perhaps this time next year, but only 2 leading comrades will be going for quite some time and it would be unlikely that I would.

(6) I told Bill that we wanted to live closely together -- ie. close physically.

(7) Bill insisted that I show him my letter to which I said that I would have them ready by the weekend. (See my letter of 21.7)

On Thursday the incident of reading my mail, which I described in my letter of 21.7 occurred. Bill's remarks (some of them, the ones that I can remember) were that: (1) in principle there was nothing wrong with what he did (2) that in a larger party you and I could possibly form a clique (3) said that I should relate what happened to you to, which I replied that I would and that I would give him a carbon.

On Friday another discussion occurred -- Bill suggested it that Thursday night. Bill asked me whether "Christina" want to live with me. I replied, yes. He asked where and I said that most probably in England. I explained that because of your mother you could'nt really live very far from Europe. Moreover, I did not quite see why he immediately wanted to know where we would live. I told him that and said that at the moment it was not important to know ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the exact location We could surely discuss it (ie. you and I, I thought). I told him that we talked about England. He kept needling me on the point for quite some time.

200374

Berlin, July 15th, 74

My dearest Janusz,

...

First of all I want to tell you that you should not feel guilty. It is not a question of guilt. If you raise the question of guilt, I am at least as much guilty, as you are but we are not guilty. If you want, the circumstances are guilty.

...

I hope that you are answering my several questions which I raised in my longer letter.

When I go to the States I shall talk to Jim about us. He is the only one who could do and is willing to do something for us. (This is by the way no pol. statement, therefore you are not obliged to type it out) I have got to know Jim on the conference here and I have great confidence in him.

... I hope that we soon get the chance to see each other again. It would be wonderful if you could telephone me every two weeks....

Please tell the respons. comrade of the SA/ANZ that they should only write to our Postlagerkarte . Without any name.

...

200874

Berlin, July 17th, 74
24.00 p.m.

My dear John,

...

I also have the premonition that the comrades will not allow you to come to Berlin at Christmas. Am I right? Perhaps it is not even possible to get a holiday from the factory. I hope that I shall receive a letter clarifying all these questions soon....Which real perspective do we have to see each other again? Is there any? In spite of my premonition I shall open this account and save as much money as I can. By the way it is not necessary to send me money -- better save it for coming here. W. will give me money if I need it.

[July 18th, 74]

My dear John,

...

Yesterday we talked a little about my criticism on the draft for organising an International Trotskyist Tendency. She [Mary Ann] is sympathetic towards my view of point 4 of it, although she said that she had to think more about it.

...

Did you have time to read my article in W&R? I am also interested in knowing how you like the work in the factory?

I shall continue with the political part of my letter on a separate page. [which follows below]

Did you already read the article about Portugal in the last WV? I shall prepare a letter to WV criticising the fact that a main problem of the Portuguese society is not dealt with, not even mentioned. Portugal is at least half agrarian and a majority of the population consists of poor peasants and agrarian workers. Revolutionists therefore have to raise demands which can mobilise these poor peasants and agricultural workers for the socialist revolution. By raising transitional demands like f. ex. demands raised by Trotsky in "A Program of Action for France" in paragraph 8 as well as 14 and 15, it will be possible to establish an alliance between the rev. working class and the rev. peasantry, leading the rev. peasantry+into the struggle against the bonapartist regime in Portugal.
+ under the leadership of the proletariat)

Without such an alliance with the bulk of the poor peasants and the agricultural workers the Portuguese proletariat will not be successful in smashing the bourgeois state.

Did you by the way receive a few copies of the 2nd edition of the

Austrian Bulletin? I suppose that you did not. You should ask them to send you some, even though it might only be for your archives. The 2nd edition deals with: Concerning the question of the bureaucracies, Chinese Menshevism, (a translation from Spartacist 15-16) Trotsky: Letter to the Chinese Comrades and Portuguese Perspectives. The last article has been written by this conspiracy group in Vienna, with which they have permanent discussions. Am I right that you have heard of this group during your stay in Vienna? If not to your information they are a group working completely in the "underground" (the OBL has only discussions with two of their members). They agree to a major part of the trotskyist program, they disagree to the tactic of the fighting propaganda group, to the tactic of regroupment and supported Mitterand in the second round. After a discussion with comrades of the OBL they wanted to reconsider their standpoint on the French elections, i.e. their view on the Popular Front.

We are planning of editing a special of the KK with the declaration for the organizing of the International Trotskyist Tendency including a translation of the communique of the International Secretariat out of WV. It shall be published in common with the OBL. Our next regular number of KK shall deal with the T.U. work in the USA. We have assigned for the purpose of writing the articles (two articles -- 1 about the work and intervention of MAC -- 2nd about international campaigns initiated and led by the rev. caucuses in the T.U.) a commission to which belong Eric, Heidi and I. These two articles shall be finished at least as a draft before Aug. 15th, ie. before the departure of Eric, Heidi and me (possibly) to the States. Heidi has become the production manager of the KK. I am very glad for her transfer to Berlin. It will save us a lot of time in the production of the KK. Hopefully from nowadays on the production of KK will not paralyse the whole BK. I think that she will be of great help for us not only as far as production problems are concerned.

July 20 th, 74
13.00 p.m.

200274

My dearest John!

Yesterday I have received your letter of July 10th and 13th ...

...

Just a few minutes ago I had another discussion with Ilona and Wolfgang. We talked about the possibility of delaying my examination for half a year, which might be necessary, after I have got the baby. It all does not look very favourable for me and the baby. It would also imply that I could not come to Australia but you had to come to Berlin.

My love, don't be so sad and desperate although I understand you so well. We both are living under difficult conditions at the moment but once we shall be united again. You complain that I did not write regularly. Did you not get receive my letters, one is from Monday and one from Thursday of this week? I have indeed regularly written and don't know what the hell the post does with my letters. I have written to you. Did you not get my letter from the Summer Camp from Austria? What I shall do from now on is I shall put down the date when I send the letters to you, then we have a control which letters you get and which not.

I think you should insist of going to England, then we had at least a chance of seeing each other more often. My love, you must know that I am thinking of you day and night, I am suffering with you. I think that you are doing too much work which will destroy you in the long run, if the leading comrades don't understand that too much work is destructive for the organisation they are lacking the right understanding of how to lead a bolshevik organisation. Your work seems to be very tiresome and hard. I am sure however that you will get used to it. Also I think it will somehow be possible for you to change to another sector of the factory. By the way the overactivism of the SLANZ reminds me of the overactivism of the OBL. My dear John, I shall try to come in April for 4 weeks but it only makes sense if you are on holiday both from the factory as well as from the org. Otherwise it would be a fiasco. If we want have time to go away from Sydney may be to the coast, you also must be freed from the organisation during the weeks I am there.

...

Yesterday I was in society of a Russian Jewish woman from the Russ. Ukraine speaking broken German. We talked quite a lot about the living conditions in the S.U., how bad they are, how little money the workers earn. I agreed to all that and explained to her that the S.U. is not Communist state but ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracy. She agreed to that but when I mentioned Lenin she said that under Lenin the living conditions were not better. She was very sympathetic towards Solchenitzin. Well, she is very disoriented as perhaps most of these people are. When I mentioned Trotsky and Marx all she said was that they were Jews. If she only knew how much M and T. rejected this way of being a Jew. Anyway she was ~~only~~ very sympathetic with me. I liked her even though she had reactionary

[Correction]

very

views only due to the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Yesterday evening her husband, her little son of 3 years, another relative from Russia, who spoke Yiddish when he addressed me -- mixed up with Russian words -- a young man also a relative who emigrated to the USA and works there in a factory as a worker. He was very sympathetic and quiet. I would have liked to talk more with him but the[scene?] was more or less dominated by Ida -- that is her name.

I gave her my address, so that she can telephone me in case of help although I shall not be able to help her finding a flat because I dont know anybody influential -- as you can well imagine. My dearest Janusz, I shall write again tomorrow and tell you about the most recent information.

...

Yours Krysia.

Berlin, July 21st, 74

200874

My dearest Janusz,

Until now I did not receive your express letter, which is really strange. It is possible that the Bundes _____ [unintelligible] (the German FBI) has stopped the letters in order to copy them. I hope nevertheless that I shall receive your letter very soon.

...

I am well, only sometimes the belly aches. I think I will not be able to go to the summer camp. First of all I want to relax after the operation and my stay in the hospital and second I want to save money for my trip to Sydney.

Berlin, Aug. 8, 74

200074

My dearest Janusz,

this morning I have received your two letters of Aug. 4 and 5. I thank you very much for them. As I told you on the phone I did not yet have the abortion and explained also why....

...

Do not worry because you cannot send me any money. It is not necessary. You should try to save as much money as you can from now on because when you come here, it might be difficult for you to get work, also I think you should first learn German very intensively. You can inscribe at the University, which does not cost any money or only very little. They have study groups for foreigners who want to learn German. You should also make inquiries at the Sydney Universities, if you can get a scholarship for studying in Germany. I do not know how these things work but it could be that you only can get a scholarship from there. Did you get a scholarship when you studied at a Sydney University? What do you want to study here, math and physics?

To make arrangements for your transfer means to invest time which you must get from the organisation. I do not know how much money you have to pay for the org., but I think that you should be able to save money for a certain time here. You should make clear to the comrades that it is extremely difficult to get work here from the beginning therefore you must be able to save money for a certain time here. I am interested to know how much (percentage?) you have to pay for the org., also I want to know how much you earn in the factory.

Until now we did not get more information about your transfer and the whole matter from the IST, but I think you have first to write this appeal and there must be a decision. These things are now most important!

There is practically nothing which I could tell you about our activities in the BK because there have been none. Just imagine! We had a real break from all activities. I suppose this could not happen to you!

...

Wolfgang is well. As usual he has study difficulties. We hope to go for a holiday sometimes in fall or winter at least for 10 days because Wolfgang and me too need some free days. I have lost weight and at times I feel really bad. Did I tell you that he has separated from Ilona? I think I didn't. I shall explain to you why when you have come to Berlin, because I do not want that other people again get to know things they should not know!

It does not look like me coming once to Australia to get to know it, your family, your sister and your friends. I am a little bit sorry about that. Also I like travelling. Well, let's wait and see.

...

I did not hear anything again from this Russian woman Ida, although I had given

her my telephone number. But I think she might be very busy now, finding a flat, finding work etc. It is a real shame what the Stalinist bureaucracy has made out of these people. They are coming from working class background. This one has to consider all the time. They are completely disillusioned about the so-called Russian type socialism!

Please ask the corresponding comrades if they did not receive my Open Letter of Protest and a copy of my letter to the IST! I wonder if they did not!

...

Your Tina

24/7/74

Dear John,

...
I read your letter that came a couple of days before I left (to T) I cant collect my thoughts about any of this though; just want to let you know that I'm keeping up with you, thinking about you, and hoping your work in all its facets, has regularized itself. Quite a lot happened all at once. I hope you have been able to work things out by talking to cdes. and not had to keep it all inside. The experience of recruitment and growth inside the org it seems to me must always be a staggering thing. For yourself, from a purely individual point of view, I hope you have found ways to channel your thoughts and feelings -- failing that can only obstruct your self-confidence, or make you bitter. I don't think you will do either one of those things though. You seem to me to have a lot more than that.

...
Much affection,
and communist greetings!!

Mary Ann

EXTRACT: LETTER FROM JOHN E TO SUSI

Sydney
21 July 1974

...

On Thursday night after having finished my clippings I went home. The time was a little after 20.00 hours and to my surprise, as I entered my room I found Bill hiding my letters (i.e. yours) underneath his jacket. What followed subsequently was a tragic-comic situation. Bill tried to distract me so that he could get the letters back into my briefcase and then went later to the other house to get other comrades to do the same. This they attempted to do, but I couldn't stand this playacting any longer, so I called Bill into my room and asked him whether he had read your letters. He replied that he did. Then our conversation ranged over why he did that and so on. I shall elaborate.

About two weeks ago I was asked by cde. Adaire to type out your letters. She maintained, i.e. said that I should type out "everything in them except the lines where she is sending love". I disagreed with this but failed to argue out the question with her. Still, I resolved to type out relevant political material as soon as I had time to do so. The only time I had to this was on the weekends, and both of them were taken up with organisational work, and replying to cdes Sharpe & Helene and moreover on the first weekend I had only two of your letters which you sent before I arrived (I read them in Berlin). Because I am a slow two finger typist at this stage, I told the organiser at the beginning of this week that I would have them finished by the end of the weekend -- ie. today. During our conversation I reproached Bill for not asking me -- ie. if he thought that the letters were or contained urgent political matter -- to read out the relevant political comments or asking me show them to him. One thing that I forgot to mention above: I told our organiser that I could possibly have the letters ready earlier if I was able to write them out instead of typing them. Also, during my conversation with Bill on Wednesday I told him that I would have the letters ready by the end of the weekend.

Furthermore, I do not agree with cdes Bill & Adaire in regard to the question of where the line should be drawn between political and personal matters in personal correspondence. Bill argued that everything personal which effects the functioning of a cde. is political. Thus far I agree, but I also maintain that personal correspondence of intimate nature has the right to privacy. So, what I say is that it is up to the cde. concerned to tell the leadership what his/her personal problems in such matters are, if they arise, and if the cde. chooses to do so. During that conversation on Thursday night I told Bill that this may be a reflection of the differing views that we have on the question of the party. To me a Leninist party is a voluntary association of individuals acting as a collective in carrying out the party's programme and under the discipline of

its leading bodies -- ie. I agree with Lenin's main contribution to the question of the party which he proposed as an amendment to the party's draft statutes at the 2nd Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903, " A member of the Social-Democratic Party is any person who accepts its programme, supports the party with material means and personally participates in one of its organizations". This was counterposed to the draft written by Martov, and which expressed the views and practice of the II International. In Martov's draft the words, "personally participates in one of its organizations" were substituted by "personally & regularly co-operates under the guidance of one of its organisations". The difference between the two was that Lenin envisioned a tightly-knit centralized party whilst, as you know Martov and the Mensheviks proposed a loosely knit party which allowed fellow-travellers and other indisciplined elements to be under the guidance of the organisation.

The point that I am making in all this is Lenin's conception does not rule out the right to privacy in personal matters, such as correspondence. What do you think? I would like to know your position[Susij].

21 July

24.30[hours]

My dearest,

Didn't have the possibility of finishing this letter as I wanted to before the local meeting.

The question above was discussed and the lines that were drawn were the same. I was the only one who maintained my position -- ie. everyone took the position that Bill had the right to read my correspondence and that correspondence received by a member of a party can be read by responsible individuals in the party. I shall describe a number of other things that were raised during that discussion in my letter tomorrow or the next day. There is not much time now (it's 24.35) and I must get up at 5.30.

Briefly, I have given the correspondence between you and me to Bill because he insisted that I do and because it is a question of discipline. I think, however, that he honestly wants to help you and me out in our relationship in regard to us living together. When I talked to him on Wednesday & Friday he said that you could come here in April and that he wanted to see if our relationship would still hold out in a few months time -- he remarked that you had relations with at least four other comrades in the tendency. I said that I was aware of that. Obviously he does not understand you and your problems and our relationship. This perhaps [is] understandable, but I think that Bill on his part should have been more cautious before making such a statement.

My love,

I shall have to describe everything that has been happening here. I do not quite know how to react or fight the various accusations that have been thrown against me in the last few days. I have been called a manoeuvrer in reference to what happened in Austria and now apparently whatever I do is linked to manoeuvring, a liar also in reference to the Austrian trip. Furthermore on the question of correspondence I have been named a Menshevik by Cde Adaire.

It's getting really late. I shall write more extensively tomorrow or Tuesday, replying to your letter of 9 & 10 July.....

P.S.S. Enclosed find a letter of John Sharpe & my reply

PB ATTACHMENT

NOTE ON THE DISCUSSION IN THE POLITICAL BUREAU
ON THE QUESTION OF COMRADE JOHN E'S MEMBERSHIP

At the meetings of the PB on 20 and 22 July some heat was generated on the question of whether John E should be accorded the status of member. Throughout the discussion my position was that in the last months he has worked so closely with us that to deny him membership would be an inappropriate way of dealing with his bad functioning, including admitted indiscipline and apparent dishonesty.

There are a large number of recorded indications that he has not been treated as a member in the past period -- for example his listing in Local minutes as an "other" rather than a member -- but many such indications are in fact special security measures, and despite these indications the comrade has been expected to act with the level of discipline and commitment of a member, he filled positions on the Sydney Local executive and as a minutes secretary of the Sydney Local, and I believe that the rank-and-file of the organisation generally believed he was "practically" a member of the organisation. In fact, perhaps, he was neither a member nor a non-member, but it would be a bureaucratic way of dealing with the situation if this unclarity (an atrocity which is the fault of the organisation) were to be resolved to his disadvantage simply because the organisation believes him to have acted in an undisciplined and disloyal way towards it. He must be accorded the rights of membership, and then if sufficient cause is properly found they can be taken away.

At the 20 July meeting my view was that the comrade should apply for and be admitted to membership, but the two other full members of the PB felt unable to condone admitting to the organisation someone they believed had lied to it, and I subsequently realised that the more satisfactory formulation avoided the problem of application and admission by simply declaring that despite the unclarity he was in fact a member. It was with this conception that I moved the motion which is now operative. (After some consideration of declaring him a full member, it occurred to me that he had been undergoing a conscious testing process very similar to candidature.)

BILL LOGAN

24 July 1974

PB ATTACHMENT

Although I was against John E's admittance to the organisation at the PB meetings of 20 and 22 July and voted against Bill L's motion of 22 July recognising comrade John E as a candidate member I now see that the motion which was passed is correct. My attitude was based on the belief that John E is not fit for membership of the Spartacist League. I failed to sufficiently see the importance of determining this question of his fitness for membership in a way appropriate to the situation, seperating the questions of his existing status and the necessary measures to deal with his organisational and political failures.

Adaire Hannah

24 July 1974

EBLE CASE II

NOTE:
THIS DOCUMENT NOT
ISSUED
CIRCULATION IN GENERAL

POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES (NO 9) 26-27 July 1974

Present: PB: Bill, Adaire, Joel
 alt CC: John S, Dave R, Dave S
 other: Keith (Sydney Local Organiser)

Meeting convened: 11.00 pm

Agenda: Personnel

At 9.45 pm tonight comrade John E handed Bill a copy of a letter of 21 July to comrade Susi of the Berlin Committee attacking the leadership of the SLANZ. He also sent Sharpe's letter of 23 June and his own reply of 6 July (which is still in the process of being stencilled and has yet to be sent to New York). Comrade John told Bill of a telephone conversation he had with comrade Susi last night in which she reportedly said she had already received the material, that it had been the subject of a discussion in the Berlin Committee, and that the Berlin Committee was writing a document in defence of John E.

In view of the possibility that international co-thinkers may react hastily to situations of which they have been supplied with incomplete information we have a responsibility to use our power to regulate discussion, whilst in no way limiting the right of any comrade to express his views throughout the tendency.

While it is usually improper to restrict the right to private political correspondence among comrades, when this is being used in a factionally motivated way to win support for a disputed political position the party's right to regulate internal discussion prevails. We do not wish to place any restriction on private correspondence of a personal nature.

We note that on the face of it the Berlin Committee may have gone outside international democratic-centralist procedures by discussing the material supplied by comrade John E without first passing it on to the secretariat of the Interim Highest Body in order that the information in their possession could be centralised and for another view of the matter before discussion of it themselves.

We must inform the Berlin Committee of the situation with John E as we see it. While this matter will necessarily lead to some delay on the production of the press, we cannot liquidate our work into pursuit of this issue.

The comrades in Germany should be told through the centre that John E went outside the proper norms for distributing information and raising his differences, and that they are not now in full possession of the facts.

POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES (NO 9) cont'd

Discussion: John S, Adaire, Joel, Dave R, Bill,
Dave S, Keith (12 rounds)

Meeting recessed: 1.00 am

Meeting reconvened: 11.00 am (all present except Reynolds
who is on assignment)

Motion: Comrade John E clearly broke the proper norms of Bolshevik functioning by circulating documents internationally without the knowledge of the PB of the SLANZ, including the letter of John Sharpe (23 June 1974) and his own reply (6 July), together with a letter to comrade Susi dated 21 July stating his own version of matters in dispute and attacking the views of the SLANZ. This effectively denied the Berlin comrades access to another view on the question raised. His letter was not supplied to the leadership until 9.45 pm on 26 July when he informed the chairman of the SLANZ of his international activities.

We refrain from taking disciplinary action against the comrade in the interests of a political discussion unclouded by organisational measures. The discussion precipitated by comrade John E shall be regulated by the PB of the SLANZ and by the secretariat of the Interim Highest Body internationally.

In view of the irregular and dangerous methods chosen by comrade John E to further his position the PB prohibits discussion directly between comrade John E and members of the tendency in any other country, except in the case of internal factional discussion. In the mean time all discussion shall be in the form of documents, to be circulated by the PB/SLANZ and the secretariat of the Interim Highest Body.

passed unanimously

Meeting recessed: 11.15 am

Meeting reconvened: 7.30 pm

Motion: That the control commission be composed of Dave R, Tony and Keith.

passed unanimously

Meeting closed: 9.15 pm

STATEMENT APPENDED

Dave R who was absent when the vote on the motions was taken declares his concurrence with them.

S Winnipeg

Sydney
August 12, 1974

20007A

Helene B

Dear Comrade,

You should be receiving a copy of a reply by John E to your letter of 23 June 1974 to the SLANZ and cde Sharpe's letter of 30 May 1974 to the SLANZ, both concerning problems in cde E's functioning overseas. Cde. E was asked to write this reply in order to clarify the events which led to the two letters. Because of the discrepancies between his letter and yours, and because there have been other allegations of dishonesty by cde. E to the tendency, a control commission has been established by the PB of the SLANZ charged with reporting:

"on the questions raised by the letters of comrades Sharpe (30 May 1974) and Brosius (23 June 1974) and his [comrade John E's] verbal and written responses to their letters, with particular regard to the matter of the comrade's honesty to the tendency." (Motion passed at SLANZ PB, 22 July 1974, PB Minutes No.8.)

There is of course bound to be some uncertainty arising from vague recollections or possible misunderstandings. Therefore in order for the control commission to make a judgment it must also establish the degree of uncertainty. It would be desirable if you could indicate the areas and extent of ambiguity in your response and supply possible sources of verification (including excerpts for any documentation now unavailable to the SLANZ, eg, diaries, notebooks, correspondence). We are requesting a response and clarification from cde Sharpe as well, regarding the parts of the disputed issues relevant to him, and some other matters.

We direct your attention in particular to the following points and evidence:

1. Vienna --

John E letter to Mary Ann, 6,11 May 1974:

[6 May] This Thursday I am leaving for Vienna; from then² I will be going back to Paris."

"[11 May] Instead of going to Vienna as I had intended to do, I went to Brussels. I rang Helene in Paris and the CM were needed urgently."

John E letter to Adaire, from Vienna, 13 May 1974:

"Just one more point: while in Paris I talked to Helene about going to Wien.... She thought that it would be worthwhile -- even if only I talked to comrades about the SLUS and SLANZ and their functioning."

John E reply to Helene and Sharpe, 6 July 1974:

"In Frankfurt and Paris cdes in passing remarks, encouraged me to visit Vienna. I had asked Helene on Sat. May 11 after the OCI meeting at home, whether it would be advisable for me to go to Vienna. I said that cde Jim R and other leading comrades in the CO have said that it would not be advisable for me to go at this time. Perhaps I did not stress it sufficiently and this was, of course, my fault...." "The fact is that I was not aware of the relationship of authority between cde Helene B, John S and Jim R, and this again is my fault because I should have found out. (I knew that cde Helene was the PB rep in Europe and that is why I told her about the advice of the leading cdes. of SLUS.)"

Dave Reynolds notes from SLANZ PB, 26 June 1974:

"[JE report] ... Vienna -- JR and Sharpe both advised against [going there]. In Paris, Helene asked me whether going to Vienna. Helene said it didn't matter [on round] ... Vienna -- irresponsible in sense that I didn't realise the gravity of the instructions given to me.... Should not have gone to Austria no matter what Helen said ... [I] Did not argue. [I] Said what JR and Sharpe said and asked Helen if it was ok [to go to Vienna]"

John Sheridan notes from SLANZ PB, 26 June 1974:

"Jim/John said 'not advisable to go'"

Helene B letter to SLANZ, 23 June 1974:

"... he approached me on the question and asked my opinion on the subject without mentioning Sharpe's instructions. I told him, having just come back from there, I thought it would be all right for him to go, as long as he kept his mouth shut. As far as I know he did that."

JE letter to Logan, from London, 26 May 1974:

"[In Vienna] I argued [at OBL internal meeting on the question of the "Leitung"], together with Weezie, that since no member of the OBL had been aware at the time of the election that the body he or she were electing has the powers which it tried to assume for itself later on, it should be up to the future national conference to elect a CC."
"I discussed the question with Helen here in London and she agreed we took the right line."

2. JE's stay in Berlin from 7 June to 22 June and his delayed departure --

According to your letter (23 June),

"... arriving in Berlin two weeks later [after 7 June], I discovered that John had not yet left for Australia! The first question I asked

him when I saw him was 'Does your central committee know you're here?' He assured me that it was all approved by responsible persons in SLANZ. Furthermore he explained to me that this prolonged stay [beyond June 10] in Berlin was necessitated by difficulties with his ticket."

JE reply, 6 July 1974:

"By her question I had understood that she had been asking me whether I had informed the SLANZ leadership of my whereabouts and the reasons for my late arrival." [Thus this is what JE presumably thought he was saying when he responded affirmatively.]

But in respect of "the reasons for [his] late arrival", his affirmative answer would be simply incorrect. A review of JE correspondence sent to NY and Sydney at that time -- including those items which we did not receive due to a postal strike until after his return to Sydney -- fails to reveal any mention of reasons for going to Berlin at all, not to mention the 2 or 3 days spent in Paris after leaving London. The only effort to inform the SLANZ or his visit to Berlin appears to be copies of letters sent from Berlin on June 8 to Nicolau and Sharpe. Telegrams followed mentioning only ticket delays. Prior to that JE had not informed Bill of any plans to stay in Paris or Berlin, saying simply that extra work required a longer stay in London. Likewise, no notification of the SLANZ was attempted to our knowledge of the extra two-day delay from June 19. (We note you found him in Berlin apparently on Friday, 21 June). The following excerpts from letters summarise the "information gap":

JE to Logan from London, 31 May 1974:

"My stay in England will have to be extended for two or three days.... One more thing I should mention about my departure from Europe: I will have to leave from Paris, and not London ... You should expect me in Sydney on the tenth -- perhaps a few days after. I will send you a telegram informing you of my flight number, time, etc."

Compare JE to Susi from London, 27 May 1974:

"I have found out that I will have to leave for Australia either from Paris or from another continental city This has worked out fine, since I wanted to spend a few days in Paris before leaving I will be in England till the 30th and could be in Berlin by the 2nd or 3rd...."

and JE to Susi, 29-31 May 1974:

"[29 May] ... The way things look now I should accomplish my assignment by Sunday or Monday [2-3 June]. So please send your letter to the Paris address. It seems that I should be able to come to Berlin for about two days -- I rang BOAC and they said it makes no difference to them whether I leave from Paris or Berlin"

"[31 May] After the Chartist conference and the addresses that I had received from NY about our contacts It will mean that I will have to prolong my stay in London for about a day or two [emphasis added]."

Given the discrepancies, and the fact that even according to cde E's strict definition of his understanding of your question, his reply to it would be inaccurate, it would be useful to know: (a) what cde E actually said when he spoke to you in Berlin; (b) what led you to conclude he had "authorisation"; (c) whether he attributed the delay solely to the ticket difficulties, as your letter seems to say.

3. Other matters --

When did JE arrive in Paris from London (before going to Berlin on June 7)?

According to a letter from Susi to JE, 26 June 1974:

"I suppose you will soon get literature in Polish from LIRQI, the Varga group. We have agreed upon an exchange of lit. between our orgs. I have said in my letter to them that you would send them Australian Spartacist in exchange."

Further, in a letter of 15 July 1974 from JE to Susi:

"... So far I haven't received anything from LIRQI, but am expecting it any day to arrive."

The SLANZ knew nothing of the matter until Susi's letters to JE were supplied to cde Logan on 18 July. Knowing that relations of our tendency with the Varga group were at one point open to question, Cde Logan asked John about it. According to Logan, John claimed the exchange, and his personal receipt of the Polish language Varga material, were authorised by you in Europe. Do you know anything about this? We are requesting information from cde Sharpe on any arrangements that were made.

With Communist Greetings,

Dave Reynolds

Reynolds, chairman,
control commission

cc. SLANZ CO
IMB Secretariat
Control Commission files
Logan C/O New York

TST JUL 24 84

Winnipeg

Sydney
August 12, 1974

John Sharpe
New York

Dear Comrade,

I am writing on behalf of the control commission established by the PB of the SLANZ on 22 July, 1974:

"...comrade Ebel's status is that of candidate member, to be reviewed on the receipt of a report from a control commission, on the questions raised by the letters of comrades Sharpe (30 May 1974) and Brosius (23 June 1974) and his verbal and written responses to their letters with particular regard to the matter of the comrade's honesty to the tendency."

We have written a letter to comrade Brosius, and have certain questions which will involve contacting the Berlin Committee. However, we felt it best to allow the IHB Secretariat to forward the letter to Brosius and pass on requests to the BK, ~~and~~ with the very useful excerpts from cde Ebel's letters to Susi we have already received. Therefore, we have enclosed the letter to Helene, plus one copy of each letter for the IHBS.

You should be receiving a copy of cde Ebel's reply to the Brosius/Sharpe letters. We refer you to our letter to Helene for any comment on your part. We would also like you to respond on the following points.

1. Do you know of any evidence that might contradict the apparent deception of the SLANZ leadership by cde Ebel regarding the details of his return from Europe indicated by the material summarised in the letter to Brosius?
2. On the trip to Vienna -- Although cde Hannah also maintains she instructed Ebel explicitly not to go to Vienna, he still evidently maintains that he was merely "advised" not to go. Please specify where, when, and with what words you gave the instructions concerning Vienna to cde Ebel, and what are the limits of any possible ambiguity in them. Are there any grounds for the assertion in JE's reply, "The fact is that I was not aware of the relationship of authority between cde Helene B, John S and Jim R...."?
3. Are you aware of any arrangements having been made with the Varga group, involving an exchange with Australasian Spartacist? (See our letter to Brosius) We received a bundle of French-language LIRQI lit in June, with a request for an exchange but have not acted on it. Were you aware of JE's arrangement to receive the Polish Varga material? Did the International Department make an attempt to inform the SLANZ of any arrangements? Did the BK make any such attempt? The fact that the SLANZ has not received such information seems to conflict with the evidence of cde Susi's letter to JE and JE's assertion that his arrangement was authorised by cde Brosius; but due to the disruption of mail in Sydney around that time, it is possible that the SLANZ failed to receive some mail.

4. The problems with the shipment of Cuadernos Marxistas (CMs) entrusted to John is not central to the control commission's purpose, to the extent that there was a real misunderstanding, regardless of whether that misunderstanding reflected carelessness on John's part. However, certain things remain unclear. At a 26 June meeting of our PB, cde Ebel maintained that it is especially wrong to send the large shipment, claiming the CMs had been "lying around" the CO for some time, a week or weeks. At the meeting this was denied by Adaire but reasserted by cde Ebel. Adaire, who was in Canada at the time, reports that his departure had been planned to coincide with the completion of the CMs production. It is her impression that the CMs were available only a few days at most before cde Ebel's departure. While cde Ebel did not mention this point in his reply to your letter, he did say

"I wrote a number of letters to cde John Sharpe asking him to be more cautious in the future in sending so much literature aboard a plane and suggested a number of alternatives."

We are aware of only one such letter, of 15 May 1974 from Vienna which said:

"Briefly, I talked to Jan and Joan and decided you deserve an explanation of what happened to [the CMs].

...
"I would like to add that in future we should not send so much literature in boxes to any country in Europe. They immediately draw attention of customs. There are a number of alternatives available. I have discussed them with Kelley and offered some suggestions. This is an important question and if we want to send big quantities of literature in the future we should take this matter up and make the necessary prior preparations."

We would like to know how many letters were sent with criticism and advice, and would like copies of any other such letters with your response. We also need to know: How the CMs were in fact sent -- as baggage or freight; what instructions had been given on this point, and how explicitly; to what extent cde Ebel was misled by airport officials (cde Cory should be asked to give an account of what happened at the airport); and details on the availability of the CMs before JE's departure, whether other means of transport were feasible, etc.

5. We cannot reconstruct from the correspondence at our disposal the location of cde Ebel from Friday, 17 May -- when according to his letter to Adaire of 13 May 1974 he was to leave Vienna for Paris -- and Friday 24 May -- when he actually arrived in Paris (according to JE to Susi, 27 May 1974, from London). Can you give us any information on this point?

6. The Poland Question -- At the 26 June SLANZ PB meeting, JE did not mention his fatigue or other "extenuating circumstances", when answering comrades' questions about your letter. Nor did he mention at that time the request for a delay in the International department meeting. He spoke along these lines --

Dave Reynolds notes on 26 June PB --

"[JE on round] ... [on Poland] -- Tried to put forward positions for going--

said would be difficult for them to know me politically, plus [my] experience [with this problem]. But [I] was convinced before [the ID meeting], but didn't tell it to Adaire. Suppose I should have. But the question was going to be discussed [anyway]."

Adaire's notes on PB:

"[JE] -- When talked to Adaire [before ID meeting] put up argument for going but really believed otherwise. Didn't tell Adaire. Perhaps wrong."

Was the meeting going to discuss the point regardless of whether cde Ebel agreed beforehand that he should not go? Do you have any further observations of the incident? A note by Adaire is appended with her recollections of the meeting and circumstances. Susi's "Open Letter to the SLANZ" says:

"He [JE] made a self-criticism where he was right and Sharpe was wrong, namely the question of Poland."

We would like to know, in view of his responses at the 26 June PB and in his 6 July Reply, if and when he expressed to Susi or anyone else in Europe the view that he had changed his opinion or thought the ID was incorrect?

7. JE Reply (6 July):

"I do not recall cde John Sharpe telling me to sell at the OCI meeting on May 3. Had I been instructed to do so, I would have straightaway noted it down in my diary, as I did the OCI election meeting of April 20 and the Frankfurt conference of April 24-26. [etc]"

8. On the addresses -- according to JE's letter to Adaire (13 May 1974) "Received your letter dated 5 May on Saturday, May 11, when I arrived in Paris." In his reply he says:

"It was also known that I would most probably go to Berlin, and then definitely again to Paris before my departure for England."

Since this itinerary was abandoned by JE by going, and after going to Vienna, what itinerary was established or made known to you and when; and (outside of the Vienna question) how much was the itinerary to be left open?

9. Comrade Ebel attaches importance to the amount of contacting which he had to do in England. Was he sent any contacts other than those listed in Adaire's letter to him of 5 May? Did the SLUS or any representative of it authorise or request that he spend extra time in England to pursue contacts or anything else?

10. Cde Ebel's relationship with cde Susi is important in that

(a) it appears to be a principal source of his indisciplined behaviour in Europe;

(b) it remained unknown or obscure to the SLANZ leadership for sometime (specifically until 16 July); and

(c) it has led to demands on the organisation of a rather severe character.

It is a subject of investigation for the control commission to establish the degree of cde Ebel's reticence about the relationship; the weight that should be given to it in judging the comrade's actions; and because their communi-

cations have been a source of the "information gap" referred to in our letter to Helene. There have also been charges that cde Ebel in these communications tried to line up in an unprincipled way comrades in the BK against the leadership of the SLANZ, largely by providing a one-sided picture of the organisation. Here the control commission is not concerned with the political charge of unprincipled struggle, but with the question of deception -- that is, whether cde Ebel neglected to tell the SLANZ leadership important information that he discussed freely with cde Susi, or actually provided misleading or false information to the organisation (or to the Tendency in Germany).

The first possible instance is the apparent desire of cdes Ebel and Susi to live together. Had either ever informed either the BK or the IHB Secretariat prior to cde Susi's "Open Letter", of their desire to live together? The SLANZ became aware of this problem only on Tuesday, 16 July, the day before cde Ebel proposed to cde Logan his transfer to Britain. Yet we note the following in the letter of 9-10 July from cde Susi to John:

"I think we made a mistake by not writing a letter to the CC of SL/ANZ telling them that we want to stay together for a while and so on. Don't you think that they must have understood that. Did you already tell the comrades of the SL/ANZ that we want to live together?"

Cde Susi's "Open Letter" of 29 July 1974 says,

"In one letter Franz told me of his impression that the discussions were not mainly held in order to clear up things but in order to humiliate him."

He did not express this opinion to anyone in Sydney until directly asked about this passage by cde Logan. Since then, the control commission has met with cde Ebel to ascertain whether he had any complaints or grievances that he felt fell within the control commission's jurisdiction and that he wished it to investigate. Among the things we asked him about was this passage. Agreeing that he did in fact use those words in a letter to Susi, and after a detailed discussion about the meaning of "humiliation" and its application in democratic-centralist organisations, cde Ebel agreed that there was no incident which he felt required investigation by the control commission in regard to this charge -- except a remark by comrade Helen R during a trade union fraction meeting here which JE insisted was vindictive (the control commission will prepare a report on that incident). Moreover, one of the few examples that he was able to give at that meeting of the control commission were some harsh remarks by cde Adaire. However, he at length agreed that Adaire often directs equally harsh remarks at other comrades, and thus he had no cause to believe himself singled out for abuse from her. Another example he gave was an accusation made by comrade Logan to him in a private discussion that he was manoeuvring. He also agreed that cde Logan's opinions were not matters for investigation by the control commission, ie, that they were within the framework of bolshevik procedure.

Although in this way his remarks about humiliation to Susi have been clarified, his use of the 26 June PB meeting (particularly Adaire's comments at that meeting) as an example of "humiliation" appears to conflict with an earlier statement he made in a letter to Susi (1 July 1974):

"By the way, I was severely criticised by the PB over my late arrival and a number of other matters. But things have worked out for the better and after a long discussion with Bill we have begun to understand ourselves, particularly my reactions to various things at various times ... You are in no way responsible for my being late; so please don't blame yourself and just forget the question."

(This is apparently in reply to Susi to JE, 24 June:

"I hope that you do not get in trouble with the comrades of the SLANZ. If you have let me know then I shall write a document entitled: 'In Defense of our Love'. Do you think I was irresponsible for holding you back from departing? I hope not.")

Another problem arises from the fact that the "humiliation" passage from his letter to Susi was not included among the excerpts from letters of JE to Susi supplied by the BK. JE made no carbon of this letter and submitted no excerpts from it to the SLANZ at any time. Moreover, when formally requested to supply carbons of all political excerpts from his letters to Susi to cde Lagan as SLANZ Chairman on 7 August, he handed over a single sheet with parts of two or three sentences from his letter of 15 July and no more. The control commission requests from the BK a copy of the letter in which JE made his remarks about humiliation.

In her "Open Letter", Susi writes:

"I openly ask him to refuse to hand over my letters in the future. Instead, I shall type out the political parts of my letters to Franz."

Two letters of Susi to JE of 15 and 17 July were shown to cde Logan by JE. Cde Logan recorded the following passage:

"[July 15] When I go to the States I shall talk to Jim about us. He is the only one who could do and is willing to do something for us. (This is by the way no political statement, therefore you are not obliged to type it out)."

It is important both for the SLANZ leadership in its consideration of a personnel problem, and for the control commission in weighing its evidence that information of the kind cde Susi rejects as "apolitical" be supplied to the SLANZ. Substantial doubt exists, given the above and cde Ebel's failure to relay any real information about his correspondence, whether the judgement of either JE or Susi of what information to supply the tendency is sound. Moreover, the question arises whether the excerpts received from the BK were assembled with sufficient completeness, and whether the selection of letters supplied by cde Susi to the transcriber was complete. Can this be conveyed to the BK, along with our more specific requests?

In addition to letters, there have been numerous phone calls between the two comrades. Thus it is possible that some other apparent holes in the JE excerpts we were provided are accounted for either by missing letters or by the content of these phone calls. For example, the excerpts do not include any source for the references in the following material:

Susi to JE, 9-10 July:

"By the way, Mary-Ann told me about her difficulty to get along with John Sharpe. Did she tell you? I think the best way to fight _____ is to fight in a very calm but politically sharp way. Never lose your nerve. Remain cool! Try to be always rational, never start personal attacks. This makes a bad impression. "You know that I think of you as a very good comrade and I think that the comrades of the SL know that too. If Adaire has certain reservations towards you you should convince her from the contrary by your day-to-day work. I am sure that you will be successful in doing so, also showing that you can function in a disciplined way." (Missing words illegible.)

In particular, there is no reference in the excerpts from JE's letters, by Adaire or other comments about Adaire. Nor is there any reference to whatever it is that is to be fought. We would like to request from cde Susi summaries of any material such as this discussed with cde Ebel over the phone.

11. There are a few other discrepancies. Cde Susi, after initiating a discussion on the translation question, apparently remained in doubt about cde Ebel's status while in Europe. While her argument on the question did not hinge on cde Ebel's status, it is evident that unclarity on this point was discussed. On 11 May Susi wrote to JE,

"Not only Eric but also the other cdes of the Komitee held the position that you were here not as the rep of the SLANZ but as a cde who happened to stay here more or less by chance."

Your letter to the BK of 22 May stated explicitly: "Franz ... was in Berlin essentially as a tourist and had no political responsibilities whatsoever." Yet in her letter to JE of 9-10 July, she recounts a discussion with you apparently at the European summer camp in which this, along with a number of other points was raised again:

"I had a discussion with John Sharpe basically about the translation question, in the course of which he said that you do sometimes things which you are told not to do -- f. ex. the SL leadership had told you not to go to Vienna which you did and that you did not tell Helene about the decision of the PB in NY, above all you should not have sent the literature to Paris by airfreight.

"I am not sure that you told me all this. Another thing is that John said, when I asked him if you had been the official representative of the SL/ANZ, no -- you were on a private trip. There must have been a clear decision in the SL/ANZ about the character of your trip, hasn't there been? ... I think it is a mistake that you went to Vienna against the explicit decision of the PB.

"By the way, Mary-Ann told me about her difficulty to get along with John Sharpe"

It is puzzling that Susi should still have been confused concerning JE's status. The BK was evidently already informed of his status in May when the translation discussion came up. It appears possible that JE was not entirely honest with cde Susi on this score, although cde Ebel assured us at

the 26 June PB that he did not consider himself an international representative of the tendency while in Europe (or any other time). (The SLANZ's decision was conveyed in Bill's letter of introduction dated 4 January 1974 which had been read by JE before he left Australia.) We would like your account of the conversation with Susi, and would like to know the source of cde Susi's confusion, as well as any other comments you might have on these questions.

I would like to apologise for putting you to so much work; but it is urgent that the questions concerning cde Ebel's reliability and functioning are resolved as quickly as possible and with the greatest possible and most scrupulous attention to detail and fact. The control commission, originally established to investigate questions relating to behaviour overseas, has been further empowered by the PB (as is only proper) to investigate any other problems or allegations relating to cde Ebel (PB, 10 August 1974). Several other matters arising after his return to ANZ are being studied; and we have, as I mentioned, explored cde Ebel's possible grievances. The control commission will undoubtedly be filing one or more interim reports to the PB-SLANZ, which will be sent immediately to the IHBS.

For the control commission,

With communist greetings,

David Reynolds

Reynolds

cc: CO SLANZ
Logan & NY
IHB Secretariat
Control Commission files

DIRECTIVE

John E's responsibilities for the organisation include everything necessary to his trade-union work as long as he remains in the Metal fraction, one hour's work on the press clippings every day Monday to Thursday and at least one hour on Saturday, one hour's typing practice every day (to be performed under supervision at the Local Hall) except Friday, and attendance at all Local meetings and educational (internal and public). He must be available for organisational tasks on Saturday 10.00 am until 6.00 pm (though his Saturday typing responsibilities will be allowed for within this timespan).

In order that he has reasonable time to work on his oppositional documents and material for the AwZ and international control commissions investigating his case, he is relieved of his job as house commissar but must do a reasonable share of domestic duties in his evening and weekend free time. He is relieved of his duties in finding photographs for our press. He shall not be assigned any contacting or public interventions, though on specified request may be allowed by the Local executive to do some such work. He shall not be required to do any specific organisational tasks after work on Friday, after 6.00 pm on Saturday or before 5.00 pm on Sunday (except that he must do his Sunday typing practice before 5.00pm).

While all senior comrades are expected to supervise the comrade in terms of this directive where practicable, any senior comrade may vary it in accord with his responsibilities to lead the organisation. However, where possible any variation from the terms of this directive shall be recorded in writing and filed in the CO.

Bill Logan

Chairman

cc: John E
✓Secretariat IST
Sydney Local Organiser
Editor
TU Director
Metal fraction head

JUL 24 89 TST

⑤ Winnipeg 00374

Today the control commission met with cde Ebel to ask him a series of informational questions. In the course of the meeting, which was tape-recorded, he gave misleading, evasive, vague, or outright deceptive answers to several questions.

The most clear cut was his statement, regarding his return to Sydney from Europe, that he decided only after arriving in Paris from London to spend time in Paris and to go to Berlin. He had been reminded that he stated neither fact in his letter to cde Logan of 31 May. Asked if he was sure about his answer, he replied, "pretty sure". This statement conflicts with his statements in letters to Susi of May 27 and May 29-31, which in any case are clearly at variance with his letter to cde Logan on 31 May. (See the control commission letter to cde Brosius). Thus

- (1) cde Ebel could only have consciously misinformed cde Logan when he wrote his 31 May letter; and
- (2) cde Ebel has attempt to avoid blame by deliberately misleading the control commission. That his statement to the control commission was a conscious deception is the only reasonable interpretation, since:
 - (a) if he were unsure, the reply would still have been a conscious deception, especially in light of his frequent claims, in answer to other questions which presented difficulties, that he could not recall or was unsure, making his certainty on this point stand out;
 - (b) the evidence of the letters to Susi shows him planning his trip to Berlin at least nine days prior to when he now claims he first planned it, and it is unreasonable to believe that he could easily make such a definite mistake simply from faulty memory;
 - (c) cde Ebel has accurately cited or referred to some aspects of correspondence from that time period, indicating he is capable of retaining information that long;
 - (d) cde Ebel insists that he remembers some things better than cdes Brosius, Sharpe and Hannah, all responsible cdes whose word ^{weight} card weight, and all in cases where he is subject to criticism; and
 - (e) point one above demonstrates that he is quite capable of such petty deception.

Asked what he had discussed in his letters to cde Susi, he neglected to mention the section of one of his letters with his remarks about humiliation until reminded of it by cde Reynolds. It is improbable in the extreme that this was a normal lapse of memory, since that particular passage had been discussed with him by the control commission for about an hour yesterday afternoon. Previously, he had been asked by comrade Logan to show him copies of political sections from his letters to Susi, and he handed cde Logan a single sheet with parts of only three sentences.

Confronted with the fact that he said in a letter to Mary Ann dated May 6 that he intended to go from Berlin to Vienna without passing through Paris, (see control commission letter to Helene), he answered at one point that he had originally planned to go straight from Berlin to Paris, and claimed that he had discussed his visit to Vienna with Helene during the Frankfurt Chile conference on April 24-26 -- a claim never made before

either verbally or in his written response to Brosaus' and Sharpe's letters criticising him in this matter.

This is only an initial selection of examples, demonstrating at a minimum the unreliability of cde Ebel's testimony.

At the end of the meeting the control commission, as it had previously decided, formally requested from cde Ebel documents and correspondence; specifically relevant notebooks, his diary, any copies of his letters to cde Susi and other comrades, and letters he had received from cde Susi. Cde Ebel's initial response was to ask why the documents were being requested. The general purposes and the specific areas of investigation, as well as the powers of the control commission were explained several times. He said first that he had no objections, and then objected that Susi has asked him not to hand over any of her letters. Helater said that he would have to consult with Susi first. Finally he said that if it is a question of discipline (it had been explained at least three time that it was), "I certainly don't want to be expelled for such a thing -- so I'll hand them over." The meeting then adjourned to collect the material. But before the comrades had risen to leave the room, cde Ebel reopened the question. A ten minute discussion ensued, re-covering the previous ground. At length the control commission passed in cde Ebel's presence the following motion:

"If cde John does not hand over the material formally requested from him by the control commission within the next ten minutes that the control commission recommend that disciplinary action be taken against cde Ebel to the Political Bureau."

The meeting was then adjourned again.

At the end of the ten minute period, the three members of the control commission went to cde Ebel's room and asked him if he had decided to hand over the material. After attempting to argue the question for another five minutes or more, cde Ebel finally refused to hand over anything but some copies of his old correspondence to Logan and Sharpe. At this time he explicitly refused to submit his diary or notebooks because it would interrupt his work on his political document. Cde Reynolds indicated that the material could be returned certainly in two or three days and that cde Logan and the PB could be expected to grant him extra time if he felt he needed it because of this delay. Cde Ebel maintained he could not accept a delay of as little as one day. He then requested time to find the copies of letters to Logan and Sharpe. The control commission informed him that it would act on its motion, and told him to have whatever he was going to submit ready by 9.00 pm tonight. Comrades Reynolds, Olerhead, and Naughten were all present and took part in these discussions.

At about 6.30 pm, cde Logan, having been informed of the events, as SLANZ Chairman called cde Ebel to inform him that if he did not hand over all the correspondence and other documents to the control commission by 9.00 pm that he would institute the strongest charges against him and support the strongest disciplinary action, and read him a section of the decisions of the IST as regards the jurisdiction of national sections in cases of dis-

cipline. At 8.53 pm cde Ebel phoned cde Logan to ask that more free time to write his document on his minority position be guaranteed before he submitted the material. Cde Logan told him that he must comply with the control commission's decision irrespective of his ability to write his document, and refused to give such a guarantee. At 9.00 pm cde Reynolds went to cde Ebel's room, where cde Ebel was engaged in assembling his correspondence as if to submit it to Reynolds as chairman of the control commission, but requested an additional thirty minutes to assemble them. Cde Reynolds agreed, and returned to his room at 9.30 pm. At that time cde Ebel denied that he was giving the letters from Susi to the organisation, and again questioned the power of the control commission to demand them. Cde Reynolds suggested that he write a document. Cde Ebel then agreed to give five items to cde Reynolds, including none of his letters to Logan and Sharpe, but a single rough draft of a 29 May letter to cde Susi, two notebooks, a memorandum book, and his diary. Cde Reynolds informed him that these items did not satisfy the requirements of the control commission and took the material he offered, with a list (cc: JB) signed by both JB and Reynolds of the five items. These events were witnessed by cde Vicky.

The control commission regards cde Ebel's wilful defiance to be intolerable in a bolshevik organisation. In addition to the fact that cde Ebel has chosen to regard the discipline of cde Susi as more important than the discipline of the SLANZ and bolshevik procedure in general, such actions if unchallenged will destroy the ability of any control commission to fulfil its duties. All members of the control commission are prepared to recommend the strongest disciplinary action commensurate with open defiance incompatible with membership in a bolshevik organisation. The control commission feels that just a censure would be too light and that expulsion should definitely be considered.

David Reynolds
for the control commission

JULY 24 89

⑤ Winnipeg

ATTACHMENTS TO CONTROL COMMISSION 12 AUGUST 1974 INTERIM REPORT

A. Notes submitted by cde Logan:

12 August 6.30 pm (approx)

I rang Ebel and told him that the control commission had asked him to hand over certain documents, and that he had refused. I read the appropriate section of the rules and said that if the control commission's resolution were not complied with by 9 pm tonight I would have to support severe disciplinary action against him.

12 August 8.53 pm

Ebel rang saying that he was prepared to hand over the documents, although he didn't know about the personal letters, but that he would therefore be delayed in writing his document, and he required extra time to write this document.

I said that he must comply with the control commission's decision irrespective of his ability to write his document. I refused to guarantee him being granted extra time free of organisational duties in order to free him to write a document.

As I told leading comrades immediately afterwards, I would support him being given extra time to write his document, but not as a condition of his complying with the control commission requirements.

B. Excerpts from the tape of the 12 August meeting of the control commission with cde Ebel:

JE -- [consulting diary] I arrived in Paris on June 5 at 5.30.

DR -- When did you decide to visit Paris and Berlin after leaving Britain, that is to spend a few days in Paris and then go on to Berlin? You did not mention your plans in respect to either in your letter to Bill of 31 May.

JE -- That I didn't explain my plans?

DR -- You did not mention -- you mentioned that you would be leaving from Paris --

JE -- oh yeah

DR -- and did not mention you would be spending any time in Paris and did not mention you were going to Berlin so the question is when did you decide to do that?

JE -- Uh, let's see [pause] I decided when I was in Paris I think. I originally [pause] because of my relation with Tina or Susi -- I decided to leave Paris as soon as I could. I think I spent only two

days in Paris after arriving there.

DR -- you left on June 7.

JA -- That's right. Um -- yeah. I left on June the seventh. I wanted to stay with Susi until the tenth or a few days later after. I think I mentioned it in the letter to Bill didn't I?

DR -- You mentioned the tenth, you didn't mention the reasons why. An you didn't mention you were going to Berlin.

JE -- Yeah, well I may not have decided at that stage. If I had I would have written it.

DR -- Are you sure -- uh --

JE -- Because I wrote the letter from London.

DR -- Right -- um, you're sure that you did not decide until after you got to Paris?

JE -- Yeah I'm pretty sure.

DR -- All right. Um -- [next question]

...

DR -- in your letter to Mary Ann of sixth of May which you sent us a carbon of, you say that you had intended to go straight from Berlin to Vienna and then to Brussels, and that you only went to Brussels, Paris and then Vienna because of the problems with the CMs. But um, you did not ask cde Helen whether it was all right to go to Vienna until you happened to be passing through Paris, on May 11. Um, moreover in your letter to Adaire of 13 May, from Vienna, you said that Helen said that it would be worthwhile for you to go and that Helene suggested that you speak to the Viennese comrades about the functioning of the SLANZ and the SLUS. Um -- now this differs from your description of what Helen told you, in the PB meeting of 26 of June, and also from what you said in your reply of 6 July. Moreover the fact that you expressed your intention of going straight from Berlin to Vienna suggests that you did not intend to ask cde Brosius until you ended up going to Paris. Now, can you (a) explain the discrepancies and (b) clarify what you said to comrade Mary Ann.

JE -- Well first, the question with Helene. Helen did I think mention when she talked to me on a number of occasions about Vienna that it would be worthwhile to talk about democratic centralism, functioning of, just the experiences that I've seen in SLUS and SLANZ. Um, she did mention it at some period of time. She uh, lets see -- what was the other thing?

DR -- Well first of all why did you not mention those things in the PB meeting of 26 June or in your letter of 6 July responding to cde Brosius?

JE -- Well I thought I did mention it in the PB meeting didn't I?

DR -- No, I've checked my notes and the notes of cdes Sheridan and Adaire um -- and you did not.

JE -- I don't know why.

DR -- Why didn't you mention it in your letter of 6 July, responding to cde Brosius' letter?

JE -- I think I did make a point that I was generally encouraged and that I was generally given the feeling that it would be worthwhile for me to go.

DR -- Yes, you said by some comrades in Paris and Vienna without being specific.

JE -- (pause) Well I also meant cde Helene. And that is the case [?]

DR -- (pause) Um, ok. The other question pertains to whether you originally intended -- [interruption] -- the question was whether you initially intended to ask permission from cde Helene to go to Vienna, since you indicated to Mary Ann in a letter of 6 May that you initially intended to go straight from Berlin to Vienna.

JE -- Yeah I did because -- as far as I know I rang Helene, from Berlin to Paris, on the question of literature, now can you um, [pause, looks through diary] Yeah -- I rang Helene from Berlin to Paris, right -- saying that I would be in Paris on Friday or Saturday, May the tenth or May 11th, because of the literature, right, I wanted to go to Brussels to pick up the literature as soon as possible. I changed -- just a minute (pause). I think I wanted to go to Paris straight from Berlin originally um and then I wanted to ask um as far as I know um Helene whether I could go to Vienna.

DR -- In your letter to Mary Ann you said that --

JE -- What is the date of the letter?

DR -- May 6 -- um, you were to go from Berlin to Vienna and then to Brussels but because of the literature problem that you'd have to go to Brussels and Paris and then to Vienna.

JE -- um... I said what, that uh I would have to go to Brussels?

Well um -- I don't know why I did that, I think I may have had a discussion or so with Helene in Frankfurt about the question of Vienna -- um -- when we were at the Chile conference

TOT JULY 24 87

⑤ Winnipeg

SECOND PACKET: Material on Case of John E.
furnished by SLANZ

July 24 89 TBT.

⑤ Winnipeg

16 August 1974

STATEMENT BY THE SLANZ SPECIAL CONTROL COMMISSION TO THE IHB SECRETARIAT ON COMRADE EBEL'S AUGUST LETTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

You should have received a letter of protest from cde Ebel regarding action of the special control commission of the SLANZ investigating his case.

Cde Ebel's letter amounts to a misrepresentation, both by commission and by omission, of the events.

Cde Ebel: "I was given 15 minutes notice -- i.e. at 14.45 cde Keith, one of the members of the Control Commission informed me that a session was to be held today at 15.00 hours." In fact, cde Keith notified him at 2.15 or 2.30 pm that he was to attend at 3 pm, but he did not actually join the meeting (due to unavoidable delay) until 3.30 pm. Possibly his clock or watch was wrong. He was rung at 1.30 pm but apparently did not hear the phone ringing (his room is on the other side of the house from the phone).

Cde Ebel: "When I asked why I had not been informed previously, I was given the answer that this was not necessary." Cde Keith reports that cde Ebel's only objection on this score was the effect that the Timing of the meeting would have on the writing of his document. Cde Keith says he pointed out to cde Ebel his sometimes inefficient use of the previous three days of free time he had been granted (Monday 12 August was the fourth). On the other hand, the answer that earlier notification was not necessary would have been correct. The time for the meeting was definitely set only on Sunday night. It had been intended to inform him of it on Sunday night but this was neglected through an oversight. However, it would have made no difference. No preparation was required of him for the meeting and he did not request any preparation time. On Monday afternoon he was working on his political document, as he would have been at that time in any case. When asked at the beginning of the meeting if he had objections to its being held then, he raised another objection, but did not mention the amount of notice given. From the tape of the meeting:

DR -- If it is absolutely necessary --

JE -- Why aren't we holding this on the weekend?

DR -- Um -- do you have an objection to holding it today?

JE -- Well, I'm writing my document and --

DR -- I'm supposed to be writing several articles for the next issue of the press, particularly next weekend which is the weekend before press production and on that weekend you will also have to do some looking for photographs, which I haven't got around to working out yet.

JE -- This is in two weeks?

DR -- This coming weekend. The paper's going to press two weeks from yesterday -- or two weeks from today, actually.

JE -- Oh -- two weeks from today? Yeah --

DR -- So, that's the problem. Uh, okay....

Cde Ebel: "(a) I was refused a reason/explanation why these letters would be held." From the tape recording:

DR -- Comrade, it is not the responsibility of the control commission to reveal the reasons why we want the material in those letters. I think a number of questions have come up where uh it should be clear to you what kinds of reasons there are. That you have this afternoon referred to copies of correspondence which you may have which bear on the questions we've been asking you etcetera. But in any case the control commission has decided on the basis of what we've discussed and gone through so far to make this formal request. Now this formal request is under the power of the control commission as stated in the rules of this organisation --

JE -- Yeah but um -- I have no objections, I mean -- but -- the thing is though that -- well first of all Bill did have a look at those letters -- which relate to what I said right now -- that is about my desire to live with Susi -- and hers. So he sort of had a good look at them. The other thing is that those letters contain personal matter.

DR -- As I pointed out yesterday all this material will be confidential to the control commission and the PB of the SLANZ --

JE -- I mean it's something which is not simply mine, I mean it's also Susi's.

DR -- Well it is more or less simply made [?], the control commission has been empowered to investigate these things, and uh, and uh we found it necessary in the course of our investigation to -- to make definite -- to have definite, concrete material on the stuff. And it certainly does not make sense for us to rely on the memory of cde Logan about what he may have seen in those letters.

JE -- Well other PB members have also seen them.

DR -- Well that's really beside the point. The control commission feels it necessary to see the documentary evidence.

JE -- Well -- as I say, its not simply my decision, you know?

DR -- Um -- It's not your decision at all - its the organisation's decision.

JE -- Yeah but it's also Christma's decision.

DR -- Um -- not unless its factional, internal factional material between yourself and cde Susi which it cannot possibly be since there is no declared faction. Cde Susi is also part of the international Tendency --

JE -- Sure but I mean she uh -- she objects me showing personal -- matter, and I also --

DR -- Comrade it's a question of discipline. The control commission is empowered to request this material. Com -- All comrades are required to submit to the control commission any material that they may consider necessary.

....

JE -- Well I can read out the parts you're interested in -- if that's what you want.

DR -- That's not what we requested.

....

DR -- Do you intend to refuse to give them to us? It's our decision whether we need to see them or not.

JE -- Well -- as I say, um -- [pause] its not simply my decision, because these aren't simply my letters.

DR -- I'm going to repeat my question. Do you intend to refuse to hand the material over to us?

JE -- I'm not refusing anything, the point is that I would have to first consult -- um as I say, it's not simply my decision --

DR -- Cde Susi is not a member of the SLANZ but she is a member of the international tendency. And uh -- in any case the rules of our organisation are quite explicit -- on the powers of the control commission.

JE -- Well am I under the discipline to hand these over?

Dr -- That's what I said before. And its clearly stated in the rules --

....

JE -- ... why don't you want me to [inaudible] -- Presumably you are

interested in those parts of the letters which relate to us living together, right?

DR -- That's not the only thing we're interested in, and it's up to us to investigate.

....

JE -- Well I don't see -- a reason why -- well as I -- well I'm prepared to have it perhaps -- done at a place where I am, but I don't want the letters taken away from me.

DR -- If you wish you can make a list, and when they are returned to you, as they can be shortly, uh, you can check the material that's returned to you against the list to make sure that nothing is missing. Um -- you're going to have to trust the comrades of the control commission not to be irresponsible enough to lose the material and I can give you a reasonable guarantee of that. I will personally guard the material -- and it will not go outside the control commission's files, just like the rest of the material in the control commission's files.

JE -- Can I be given a reason why these are requested? And for how long will you have them?

DR -- They are requested for the purposes of the control commission's investigations into your functioning in Europe, and functioning since your return, uh and your relationship with Susi as it regards these questions, some of which are the points raised in cde Brosius' and cde Sharpe's letters, some of which are other questions which have come up since. Now -- um, I'm not going to give you any more of a reason than that. I don't -- it's, it's -- that's sufficient reason. The control commission has an obligation to carry out a thorough investigation into all kinds of allegations that are brought to its attention. And anything that comes to its attention in the course of the investigation.

JE -- Well I'm not sure the control commission has the right to uh take personal letters --

DR -- I suggest in that case --

JE -- and [inaudible] simply with personal relationships.

DR -- I suggest in that case -- in the case that you have a political objection to handing over the letters, that after handing over the material, you protest to the PB of the SLANZ, or to the International Secretariat. [pause] But in any case if they are not handed over the control commission will recommend disciplinary action to the Political Bureau.

....
JE -- Well what I want to know is whether the control commission has the jurisdiction to demand letters of intimate nature.

....
DR -- It's for the control commission to decide --

JE -- But surely you can --

DR -- We're not under any obligation to explain to your satisfaction why we want the material.

JE -- Why not? You can surely tell me why you want the material.

DR -- I told you why.

JE -- You did?

DR -- In order so that we can -- investigate certain things which the stuff bears on. And its our judgment that it bears on it. And its our responsibility to do according to our judgment.

....
Cde Ebel: "(d) I have given my personal notebooks and my diary because I have been requested and told that I was under discipline to do so." In fact, at 5.15 pm cde Ebel refused to hand over these things at all, saying he needed them to write his document, and submitted them only later after speaking to the Chairman (see Interim Report). To cde Ebel's point (e) -- the control commission did not receive the list of his letters from Susi until 9.30 pm Monday night.

We note that in his letter cde Ebel clearly acknowledges his breach of discipline, but attempts to set against the rules of the SLANZ a motion adopted by the PB of the SLUS (reprinted in IST circular letter no 1, 2 August 1974). But that motion is not counterposed to the rules of the SLANZ; and in particular, cde Sharpe's letter of 29 March conveying that motion to the OBL cites, without criticism, part of the motion which had been passed by the SLANZ PB, which begins:

"We note that section leaderships have the right of access to non-factional correspondence of members where it is important to the functioning of the organisation." (SLANZ PB, 16 December 1973)

The Provisional Organisational Guidelines of the SLANZ state:

"Article IX: Discipline ... 4. It shall be obligatory on every member of the SLANZ to furnish the Central Committee in the course of such investigation, the Control Commission, or their authorised

representative with any information they may require, other than material exchanged entirely privately between members, i.e., between individuals within a tendency or faction."

This differs from the corresponding rule of the SLUS (MB no 9, pt 2):

"It shall be obligatory on every member of the SL to furnish the Control Commission or its authorised representatives with any information they may require, other than material exchanged entirely privately between SL members, i.e., between individuals or within a tendency or faction." (emphasis added)

The differences -- including the omission of the word, "or" -- resulted from a conscious and deliberate political decision of the SLANZ CC when it drafted the rules, which were presented and adopted at the Second Organisational Plenum of the SLANZ in September 1973. Cde Ebel attended that Plenum, and voted for these rules.

We also note, in IST Circular Letter no 1.:

"We also discussed the question of discipline and transfers internationally. Discipline generally resides in the local sections; that is, only the section has the right to try (expel, censure etc.) a member. The international usually enters discipline proceedings only at the level of an appeal."

While any ambiguity arising from the differing formal rules of the two sections should be resolved by a decision of the IST, cde Ebel broke discipline by refusing to submit to the control commission material which was not part of his personal correspondence; and his refusal to submit any personal correspondence was in fact also a breach of the discipline of the SLANZ and of the principles of democratic centralism, regardless of whether the comrade had decided the rules of the organisation were wrong. (Cde Ebel was censured by the PB for his initial refusal to comply with the control commission's requests, even though he had by that time agreed to comply and has since submitted material requested. However, this reversal on his part came only after his letter to the International Secretariat had been written, as you will note. The PB minutes with the motion of censure will be sent under separate cover.)

cc: Int Sec (2)
Bill L
SLANZ Control Com
SLANZ c.o. files

JUL 24 8 11 TBT

⑤ Winnipeg

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ON JOHN E. CASE

(furnished by Card Susi and the Berlin Committee)

010874

Berlin, 29 July, 1974

IB, New York

⑤ Winnie

Dear Comrades,

Things don't look exactly cheerful here, with respect to the Franz problem. Susi is extremely depressed, both because of the question in itself, and her other problem of which you are aware.

All of the members of the BK were disturbed to hear of the expropriation of Franz's mail--this is obviously a very serious step, for which there must be considerable justification. However, as the situation has escalated to a factional one, and in view of the Control Commission which has been in existence in the ANZ, we should clearly wait to take any position on the question until all information is available to us. In light of this, I have announced that I will present the following resolution at our next regular meeting:

"In view of the seriousness of the situation in the SL/ANZ regarding Cde Franz, as demonstrated by the formation of a Control Commission and by Franz's reported declaration of faction, and in view of the lack of information on the situation available to the BK membership; the BK affirm the necessity to await full documentation before any position is taken by the BK on the question and any subordinate issues."

The motion has not been voted upon, since we have not been able to have a formal meeting. (Due to two leaves of absence--Sybille and Fred, and Susi's illness.) The motion was worked-out by Heidi and me, and is supported also by Fred, whom, although on leave, was specifically invited to meetings while he works on his dissertation, and is therefore informed of the situation. Sybille is on leave in Hamburg, and although I have informed her that we have a problem of a personnel sort, has not been informed of what is specifically going on. If it is absolutely necessary, we may of course cancel her leave.

As far as I know, both Susi and Albert feel that it is possible to take a position on the question of correspondence without awaiting other information. In Susi's case, this is so extreme that she threatened yesterday to ask for a suspension or leave for herself, since the BK refuses to act promptly on the issue. Albert's position is not so extreme, but it is difficult to project its ramifications.

It is significant, however, that Susi has expressed disapproval, or incomprehension, of Franz's declaration of faction (both, actually). However, she is extremely emotionally involved, and has tended to draw conclusions about the leadership of the SL/ANZ which could become a factional issue, as well as about the "lifestyle" in Sidney--i.e., barracks, overwork, destructive "asceticism" etc.

Obviously, we need information on what is going on as soon as possible--and also clarification on the sort of situation which makes the expropriation of personal correspondence justifiable. Heidi has typed out ~~00~~ the political portions of Franz's letters--with Susi's agreement--and they should be in the mail today to NY and ANZ.

Best comradely greetings,

Eric

Copy to SLANZ 3 Aug

TOT JULY 24 1974

010874

Susi Pilar
Berliner Komitee

Berlin, July 29th, 1974

(5) Wunnege

OPEN LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE SL/ANZ

I refer to Franz' letter of July 17 and 21 as well as to Sharpe's letter of May 30, 1974 and the answer letter of Franz of July 6, 1974.

1.

I sharply protest against the fact that Bill and other comrades of the SL/ANZ have read my private correspondence without Franz' and my knowledge. This event is completely unacceptable and has nothing to do with Bolshevism. My opinion is until now shared by Albert, and Fred. I shall fight for my position in the "Berliner Komitee".

2.

I remind you of a letter of Sharpe to the ÖBL and to the "Berliner Komitee" of March 29, 1974 (copy of which you should have in your files!). In this letter you find on page 2 a motion adopted by the Politbureau of the SL/ES reading as follows:

"The international group notes that violation of the right of comrades in a common international tendency to communicate privately is a breach of international discipline; that for comrades not part of a common faction internationally to undertake a secret correspondence behind the backs of the local or section leadership is a violation of procedure which, if persisted in, is suggestive of cliquism rather than inexperience. Comrades who do show such correspondence to their local committee are under no further obligation to their local or section. If the local committee disagrees in fact or interpretation with such correspondence, it has the full right to circulate within the international movement contrary opinions and assertions."

This motion was adopted by the "Berliner Komitee" unanimously. I defend this motion! What Logan and other comrades did, is counterposed to this motion. The fact that you have read my whole correspondence, incl. the most intimate parts of my letters is a violation of socialist morality. As you can see from Franz' letters, he had already or was going to type out the political part of my letters. Therefore there was not reason whatsoever to read my correspondence to Franz behind the back not only of him but also of me.

3.

I protest against the factual capitulation of Franz to the leadership of the SL/ANZ by handing over voluntarily? my letters. I know however that he shares my position in principle. I openly ask him to refuse to hand over my letters in the future. Instead I shall type out the political parts of my letters to Franz. I openly attack the leadership of the SL/ANZ of having put pressure on Franz which finally led to his capitulation without that he had changed his position.

4.

Some remarks to my (4!?) relationships quoted by Bill. He speaks about my supposedly 4 relationship I had or have in the international tendency. That is a mere impudence!!! I could call him a liar, but I renounce to do so. I simply state that before one says things like that one should have ask me if these things are true. In fact, they are not! It is however unimportant how many relationships I had with comrades in the international tendency. The number of relationships I had does not predicate anything about the character and nature of my relationship to Franz. You should however from nowadays on be well enough informed ~~by~~ about my relationship to Franz thanks to your unexcusable curiosity. Also in this question I am supported by the comrades of the "Berliner Komitee". I think that the attitude taken by Bill and others in this question is petty-bourgeois, moralistic and reveals a tendency towards asceticism. Also the fact that comrades in the SL/ANZ do not seem to have a private life, is - I believe - a sign for this asceticism.

5.

Now to the question of the transfer of comrades out of personal reasons: I do not want to mix this question up with the political question of colonization of England. These two questions have to be dealt with separately. The mostcapable comrades must be transferred to England - a question which has to be decided by the Int. Sec. and by the SL/ANZ.

Eric has told me some days ago that the maximum time until now comrades were separated amounted to six months. The organization has no right to separate people for much longer and destroy here-with their life. A good example is Jan, who had appealed to the

leadership of the SL/US to be allowed to return to the States, where her friend lives. Eric also mentioned that they did not know each other for a longer period of time than I know Franz and vice versa. The six months of being separated will have passed in December. There can be only the question of me going to Australia or Franz coming to Berlin.

Here the reasons for which I am not able to go to Australia and the reasons for which I am not willing to go there:

1. At the time being I attend a school for workers and employees where one can pass one's baccalauréat (Abitur). I shall finish school in December 1975.

2. I have the prospect of studying at the university. I know that only after 4 semesters one could successfully receive a stipend for a university in a foreign country.

3. My duties towards my mother are thus that I cannot and am not willing to go to the end of the world. She is completely alone and has no one besides me.

My father was a Russian officer in the "Red Army". You should be aware of the fact that Stalin had forbidden any legal relationship between Russians and Germans after the Russian Army had occupied Germany. When such things became known, the correspondent person was immediately transferred to a different place or region. The same happened to my father.

4. I am not willing to go to Australia and to work under such conditions. I am not willing to live in a sterile commune with people nosing in my correspondence.

Conclusions:

Here is the danger that Franz is destroyed politically by the SL/ANZ. The comrades of the SL/ANZ are calling him a manouverer and a liar. Where is the material basis for such accusations! I do not discover them either in the letter of Sharpe. In one letter Franz told me of his impression that the discussions were not mainly led in order to clear up things but in order to humiliate him. I of course cannot judge this but what I can say is that the result is a deep demoralization and despair on the side of Franz. I extremely dislike the tone of his answer to Sharpe. He is terribly submissive

He made a self-criticism where he is right and Sharpe is wrong, namely in the question of Poland. I think the main thing is that he did not break discipline and did not go to Poland. The fact that he still would have liked to go is a matter which is out of interest for the organization. Nobody who has a certain understanding what it means to be forced out of one's homeland into another complete alien culture will ask of him that he agreed to this with pleasure. Only comrades without any feelings and sensibility can call this manouvering!!!

I accuse the SL/ANZ, mainly the leadership of this organization, of destroying the political life of a valuable comrade who is deeply rooted in the tradition of the international working class movement and who has dedicated his whole life to the liberation of the oppressed toiling masses.

From what I and other comrades of the BK (Albert, Eric, Fred) have seen here in Berlin and Frankfurt of how he works, I must say that he eagerly and enthusiastically participated in our political activities. I suppose this is due to his ~~xx~~ ambition. What a very positive quality when the results are thus!

Towards the reconstruction of the Fourth International!

With Bolshevist greetings

Susi Pilar

cc:

Int. Sec. ✓

Franz

our files

P.S. I send this letter only to SL/ANZ and the Int. Sec. The Int. Sec. may decide whether it should be more widely distributed inside our tendency.

Susi Pilar
Berliner Komitee

(5) W. W. W. W. W.
Berlin, ~~and~~ August 1st, 74

To the International Secretariat!

Dear comrades,

here an extract from the letter of Franz to me of July 18th, 74:

"I was intending to send my long letter (ca. 14 pages) that I have promised and to ring up; however, I am unable to do so - I shall send several pages of it which do not contain political material - because I have been informed by Bill that the PB of SLANZ passed a motion and that the Int. Sec. has verified it, that all political matter must pass through the Inter.Sec. Letters which contain political material must pass through the Inter.Sec. and are regarded as documents. At present, I am not aware of the exact procedures but we shall find out."

In nearly each letter I receive from Franz things are contained like this mentioned above, for which I really have no explanation whatsoever! I want to know, if these facts mentioned above correspond to the truth. If so, I want to know why this motion has been adopted by the PB of SLANZ and verified by the Int.Sec.

~~xx~~ I mentioned in my Open Letter of Protest to the SLANZ with copy to the Int.Sec. the motion concerning the correspondence question adopted by the PB of SLUS. This motion clearly expresses the right of the comrades to private as well as political correspondence. As far as this motion goes, it ~~x~~ seems to me that you have broken discipline, although it is hard to imagine that you did.

I am very worried about the events happening in Australia and do not know how to interpret them. Even after each phonecall with you, the contradictions are becoming even worse. There must be a lot of misunderstandings because everything seems to be so extremely illogical.

Comradely,

Susi

cc: SLANZ, Franz, files

⑤ Winnipeg

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ON JOHN E. CASE
(from Card John E. and the S.D. (I.D.))

⑤ Wunipeg
010874

Resolution of the Berlin Committee

Accepted on 29 July, 1974

Unanimous: Four votes for (Albert, Eric, Heidi, Susi), one consulting vote for(Fred).

The BK stresses the urgency of receiving full information on the case of Cde. Franz (minutes and reports of the development of the situation since his return to Australia), because: 1) this case directly effects one of the members of the BK, 2) the case, and reported decisions respecting correspondence between members of our tendency, are of significance to our tendency and its international functioning as a whole.

The BK notes that it would be premature on its part to take any political position on the question and its subordinate aspects before such information is available to its membership. But it stresses the necessity of receiving such information with all due haste.

In particular, the BK urgently requests clarification on the reported expropriation of the personal correspondence of Cde. Susi to Cde. Franz (see his letter to Susi of 17, 21 July), on the declaration of faction attributed to Cde. Franz by Cde. Sharpe and denied by the former in a telephone call of 29 July initiated by Cde. Susi, and on the reported ban on political correspondence between Cdes. Franz and Susi on the part of the SL/ANZ (communicated to Susi by Franz during the above-mentioned telephone call).

The BK notes that political or otherwise relevant portions of correspondence to Cde. Susi from Cde. Franz have been transcribed by a neutral and responsible Cde. (Cde. Heidi), and forwarded to the IST/NY and the SL/ANZ.*

*(Note Franz's letter to Susi of 7 July: "Also, in the future we will have to write the political stuff on separate pages and if you can send me two copies of that page; I've been told that I must type out the political matter in your last three letters and I am a very slow two finger typist.")

IST
ANZ
BK Files

Copy to SLANZ

⑤ Winnipeg
50374

Franz
SLANZ

Sydney, August 12, 1974.

APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT.

Dear Comrades,

I appeal to the International Secretariat to grant me permission to transfer to the Berlin Committee for the following reasons:

1. I am finding extremely difficult to live without Suzi. We both want to be reunited as soon as my transfer is approved.
2. Suzi cannot transfer : (a) because of her mother , (b) because of her school.

Looking forward to a speedy reply on this matter.

With Communist greetings

Franz

Franz.

cc: SLANZ
B.K.
file.

Franz
SLANZ

Sydney, August 12, 1974.

To The International Secretariat .

Dear Comrades,

Today, the Control Commission met at 15.00 hours.

I want to notify the International Secretariat that:

(i.) I was given 15 minutes notice - ie. at 14.45 cde. Keith, one of the members of the Control Commission informed me that a session would be held today, at, 15.00 hours. When I asked why I had not been informed previously, I was given the answer that this was not necessary.

(ii) I was asked to hand over to the Control Commission for an unspecified period of time cde. Suzi's letters to me. In this context I want to note that : (a) cde. Bill L. and the P.B. have seen ^{most of} these letters, (b) I said that I was prepared to read out the relevant parts which the Control Commission wanted. (c) I was refused a reason/ explanation why these letters would be held.

(d) I have given my personal notebooks and my diary because I have been requested, and told that I was under discipline to do so.

(e) I have given a date-list of Suzi's letters that I have.

In refrence to point (ii) I want to draw to your attention that: (I.) it is not only up to me, but also up to comrade Suzi to allow the intimate parts of her correspondence to be scrutinised. (2) I believe that the action by the Control

Commission contravenes the P.B.S.I.U.S. motion which states:

" The international group notes that violation of the right of comrades in a common international tendency to communicate privately is a breach of international discipline " (my emphasis.)

Furthermore, I want to point out that I have been informed by comrade Bill L. that I was breaking discipline, and had been given until 21.00 hours to hand over the correspondence. I have not given it. In addition, com. Bill L. stated that I " was no person but had to ~~obey~~ obey "The C.C." and that I could be expelled for such a breach. He also informed me that such a measure is under the jurisdiction of a national organisation.

I request a clarification of this matter by the International body.

With Communist greetings

Franz.

Franz.

cc: SLANZ.

: I leave up to you to send a c.c. to the B.K.
: file.

TBT July 24 84.

⑤ Winkler 74

Franz
SLANZ

Sydney, August 12, 1974.

APPEAL TO SLANZ.

Dear Comrades,

I appeal to SLANZ to grant me permission to transfer to the Berlin Committee for the following reasons:

1. I am finding extremely difficult to live without Suzi. We both want to be reunited as soon as my transfer is approved by the International Secretariat.

2. Suzi cannot transfer : (a) because of her mother (b) because of her school.

With Communist greetings

Franz.

cc; International Sec.

B.K.

file.

TBT JUL 24 67

⑤ Winnipeg

Sydney, Australia

14 August, 1974

Interim Highest Body
Spartacist International tendency
c/o Box 1377 G.P.O.
New York, N.Y. 10001
U.S.A.

10074

Dear comrades,

Herewith are the tapes of Sydney Local Meeting 13 August 1974 regarding John Ebel. You will note that side 2 is only partly used due to the tape sticking.

comradely,

Joel Salinger



cc: file

TBT July 24 89.

(5) Winny

Berlin Committee: Political Report
24 July, 1974

Copies to: NY, Vienna, Paris, Israel, Sydney, BK-Files

Comrades: In its sixth month of political existence, the BK has consolidated itself somewhat politically and organizationally, and has been quantitatively strengthened as far as personnel is concerned. (Through the transfer of Cde. Heidi and the recruitment of Cde. Sybille.) It remains however an isolated island of Bolshevism in a milieu dominated by the Maoist (to the left of the CP), and by the GIM and Spartacusbund among the ostensible Trotskyists.

Although the BK is composed of experienced elements (average period in the ostensibly trotskyst movement is about five years), and represents a large repository of leadership potential, its work is not as yet sufficiently structured (division of labor is still lacking) resulting in a doubling and tripling of functions for individual comrades. (That is, the BK is a national center, an editorial office for the KK, a translating center, a local, and must increasingly strive to support the OBL and aid in the development of its cadre.)

One important political success has been the recruitment of Cde. Sybille, a former member of the "Leitung" of the KJO and a five-year veteran, after several months of intensive political discussion. The comrade had been functioning in a disciplined fashion under our direction for at least six weeks prior to her acceptance into membership (attempting to programmatically differentiate the "Kompas" grouping, a split-off from the IKD-KJO, although due to the bureaucratic nature of this "study circle", we didn't get too far. Sybille was promptly expelled as soon as her political criticisms became known, and the organization thereafter refused to talk to her.)

Another important development has been discussions with a young Healyite (ex-Healyite) leader, which after two months of discussion arrived at clear political agreement on all points. However, the comrade is not remaining in the country. We hope, however, that this comrade (a six-year veteran) will work with our friends in his projected destination. He seems to be an experienced, politically developed and dedicated comrade, and he does not appear to suffer from the debilitating demoralization characteristic of comrades run through the Healyite mill. He has stated his intention of working within our international tendency.

Generally, our perspective for the immediate future is one of linear, rather than "logarithmic" growth. Although the prospect of a left split from one of the larger ostensibly trotskyst groupings cannot be excluded, our ability to intervene in such a development is seriously limited--especially on a national basis (more on this point under OROs.) At the moment, we have only one relatively serious sympathizer, C., a young and inexperienced but apparently serious comrade (who has regularly read WV as well as our German lit., etc.) We must continue to strive to win experienced cadre from the increasingly splintered ostensibly trotskyst OROs, while making the formation of a study group of younger comrades a central priority--we could use some "new blood" and a little frenetic overactivism from German RCY-equivalents.

Key to the consolidation and growth of the BK is the Kommunistische

Korrespondenz. The decision to produce the KK was taken haphazardly and without sufficient consciousness of the enormous commitment which such a publication involves. However, the KK has developed tremendously (although too organically, without sufficient planning) in both its political and especially its technical aspects. The transfer of Cde. Heidi is an especially important boost as far as professionalizing our production capacity is concerned, and preventing repetition of earlier experiences--when the production of the KK often paralyzed the work of the BK for extended periods of time (up to ten days).

The KK must increasingly take on a more balanced character. Initial issues were devoted almost exclusively to the Spartacusbund. Although, because of our (correct) orientation to the SpB and because of the factional intervention of Cde. Fred, this character was inevitable in the short-run, the BK is not an external faction of the Spartacusbund, but the core of an independent revolutionary-trotskyist group, and the KK must reflect this simple fact. Although the article on the French elections and the issue on the Women question were steps in this direction, they were merely steps. The KK must become an organ dealing on a high theoretical-propagandist level with the most important political occurrences on the German and international scene--with a hard interventionist line not merely towards the Spartacusbund and the other ostensible trotskyists, but increasingly towards the Maoists, and possible left-wing crystallizations in the DKP and SPD.

KK No. 5 should hopefully appear within two weeks (maximum), with the "International Declaration", the report on the summer camp, and the report on the IT-expulsion--all from WV 49. We project an issue on "Revolutionary Trade-Union work in the US" as either No. 6 or 7, and an ~~xxxxxx/xx~~ issue on the USec., if the conflict between the GIM majority and the GIM-Kompaß comes to a head. We further project a series of articles on the historical development of trotskyism and pabloism in Germany, although preparations for an issue on a possible GIM-split take precedence in the short-term.

The affiliation of the BK to the "Core for the early crystallization" etc. requires a change in the masthead in keeping with this fact. Since the designation of the KK and BK will have to include the entire complex formulation on our "tendency", it will probably be transferred from the masthead to a box on page two.

ORO's:

The left wing of German pabloism is the Spartacusbund, which remains a long-term orientation. The political spectrum of the SpB ranges from syndicalism or economism bearing little resemblance to even "ostensible" Trotskyism; to very left centrism, closer politically to us than to the SpB majority, but organizationally integrated and politically determined to avoid identification with the "sectarianism" of the BK and SL. Since the Berlin-SpB is slanted leftward, while the Berlin-GIM is christawful, it remains our main arena for ORO work in Berlin.

Generally, the SpB is probably stagnating, with the euphoria of their fusion slowly wearing-off. However, they obviously hope for a part or all of the GIM-Kompaß, when it is catapulted out of the USec (or decides to leave), and the organization stills shows cautious optimism about its prospects. Its structural instability doesn't seem to be becoming "antagonistic", that is, there doesn't seem to be a clear political polarization--although certain elements have the prospect of "reforming" the organization to the left. These comrades

(comrade? Jeff) presented a counter-resolution to the org. resolution on tactics at the last SpB NC (the third this year!) But the counter-resolution or amendments (I'm not sure which) were rejected. One should note that the resolution on tactics was supposed to be accepted at the first conference six months ago, but was delayed for months because of inefficiency. Then the first more-or-less final draft was rejected at the second SpB NC this spring. (We have not seen these documents.) The next NC (scheduled for Fall, I believe!) is supposed to deal with international questions. The largest group plans to build their own international tendency (sic; sick!), there is a small group which wants an entry into the GIM, a yet smaller group which is orienting, or wants to orient, towards the OCRFI, and one comrade who wants to collaborate with us (Gotthold, Berlin).

It is difficult to orient to the GIM in Berlin, because the organization is a model spontaneist, menschevick unseriousness. The local is large but most of the members don't come to meetings, so it doesn't matter much. The GIM in Berlin can attract up to 300 petty-bourgeois swine to a Teach-In (if somebody famous is to appear, and especially if there's music), but there seems to be no Kompass-faction, and not even any International minorityites (to our knowledge). The GIM is publishing, by the way, a German LIT document in their next theoretical journal. Since the article differentiates itself from the IMT only in demanding that the GIM orient more towards the women's movement (and maybe the high-schoolers) its easy to see why the majority allows "freedom of criticism". I haven't run into any GIM cadre recently, so I don't know how they've reacted to the IT expulsions (or for that matter, if they've heard about them yet.)

On the other hand, the FIM-Kompass is a very important prospect for intervention. Unfortunately, most of them are in Frankfurt and environs, so we don't run into them here much. Our intervention is thereby reduced to a literary one, with occasional raids while passing through town. The prospect of a part of the GIM-Kompass fusing with the Spartacusbund to form a larger centrist swamp is an unappetizing, but very possible, development.

IAK, SAB: Both the small Lambertist and the somewhat larger Healyite group are not a central focus for our political intervention at the moment. Both have small numbers of integrated, very rotten, cadre, with a soft, young and inexperienced periphery. The IAK is a particularly rightist form of Lambertism, representing the logical extension of policies which can not be seen in their pure form in the OCI (as evidenced by their genuinely Pabloist deep-entriism in the SPD.) Due to our discussions with H. (the ex-Healyite leader), we may intersect the SAB somewhat more than their size would warrant. Also, an expansion to Frankfurt in the medium-range would mean entering onto their home ground.

Maocists: We have had little to do with the larger Maocists' organizations--the KPD, KPD/ML, KBW and KBN until now. We have also not sufficiently developed a political analysis of them (for instance, can any of them be considered centrist?) These are large, hard organizations, and especially the KPD (and perhaps the KBN?) have very hard, subjectively revolutionary cadre. But we can do little to dent them with our present forces. However, we must project an increasing literary orientation to them.

SAG, Soz. Büro, etc. The left social democratic, economist milieu may become of some importance to us with growth, or through factional differentiation within these organizations. They are not, however,

immediately central arenas, both because of their geographical strongholds (again, Frankfurt)--and because of their disdain for program. We will certainly have to deal with them once we begin TuU. work, but until then we will probably not intersect them often. (The left SAGer with whom Helene talked at the L.O. Fete may open some perspectives, but we have not heard with him since before the summer camp.)

SEW-DKP-SPD: The traditional bourgeois workers parties are not as such an immediate area in which we can hope to intervene. But we must be sensitive to leftward moving currents in or on the periphery of these organizations.

Growth of the organization and territorial expansion (or, the "Drang nach Westen"); Berlin is not the sort of place that one wants to be isolated in, unless one has the perspective of remaining a sect--even the Spartacusbund, the original one, discovered that, and paid for it in blood. With recruitment we must expand outside of Berlin. Due to H.'s absence, we may remain in isolation somewhat longer than we had hoped (although there are possibilities through contacts of his.) But we must project a second local (or organizing committee) within the year in any event. In this perspective, we must orient to cities possessing both industrial proletariat and a radicalized, largely student, left movement. Two cities come to mind: Frankfurt and Hamburg. The former is a GIM, SAG and KPD center, with a large, relatively radical university (and is the nerve-center of German capitalism.) The latter is the nation's second largest city, and the center of the KBN (perhaps the most interesting and contradictory of the Maoist groups.) The Ruhr area is of central interest to the workerists, but for us must be a more long-range perspective. Only a break in SpB cadre in that area (for instance, Essen or Gelsenkirchen) should move us to consider an organizing committee in this area in the near future, since it does not present the possibilities for ORO work and short-term recruitment which the larger urban centers (with universities) offer.

We must note that we have a couple of contacts in L., a medium-sized industrial town in the Saar area. The young comrades have been organized for some time, but are not highly developed theoretically. Their personal situations are also very unstable, since they are about to get drafted. Since L. is not even a long-term perspective, we would seek to get them out of that area, if we won them--although it would depend on the stage of our development whether we would want them to come to Berlin or another O.C.

Recently we have been down to less than half-strength, since Sybille has been on leave (in Hamburg), Fred is on leave to work on his dissertation (until the beginning of August), and Susi has been sick. We are primarily occupied with KK No.5, which occupies all of Albert's free time (for translating), and all of Heidi's (for the technical work). We have tried to maintain a public face through weekly lit. tables at the T.U. (Technical University), but most of the left has left town for the summer vacation. Sybille, from reports, seems to be aggressively contacting former KJO members in Hamburg, a local (KJO) which she formerly worked in, and has been hunting up bookstores for the KK. I plan to go to Hamburg at the beginning of August, and will try to talk to these people too, as well as perhaps a KBN honcho with whom I talked once. Generally, however, there is little going on here. I have written to the comrades in L., and I plan to write to H.'s contacts in F.,--we shall see what comes of that.

Comradely greetings,

Franz to Suzi

- 2 -

010874

Paris, 11 May 1974

Just a brief letter to tell you what happened in the last few days. Right now I am sitting in a coffee and my train is leaving in two hours (10 p.m.) for Vienna.

Would you believe that after all I did catch the wrong train; My was leaving twenty minutes later. ...

At 11:30 I arrived in Brussels. Straightaway I caught a train to the airport. I won't relate what happened because it is quite uninteresting; except to say that before I wrested Cuadernos Marxistas from the Belgian customs I had to bribe one official, and spent from 12 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. at the airport - this whole time being taken up with seeing a number of officials and finally bribing one; otherwise I would not have seen CM. I hesitate to say but I came close to the conclusion that Belgium is a country with most petty minded officials that I have ever seen. In fact, the lower their authority the more important they feel. This conclusion stemmed from a number of incidents I was involved in other than this above case.

Meanwhile, when I did get the 105 lbs. of CM they presented somewhat of a transportation problem. I did get them on the train, with the help of porters and a taxi, and luckily had no problem with the custom officials at the French border (they took samples of CM's but left me alone).

The train arrived in Paris at 10 p.m. To my annoyance after taking a taxi to Jan and Joan's place, I did not find them at home. Subsequently, I found out that they did know that I was coming last night. To add to all that Helene wasn't at her hotel either. Finally I left the CM with the caretaker of the building and took a room out at a hotel.

This morning I found them at home. In the afternoon we went to an OCI meeting (election mtg.) Indeed they got pretty violent, although in a very disorganised and sloppy way -- ie. they did not use their goon squad. At the beginning an OCI member began abusing Jan and Joan calling them streetwalkers? and soon after other high ranking OCIers told them to get out and so on. I should say that the OCI meeting was held in a bookshop to which one enters through a courtyard. They then fetched the landlady who also insisted that we get out. Then Stephane Just arrived, began arguing and abusing Helaine, and ended up on a note, "I Stephane Just order you to get out"! At that point a number of OCIers began to get violent and we decided to leave.

How have you been? I will be in Vienna till Friday morning. It seems possible that I will be able to come to Berlin for two days during the weekend....

London, May 27 1974

You are probably surprised that I am already in London. I arrived here early or rather late Saturday morning (10:45 a.m.)

After arriving in Paris as scheduled on Friday afternoon and after booking a hotel room I went to see Jan & Joan. Joan had already departed for London - she was informed earlier in the week that the R.C.L. (the Chartists) were holding a national conference over the week-end - and had invited us. So, after being in Paris for about seven hours I departed for London.

After arriving in London on Saturday morning I was unable to get in contact with the Chartists', Helaine or Joan. Unfortunately for me, they had not telegraphed Paris to let Jan know where the conference was being held; so after trying all the 'Chartist' telephone nos. I went through all the other telph. nos. that I had. Again no one knew where it was. My last chance was the I.S. bookshop. I went there but received the same answer: they did not know. Finally, at 10:30 p.m. I was able to get hold of Janet Pickering, one of their members.

As I found out later, Saturday was devoted to the discussion of a revolutionary party. We were invited as observers and had no rights to take part in the discussion. The next day the discussion topics were: Ireland, Secretary's Report, Labor Party, work in the OCR, and the Woman Question.

There appear to be three "tendencies" in the RCL: not factions or tendencies as understood by us, but rather cliques around three personalities - Connolly, Atkinson, & Knight. All these people have confused and bad positions on the above and other key questions, although Connolly is the best of them. If we had a group here there would be a possibility of recruiting him and some of his co-thinkers. I will be seeing him in the next few days and will try to hammer him. We shall see what happens. In addition, we were able to see the inner functioning of the RCL and a glimpse of their internal life. Both reflect a very amateurish sloppy petit-bourgeois tendency. They have no idea whatsoever of democratic centralism or general Bolshevik functioning. True to their nature they display all the worst features of centrism.

Apart from Nicolas we were unable to remain for the final session, when the election took place and a discussion of their leadership. Helaine, Kelly & Joan had to catch their boat back to France and I had to have a discussion with Helaine on 'The Chartists'. Nicolas was instructed to take notes and count the votes and I will find out tomorrow what the outcome had been - he had to leave for Sussex and I will be going out there tomorrow to see him. (I forgot to add that Helaine had been given 2 15 mins. speaking time on the 2nd day and gave an excellent speech)

... As soon as the train left the platform I went to my compartment and sat there for about half an hour, reminiscing about you and me, looking at your pictures and despairing that we won't see each other for at least one and a half years. The time span seemed to me at the time to be limitless. ...

I have found out that I will have to leave for Australia either from Paris or from another continental city. Apparently, I can't from London because I landed in Paris when I arrived from New York - in their language i.e. of the airlines it means that I can't "backtrack". This has worked out fine, since I wanted to spend a few days in Paris before leaving. I haven't forgotten your Goyas ... Moreover I will make inquiries tomorrow about the possibility of leaving from Berlin for Sydney - today England is on holidays, Boxing Day or something like that, everything is closed ~~xxxxi~~ ...

It would be wonderful if we could see each other again, if only for a few days before the long break. I will be in England till the 30th and could be in Berlin by the 2nd or 3rd. ...

copy to SLAN 2 3 Aug

London, Wed., May 29, 1974

... I would forward you my address if I would stay longer, but the way things look now I should accomplish my assignment by Sunday or Monday. So, please send your letter to the Paris address.

It seems that I should be able to come to Berlin for about two days - I rang BOAC and they said it makes no difference to them whether I leave from Paris or Berlin. ...

A few comments about London: it's huge! would you believe that it takes on the average about 45 mins. to an hour to get from someone's place to another; there are also lots and lots of bookshops including many with out of print books. Today, I visited several: the famous Collets (a C.P. bookshop, carries all Marxist lit., however) as well as two others. I was trying to obtain the two volume biography of Rosa L. by Nettl but none stocked it. However, I managed to buy several pamphlets and books among them a book edited by Tamara Deutscher, 'Not by Politics Alone - the Other Lenin'. It looks excellent; I will be getting a copy for you. Briefly, it deals with the various aspects of Lenin's many sided personality - ie. his personal life. Its contents is divided into six parts which include letters and descriptive character sketches by his contemporaries. ...

At eleven o'clock this morning I had a talk with Tamara Deutscher. I arranged a meeting with her last Monday. She was not familiar with our international tendency, although she had seen several issues of Workers Vanguard. Our discussion ranged over current and historical questions. Her positions and ours coincide on many points, except of course the viability of forming the FI in 1938. Moreover, I talked to her about our work and asked her what her future plans in relation to this were. As you know she is a very experienced, erudite and eloquent Marxist. During Isaac D. lifetime she seems to have limited herself in doing large part of the research, discussing and criticising and leaving her name out of his works. But look at the beginning of I.D.'s Stalin and you will get a glimpse of their relationship (there is a dedication to her before the introduction). Among other things we discussed her publishing plans. At present she has no long range plans of any major works, but is planning anthologies; is intending to write a short articles and so on. She has written excellent reviews of books: assessment of Solzhenitsyn for example; which as far as I know, apart from us or perhaps before us analysed the reactionary tendencies implied in Solz. works (ie. his embracing of Greek orthodoxy). Moreover, she is determined to carry out her work and when I asked her whether she had plans to complete I.D.'s incompletd 'Lenin' she answered resentfully that she did not want to be seen simply as I.D.'s ~~xixix~~ faithful widow. I will be meeting her again on Sunday - she will show me their archives and I will try to find out more about their experiences in the Polish C.P.

Yesterday, I visited Nicolau S. at Sussex University. He is a young comrade who has been in contact with us for several years.

Friday, May 31, 1974 (part of same letter)

I did not have time to finish this letter. Frankly, I have been on my feet day and night. After the Chartist conference and the addresses that I had received from N.Y. about our contacts, I have been going around London from one contact to another. It will mean that I will have to prolong my stay in London for a day or two.

Otherwise everything is going well. The contact work is proceeding steadily, Nicolau is very bright and enthusiastic.

...

Hope everything is going well in Berlin. How is Wolfgang and Ilona?, and the work of the etc.

LETTERS FROM FRANZ TO SUZI

1 42

Sunday (on plane from Frankfurt to Bombay)

... Write me how the discussions with Ilona are proceeding. You and Albert, but especially Albert, should encourage her to read our publications and arrange discussions on positions where differences exist, between her and us.

...Write to me before the summer camp and tell me what has happened in Berlin since my departure.

...I will write another letter and post it from Singapore.

P.S. You and I must start a separate bank account so that I can come to Berlin or you can come to Australia in July or August next year. It will perhaps be easier that way, because the money won't be spent on anything else.
...

Sunday (on plane from Bombay to Singapore)

We are approaching Singapore and will be landing soon.

I feel very tired, although I slept two more hours I think (?) But then I am looking forward to seeing everybody back again. Probably they won't let me go for at least five hours. I shall try to get more sleep, so that I can satisfy their curiosity.

It's morning here; the sun is rising and the sky looks very pretty from the window of the plane. I was thinking of you all back in Berlin; right now you must be getting ready to go to bed. What was the meeting like? Did you get some sleep before it? And what was your journey back home like?

...
I suppose you have a very busy week coming up. With all your schoolwork and preparation for the summer camp you will most probably be burning the mid-night oil. ...

P.S. Send me the forwarding address for the camp.

Sydney, 25 June 1974 (part of above letter)

Just a few words from Sydney. I got up this morning - haven't slept well because it has been so cold and at present I am sleeping in an unheated bare room -- and went to the Glebe point road where our headquarters are situated.

I was to have a discussion with Bill about my trip, but he had to go buy a car, so we shall have one tonight.

At present I am at the post-office. Already I have been put to work - I am in charge of filing three main newspapers for future reference, to be used by Austral. Spartacist.

....

P.S. Check for me what has happened to my telegrams. There is a post office strike here, but I just asked the attendant and she said that they should have been here. If it's too much work don't bother, they will probably be here in a few days.

Copy to SLANZ 3 Aug

Franz to Suzi

- 5 -

Melbourne, June 30

I am sitting in a plane on my way to Sydney. In all I have spent three very busy days here. Please forgive me for not writing a long long letter, but it's just hard to imagine the number of people - comrades, my parents, my sister and some acquaintances - that came or I went to see. ~~it's~~ ...

Now I shall describe what has been happening to me since my arrival. As you know I arrived in Sydney on Monday night at 6:30 p.m. (Aust. time) Noone knew that I arrived because of the mail strike here. When I arrived at our offices everybody looked as if they had just gone through a battle. The paper had just gone to the printers and everybody was working for about 24 hours, without a break to get it on time to the printer. This kind of shocked me, because I did not really realize how much energy is spent on the press. As it turns out, we are usually immobile for about a week before the paper deadline.

At present, we are living in another set of barracks which were acquired during my absence. It's a big house which is occupied by everybody in the local here, except for the three comrades who live in the house where the offices are. The house itself is a dump - cold and old, but it's clean and freshly painted; and bearable. It was cheap - only 50 dollars a week - so it means a big saving for everybody. But hopefully we will be able to move out when our finances get a little better.

Monday, 1 July 1974, Sydney 23.40 (same letter as above)

You are probably wondering what has happened. You see I had managed to write for a few minutes only on the plane. It was a very shaky trip. After arriving in Sydney at 23.30 I had to be briefed about the t.u. situation. As I wanted to tell you above, but unfortunately didn't get to, I've been implanted in a big metal plant here. Most of us work there and of course that is where our t.u. work is being tested. The work starts at 7 in the morning and it's quite a distance away; so that we have to get up at 5:30 to get there on time. Tonight, straight after work we had a long discussion about the plant situation. We will be having these all week long, basically in order to straighten out the situation. In the last week and previously a lot of mistakes had been committed, but apparently last Friday's was the worst. I shall go into the details in that 'long long letter' that I promised. But, I think it will have to wait till the week-end. Please forgive me, but truly I won't even have one hour to spare. Till Friday I shall try to write short letters or postcards.

...
Right now you must have arrived at the summer camp. Describe and write your impressions of it, if you don't have time in Austria, then do it in Berlin. I would very much like to read them. As you know Bill will not be coming. He will go to the U.S. instead, for the conference.

My next letter (the long one) will inform you of everything. By the way, I was severely criticised by the P.B. over my late arrival and a number of other matters. But things have worked out for the better and after a long discussion with Bill we have begun to understand ourselves, particularly my reactions to various things at times. More of it in the next letter, however. Oh, just one more thing on this question. You are in no way responsible for my being late; so please don't blame yourself and just forget this question.

I must finish here because it's past 12 already, and I will have to get up in five hours.... and will cross out the 360 days ... till our reunion.

Franz to Suzi

- 6 -

postcard, July 4, 1974, 18.00

... For the last three days I have not even had an hour to myself. We're having extraordinary meetings of the t.u. fraction - i.e. straight after work at about seven (19), after we have written reports of the plant situation. This is to last for one week only, so that we can ascertain what is actually happening on the factory floor and so that we can straighten out our mistakes. I shall describe it in my next letter.

...

Sunday, July 7, 1974, Sunday, 10.45

... For the whole week I had been getting four to five hours sleep. As you know (I send you a postcard, do you got it?) we have been having extraordinary trade union fraction meeting from Monday till Thursday. On Friday night, I also had to type out a t.u. report and at 8 pm o'clock I was feeling so tired and exhausted that I went to bed and woke up the next morning at 9 in the morning. Yesterday, I had to attend a house committee meeting from 10-12; then I had to work on newspaper clippings from 12-5, then I had a meeting with Bill and then I had to work on a reply to two letters, the first from John Sharpe and the other from Brosius. I was to explain in that "long long letter" what happened at last weeks P.B. meeting here, which concerns John Sharpe's letter, and Helaine's I saw last night.

Today, I got up after sleeping for 3 1/2 hours and must clean up the kitchen in this house; ie. the 2 fridges, cupboards, floors and the stove. Then more work on the clippings, then I must go over the draft of my reply to John Sharpe & Brosius and then a local meeting at 17 hours which will probably last till 24 hours.

...

You should get the two letters one of Sharpe, the other of Brosius and my reply. This will clarify what has happened. Also, in the future we will have to write the political stuff on separate pages and if you can send me two copies of that page; I've been told that I must type out the political matter in your last three letters and I am a very slow two finger typist. So it would be much easier for me if you could do that. Do you want me to do the same for you?

...

P.S.S. I forgot to tell you what my duties and appointments in the organization are at present. I am responsible for clipping & filing the daily press (3 Aust. newspapers) for at least one hour each day; also, I am the locals treasurer; and also I am the house commissar at Quarry St. All these jobs involve a lot of time and effort, although some of them perhaps do not appear to. Besides I will be asked to write articles for the press.

P.S.S.S. A few questions for you. What have you been doing? What was the summer camp like?; how is your work going? ... and how is the work of the Berlin Cte. going? Tell me everything; as you have done so well in your previous letters.

Copy to SLANZ 3 Aug.

Franz to Suzi

- 7 -

postcard, 9 July 1974, 16 hours

...
Last night I was intending to write a letter. Again I was held up by the press clippings which the editor had told me had to be finished last night. (the one's from last week). Tonight I have a t.u. fraction meeting which should last from 19 till 23 or 24.

...
Sydney, July 15, 1974 22.00 p.m.

...
One of my greatest wishes is for you to develop into an outstanding revolutionary and anything that upsets you upsets me also....

I do see a perspective for our mutual future! I shall apply for 'work' in England. This will, probably at this time next year ~~xxxxxx~~ ...

If 'work' in England is not possible I shall come to Berlin. On Wed. night I am having a discussion with Bill and shall discuss this question at length with him.

...
Was the address of Pierre Naville that I gave W. the right one? How is your school work going?; Have you finished the paper on the German Revolution and have you begun your holidays already? What have you been reading lately?; you ask me in the letter of 26 June (I think) for material on Polish Communism. The interview with I. Deutscher in 'Marxism in Our Time' is quite good; there is also in existence, in English, a book by Dziejowski entitled 'The Communist Party of Poland'. He is a bourgeois academic - a liberal - but the book has nevertheless a lot of useful information. There is another book of value, but unfortunately it is in Polish. R. Luxemburg's biography by Nettl is also worthwhile; what was the outcome of the discussion in B.K. and how did comrades feel about the 'Draft for the 'International Trotskyist Tendency'?; what was the summer camp like - formal discussions plus informal etc.; was hitchhiking pleasant or did you get very tired?

... So far I haven't received anything from BIRAI, but am expecting it anyday to arrive.

...
The work in the local has been consuming all of my time. I would have written more frequently, and more extensively if I have had just a little spare time. But this has not been the case until now; ...

postcard, Sydney, 18. July 1974 6.00 a.m.

After having made the phone call to you last night, I rushed home and began the second part of my letter. Unfortunately I ~~only~~ had only 15 minutes to spare and thereby I could not finish it. ... Last night I had a talk with Bill about you and me. He thinks that it would be possible for you to come in April, but that it would be impossible for me to come to Germany in December, because of my implantation. He also asked whether you wanted to live in Sydney and my reply was that you definitely did not. Furthermore he thinks that you should possibly come here for more than three weeks in April, to get to know the situation in Aus. and I agree with that, and also want to say that if you possibly could do that it would be wonderful to have say 5 or 6 weeks with you together. Colonizing England is at present indefinite. Perhaps this time next year - but only by 2 comrades initially. I shall write more about it in my letter....

Franz to Suzi

- 8 - A

Sydney, July 17, 1974 18.00

Have just got back from the post office. I rang you at about 17.20 our time - ie. Berlin is nine hours behind Sydney.

Please don't be angry with me for not writing more frequently and more extensively. My two weekends which I have spent in Sydney since my arrival have been completely taken up with organisational work and meetings (I shall describe these below), and the weekends are really the only time that I have to write long letters to you. You see on every weekday I have a meeting and in addition from 18.30 (16.30?) - 19.30 I have to cut up and file newspaper clippings. Below I shall outline a typical day - today - just to give you a feeling what a normal week day is like for me.

Today I got up at 5.25; then the t.u. fraction had a short briefing before going to work - ie while we were drinking milk for breakfast; left house at 5.50; arrived at station 6.10; train arrived at work at 6.40; work started at 7.00; work finished at 15.30; train arrived at 'home' station at 16.15; went to ring you at the main post office & had to drop a number of 'Aust. Spart.' off to a bookshop. Then, I will have to start cutting up the press - it takes about 30 minutes to go over to the Glebe Pt. Rd. House - then at 19.30 I must type up a report for the t.u. fraction and then a talk with Bill. In fact today there is no meeting. Last night we had a t.u. meeting which finished at 23.30. So that apart from the lack of time that I have had during the week to write I am also incapable of composing a letter worthy of you, except on the weekends.

Sunday, 21 July 74, 12.00 (part of same letter as above)

First of all I must explain why the delay of four days. I was intending to finish this letter by Thursday night. - I thought that I would have free time from 21.00 on Thursday - but an incident(s) occurred which prevented me from doing this. Below I shall explain what happened.

But before doing that I should say that on Friday after I rang you, I wandered around the city till 19.00 hours (I rang you at 18.00 or perhaps a little earlier) just thinking what has been happening here and about us; then I went to a SWL-SYA intervention to sell our publications. Afterwards I went back to the Glebe Pt. house had a talk with Bill there about what had happened on Thursday and also about you and me; and after that back home to the 'new' house (Quarry St) with Joel. Yesterday, I had to search for photos for our press till 18.00 hours and after that I re-read ~~your~~ all your letters and was intending to write, but found myself distracted by comrades and a feeling that I would be fresher in the morning, and so I ended up drinking beer till 23.00. This morning after waking up at 9.00 I went through NY before sitting down to write to you. Also, I am enclosing the postcard which I began writing on Friday just before I rang you so that you can see the frame of mind that I was in. At present I do not know what steps I should actually take; I feel very uneasy and depressed about what had happened and what has been happening since my return. One more thing I should mention; perhaps, I have been subconsciously delaying writing over the last few days because I wanted to resolve all the questions which I felt I had to before writing - ie. I could have written last night. I shall be completely frank in telling you what I think - and I think that I have done this in the past....

Copy to SLANZ 3 Aug.

Sunday, 21 July 1974 (cont.)

On Thursday night after having finished my clippings I went home. The time was a little after 20.00 hours and to my surprise, as I entered my room I found Bill hiding my letters (ie. yours) underneath his jacket. What followed subsequently was a tragic comic situation. Bill tried to distract me so that he could get the letters back into my briefcase and then went later to the other house to get other comrades to do the same. This they attempted to do but I couldn't stand this playacting any longer, so I called Bill into my room and asked him whether he had read your letters. He replied that he did. Then our conversation ranged over why he did that and so on. I shall elaborate.

About two weeks ago I was asked by cde. Adaire to type out your letters. She maintained, ie. said that I should type out "everything in them except the lines where she is sending love". I disagreed with this but failed to argue out the question with her. Still, I resolved to type out relevant political material as soon as I had the time to do so. The only time I had to this was on the weekends, and both of them were taken up with organisational work, and replying to cdes Sharpe & Helene and moreover on the first weekend I had only two of your letters which you sent before I arrived (I read them in Berlin). Because I am a slow two finger typist at this stage, I told the organiser ~~me~~ at the beginning of this week that I would have them finished by the end of the weekend - ie. today. During our conversation I reproached Bill for not asking me - ie. if he thought that the letters were or contained urgent political matter - to read out the relevant political comments or asking me to show them to him. One thing that I forgot to mention above: I told our organiser that I could possibly have the letters ready earlier if I was able to write them out instead of typing them. Also, during my conversation with Bill on Wednesday I told him that I would have the letters ready by the end of the weekend.

Furthermore, I do not agree with cdes Bill & Adaire in regard to the question of where the time should be drawn between political and personal matter in personal correspondence. Bill argued that everything personal which effects the functioning of a cde. is political. Thus far I agree, but I also maintain that personal correspondence of intimate ~~n~~ nature has the right to privacy. So, what I say is that it is up to the cde. concerned to tell the leadership what his/her personal problems in such matters are, if they arise, and if the cde. chooses to do so. During that conversation on Thursday night I told ~~Bill~~ Bill that this may be a reflection of the differing views that we ~~had~~ have on the question of the party. To me a Leninist party is a revolutionary association of individuals acting as a collective in carrying out the party's programme and ~~under~~ under the discipline of its leading bodies - ie. I agree with Lenin's main contribution to the question of the party which he proposed as an amendment to the party's draft statutes at the 2nd Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903, "A member of the Social-Democratic Party is any person who accepts its programme, supports the party with material means and personally participates in one of its organizations". This was counterposed to the draft written by Martov, and which expressed the views and practice of the II International. In Martov's draft the words "personally participates in one

Sunday, 21 July 1974 (cont.)

one of its organizations" were substituted by "personally & regularly co-operates under the guidance of one of its organizations". The difference between the two was that Lenin envisioned a tightly-knit centralized party whilst, as you know, Martov and the Mensheviks proposed a loosely knit party which allowed fellow-travellers and other indisciplined elements to be under the "guidance" of the organization. ? the point that I am making in all this is that Lenin's conception does not rule out the right to privacy in personal matters, such as correspondence for eg. What do you think? I would like to know your position Suzi.

21 July 24.30

Didn't have the possibility of finishing this letter as I wanted to before the local meeting.

The question above was discussed and the lines that were drawn were the same. I was the only one who maintained my position ie. everyone took the position that Bill had the right to read my correspondence and that correspondence received by a member of a party can be read by responsible individuals in the party. I shall describe a number of other things that were raised during that discussion in my letter tomorrow or the next day. There is not much time now (it's 24.35) and I must get up at 5.30.

Briefly, I have given the correspondence between you and me to Bill because he insisted that I do and because it is a question of discipline. I think, however, that he honestly wants to help you and me out ~~in~~ in our relationship in regard to us living together. When I talked to him on Wed. & Friday he said that you could come here in April and that he wanted to see if our relationship would still hold out in a few months time - he remarked that you had relations with at least four other comrades in the tendency. I said that I was aware of that. Obviously he does not understand you or your problems and our relationship. This perhaps is understandable, but I think that Bill on his part should have been more cautious before making such a statement.

I shall have to describe everything that has been happening here. I do not quite know how to react or fight the various accusations that have been thrown against me over the last few days. I have been called a manoeuvrer in reference to what happened about Austria ~~and~~ and now apparently whatever I do is linked to manoeuvring; liar in reference to the Austrian trip. Furthermore, on the question of correspondence I have been named a Menshevik by ede. Adaire.

...

P.S.S. Enclosed find a letter of John Sharpe's and my reply.

P.S.S.S. I will show a copy of this letter to Bill and all my subsequent correspondence as it is a question of discipline.

P.S.S.S. The correspondence that I am enclosing - ie. John Sharpe's letter and my reply should answer quite a few questions which you asked in your letter of 9 and 10 July. In my following letter, however, I shall elaborate.

Copy to SLANC 3 Aug.

POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES (NO 8) 22 July 1974

Present: PB: Bill, Adaire, Joel
alt CC: John, Dave R, Dave S
other: Keith (Sydney Local Organiser).

Meeting convened: 9.25 p.m.

Agenda: 1. Personnel

1. Personnel:

Discussion: Bill, Joel, Dave R, John, Keith, Dave S, Adaire,
(4 rounds)

Motion (Bill): That the PB recognises that John E, although never formally admitted as a member of the Spartacist League, has been accepted as a member for many purposes and filled positions on the Sydney local executive and as secretary of the Sydney local. The PB resolves the unclarity by declaring that comrade Ebel's status is that of candidate member, to be reviewed on the receipt of a report from a control commission, on the questions raised by the letters of comrades Sharpe (30 May 1974) and Brosius (23 June 1974) and his verbal and written responses to their letters, with particular regard to the matter of the comrades honesty to the tendency.

[Put in counterposition to Adaire's motion]

For: PB: Bill, Joel
alt CC: John, Dave R, Dave S
other: Keith

passed

Motion (Adaire): That John E apply for membership of the SLANZ and that the application be decided by the PB on the basis of findings by a Control Commission appointed to investigate his functioning while overseas and on return to Australia.

For: PB: Adaire

failed

Meeting closed: 12.00 p.m.