

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, 3-4 NOVEMBER, 1979.

Saturday, 3 November

Chair: Matthews Minutes: Harlow

Attendance

Present: Matthews, Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Larkin, Bezant, Howard, Inglefield, Hudson, Jones, Mann, Sinclair, Last, McCarthy, Williams, Adair, Sands, Baker, Banner, Ellis, Strawson, Klein, Oswald, Jenkins, Rowley, Biggs, Cannon, Brown, Yussef, Hutton, Corby, Mitchell (CC members); Shevek, Jeffries, Marston, Harney (Control Commission members);

Seated: Hector, McDermott, Andre, Cheddar and the following branch organisers: Woods (SW Manchester), Jackson (Oldham), Tritan (Oxford), Boyce (Birmingham), Worcester (Cardiff), Blake (Liverpool); and Stein (Nat Treas), Schweik (),

From other organisations: BM (Socialist Action League, New Zealand), TR (League for Socialist Action).

Apologies: Howard (Saturday evening and Sunday), Luff (Saturday), Drake (Sat and Sunday), Mitchell (Sat a.m.), Lane (Sat and Sun), Strawson (late Sat), Biggs (late Sat), Higgins (Sat and Sun), King (Sat and Sun), Knight (Sat and Sun), Donoghue (Sat), Cusack (Sat a.m. and Sun), Banner (Sat eve), Tettodoro (Sat and Sun).

Agenda

Reporter Ellis

Proposed Saturday

11-12.20 Reports on Tactics
12.20-1.30 Discussion
1.30-2.30 Lunch
2.30 -6 Discussion
6-7 Summaries and voting
7-7.30 Black Liberation Report
7.30-8.15 Discussion

Sunday

9-10 Black Liberation Discussion
10-10.15 Summary and voting
10.15-10.40 SC Sales Report
10.40-10 Discussion
12.15-12.15 Summary and voting
12.15-1 Report on Situation in FI
1-2 Lunch
2-4 Discussion in Situation in FI
4-4.20 Future CCs and IDBs
4.20-5 Fees
5-5.30 Conference Appeal.

a) Request for Adair to have reporting time on tactics

For PB position: Cannon

For Request: Williams 11-13 Defeated

b) Nature of Item on Socialist Challenge

For PB position: Dennis

Against: Inglefield

'PB resolution: "That item on SC simply deal with Sales Tour and Branches. That dpci,emt pm SC, its overall orientation and balance sheet is part of tactics discussion". Carried 11 For 10 Against

Inglefield resn: That Inglefield report on Inglefield document 10-10 Falls

Voting on agenda: Carried 14 For 6 Against.

Tactics

Reporters; Clynes, Cannon, Strawson

contd over....

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Contributions: Jones, Manzano, Howard, Ellis, Banner, Adair, Larkin, Inglefield, Dennis, Jenkins, Oswald, Hudson, Harlow, Shevek, Hector, Harney, Savage, Williams, Last, Sinclair, Bezant, Mann, Klein, McCarthy, Sands, Cusack, Andre, Biggs.

Howard: request for written vote to be counted)
Cusack: " " " " " " " ") Taken together. Agreed

Summaries: Strawson, Cannon, Clynes.

Voting: Clynes/Dennis/Manzano -

For: Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Larkin, Bezant, Banner, Ellis, Cusack.

Against: Matthews, Howard, Inglefield, Hudson, Jones, Mann, Sinclair, Last, Williams, Adair, Sands, Baker, Strawson, Oswald, Biggs, Cannon, Brown, Hutton, (CC members) and Shevek, Jeffries, Marston, Harney (Control Commission members)

Abstaining: McCarthy, Klein, Jenkins, Rowley, Yusef, Corby.

No Vote: Mitchell.

Document defeated 10/18/6/1

Voting: Cannon

For: Matthews, Howard, Inglefield, Judson, Jones, Baker, Oswald, Biggs, Cannon, Brown, Hutton, Yusef., (CC members) and Shevek, Marston (Control Commission).

Against: Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Larkin, Bezant, Sinclair, Last, McCarthy, Williams, Adair, Sands, Banner, Ellis, Jenkins, Rowley, Mitchell, Cusack. (CC members) and Jeffries, Harney (Control Commission).

Abstaining: Klein, Corby.

No Vote: Mann.

Document defeated 12/20/2/1

Voting: Strawson

For: Sinclair, Last, Strawson, (CC members), and Jeffries (Control Commission).

Against: Matthews, Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Larkin, Bezant, Howard, Inglefield, Hudson, Jones, Mann, McCarthy, Williams, Adair, Sands, Baker, Banner, Ellis, Klein, Oswald, Jenkins, Rowley, Biggs, Cannon, Brown, Yusef, Hutton, Corby, (CC members), and Shevek, Marston (Control Commission).

Abstaining:

No Vote: Mitchell, Cusack.

Verbal report and summary defeated 3/30/0/2

Resolution by Harney (moved formally by Larkin):

"A real balance sheet of the "regroupment project" of the IMG over the past years must do more than condemn "Our Common Ground" as a "minimum programme", note that Socialist Challenge "had very little political guts, and disavow the (failed) soft approach to the ISA, Big Flame and the SWP. (See Clynes' "Notes Towards a Balance Sheet").

"To get to the root of the problem, it must be recognised that the Party and Faction orientation was fundamentally wrong. It fetishised unity, promoting it at the expense of programme. It served both to justify the continued unity of the IMT and the LTF - despite their being on opposite sides of the barricades in Portugal - and to seek an organisational formula for the regroupment of the far left in Britain, in order to escape the necessity for political confrontation.

" Real revolutionary regroupment can only be brought about by political combat focussing on the key issues of the class struggles in this historical period. One of these must be defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack. Clynes says this "doesn't occupy a central role" today - presumably because only small

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numbers of people are currently agitated by it. But in the objective world - the one against which would-be revolutionary programmes must be measured - the full military might of imperialism is directed against the USSR and the deformed workers' states today. Programme for a revolutionary organisation is determined by what is objectively required right through to the socialist revolution. Revolutionary Marxists must reject the position proposed by Clynes on the SWP: "we consider this organisation can be won to the FI and our general orientation is towards fusing with it to form a unified British Section." The SWP's most outstanding difference with Trotskyism is its opposition to the defence of the Soviet Union. The SWP must be split, rather than unified with, in order to win over the best elements to the Trotskyist programme."

Amendment by Last: "Delete from "was fundamentally wrong.....and so seek" in second paragraph and insert "sought". Carried with 1 For, the rest abstaining.

Voting on Harney as amended:

For: Last (CC member) and Harney (Control Commission).

Against: Matthews, Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Larkin, Bezant, Howard, Inglefield, Hudson, Jones, Mann, McCarthy, Williams, Adair, Sands, Baker, Banner, Ellis, Klein, Oswald, Jenkins, Rowley, Biggs, Cannon, Brown, Yussef, Hutton, Corby (CC members) and Shevek, Jeffries, Marston (Control Commission).

Abstaining: Sinclair, Strawson.

No Vote: Mitchell, Cusack.

Resolution was defeated 1/30/2/2.

Statement by Cusack: "I heard only the afternoon contribution in the debate and do not have some of the documents. Nevertheless I voted against comrade Cannon's position and for those of Manzano, Clynes and Dennis because I find no programmatic differences between the two positions on the unity of the Party, but serious differences on the next steps for building it.

"Comrade Cannon's position (as I read it, and how I believe it will be understood in the membership) reduce themselves to saying that the next layer we will win to the Party and the existing members of the SWP, that the instrument for recomposing layers of advanced workers in the unions is Rank and File and therefore leads logically to deprioritising everything in our programme except those points on which we agree with the SWP and taking no independent IMG initiative- in the class struggle.

"In short the motivation for the turn to industry is making the IMG more palatable for the SWP.

"I believe the Clynes, Manzano, Dennis position lays the correct framework by which the IMG can take the first steps to answering the questions raised in the class struggle (principally how to defeat the Tory Government) and increase the size of the IMG by winning advanced militants of the working class to the ranks of the Fourth International."

Statement by Larkin: "I do not support the Harney resolution or any amendments to it. I have simply moved this formally to allow the CC to vote on it."

Statement by Mitchell: "Due to a postal strike I received only the Cannon document before the CC. As I also missed a greater part of the discussion I had to record a "No vote" on the other positions."

Statement by Cannon, Inglefield, Jones, Howard, Hudson, Brown, Baker, Biggs, Oswald, Shevek, Hutton: "We appeal for comrades of the CC to attend a meeting tomorrow lunchtime to organise the formation of a tendency. The political basis of this tendency will be: 1) Building the Revolutionary Party in Britain adopted by IMG CC
2) 'Launching the Revolutionary Youth Organisation' by Brown
3) Tactics resolution in name of Cannon present to this CC.

Its aim will be to fight for the biggest majority for these documents at the IMG Conference."

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Statement by Dennis: "I wish to call for a meeting of all those comrades who voted for the Clynes, Manzano, Dennis document tomorrow lunchtime."

Motion by Biggs: "That we refer to the Control Commission the question of the content of statements to the minutes." Agreed

Motion by Jones: "That the IEC cdes be excused the evening session to prepared item for tomorrow on the FI" Agreed

Attendance

Harlow report on cdes present and apologies received.

Motion to seat cdes present as listed. Agreed

Motion by Hutton: "The CC is not open to branch organisers unless explicitly agreed by the CC/PC/PB". Carried 11/2

Motion by Inglefield: "Branches that do not have a CC member can send 1 representative to CCs". Falls

Personnel

Report by Ellis.

Motion: a) ratify move of cde Jones to International Centre. Carried nem con.

b) agree move of cde Andre to Centre to take assignments of cde Jones re Education and International Editorial Board. Agree to seat cde Andre with voice on CC". Carried

Motion by Matthews/Biggs: "Procedure of electing f/ts referred to discussion on leadership opened on PC for IMG National Conference". Agreed.

Control Commission Report

Motion by Ellis: "The CC notes the Control Commission report and proposes that it be referred to the next PC before being taken at the next Central Committee". Agreed.

Black Liberation

Report by Dennis.

Contributions: Inglefield, Yusef, Cannon.

Agenda: End CC now. Agreed

Take 3 comrades on list. Falls

Agreed cde Sinclair to chair tomorrow.

Sunday 4 November

Chair: Sinclair

Minutes: Harlow

Attendance

Present: Jenkins, Manzano, Matthews, Dennis, Harlow, Baker, Bezant, Sabage, Rowley, Oswald, Mitchel, Brown, Mann, Jenkins, Last, McCarthy, Sands, Luff, Banner, Sinclair, Clynes, Yusef, Biggs, Strawson, Corby (CC members) Jeffires, Hanks,

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Harney, Marston, Shevek (Control Commission) McDermott, Boyce, Cheddar, Hector, Donoghue (TU Sect and City Organisers), Jackson, Woods, Trisban, Worcester (Branch organisers), JM, F (Other organisations).

Black Liberation Discussion Contd

Contributions: Jenkins, Jarney, Biggs.

Summary: Dennis

Voting:

For: Matthews, Clynes, Manzano, Dennis, Savage, Harlow, Bezzant, Hudson, Last, McCarthy, Baker, Banner, Strawson, Oswald, Jenkins, Rowley, Biggs, Brown, Yussef, Mitchell (CC members) and

Against: Harney (Control Commission)

Abstaining:

No Vote: Larkin, Mann, Sinclair, Sands, Corby, Luff (CC members) and Jeffries (Control Commission).

Document was carried 19/0/6/6

Conference Appeal

Report by Biggs

Contributions: Matthews, Rowley, Strawson, Last, Larkin, Banner, Clynes, Yussef, Sands, McCarthy.

Summary: Biggs.

Motion by Strawson: That the question of inviting other organisations be taken after discussion on World Movement. Defeated

Amendment to Conf Appeal by Strawson: delete under point 9 the 3 sentences beginning "The Cost of speakers' fares" to "will we estimate by self-financing". Defeated

Amendment to Appeal by Matthews: That the scale of charges to be extended: up to 10 members, £5 - 10 to 25, £8, over 25 £10. Carried

Amendment to Appeal by Larkin: Add at end of Point 6 - "All branches should also elect alternates for the purpose of replacing full delegates elected but not able to attend conference and for the allocation of the delegates from the national pool". Carried

Amendment by McCarthy: "Branches should elect as many alternates as they deem necessary for each caucus. In the event of all the alternates who voted for one position being used up at the conference alternates who voted for another position must be used. In the event of all branch alternates being used up at conference, branches have no right to subsequently make observers up to delegate status. Consultative delegates have no right to be made up to full delegates." Defeated

Amendment by Rowley: Delete 2nd sentence Para 5 and replace by- "Cdes should bear in mind that adequate consideration of all material produced is an aspect of the democratic conduct of the preconference discussion. An unlimited supply of bulletings can create difficulty in this regard. In addition, there are limited technical resources at our disposal"

In the 7th line para 5, insert word "strongly" after "the Central Committee" to read "The Central Committee strongly recommends..." Carried

Amendment by Strawson: Point 4, omit last sentence and add "The IMG CC also invites the SWP, WSL and I-CL to attend the National Conference". Defeated

Amendment by Last: Refer back point 9 to Secretariat with an instruction to budget

6.

for production of bulletins within the levy Defeated

Appeal as amended: Carried unanimously

Agenda

M/c To take two small items now
" " fees to 1.15 then break for lunch
" " SC Sales and World Movement report after

Ford's

Information report Manzano

BOC

Information report Matthews

Fees

Reporter Matthews

Contributions: Biggs, Clynes, , Harlow, Strawson, Banner, Hector

Motion by Matthews:

- "1. The fees should be consolidated as from 1 October
- "2. There should be an increase of £2 from beginning of October
- "3. There should be another increase of £3 from 20th December.

"Comrades who under these proposals would get a cut should still get c.£2 increase on consolidated plus referred to an anomalies committee."

17/4 CARRIED

Motion by Larkin:

"That we have a fee's rate which is paid to all fulltime cdes. This should be phased in, in line with the Matthews/Biggs proposals. This should be supplemented by a £4.10 weekly travel allowance, to cover the costs of travel to and from centre.

4/ 13 FALLS

Socialist Challenge Sales Drive - Inglefield reported

Questions: Brown, Luff, Last, Biggs, Jones, Yusef

Summary: Inglefield

Situation in the FI: Jones reported

Supplementary report: Strawson

Questions: McCarthy, Inglefield, Hanks, Marston, Clynes, Banner, Sands, Adair, Shevek, Harney

Contributions: Clynes, Manzano, Inglefield, Last, Brown, Banner, Ellis, Harlow, Adair, Sinclair, Luff, Cannon

Summaries: Strawson, Jones

Resolutions:

Biggs: That the internal material for our own members concerning the split in the FI takes priorities over the production of other internal bulletins, including the tactical resolutions and the conference appeal to open the preconference period. 10 for

CARRIED

Ellis: That we send out the 8 page statement produced by the USec with NDs with week; That we carry an article in SC this week; that we send out the bulletin proposed by Biggs duplicated. 7for, FALLS

Concerning cde Monica

1. That cde Monica arranged meetings between members of the FI, notably cde Moreno, and an organisation outside the FI, the WSL, without agreement of either the leading bodies of the FI or its British section. This action is incompatible with the democratic centralism of the IMG and the FI.
2. That cde Monica knew that the content of this meeting was a proposal to violate the discipline of the FI and to attempt to split it. This constitutes disloyal behavior to the FI and the IMG.
3. That the CC recommends that if these charges are found to be proved, Monica is expelled from the IMG. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Concerning the split

1. The IMG CC notes the expulsion of Nemo, Ulysses, Seldjouk, and Cristobel from the FI. It notes the split carried out by the majority of the LTT and the DF from the FI. As with all such forces, organised relations with these currents can only be through and with the agreement of the elected leading bodies of the IMG and the FI.
2. The Decisions of the IMG conference and its elected leading bodies are binding on all members of the organisation. Non support for this position is incompatible with membership of the IMG.
3. As the British section of the FI all decisions of the World Congress are binding on the IMG and all its members. Non support for this position is incompatible with membership of the IMG.
4. Any person placing themselves outside the organisation through failure to support the previous two motions may be re-admitted to the IMG by decision of the CC or PC- the condition being to make a statement that they recognise the authority of the decisions of the World Congress, the leading bodies of the FI, and the IMG.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Concerning other groups

This CC agrees to write to the SWP, WSL, SLG, ICL, asking for a meeting with the leadership of these groups to explain the situation in the FI and to re-affirm our position for the unity of all revolutionaries inside the FI. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

LTT Statement "At a meeting of representatives of the LTT on 3.11.79 it was resolved that:

1. We oppose as unprincipled the split in the FI and its sections.
2. We remain loyal members of the FI and the IMG and call on all cdes who support the LTT to remain loyal to the FI and its national sections
3. We re-affirm the position of the platform of the LTT that criterion of the membership of the tendency is loyalty to the FI and its sections. Therefore the LTT can only be built in the international and we break all relations with those who have broken ranks with the FI and its sections. 4.11.79

Statement by Last, Mitchell, Sincalir, Strawson, Jeffries on IMG Conference debate

We support the general line of cde Strawsons report. However we are not calling for the formation of a leadership caucus or for a tendency. We think it is necessary to continue that preparation discussion for the IMG congress without prematurely creating tendency divisions. We propose collaborative discussions aimed at getting agreement on: 1. the nature of the period, 2. the character of the Tory Govt. In addition, we will produce written material on: i. the workers united front ii. the Labour Party iii a balance sheet of workers struggles under the Tories iv the nature of the labour bureaucracy v key elements of a line to reorient the IMG towards the w.c and its organisation.