

April 20, 1976

TO ALL NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

The following letter is for your information.

Comradely,
Caroline Lund

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April 6, 1976

Joe Hansen
New York

Dear Joe,

At the December meeting of the United Secretariat there was a brief discussion on the Sahara, after which the Bureau was empowered to draw up a statement. Afterwards I had some second thoughts, and at the time of the January meeting I stated that I thought more discussion was necessary on the question of the Sahara before releasing statements in the name of the Secretariat along the lines of the one that appeared in Inprecor, no. 42, January 22, 1976. At the time I was mostly concerned with some formulations on secondary questions that are not the best. But after thinking it over, I think that what really needs discussion is the central line question: posing the issue as a struggle for self-determination in which support is given to those fighting for national independence of the Sahara. This latter position is not only the position of the United Secretariat, but is also the position held by both the LCR/ETA-VI and the LC of Spain. It is also the position taken in the News Analysis section of IP, February 2, 1976.

Although I know very little about the Sahara, I have strong doubts that the question of national self-determination is the issue involved. I believe a strong argument can be made for the following position:

1. That historically, ethnically, linguistically and culturally the Saharan people (or at least most of them) have been considered an integral part of Morocco -- for the past several centuries at least; that it was imperialism that artificially divided Sahara from Morocco, and that there has never developed a separate Saharan nationality.

2. That an independent Sahara, so small in population (less than 100,000), and not being based on an independent nationality, would not be independently viable, and would in reality be a dependency of Algeria; that, in fact, the real impetus for an independent Sahara stems from the Algerian government, motivated by its narrow interests vis a vis the Moroccan government, rather than from the dynamics of a national liberation struggle.

3. That it is either:

- a) not really clear that the majority of the Saharan people favor independence, or
- b) if they do, that this stems from their fear of political repression from the Moroccan regime (a well-justified fear); however, such political repression could not be considered identical to national oppression.

4. That, therefore, while one should support the political struggle against the Moroccan regime, the demand associated with this struggle should not be for independence; instead, one should fight against the imposition of the Moroccan dictatorship in the Sahara, and for full and unrestricted democratic rights in the Sahara and in all of Morocco. This of course should be linked with the entire series of demands in our program pointing towards a workers state and a united, socialist Maghreb.

As far as Mauritania is concerned, I am far more uncertain about what to say. Nor do I know enough to really feel certain about the above four points. But I do think that this argument merits serious consideration. Perhaps we can discuss these points when I am in New York for our plenum.

Comradely regards,

/s/ Gus Horowitz