

S P A R T A C I S T L E A G U E

I N T E R N A L I N F O R M A T I O N B U L L E T I N

Available Documentary Background to the Moore, Cunningham
Opposition(s) and the Treiger Defection

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Sharpe to Moore/20 Dec.71

Appended to PB No. 43

[Bonn]

[Boston]
Dec. 20, 1971

Dear Bill,

The International meeting yesterday was a real swinger (JR, me, Judy, Liz, Helen, Crouch and GK). It sort of culminated in a shouting match between Judy and Jim, in which he accused you of mounting a conspiracy out of arrogance to circumvent the authority of the PB and institute the Grenzebach line on Germany. Namely, of forming a bloc with Bolfra without authority to do so and getting me and Judy to act as a "secretariat" to administer it. There was a whole lot of other stuff too, but that is the basics. The PB is outraged because it thinks you acted without authority (and us here did some too), intervening factionally when you shouldn't have. As far as I can see, the following is the case:

1) The SL is indeed in a de facto informal bloc with the Bolfra people Having 300 copies of the t.u. document and of youth-party relations at the conference in a situation where it was well known that they would be used factionally amounts to support for Bolfra. (Aside: the text on the t.u. doc. table of contents is not correct: it was forwarded to the PB for action, but not approved by the conference. That is my mistake). Also, generally, it seems you have been giving them lots of fuel for the fire in terms of arguments, etc. while--possibly-- (this is one of the things that came up) holding back? on other things, such as the nature of the SPD.

2) Because of that, the PB is furious about its authority being circumvented. It is true that up to the conference you sent no reports to the N.O. The material in the documents is not sufficient for two reasons: first it is much too long to translate and is difficult to summarize adequately, and second much of it is completely inconclusive. The Bolfra Platform for example only refers to other documents in key places (docs. which we do not have) and is vague in others. In addition, I have the feeling that the documents are not all that is at issue. It would have been most helpful to have a history and development report before the conference, even though it was a factional situation etc. As it is, Bolfra seems better in some respects, but not qualitatively (as Jim put it). e.g. the "freedom of criticism" of the joint statement is bad; the original Bolfra document is weak and vague, other questions (SPD) need a lot of discussion, etc.

As to the question of circumventing the PB authority: on the one hand there seems to me little question that in some sense that occurred, on the other hand there were certainly adequate signs as to what was going on which could easily have been clarified. To a certain degree I have the feeling that the PB is mad because it got caught not being aware of something it should have been aware of. That is, as opposed to Jim's claim that you, Judy and maybe me were "consciously concealing" what was going on from the PB.

3) However, everybody is also aware that as Jim said, "you may have a good thing going." Or as he said to me at one point, that people are ok if they do things by the rules and if it fails, or if they don't do things by the rules and it works. If Bolfra is the real

thing, then it is a horse of a different color. If they really intend to use the Declaration of principles as a basic document, that is a different matter. But in order to know that we have to know more about them, and about the past of IKD-Spartacus relations. I have the feeling for example, that there are more things going on than are in the documents. The resignation of Otto, for example, seems really strange. Is it just demoralization, or what? Or is there something else?

Since I have the feeling that Bolfra probably will work out, I suspect that though things will be hostile for a while there is little permanent damage. One thing that did come up, though, that seems important, is that channels should be kept open both to the IKD and to other groups e.g., the Austrians, small though they may be, what is left of the OCI group (IAK/Junge Garde) after the IC split. If part of them have split off, the other part must be disoriented. Hopefully you have gotten the papers with the long articles about the split and Bolivia. Why not ask to meet with them? The analogy people here used was the CT/PO in the SWP. Although the CT seemed closer to us initially, there is difficulty with them (although they have agreed to formal talks), as they have a notion of pride and independence which I gather makes talks difficult. On the other hand, the PO, though apparently further, has in fact been more open and willing to talk with us (thus breaking party discipline). There have been several talks, with Dave and Jim, which apparently have been quite good. So if we had accepted the CT's estimate of the PO, we would have been left out in the cold and not bothered with them. Whereas now it looks like we have a good chance to get them both in the next couple of months. So....even if things look bad or insignificant, at least talk and dump lit. on them, I would say. Also, according to Jim, the combination of the U. Sec. split with the SWP and the IC split makes everything chaotic, but also ripe for us.

We will be going to France probably between Feb. 15 and Mar. 1 for about 5 months, and hopefully will be able to get a lit. distribution and translation cell going. Also to gather materials, make reports, etc. In lots of ways I am glad I don't have either the capacity or the opportunity to get into a factional situation (not to speak of the wrath of the NO!). It will make things easier, both personally and as far as getting any academic work done. Before we leave, I hope to get the Statement of Principles trans. into French and may be able to start some distribution, at least.

I guess Judy was going to write today and you will no doubt be getting a letter from the NO shortly--which should be quite a blast. Let's just hope the bloc doesn't turn out to be rotten and that things are not definitively busted up with the IKD and other groups. That way we would be left with nothing.

My job situation is unclear. Looks like a 50-50 chance at least that I will still be at Brandeis for one more year. I should know more after the MLA conference in Chicago right after Christmas. Will write then.

Comradely,

[John S.]

Moore to PB/26 Dec.71

Appended to PB No. 43

PB, SL
New York, N.Y., USA

Bonn, Dec.26, 1971

Dear Comrades:

I have just received a letter from Comrade Stuart summarizing the recent PB discussion and the meeting in Boston on Dec. 19, 1971. While this in no sense can be regarded as an official notification of the decisions, the results seem unambiguous enough to make immediate comment on them necessary. Apparently the PB has decided that I am guilty of the following political infractions:

1. Deciding policy for the PB by consummating a 'bloc' with Bolfra
2. That Comrade Stuart and I have been involved in a 'conspiracy' to deceive the PB as to the real situation here in Germany.
3. That I have a split perspective, that is, I have the notion of splitting with the SL in order to discredit the SL in the eyes of Bolfra.

Notwithstanding the phone call, and my last two reports (Dec. 14 and 15) certain members of the PB seems hell-bent in proving not only indiscipline on my part, but, more seriously, outright lying, since if my previous explanations are not accepted, one can only conclude that I have been lying. These accusations are completely groundless, the product of over-worked imaginations. You seem to forget Comrades that one must prove specific acts of indiscipline, and unfortunately for the accusers there is not one shred of evidence to support these slanders. Taking these accusations in order:

1. If I have consummated a 'bloc' with Bolfra, what sort of bloc is it? If you attempt to assert that I have intervened in the fraction fight here on the side of Bolfra, this can easily be refuted. If I had why didn't the IKD protest, if not to me, then to New York. If I had intervened they would have raised bloody hell, and demanded my expulsion from the Spartacus conference. The only other meaning of 'bloc' presumably would be some 'secret' agreement that I have made with Bolfra in the name of the PB! I have repeatedly stated that no such agreement exists. If Helen comes she can easily verify this by asking the Bolfra leadership. (But, of course, given the fact that all these accusations are based on pure imagination, it would not be difficult for the leadership to imagine that I had forewarned the Bolfra not to say anything to the PB about this agreement!). If these meanings of the term 'bloc' are excluded, what remains? The PB seems to have confused my private opinion as to the desirability of rapprochement with Bolfra, with my public stance vis a vis the IKD and Bolfra. It is elementary in diplomatic situations like this that a representative not only has the right to his opinion, but has the duty to argue for a change in the policy of the leadership. When you appoint a CC member as official representative in Europe, you have to give him some leeway to maneuver, this in no case means changing the line of the organization. I have attempted within the obvious limits of my position to recruit Bolfra to our politics. This necessarily involved pointing out that the general line they were attempting to pursue could only logically end up as building an org. around our politics. This is a pedigogical effort, an attempt to develop an unfinished political

tendency in our direction. This is precisely what Comrade Robertson wanted done (at least in August), this is precisely our duty in the international Trotskyist movement, or would the PB prefer a different formulation akin to Cannon's post war know-nothingism? Precisely, what were my acts of indiscipline: Showing Hans the draft document for the international bulletin? Telling Spartacus (B-L) that we considered them the continuation of Spartacus (KJO), wished to maintain fraternal relations, and wished that they would participate in the international discussion? Or was my chief error discussing our differences with the IKD, differences which the Bolfra comrades to their joy found they shared with us?

2. While the first accusation, even at this point, could conceivably be based on misunderstanding, the accusation of 'conspiracy' against Comrade Stuart and myself would be ridiculous nonsense, if it did not have a characteristic political thrust. Of course, as is well known to all comrades, the accusation of 'conspiracy' relieves the accuser of the necessity of proving specific acts of indiscipline. (I suggest that the comrades re-read MB's 2 and 3 to refresh your memory, especially, on Dobb's formulation of the question). Apart from bundles of WV, the N.O. has been completely inactive in supplying me with lit. It was a scandal that I did not have a packet of lit to sell at the Spartacus national conference. The only lit. I had came from...Boston (apart from WV). The decision to liquidate the Boston secretariat combined with the unfounded accusations against Comrades Stuart and John is an incredible act of folly, for which the PB will pay a heavy political price. Instead of receiving a commendation of their admirable and disciplined work in supplying me with lit. and translating and running-off the youth-party treaty and trade union program, these comrades have to endure a humiliating and unwarranted rebuke from the national leadership. Comrade Stuart has been functioning as a adjunct to the N.O. for a long time (recall that three leaflets for the SDS conference in 1970 were edited and run-off in Boston). Nothing could be more logical than to extend this to the international arena, especially, considering the fact that the N.O. was completely incapable of doing anything. I eagerly await the day when the N.O. reaches the efficiency of the Boston comrades. Yes comrades, the above amounts to 'conspiracy,' a conspiracy to disseminate SL propaganda in Europe, a conspiracy by dedicated comrades to fill the breach left by a non-functioning N.O. Make the most of it! (Has the PB even noted that the translations of the youth-party treaty and the trade union program mark a historic step forward in our work, the first time that we have been able to make our propaganda available in mass quantities to a foreign audience. And that by the end of next year, if not sooner, most of our basic positions will be available in German--not only MB 9, I).

3. The accusation of split perspective, like number two, only serves to discredit the present leadership. It only demonstrates that the leadership has confused personal loyalty to them with loyalty to the political line of the organization. This is nothing but the most blatant distortion of the Leninist concept of democratic centralism. My criticisms of the inaction in the international arena have been unreserved and will continue to be so as long as the present paralysis lasts. If you don't like comradely criticism, that is too damn bad, but such criticism implies in no way a split perspective.

It is plain to me that certain members of the PB (i.e. Robertson and Gordon) hope to cover up their own incompetence and dilletantism on the international questions through a slander campaign against me in the organization. I can only assure you that my confidence in the membership of the SL is unshaken: this will not work. I am not going to respond to this blatant provocation by leaving the org., or in any other undisciplined way. I am formally requesting that the PB's decision and report be distributed to all CC members, with my previous two reports (Dec. 14, 15, 1971) as the minority position (as well as this letter). In addition I would appreciate, as a CC member, some rational answer to the following questions:

1. Why has the N.O. been unable in four months to send me a bundle of lit. through sea post?
2. Why have I received no bundles of the RCY Newsletter?
3. Why was the PB unable to consider my draft article for the international bulletin for almost three months?

It is difficult to believe that the leadership is seriously considering not sending me lit. This would mean that the leadership had decided for purely factional reasons to liquidate our work here, precisely at the point when the most serious and disciplined support is necessary from the N.O. If this decision is made, it amounts to leaving Spartacus (B-L) to develop its program without our assistance, precisely the error that Cannon made in relation to Pablo-Mandel.

I have the following formal proposals to facilitate our work here:

1. Please send a large amount of lit. immediately through sea mail, esp., MB 9s, 5, 7, 8s, and the founding document of the RCY. If the 'Memorandum on the Transformation of the SL' is available (and I would be allowed to sell it) that as well.

2. I suggest that the SL invest in 5 copies of all numbers of Trotsky's Writings series, 5 In Defense of Marxism, 10 of Trotsky on the Labor Party, 10 Cannon on the Wallace campaign. Already through Comrade Stuart I arranged orders for the Bolfra (five of the first two items) and they were gone within twenty four hours. I can mark them up perhaps fifty cents to compensate for post and our work, and sell them very readily. This can only do us good (esp. the stuff on the FI and entrism).

3. Give John H. a complete list of our European contacts. It is possible with the help of our contacts in France and Germany that we could set up a European bureau. (four comrades will be in Europe simultaneously). Perhaps we could publish summaries of our positions in French and German and mail them to all our contacts. This would be an excellent opportunity to develop our tendency in Europe.

4. John should be given the official mandate of the PB to organize our various French contacts into a study circle on our politics, esp., emphasizing translation etc., with the goal of hardening them up for an entry into the Ligue Communiste.

I look forward to the formal receipt of the PB decision, plus exact and unambiguous instructions (written, of course) as to how I am to proceed in this delicate situation vis a vis Spartacus (B-L) and the IKD.

Comradely,
Moore

Moore to PB/26 Dec.71

4.

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P.S. I have stomach flu for the second time in two weeks. Therefore you will have to wait on a detailed reports of the post factional situation. In general Bolfra has been making progress; except for Hamburg-Kiel, Frankfurt, and some strength in Rhein-Westphalis the IKD is isolated in Berlin. The Spartacus (B-L) has succeeded in bringing over the main cadres of the IKD in the south west, which is an important victory.

CC: Files, Stuart, John H.

Moore to Sharpe/31 Jan. 72

Appended to PB No.43

[Bonn]
Jan 31, 1972

[Boston]

Dear John:

Received your modest proposal (of Jan. 25) today: I agree with its fundamental thrust wholeheartedly. However, I think the priority, at this point, should be given to our own material. I am proposing in a report to the NO (today) that we publish two Marxist Bulletins: the first would be basically MB 9, part 1 with the org. rules, without the Black and the red; the second would include "Chinese Menshevism" (already translated into rough draft into German), the Bolivian article (being translated), the article on the split in the IC, and possibly the draft TU program. These would be published in German, French, and Italian (my Italian friend is going ahead with "The Statement of Principles," Trotsky, "Class, Party, Leadership," and the second part of the TU). I think the best situation would be to use the print shop in Koln which Sp (B-L) uses. The owner lets a worker sympathizer use his offset press on weekends for next to nothing (the printer works there). We couldn't ask for a better set up.

On the other issues:

1. Breaking discipline: this is really a smoke screen and nonsense. I wrote two letters in Nov. (1, 8) outlining my perspectives. In the letter on the first I said: (in the context of translating the TU program) 'I am corresponding to John in Boston over the possibilities of translations.' In the letter of Nov. 8 I clearly stated my intention of distributing SL propoganda in German at the conference: 'Since the Spartacus conference is at the end of November (26-27) it would be foolish to hand over these leaflets to the IKD now in hopes that they will distribute them at the conference and they certainly will get full distribution there.' Where was the youth-party document run off? Why was nothing done at this point to indicate to me (or to you and Judy) that the distribution of our propoganda in German was interpreted by the PB as an organizational maneuver. Why was the mimeoing of the youth-party treaty in Boston passed over in silence. Nelson replied to me: 'So, the point is one of tactical caution in a situation that is coming our way already. This doesn't mean that they are going to 'control' our distribution of literature in Germany, and doesn't mean that you should cease and desist, etc. Just go easy up through the conference period and don't get caught out on some formal basis, as long as your general access to the minority people remains as open as it has been.' OK, at no time have I been caught out on a formal basis. The condition of my attendance at the Spartacus conference was that I wasn't to intervene. I didn't. I asked for permission to sell literature, and I got it. No one said anything about the TU program, etc., or objected in any way to my presence or actions. Where in Nelson's letter is there any hint that printing stuff in Boston (not anything new, but positions which we have held for years) was illegitimate, or conspiratorial, or anything? Since when is it breaking discipline to reprint SL documents (not to speak of the local's right to issue leaflets, which I do not claim or even suggest). There was no breaking of party discipline at any time by any of the comrades involved. What was not actionable in November cannot be actionable in December. At

most, the PB can make the decision for whatever reasons they like, that the Boston secretariat was a bad idea, etc., and things should be centralized from now on. On the formal question the N.O. has no case. This issue is a complete red herring, obscuring our fundamental political duties in the international arena.

2. The bloc once again. Whether the Bolfra made political hay out of the TU program and youth-party treaty is irrelevant. The fundamental question is: Do we allow our fraternal relationship with a group to interfere with the struggle for our program. The question of 'Bloc' raises the spectre of Pablo's factional maneuvers, secret factions, opportunist deals etc. If the shoe were on the other foot, i.e., if an IKDer sold an English translation of the KJO program at our RCY conference, and there was a strong tendency sympathetic to the ideas of the KJO program would that constitute, automatically, a bloc? If our PB regarded it as such, I would have to oppose that interpretation. If our fraternal relations mean anything (and the cases of the RCL and the IKD they mean very little indeed), we must allow for the right to distribute propaganda to our members, even, especially when it hurts. Otherwise there is no alternative to Pablo's organizational methods. The position of the PB strikes me as very dangerous indeed, especially, if they pursue the question of my alleged infractions. They are writing a brief for the IKD's own anti-internationalism and national particularism. By refusing (at least in retrospect) to allow me to distribute our own propaganda here, they are placing the organizational tie with the IKD ahead of our clear political duty to all comrades here to clarify and explain our political positions. This is doubly necessary when it is precisely these positions that are under debate (the transitional program, etc.). To argue the contrary, as I have said before, is liquidationism.

3. I have received no written communication from the N.O. since 11 Nov. 1971. If they really believed half of what they say, why haven't I been informed directly and officially of the PB's opinions? This is raising 'non-functioning' to the level of principle, and daring the critics to say something. Without lit. I am seriously handicapped here, and it is clear to me they have no intention of sending any to me, for the present at least. Every practical proposal I make falls on deaf ears. (The next Sp (B-L) conference is coming up and once again I will have to take pre-paid orders which means that I will sell perhaps half or a third as much lit.)

4. Org. functioning; A short list of atrocities: the Broue article which I spent a month on, turned in about ten months ago. Where is it? I was promised that if translated it would appear immediately. The SWP conference intervention in August, which someone (!) forgot, our comrades arrived a day or two late, the draft article for the international discussion, the bulletin itself, etc. If the only reply they can make is 'vote us out' that amounts to saying: the only way you can remedy this problem is to throw us out of the leadership. One should take this opinion 'under advisement.'

5. Arrogance: I find it hard to believe that in a Bolshevik organization ad hominem methodology should find so ready an acceptance (you repeat their opinion without comment). I am not going to descend to the level of engaging in a struggle over personalities. That may be

Moore to Sharpe/31 Jan.72

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Appended to PB No.43

arrogance, but the fundamental questions are political and can only be dealt with on a political level. As far as I am concerned such ad hominem remarks only confirm my earlier assessment of the basically unpolitical, fractionally motivated character of this discussion.

6. Coming back to the US: I have no money to do so, if they want me to they will have to pay. In any case I haven't heard a word.

Comradely,

Bill

CC: Files, Stuart

LETTER FROM ROBERTSON TO MOORE

New York
24 February 1972

Bonn, W. Germany

Dear Comrade Moore,

Since your letter to the PB of 26 December 1971 we have felt at a complete impasse in our relations with you. Consequently we have temporized, considering and re-considering the situation.

In our view your letter of 26 December and your continuing adherence to the attitudes and characterization of the PB there expressed quite transcended our earlier concerns about your work as our representative and has made impossible such representation as things stand. We have come to believe that the only possible means--that is available and practical--to seek a positive resolution of this situation is for you to immediately come to New York for a week of exhaustive clarification and confrontation with the PB. Toward this end we are prepared, if necessary, to defray a portion of your air fare.

It would indeed appear desirable that a spokesman for the SL "give our line on the international movement at the next conference" of the Spartacus-BL as you have been invited to do according to your letter to us of 31 January 1972.

But such a spokesman or any member of the SL can only attend or speak if an invitation is extended to the SL as such, i.e. to the National Office. Then we can make a final determination on the basis of the content and conditions of such an invitation.

Fraternally,

James Robertson

cc: Boston CC, Bay Area CC

LETTER FROM MOORE TO THE PB

Bonn,
28 February 1972

PB, NY
USA

Dear Comrades:

Today I have received Comrade Robertson's letter of 24 Feb. I am willing to fly to the US to discuss the outstanding differences, but need financial support before I leave. The economics of the problem are very simple: I have about 250 DM in the bank. The cheapest flight (from Luxem-bourg) would cost around 528 DM (plus transportation to Luxembourg, and expenses in the US). In addition I have outstanding debts (especially for xeroxing) which must be paid this week, or I will be denied access to the materials which I must see. In a word, even if I spent my whole monthly allowance and savings I would not have enough money to cover the plane ticket, my rent here, outstanding debts, and expenses in New York. Perhaps we can agree on a ratio in New York to be paid at a later date (i.e. the summer) when I have a substantial amount of money coming in.

It is ironic that while Sp-BL is using 'Chinese Menshevism' as the central text in its present national campaign against Maoism (two pamphlets plus an eight part educational series and leaflets), and when our 'Statement of Principles' is published as part of the Sp-BL pre-conference discussion, the PB should decide to decertify the representative responsible for these breakthroughs. In any case, I have considered the Boston discussions (even though I was never informed officially of the PB's decisions) as a defacto decertification. Therefore, I have not sought to contact the German Lambertists, have not attempted to explain our unclear line vis-a-vis the IKD/BL to the IKD, and finally have not sought participation in the Sp-BL local and/or central committee meetings. The allegation of 'conspiracy' was in my view a decisive, qualitative characterization of my work here. The polemical tone of the 26 December letter was only an expression of the above determination. I had hoped the PB would feel the responsibility to substantiate its charges in written form to me, but it is clear that the very groundlessness of the charges makes it impossible for the PB to put them on paper. Thus the necessity for a verbal confrontation, when the issue could have been resolved through written discussion. If the PB believes I am guilty of both organizational and political infractions, they should have both the responsibility and the comradely courtesy to specify them quite concretely to me. If they do not believe such allegations, there are no grounds for the whole controversy.

The policy of the PB in the entire spectrum of our international work today can certainly be characterized as 'temporizing.' In spite of the fact that this situation in Germany (as well as in Europe generally) is the hottest that we have been faced with in years, the PB has chosen to drag its heels at every point, even refusing to provide the minimum organizational support (literature) necessary to political work here. In my view the present course of the PB,

Letter from Moore to the PB, 28 Feb 1972 2.

especially in regard to the intervention in the December Spartacus conference, borders perilously close to liquidationism.

As far as my invitation to the conference goes: it was given to me as the representative of the SL, not to me personally. Hans, who stands closest to us, has been seriously ill, and therefore is out of party work entirely. Therefore, I am not sure of the status of the invitation as of today. I will request that a formal invitation be sent to the NO. I have no vested interest in personally giving this report (in any case the general lines would be quite clear). I certainly have no objection to the PB designating anyone it chooses to conduct this intervention. The remark 'But such a spokesman or any member of the SL can only attend or speak if an invitation is extended to the SL as such, i.e., to the National Office. Then we can make a final determination on the basis of the content and conditions of such an invitation.' is an incredible piece of formalism and conservatism in relation to a half-formed tendency which is frankly and openly seeking our advice, and which has already spent dozens of hours translating our political documents. Would the PB also argue that if the IKD had invited me to speak at their conference or the December Spartacus conference (I mean on the spot), I would have had to remain silent, since it would have been impossible to secure PB permission immediately?

Fraternally,

Moore

cc: files, Stuart

Robertson to Sharpe/6 Mar.72

Appended to PB No.43

New York
6 March 1972

Paris

Dear John:

I am responding to your letters of 27 Feb. and 3 March, the latter received today. Actually, on your specific suggestions for the agenda of the proposed meeting with comrade Moore, we don't differ and, further, it seems to me to be pretty much the way in which we decided to proceed as a result of the discussions in the recent PB meeting which you attended.

The reason, however, that I'm making an immediate reply to your letters is because your argumentative framework seems to me all wrong and I believe reflects a lot of continuing disorientation by you.

You make a number of points about factual accuracy and exaggerations at various points and in various discussions. Most, right or wrong, are trivial except as they relate to an appraisal of Moore himself, which I'll try to touch on below. But two of the points which you have raised I believe to be verifiably wrong and of major significance in the issues of the dispute.

A) In comrade Moore's letter to us of 26 Dec. he quotes comrade Stuart to the effect that "Apparently, the PB has decided that I am guilty of the following political infractions:...3. That I have a split perspective, that is, I have the notion of splitting with the SL in order to discredit the SL in the eyes of Bolfra."

When it was pointed out to you by those in the Boston meeting and also by the PB itself that no such PB decision had ever been made, uttered or implied by anybody, you defended comrades Stuart/Moore by saying that you did recall, unlike the rest of us, that I had made a reference in the course of some of my remarks in the Boston meeting in indicating the impossibility of Moore's current posture, underlying my point by some such query as 'what's he going to do, split and join Bolfra?' One must torture reality into falsehood to twist your recollection, which may well be true, into substantiation of the Stuart/Moore "PB decision" and it would be much better for the clarity of your mental processes to plainly acknowledge that. If the Stuart/Moore point 3 is not a lie made out of the whole cloth by them it would only be because it was a reflection of their thinking at that time, rather than of our intervention then to simply bring the runaway Boston-Bonn operation under control, to which we got the declaration of war in the 26 Dec. Moore letter.

B) In your letter to us of 27 Feb. you list an alleged verbal error by several comrades in the PB discussion: "3) Several comrades took up the question of Bill's analogy of the RCL or IKD selling lit at our conference. They put it in terms of a minority of those orgs. selling to a majority of the SL--but Bill's statement in the Jan. 31 letter is that of simply selling SL lit: i.e., as organizational rep." I don't know what the comrades said but we have Moore's letter of 31 Jan. to you. The core of his most developed political position is "If the shoe were on the other foot, i.e., if an IKDer sold an English

translation of the KJO program at our RCY conference, and there was a strong tendency sympathetic to the ideas of the KJO program would that constitute, automatically, a bloc? If our PB regarded it as such, I would have to oppose that interpretation. If our fraternal relations mean anything (and the cases of the RCL and the IKD they mean very little indeed), we must allow for the right to distribute propaganda to our members, even, especially when it hurts." Putting it most clearly Moore asserts the right of fraternal foreign organizations to intervene with written materials into our internal factional struggles upon the initiative presumably of either the other organization or a minority in ours and over the head of our leadership. What comrade Moore wrote is wrong, independently of your attribution that PB members were referring to some minority of the foreign organization making such an intervention.

Let me try to indicate why this would be wrong and was wrong when Moore in effect did to the IKD what he now defends in general terms and therefore as applicable to us too. "Fraternal relations" applies between organizations in general standing fairly close together within the international Trotskyist movement but having some programmatic differences or at least major unclarities between them. Relations in each case are defined specifically and concretely. (When the RCL-~~IKD~~-SL met in London we worked out a certain minimal agreement rather than the more fully elaborated one which the SL had proposed. All this was noted in our PB minutes.) In the absence of specific agreements to the contrary a "fraternal group" has no more rights toward and within our organization than any other section of the socialist or labor movements. The RCL-~~IKD~~-SL agreement was that we would discuss literarily organization to organization i.e. majority to majority. Therefore on our initiative a little later we ordered comrade Carter out of internal RCL meetings when factionalism broke out in that organization and her presence aroused suspicion and resentment.

Even if the organizations being discussed had essential programmatic agreement and were sections therefore of a commonly disciplined international organization the procedure defended by comrade Moore would be capricious, disruptive and therefore wrong. The intervention of either majority or minority of one section into the internal affairs of another section would be closely regulated by the international leadership and in no case undertaken simply upon the initiative of a local majority or minority. Indeed we do not permit such conduct between branches of the SL. Comrade Moore seems to have accepted and defends the essential kernel of the organizational practices of both the IKD and Bolfra, which are departures from Leninism. But you have evidently not seen this and instead have sought to defend Moore against the straw-man of alleged misstatements by some PB members. Please, please think through what comrade Moore wrote and come to a position yourself on that.

A small but thoroughly irritating point. In your letter of 3 March you urge us not "to get bogged down in the other questions--lit. orders, translations, etc." Ye gods and little fishes! Comrades Stuart/Moore have endlessly pilloried us about that kind of shit and you've been no mean inquisitor yourself. We tacitly assumed that there must have been something to "our failures" over lit. orders but

it was your investigation which seemed to show pretty clearly that we never got any of the disputed orders. We acquiesced without dispute to the National Office's paying \$75 for something we still know not what which Stuart sent Moore last fall without so far as we know any prior authorization. We have not yet made an issue of comrade Stuart's selective revelation, use and dissemination of Moore's correspondence with her, while refusing to show it to representatives of the Central Committee after having volunteered to do so. We probably will have to carefully unravel the question of translations of our material into German in order to demonstrate what you had already acknowledged repeatedly in the Boston meeting of 19 Dec. and substantiated in your letter of 20 Dec. to Moore, namely that Moore made a selective translation pattern in order to bolster Bolfra in its faction fight with the IKD, i.e., made a political bloc, rather than to bring to the whole Spartacus-~~IKD~~ our most fundamental material stressing those positions where we are most seriously at odds with them all in order to develop a fundamental agreement with our views while remaining at the same time as far as possible from their internal affairs. At a certain point of course the tension created by the application of such a contradictory policy results in polarization. But then we know where we are and with whom. In any case in all this wrangling it has been the PB that has hung hardest and stuck closest to the decisive points of what we believe to be Moore's disruptive unprincipled Pabloist mode of intervention into the German situation and his initial substitution of his own judgement for that of the PB. He first kept us in the dark and when we sought to call him to account he then responded with instant, unlimited, venomous hostility, thus defying our centralist mode of existence.

Your last two letters are sprinkled with subjective characterizations to which I think you hope to attach decisive significance as regards the dispute with Moore. In your letter of 27 Feb. to the PB you argue that we should "modify the characterization of Moore by R. as a (finished) enemy and a roadblock to European work....i.e. that his attitude is not irreversible, but that regarding him as a definitive 'enemy' might help make him one." And in your letter of 3 March to me you amplify this central thought: "I was and am quite disturbed by what I see as the PB returning Moore's characterizations in kind. To his accusation of incompetence, you return that he is arrogant. And so on and so forth." And: "I have the feeling that the whole thing is taking on somewhat the nature of working out personal antagonisms between Moore and others, yourself in particular." And: "I would also say that I would consider you and Moore as similar personality types."

Poor John! Sad is the fate of the good guy. In point 5, of Moore's letter to you of 31 Jan. he takes you to task for passing on the phrase about him that he is "arrogant," crying out in reply about false "ad hominum methodology" and "I am not going to descend to the level of engaging in a struggle over personalities " [with those lying incompetent bureaucratic swine]. And that "the fundamental questions are political" thus validating his "earlier assessment of the basically unpolitical, fractionally motivated character of this discussion."

Now its my turn: I think you are embracing a fatuous optimism, because, if the dispute can be reduced to a clash of personalities,

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there is indeed the possibility of an easy painless resolution. We manage to work with some pretty hard cases in the SL, and even on warm comradely terms at that. We are not a girl scout cell. For experienced communists personality can and does have no other meaning than how we weigh one another with regard to our commitment to the party program and our capacities in the discharge of the party's tasks. I "like" you, John, for just those reasons that I praised you in the PB meeting you were at. I "dislike" you for having to write this letter to you. What else is there. In the case of Moore, his qualities on both sides of the scale are very large. He has shifted the balance from for the SL to against it, hence I "liked him very much," now I "dislike him very much." Because of his powerful qualities for good or ill the PB and I personally have moved only with hesitation and with a great deal of thought on the Moore question. If we can break him from his present course, about which I am doubtful (in view of the knowledge of those of us who know him best), then I would again "like him very much."

The people that I "dislike" the most are those who demonstrate the maximum of organizational factionalism for the minimum of political differences. We had a big fight with Ellens-Turner. Toward the "personality" of Ellens I am today pretty neutral. She had decisive programmatic differences and is today endeavoring to build a semi-syndicalist and a-political revolutionary workers organization. Turner still nominally adheres to the essentials of our program, albeit replete with left-centrist grovelling to any opportune force he can locate. And he has conducted a venomous public struggle against us for three years. I do not like Harry Turner. Comrade Moore has tended to resemble Turner more than Ellens, but insofar as we can verify it still considers himself an SL member.

Moore through self-assuredness and inexperience and as an isolated representative created and conducted a bad policy behind our backs and locked on in the ensuing confrontation which he immediately qualitatively escalated to a total de facto break in relations between himself and the PB, two evident equals in his eyes.

I don't know how similar Moore and I are as dinner companions, but our political characters as demonstrated in the course of this dispute have been quite different. The instant war to the knife was his. The PB proposed his return for consultation, the only way that we could think to resolve the impasse other than by an all-out attack on him. He did not initiate any such suggestion. Instead in his 31 Jan. letter to you he wrote "Coming back to the US: I have no money to do so, if they want me to they will have to pay." Why do you not see the difference in "personality"? Further, until that letter of 31 Jan., as you should know because you were told it several times and saw it in the Boston meeting my personal position within the PB was among the softer of the individual opinions. Perhaps you fail to distinguish soft positions sharply expressed from harsh positions mildly expressed.

So what about the "politics"? There are some. Basically Moore has overwhelmingly expressed alleged organizational grievances but he's sprinkled through them the starting points for political differences along the lines of the N.O. being anti-internationalist

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and liquidationist as well as soft on Pabloism, i.e. tending to read us as, say, the SWP of 1948-58. As noted above we charge that with his letter to you of 31 Jan. he elevated his conduct to the level of a differing position on the vanguard party.

A couple of final points. We have just heard from comrade Moore in response to our letter to him of 24 Feb. telling him that as things stand it is impossible for him to act as our representative and urging his return for consultation. He leaves the question of a visit to New York up in the air on financial grounds and we will seek negotiations with him on this. He tells us that ever since he heard from Stuart and you about the Boston meeting he has considered that he was no longer our representative and tells us of the large amount of work which he has therefore not undertaken. In effect he says 'you can't suspend me from my job, didn't you know I quit 10 weeks ago?' What then are we to make of the several "model" reports we got in the interim and of the correspondence he had with you about translations and extension of contact throughout Europe? Not to mention several requests to us for "exact instructions"? Then and/or now we are presented with a clear case of bad faith.

In the course of my working week my ordinary urgent national office tasks permits only two or three intervals of working on the International Discussion Bulletin, writing foreign comrades, carrying through special projects or producing a letter such as this.

But as Moore has noted in his own way, such limitations on my available time are an index of our inefficiency. Rather than interminable letters, quarrels, etc., the way we are moving out of our interlocked impasse is by the continuing concentration of able forces in the center in a functioning division of labor (the first big fruit of which is the Workers Vanguard--never forget: now we have a monthly, we almost never did before!). You have some virtually unique capacities to offer in our growing division of labor.

I think the time here taken is justified because you have communicated both partial but potentially serious divergences for which there is hope to reconcile in written discussion but which if left unattended could cause you to drift over time to a kind of position to which comrade Moore leaped in a single jump.

Comradely,
Jim Robertson

cc: file

SPECIAL POLITICAL BUREAU MINUTES (No. 43).....10 March 1972

Present: Full PB: Treiger, Robertson, Cunningham, Cantor, Seymour, Kinder, Schaefer

Alt CC: Benjamin, Shiffman, Jennings, Moore

Staff: Rogers, Allen

Absent: Full PB: Nelson (on assignment), Gordon (l.o.a.)

Meeting convened 12:30 a.m.

- Agenda: 1. Attendance
- 2. Organization of Meeting
- 3. Moore

1. Attendance: Moore requests that Stuart be admitted to this meeting, as she is a leading comrade of the Boston local who has been involved in the international work and will be going to Europe shortly; he notes that under bourgeois law the accused has the right to face his accuser. However, there are no accusations against Stuart to be presented at this meeting, and her role in connection with international work has been severed. She can be called upon as a witness if any comrade so wishes, but she should not be a participant in this meeting. If our general perspectives for Europe are discussed, she could be admitted on that point. disc: Moore, Robertson Stuart, Robertson

Motion: That Stuart be admitted to this meeting with voice.
for: Moore
opposed: everybody else
motion defeated

2. Organization of Meeting: This is a PB meeting with two particular aspects; it is a preliminary inquiry of a semi-judicial nature into Moore's functioning in Germany, and also, since Moore has declared himself in writing to be a minority, it has the nature of a political confrontation. Propose a debate structure to the meeting, emphasizing the latter aspect; that a reporter for the PB speak first, followed by Moore; that each receive a total of 65 minutes speaking time, to be divided as they choose between presentation and summary, and that comrades authorized to speak get 10 minutes each. disc: Kinder, Moore

Motion: To adopt the outlined procedure. passed

3. Moore:
Presentation by Cunningham (for the Political Bureau):
 The situation we are faced with represents probably the most serious potential rupture in the organization since 1968, because fundamental political differences have been raised and the difference goes into our cadre, that is, Moore himself. In this particular situation, Moore has not been functioning under the direction of a local, so his behavior raises the question of the right of the CC and PB to oversee and determine policy generally. What is important is not merely to reassert our own authority, but to change Moore's consciousness. This would be a bad time for us to have a faction fight; in '68 we were in a period of decline, but to be forced to internalize ourselves for a period if there's no resolution coming out of these meetings, when we have the potential to double our size, would be to miss precious opportunities and set us back. This meeting marks a certain terminus--our reputation in Europe is at stake.

There are two interlocked political points I want to focus on; 1) the Democratic centralist nature of this organization and the right of our CC to have a monopoly over the public political lives of all our members, and 2) the Pabloist functioning of Moore in Germany. On the first question, Moore's written polemic tends to raise the question of the organization's inefficiency to the level of implied political liquidationism on our part, and there are scattered throughout his recent writings the implicit accusation of anti-internationalism.

On what did and did not happen in Europe: we politically characterize Moore's functioning as Pabloist, specifically the rotten bloc made with one wing (Bolfra) against the other (IKD) in the German fraternal organization, which was unsanctioned by the PB. I have read all the available letters, and I think there is a clear enough statement of Moore's intention as early as November, where one can see a willingness to go with one side against the other; possibly we could have caught that tendency then, but it's hard to tell. We have a situation where neither side reads English well, the materials chosen for translation were selective; so that translating those materials and no others initially and the pressure on us to get out the International Discussion Bulletin tended to aid one side against the other. Even assuming the youth and trade union draft document translations inadvertently strengthened Bolfra, the pressure which comes through in Moore's letters to get out the IDB recognizes the IDB would have aided Bolfra; Moore has said 'we lost people because the IDB didn't come out.' Their publication of the "Chinese Menshevism" article is not a central question. Our fundamental characterization of the whole IKD/Spartacus at the time of the split was that both wings refused to recognize the need for a strategic approach to the SPD, and that this was decisive and the other questions were secondary. Moore's behavior has the quality of a maneuver; when Nelson wrote Moore indicating a general over-all pulling back from both wings, I don't believe he carried that out.

Our intervention from here came about because we knew very little of developments until after the split itself, when the PB became aware that the situation was running out of our control and a policy was being established and we were being faced with a fait accompli. We can't tell at this point if Bolfra is even a real organization; it appears to have relatively few cadres and the average age of its supporters is 21/22, and they are impressionable. The difficulty is that we may have created a monster; that is, by intervening in a Pabloist manner, using illegitimate organizational methods, Moore has proven against us all accusations of Pabloism, and in Bolfra may have created a transmission belt for Pabloist functioning throughout the German movement.

We have had prior experience with factional struggle inside fraternal organizations. When Socialist Current had a dispute over the Arab-Israeli war, we pulled back. The role of Voix Ouvriere in the '68 faction fight seems similar to Moore's behavior in Europe; in fact one of his recent letters culminates in a formulation defending generally this kind of technique. The PB was outraged when we pieced together all the implications of Moore's letters and pressure on us. Despite his charges of inefficiency, we attempted

to stop this. We sent a delegation to Boston to immediately centralize all our international work; Stuart wrote Moore about that meeting and on the basis of her report he made a sharp factional statement. Then we were faced with a real problem, as Moore requested precise instructions, and the only one we could give under the circumstances was to return home immediately; it would be utopian to pursue any other course.

The development in Boston of the creation of an alternate international center was probably unconscious, but it created a certain consciousness, and became a technique by which the inefficiency of the N.O. could be shunted aside. This is dangerous in the best case, and this certainly wasn't the best case. For example, supposing political questions arose over criticisms of the trade union document Boston sent out arose--that document was not an official Central Committee-approved draft, but once circulated we'd have to defend it, even if we couldn't politically.

We must keep in mind the character of our organization and its priorities. We can do only a couple of things at a time, and if those are done, it means we can't do certain other things. Our abilities are limited and we have a very thin layer of cadre. After the plenum it looked as though we could acquire the rudiments of a black cadre. We felt that in light of the fact that our relation with the IKD/RCL had at that time a certain pro forma quality, it was the time to go after attempting to develop the black cadre, so we sent Robertson, Gordon and Rogers to the West Coast, which took up all their time for a relatively lengthy period. We made a conscious decision on that, realizing if we did it, we could not proceed equally on certain other of our priorities. We are pulling cadre out of the youth organization in order to strengthen our fraternal section in New Zealand; it's possible this may damage the youth organization, but we must do it. The authority on which the SL rests has a slender base; nevertheless we decided to pull Nelson out of the center and transfer him to the West Coast, which again is a gamble, but it is necessary to salvage the West Coast. We must assess what it is possible for us to do, recognizing the alternatives. The priorities dominate, and we choose them very carefully. When all these considerations are taken into account, it becomes clear we did not suppress the IDB out of anti-internationalism, but because we chose another priority.

I don't know how to assess the situation in Germany. While recognizing Moore as an advocate of one side, we haven't got the material from the split itself translated; I don't know the issues of the split. Shiffman and I tried to sort out some material we had and couldn't figure it out; I at least don't feel very close to minds that can produce that kind of stuff. Moore wanted us to give material aid to and express solidarity with Bolfra and I'm not sure he's wrong, but I can't tell from the available documents.

On Moore's last letter; he was functioning almost as if he saw himself as an organization. He didn't turn in adequate reports until after he was aware of our attitude and after the Boston meeting; yet now he says that ever since the Boston meeting he hasn't been functioning as our representative, which is not his decision to make, and is a denial of democratic centralism.

Presentation by Moore:

Certain factual points need clarification. The reason the N.O. didn't get reports from November on was because of a language difficulty. Once I developed technical facility in German, reports did come in. I never received anything from the N.O. after the Boston meeting, but because of the questions that were raised there about my functioning, I did not want to represent the organization internationally; if the PB believed I was not carrying out our line, I felt whatever I could do would endanger the SL, so I pulled back. For example, I had a chance to go to Austria but didn't do so. I tried to remedy this situation in a letter of 26 December, but I received no reply until 2 months later.

On the organization's functioning: we have a very serious lack of high-quality technical functioning. I translated a French article, which has never been published yet; that shows a serious lack of preparation and commitment to our international work, because it's a sheer waste of our cadre's time. Is arch-typical. When Tweet was in Europe she wrote good reports, but heard nothing from the N.O. (except phone calls). The N.O. should keep people informed. I requested lit. packets, which fell on deaf ears. I sent money to the USA to Stuart; apparently over \$100 got lost somewhere; I only got Workers Vanguards, no RCY Newsletters, or youth NB minutes, etc.

The policy I followed I thought was Robertson's policy; his instructions to me were to attempt to recruit an authentic SL tendency in Germany, by declaring our program and attempting to develop them, by polemic against the whole group. Our long silence has produced the opposite effect, of a kind of non-aggression pact. What imperils our effect on them is that our program has never been presented in an authoritative form.

If I was deviating as early as the Nov. 1 letter there was plenty of time to get me in hand. I found that the fundamental differences Bolfra had with the IKD were also our differences, so I took their side. We've had a bad reward for our abstentionist policies; I think Bolfra, through our international propaganda, could have been our tendency from the beginning. This policy of our priorities was not told to me. The reconstruction of the Fourth International is not only a theoretical task, it is also a practical international task. The trip to Europe made by Nelson, Robertson and Gordon was a giant step; I think the disappointment and resignation resulting from the RCL/IKD's behavior caught us off guard.

We are not in a bloc with Bolfra. The accusation that I pursued an independent policy against the line of our organization rests solely on the fact that I distributed our propaganda. It's true I did believe the trade union draft was a CC-authorized document, but it contained our propaganda against the Stalinist and labor bureaucracies. I can't see why we'd object if the Germany communist youth organization wanted to distribute something to the RCY. It would be a Pabloist conception not to allow distribution of propaganda when we have fraternal relations.

The issues under discussion at that conference were the transitional program and international stuff. It would have been liquidationist had I not distributed our literature. I never in any public or internal discussions sided with Bolfra. If merely selling our literature is bad, then that's a fundamental misunderstanding on my part.

I can't understand the analogy to Tweet's actions in the RCL faction fight. Tweet's presence at a RCL conference resulted in a sharp reaction of the RCL against us, but we said in return not that Tweet was forming a bloc, but that the RCL should not discuss internal affairs with her. The IKD had a different policy; I asked them how I could intervene.

The accusation of making a bloc is related to the general question of my pursuing an independent policy. What have become political differences have arisen posing as a discipline question. I tried to indicate my perspectives in a letter to which Nelson replied, saying that since things seemed to be 'already going our way' to go easy and not get caught out "on some formal basis." I never was caught out on a formal basis. On the question of democratic centralism and the translations, I wrote the N.O. in November, about Sharpe doing translating. We don't have sufficient cadre for a self-contained bureaucracy; comrades are pulled in all the time for special mobilizations and I find it amazing that comrades should be attacked for this.

The discipline question is ex post facto logic. The PB in the discussion of what was going on in Germany reacted in an insecure fashion. I defend my policy which I believe was correct. Robertson recommended the RCY document be translated into German. I think the Boston meeting created real confusion, because comrades were drawn into it who had nothing to do with international work. Stuart and Sharpe ought to have been brought to a PB meeting and I ought to have been recalled immediately. I declared myself a minority because I felt it was the only way to proceed against an incorrect line. My criticisms are of the functioning of the organization, I have no criticisms of our general line. I think if this paralysis in functioning goes on long enough our theory will become an ideology and we must get our line across! The time is absolutely right now in Europe. It's not clear to me that we are sealed off from the Austrians.

I think Robertson's letter of 24 February concentrates overly on the question of my 'attitude,' which conveniently relieves the PB of proving specific acts of indiscipline. The only act the PB can rest its case on is the two translations that were done. The question of disqualifying a person because of being in a minority is very bad. 'Attitude' is not a question of political discipline. If it turns out Bolfra is not closer to us, will retract statements. Why wasn't an attempt made to give me the PB's line? On future perspectives; if the PB suspends my activity it will have bad consequences, particularly if I've been pursuing a correct line. On every fundamental issue Bolfra stands qualitatively away from the IKD.

My conclusion is that the PB's stand-offish attitude is bad. Merely reading Trotsky is not enough! I think we have the responsibility, if there is the possibility of developing an SL tendency, to take the chance. Our theoretical authority is very high, although Bolfra is somewhat suspicious because we are still maintaining ties with the IKD. The IKD policy towards me continues they have never invited me to a meeting. After the split Bolfra invited me to a few; I said I would contribute to programmatic discussion but not practical work. At that point, I got word of the PB's attitude and cooled it. I recommend that: a) we ought to try practical work with Bolfra; ought to send our German translations via Bolfra, that is, the distribution of our fundamental documents ought to go through Bolfra, from our central office to theirs (this doesn't exclude other tendencies, but is centered on Bolfra), b) we ought to translate and jointly publish (with Bolfra) Trotsky's works on entrism, centrism and the Fourth International, c) ought to have discussions of a common platform going beyond the Brussels Statement with Bolfra, d) we should encourage and possibly offer a subsidy for Bolfra leaders to come to the USA. Through Bolfra we'll have contacts in Hungary and Poland. While I don't think we should ignore differences on the SPD, we ought to probe where we have a common platform.

Discussion: (first round)

Seymour: I found Moore's remarks evasive; don't believe he didn't have discussions of future relations with Bolfra in course of the faction fight. Almost immediately after the split Moore raised the demand that we subsidize the group, which implies a very high degree of collaboration. The non-publication of the IDB was used against us in the faction fight! Why? The significance of the two translations was not known to us when we approved them. You should have recommended to us we effect a genuine bloc with Bolfra. Our present policy in Europe is essentially exploratory, much of the information you've just given us is also new to us. What basis do we have for subsidizing Bolfra? We don't have documentary evidence.

Shiffman: Moore's presentation was full of contradictions, sliding over the fact that he had a monopoly over literary production to Germany and of what we read or at least got translated. If Moore really respected the democratic-centralist character of the org., his first priority would have been to get German documents translated into English, particularly the split documents! That was scuttled. Especially if Moore wants an activist orientation on our part, he must give us the material--we still don't have the basis to make a qualitative distinction between Bolfra and the IKD. Bolfra seems to have a lot of crack-pot weird theories from what I've seen. One of our strong priorities is building a strong center, which you overlook; indeed when you went to Europe we felt regret as we felt it was better you should have stayed here. We might have instructed you to bloc with Bolfra, but we couldn't as we didn't know enough. Believe your actions in Europe will reinforce the hostility the German groups feel to Healyite organizational practice.

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Jennings: When Moore went to Bonn he was in contact with Spartacus minorityites, but wrote a cynical letter to the IKD expressing surprise at finding himself in their midst, after he'd already had prior contact with them, showing a callous attitude which probably the IKD sensed. What we objected to was not the fact of your distributing our propaganda, but the specific choices made. Haven't seen evidence in writing of Moore's raising the SPD question with both wings--that would have made a strong impression on them. Seems Moore has been suppressing our differences over the SPD. Am not surprised IKD didn't invite you to meetings after you moved in with a known minorityite.

Kinder: In going over the whole record, such as it is, critically and in somewhat sour hindsight, I'm in agreement with the other comrades' conclusions. Moore says he's willing to work under the PB's direction, then blames the N.O. for not telling him what to do; yet how can he ask that when we have not received sufficient material to base a decision on! Gordon wrote a letter of instruction, emphasizing our need for information. Nelson's letter, written when we weren't sure of the situation because of lack of information, said clearly to go through the IKD majority. The N.O. may be at fault for not giving precise enough directions; but it is more important for the org. to have confidence in its reps. than vice versa. It's more important that the center knows what's going on. Moore mentions only two possible acts of indiscipline; but what about the Boston center, what about Sharpe's belief we were indeed making a factional intervention, which was your doing? Your letter to IKD on finding yourself surprised to be in midst of minority seems disingenuous.

Schaefer: Gordon made the point in Boston that, in the SWP factional situation, the CT initially seemed much closer to us. Had we impressionistically leaped towards them it would have been a severe mistake; later developments show elements of the PO moving very close to us, and the CT is now hostile. Your functioning displayed a lack of experience. The IKDers ignoring you is not surprising considering you were living in a minorityite house and refused to move out.

Benjamin: I agree with most of the points covered. It would add interest to this meeting if I could support Moore, but I can't. Moore's done a poor job of defense because there's not a great deal that's defensible. My conclusions were strengthened from hearing his statement; supposedly we're among comrades and this isn't exactly a murder trial, but most of his defense was negative--we must know exactly what was done with Bolfra. More importantly though is a kind of thinking that runs through his remarks and letters, which is the question he raises "Do we allow our fraternal relationships to interfere with our struggle for program?" and the answer is yes and if he doesn't understand that we are in for a long discussion. Moore's responsibility in Germany was to pass up opportunities if necessary until the center could have all the available information to make an assessment. If you didn't get instructions that's too bad; Germany can go to hell before you overthrow this organization. Do we hold back eager groupings--yes, if we don't know what we're into. It's very irritating that Moore

simultaneously argues that there's no bloc and anyhow what's wrong with it?

Rogers: It's amazing the IKD still carries our lit. We take our fraternal relations seriously. If the basis for a principled bloc was there you should have told us what it was so we could make an open bloc with Bolfra and break relations with the IKD. Tweet was 2 or 3 times a better rep. than Moore; while she bitched a lot, she realized her responsibilities to the org. and realized she was our only link to Europe. That's what Moore was; to see his and our exchange of information as having equal weight is completely wrong. On mobilizing outside comrades for N.O. work--we didn't mobilize Boston! The center sets the priorities of individual comrades, they don't take it upon themselves.

Treiger: On Moore's opening remarks; one doesn't need facility in German to make a case in English, seems you'd assessed Bolfra as qualitatively better much earlier. I can't imagine a more inefficient set-up than the Boston secretariat; they lose the money, there's information leaks, they don't know what they're doing, they make interventions independent of the center. They did however provide technical capacity, and it seems to me you saw the PB in the same light, i.e., for providing technical assistance only, not political leadership.

It turns out we didn't have the information from you when we made the decision on the black priority; perhaps we would have sent the comrades to Europe instead! Moore's 4-point recommendations say nothing about the IKD; yet we still have formal fraternal relations with them. We are trying to get rid of the Pabloist backstabbing that goes on. Our duty is not that of not getting caught at it, but not doing it. Moore implies it's all right as long as you don't get caught. An RCYer in Washington, D.C. heard 'we' had 150 Germans. Suppose that got back to the IKD; it would thoroughly poison relations. If it's true the European situation is open and the SL can win over a tendency, then we don't have to resort to Pabloist maneuvers. You picked up only the parts of Nelson's letter that fit your already developed perspective--you should have seen from that letter the center had a lack of clarity on what was happening and without clarity you could not move. If we're a bunch of boobs, then you must explain how we have such 'high theoretical authority'--Turner isn't doing so well. We have rules of democratic centralism; we don't allow total "freedom of criticism" which is being expressed by you on the international level.

Robertson: Moore's presentation was too soft; I believe his letters. We need frankness. Nobody is considering bringing charges against Moore. His response is not political. Of course Moore had a bloc. When I made the special effort to go up to Boston and see Moore immediately before his departure, I emphasized putting general political pressure on the IKD/Spartacus. The RCY document seemed excellent, the trade union draft okay, for this purpose--but from general pressure they quickly became selective, and what turned up in translation was exactly what Bolfra found most effective for them; Moore acted as an agent of Bolfra. I didn't quarrel with the Boston apparatus initially because Stuart was providing Moore a lot of service, and we are weak. But when we found to our horror that

the apparatus was being put to a political use, we shut it down. I said then, 'Moore will never take this!' and sure enough your next letter was a factional statement. I don't blame you for feeling decertified. You were a member-at-large in Germany, with no rights, because we can't control that kind of situation. You don't know how wracked we are by our priorities; I can prove we're anti-youth, anti-party, anti-black, anti-union any time, depending on what priorities we're ignoring that week! If Moore goes back to Germany on the basis of his statements we can't trust him; if he stays here as a minority that's fine, he can work in any area he wants; but not there. I wish Moore had come out fighting; he's made a denial of democratic-centralist procedure in our fraternal relations. You don't realize what would happen if a foreign organization passed out selective factionally-directed lit. inside our hall. You have an anti-Leninist position and you can fight on it!

Summaries:

Moore: On the translations, there was a division of labor with Boston, as I couldn't do them. I sent about \$10 worth of split documents to Boston, I don't know what Sharpe's done, but obviously I wasn't aware the org. didn't have them. On going to Germany vs. staying in Boston, nobody told me I should stay in Boston; thought it was agreed my presence in Germany would be politically useful to us.

On the SPD; nothing could be clearer than our trade union document on that question. On general perspectives; between what Robertson said and I did seems to be a vast area of gray. I'm willing to back down, but my conception of my activity was that I was not making a bloc but carrying on discussions and I thought it was possible to maintain that dual perspective. I never gave any factional advice to Bolfra. If the FB can't trust me if I'm in a minority, okay. I tried to follow what I thought was a correct line re my evaluation of Bolfra; I thought until today the split documents were available, and Sharpe was feeding them into the center. There's been a complete breakdown I was unaware of. I thought the Boston meeting seemed to be a sort of control commissio

On staying with those people in Bonn; there was a serious housing crisis and some of the people in the house weren't political. Given my evaluation and methodology I interpreted a bloc to be a formal relationship, signed papers, etc.; the fact is, Bolfra and the SL have no formal relations. The IKD published one of our articles because they're feeling pressure from Bolfra; the IKD needs us more than we need them. If my policy is mistaken it must be recognized as a policy I tried to get across to the PB and via Sharpe. I am absolutely loyal to the SL. I thought the risks I took were equivalent to the gain. Thought N.O. was aware of those risks, thought you had the documents. I was defending my positions tonight in terms of the semi-judicial character of this meeting, and will go into the other stuff, the empirical situation, etc., later.

Before I got Gordon's letter I'd already been to both Paris and England. In conclusion I do not think that at any point I

was acting in bad faith with the PB, but was pursuing a false methodological structure. The problem I faced was how to recruit a tendency from another tendency without engaging in Pabloist maneuvers. I don't see what role I can play in Germany if my policy was false; my role has been played out as a rep. Whatever my conclusions are about the majority, that's just a diplomatic fact.

Cunningham: I don't want to let you off the hook too much on the question of bad faith. You were so certain in the letters we got, you counterposed your own action to what you called abstentionism, at the same time made anti-internationalist accusations, comparing us to Cannon in '48, etc. The road to hell is paved with good intentions; I don't know what you will be able to do in Germany. Living with the minorityites still has bad implications and you shouldn't do it. Yes, it was a bloc, yes it was Pabloist. We want to change your head so you can play a major role. Despite all the admissions of screw-ups, more has to come; still don't believe you've abandoned your whole position. If your methodology was centrist, to assume you can pass over a wrong position so easily is still centrist.

Motion: To have a 5 minute limit on the second round, and 15 minute summaries. passed

Discussion (second round):

Seymour: Despite your apologetic tone you don't admit you did effect a bloc with Bolfra. If there was no bloc, why should your continued presence in Germany be any embarrassment to us, unless Bolfra and IKD believe there was a bloc? What would the IKD say your role was at the split; neutral or a bloc or what? What have you discussed with Bolfra about our possible future relations? There is a definite contradiction; if this false policy is simply internal to the SL, how could it harm us externally?

Shiffman: Think the IKD/Bolfra split had no good basis, was rotten. There must be considerable hostility between the two groups now, one must try to destroy the other, but they're both still publishing our lit. In the US a lot of little groups have SL politics (sort of) and unfortunately a lot of garbage seems attracted to our program. The CT/PO example is important; we didn't close our channels although one grouping seemed progressing closer to us. You've contributed to the general confusion by your maneuvering; we must sort out exactly what your (and our) relation to Bolfra is. If any groupings in Germany ought to have fraternal relations, it ought to be the IKD with Bolfra.

Jennings: The trade union document doesn't explain the SPD question; they could agree with us about the US, but say it doesn't relate to Germany. You said you were very busy with contact work, but that ignores the priorities of Gordon's letter which were 1) information gathering, 2) making recommendations and 3) carrying out instructions. You asked how to recruit without Pabloist maneuvering and we said how, by making a principled break if necessary.

Kinder: Agree the trade union draft is not appropriate on SPD. You

said we shouldn't throw down the "gauntlet" of the SPD to Bolfra; I think that is essential. You were very quick to the knife after the Boston meeting; to claim no bad faith now doesn't work because you never tried to get the PB to act. You constructed a conspiracy to bypass a "disfunctioning N.O."

Schaefer: Feel disoriented because this meeting's character is not what I had expected. What bothers me is there's something odd or untrustworthy in the difference between the harshness of your characterizations in letters and what you're saying now. Seems like a capitulation I don't trust. Your characterizations didn't come out of thin air, when are you going to spring them at us again?

Cantor: Do you still consider yourself a minority tendency? The Bolfra is young and unformed, but so apparently are most of the German tendencies, we need to be open to possible developments in the IKD too. Why did you follow the IKD's instructions on how to proceed in the conference; what makes you think they're right about procedure? If Stuart's statement 'we had 150 Germans' was wrong, why were you so quick to unquestioningly believe her report on the Boston meeting?

Benjamin: Don't believe you're really backing down; although I don't want to encourage factionalism, still I conclude you're either being disingenuous or else you knew a hell of a lot less about what you were doing than I thought. I don't know a lot about Germany but I don't need to in order to know that trade union document says nothing about the questions the Germans must have on the SPD. For you, with your knowledge, to use that point seems pretty desperate scrabbling. Don't understand your statements about the Boston center; unless you indicated what exactly needed translation, how could you expect them to wade through it all? If you intended to use those comrades it seems you'd have kept better track of them. Presumably you should have been better prepared to explain what you did and why if your motivations were all right.

Rogers: Wish you'd try to convince us there wasn't a bloc, so we could convince you there was one. We need to have the fight on it!

Treiger: You should have related mainly through the majority, and been very sensitive to formalities. On the PO/CT stuff; one thing that's important is to get a definite commitment, a contract with one group, then it's a different matter. Even so we want to have a correct attitude to the IKD. It's important that the Bolfra leaders are more honest. On the bloc, as Lenin said, words are deeds. Is the IKD hostile to us or just to you? Do they perhaps sense a rift between you and the PB? The PB has been silent on the split; is their publication of our material a bid to us? Integrating Sharpe into the national center is an excellent idea, but if you're so worried about our poor functioning, why didn't you suggest it? Does Bolfra expect a fraternal relation with us? Does Bolfra consider you personally an ally against the IKD? The SPD is a central question. Their attitude to the SPD is a measure of whether or not we have a bunch of New Lefters on our hands. It's a question which deals with what should be the relationship of pro-

professional revolutionaries to the class, and if they can't stomach it, they're a bunch of New Lefters.

Robertson: Our powerful political line is in our press, that's where we've thrown everything. Why not ask where's the Spartacist? We're out of the market price for it now, would cost around \$800, that's why. We have a modest capacity in the center in German; we never got the split documents here, where we could have made the initial selection of what to translate. The Germans in general are all very young, and it's a kaleidoscopic situation. We did miss something; there have been innumerable splits, which led us to discount the importance of this. Bolfra was a big split, evidenced by their putting out a publication. Why haven't we heard from Bolfra directly? We have more influence in Germany than we thought if IKD is reprinting our stuff. What's in the IKD?

Summaries:

Moore: I can't understand why there's a lack of understanding of the differences between the IKD and Bolfra. The basic split came because the IKD had a Stalinist front-group attitude to the youth. Debate centered around differences between a concentration on the apprentices or towards the whole class. IKD has no perspective of party-building, they're left-sectarians, they can't recruit from the Maoists. Propaganda is a bad word to the IKD. In addition the IKD made a sharp turn right on the anti-abortion question. The youth was launched to concentrate on the apprentices, but ended up intervening in every major class struggle in spite of their program and with reformist demands. The latest IKD statement on the split says that if they'd known Bolfra's tendencies earlier, they'd have crushed them then. Bolfra's taken the position that program is essential. IKD says we can't criticize the Vietnamese, the international can only be built once we have mass parties, etc. Why is the IKD hostile? Tweet also noticed that Ebemeier didn't want to discuss then. In August they issued that statement about the RCL/IKD doing the IDB without us. I proposed fraternal relations with Bolfra in limited terms, but said we needed to discuss political differences with them, and the situation was unclear. Said we couldn't be responsible for their translations. It's only possible to understand the SPD by studying the documents of the '30's. Can't see how IKD and Bolfra could possibly get together again. On the bloc, I repeat, my understanding of what a bloc was excluded what I did. I can't automatically say I was wrong, despite weight of opinion here, but I thought what I did was possible. I did not see how dissemination of our material could be a bloc. The Germans were interested in our trade union document, the RCY thing had already been done. Thought was a slippery line but don't think I went over the line. The sum and substance of my activity was limited to general programmatic discussion with all comrades.

Cunningham: You describe what you claim is not a bloc and I say it is a bloc; if we can't agree on a definition we can't argue. Would be useful to know what IKD thinks of your role; if we asked them, what would they say? The SPD is an absolutely key question. Their refusal to face it again and again must be broken. The fact of both wing's youthful age is probably the best reason not to do anything immediately; what their formal politics are at any time is not final. Your letter says if we attack you we're taking a chance on losing the Germans, which reads as blackmail.

Meeting adjourned 5:15 a.m.

STATEMENT BY W. MOORE
(GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CC-SL/USA)

Through the intense PB discussion (in meetings #43, 44 over 10-11 March) and in private conversations with Comrade Robertson, I have become convinced of the untenability of my minority international position and the correctness of the PB characterization of the policy which I pursued in Germany, i.e., the implementation of an informal, de facto bloc with Bolfra at the split Spartacus conference in December 1971. This mistaken policy was pursued unconsciously beyond the instructions of the PB and the general line of the SL and could have caused serious embarrassment to the SL in Europe.

The core of this mistaken policy which developed into a minority international position was a utopian, formalist conception of fraternal relations in general and in this period in the international movement, and more specifically, in relation to SL duties in the international arena. These conceptions, never developed into a coherent system, were implicit in my outlook when I left for Germany. They only developed in the course of the political work there, eventually leading to the conviction of the necessity of a factional struggle against the "semi-liquidation" policy of the PB.

The premise of my position was that it was our duty in our fraternal relations to open up our membership to the political propaganda of fraternal groups (that is, in translation, etc.) even in such in extremis cases (viz. the Ellens faction) where a minority in our organization were unconditional supporters of a fraternal grouping. Eg. Moore letter of 31 Jan. to John S.: "If the shoe were on the other foot, i.e., if an IKD'er sold an English translation of the KJO program at our RCY conference, and there was a strong tendency sympathetic to the ideas of the KJO program would that constitute, automatically, a bloc? If our PB regarded it as such, I would have to oppose that interpretation. If our fraternal relations mean anything (and in the cases of the RCL and the IKD they mean very little indeed) we must allow for the right to distribute propaganda to our members, even especially when it hurts." In my actions in Germany and theoretically I have made a sharp distinction between the literary distribution of SL political propaganda and the political and organizational consequences of such distribution. Therefore, while the draft TU program and the Youth-Party Treaty were not unequivocally anti-IKD and pro-Bolfra in their implications, the weight of emphasis on the transitional program in the TU document should have indicated to a more perceptive representative the unwisdom of distribution in such an intense factional situation. The SL was thus put in the position of implicitly supporting one faction against another (in this case a majority) of a fraternal grouping without prior consultation of the PB leading to an open political declaration of partisanship based upon clear and qualitative differences in the dispute.

Statement by W. Moore, 13 March 1972

The above minority position is, if drawn to its logical conclusions, inconsistent with our program to build an international democratic centralist party. If we concede an absolute right of fraternal groupings to such literary intervention, we in a sense disarm ourselves in advance to whatever revisionism may exist in our fraternal allies. At this point in history the highest formal expression of internationalism is located in the PB/CC's of the various national organizations. Thus I support the fundamental political thrust of Comrade Robertson's letter to Comrade Sharpe of 6 March 1972: "Even if the organization being discussed had essential programmatic agreement and were sections therefore of a commonly disciplined international organization the procedure defended by comrade Moore would be capricious, disruptive and therefore wrong. The intervention of either majority or minority of one section into the internal affairs of another section would be closely regulated by the international leadership and in no case undertaken simply upon the initiative of a local majority or minority." It is necessary to defend our program by appropriate means, including, the regulation of the distribution of material from fraternal groupings which may have factional implication in our own organization. The same principle would also apply to our relations with other fraternal groups. A purely literary approach would also imply a rather naive attitude to the almost invariable association of propaganda activity with organizational intervention. This did not happen in Germany, that is, the SL did not have secret or other direct relations with Bolfra, but this in any case does not vitiate the general principle.

The intensity of my polemical and factional response was determined by the conviction that the principles I pursued were the ones that guided our international work; that these principles were becoming compromised, and leading to an accommodation with the semi-Pabloism of the RCL/IKD. I believed further that the special meeting of the PB's international group in Boston on December 19 indicated that the PB was resorting to organizational rather than political means to resolve this issue. The liquidation of the Boston secretariat was the purpose of the Boston meeting, and it should be clear that it was not nor intended to be an authoritative body for the resolution of outstanding issues. The Boston meeting executed the prior PB decision to liquidate the Boston overseas apparatus in the context of a general discussion intended to advise the PB further. Therefore, whatever second and third hand "information" circulating in the ranks of the SL and RCY, stemming from the relative openness of the Boston meeting should be supplanted by the definitive discussions of the last two PB meetings, i.e., by propagating the interim policy statement in the IKD-Bolfra split.

13 March 1972

[signed] W. Moore

New York

14 March 1972

Germany

To the IKD and
the Spartacus-BL:

Dear Comrades,

We are writing to inform you of our interim views following intensive discussion in our Political Bureau on the split in the Spartacus-KJO between the Bolfra-Komfra bloc and the IKD and its supporters at the 11-12 December national conference leading to the publication of the counterposed organs, Spartacus-BL and Spartacus-KJO.

We note that the Spartacus-BL carried an advertisement for our press in its Dec.-Jan. issue, No.25 and in February published a German reprint of our article from Spartacist, "Chinese Menshevism." Similarly the IKD-supported Spartacus-KJO reprinted in its February issue, No.26, the first part of our article from Workers Vanguard, "The End of the Black Power Era." We are of course appreciative for this publicizing of our press and circulation of our views among German militants, but this activity in the light of your unfortunate split makes it more urgent for us to arrive at a definitive political estimation of the split and of the groupings which emerged from it. In any case we are concerned with the future of the revolutionary movement in Germany as a necessary aspect of our Marxist responsibility as internationalists committed to the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. We also recognize that your split, like any serious division, has undoubtedly generated extreme heat and deep antagonism. This too makes it necessary for us to proceed in an open, careful, clear and above all political fashion, avoiding to the best of our ability any suggestion of maneuverism, false partisanship or any other evidence of the terrible destructive policy of playing one German organization against the other for some alleged advantage on our part.

Moreover, we do not doubt that for the most serious elements among you, the present split is but one of many splits and regroupments in the struggle to re-create a revolutionary vanguard party of the German workers. (Just think of the history of the Russian and Polish movements from the turn of the century through the Russian revolution!) Hence among yourselves and between you and us, the most rigorous subordination of hostility and maneuver must prevail so that we will not poison our future struggles to the detriment of the revolutionary outcome.

II.

We would like to offer you our tentative and still partial estimation of the present split to the extent we have been able to understand it. We have arrived at an interim policy which is subject to change as we are still working on corrected translations of the main public texts from the split. And we will study the evolution of the

emergent groups, hopefully benefited by our discussions with your organizations along the way. /

We are under the impression that at your split conference two questions predominated, the lesser one being the partly political question of organizational relationships, specifically of the IKD to the Spartacus youth group. When our delegation of comrades Gordon, Nelson and Robertson visited Berlin last year for discussions with the IKD leadership and others in the IKD-Spartacus we noted then that the failure to develop the Leninist norm of youth-party relations was apparent and we argued that this question could well be a source of trouble. The IKD seemed to regard itself as a sort of special theoretical auxiliary to Spartacus which, while reflecting the real process of the crystallization of the more experienced and conscious Spartacus comrades, failed to take account of the necessary transformation of such a leading group into a democratic-centralist vanguard in relationship to the Spartacus youth organization. Hence as things stood should counterposed majorities develop within the Spartacus and the IKD respectively, no regulated mechanism for factional political struggle existed and any such difference could only be resolved by organizational negotiation, capitulation or split rather than the possibility, following debate and decision, of the disciplined subordination of the minority of the IKD-Spartacus movement--as a separately organized, but united whole--to the majority. We have attempted in the developing relationship of the SL with the Revolutionary Communist Youth to codify the experience of the Leninist period of the Third International in our jointly approved document regulating SL/RCY relations. This document has been translated into German and circulated among your comrades.

We understand that both Spartacus-IKD and -BL justify some variant of "freedom of criticism" by which is apparently meant that dissidents are free to make public propaganda at variance with that of the organization. If this is true it too is a departure from Leninism sure to breed numerous splits and to render the movement incapable of intervening as revolutionists in the class struggle.

We also understand that the KJO (Communist Youth Organization) orientation advanced by the IKD is central to your dispute and that involved in this question are major questions such as the character of the epoch, the validity of the Transitional Program and the revolutionary potential of the German working class as a whole. It is possible that present conditions in Germany justify the KJO as a tactic should it be that the apprentices are much more accessible to revolutionary propaganda and organization than the older workers just now. But as a strategic orientation the KJO systematically extended to its conclusions could only be a denial of Marxism and of a proletarian revolutionary perspective.

The orientation of revolutionary Marxists to the working class as such necessarily poses sharply the question of the SPD. In our view, the continuing validity of the Transitional Program in the epoch of imperialism (i.e. the eve of proletarian revolution and the highest stage of capitalism) provides the fundamentals, politically