

RESIDENT NATIONAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, No. 6, March 6, 1967

Present: NC: J. Barnes, Chester, DeBerry, Dobbs,
Halstead, A. Hansen, J. Hansen, Lavan,
Novack, Reed, Ring, Sheppard, Vernon.

Alternates: Graham, Spilman, B. Barnes, Horowitz,
Spangler.

Youth Representative: Jones.

Visitors: Benson, Daniels, Evans, Jenness, Lund, Maisel, McBride,
Weiss.

Chairman: Chester.

AGENDA: Antiwar Report.

ANTIWAR REPORT

J. Barnes reported. (See attachment No. 1.)

Supplementary report by G. Horowitz. (See attachment No. 2.)

Supplementary report by D. Jenness. (See attachment No. 3.)

Discussion: Halstead, Ring, Graham, A. Hansen, Barnes, Novack,
Lavan, Dobbs, Chester, Vernon, DeBerry.

Meeting adjourned.

Antiwar Report -- J. Barnes

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss both the general political situation we face in the antiwar movement which you have had a chance to read in Farrell's memorandum, and secondly to bring the comrades up to date on what has transpired since Muste's death and where we stand now vis-a-vis the April 15 Spring Mobilization. We thought the most effective way to do this was to have a general report, a report on the Student Mobilization Committee, and a survey on how preparations for the action are proceeding around the country.

The forces in support of the Spring Mobilization have continued to increase steadily over the past two months. This includes a small, but significant endorsement by a section of the labor movement for the first time for one of these national actions against the war. The addition of new forces is symbolized partially by the addition of the two new vice chairmen. Cleveland Robinson, secretary-treasurer of District 65, is one new vice chairman and Dagmar Wilson, national leader of Women Strike for Peace, is the other. The first, Robinson, symbolizes the new forces that have come in, and the second, Dagmar Wilson, symbolizes the decision of the old forces not to leave.

Last week the Militant carried a roundup front page article on the official endorsements of the Mobilization by the labor movement. The Northern California District Council of the ILWU, the Santa Clara County Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO (who sent three council delegates from three different unions to the Spring Mobilization Steering Committee in San Francisco), the president of the California AFT, and Al Evanoff of District 65 here in New York, have all formally and publicly endorsed the Mobilization. Since the Militant article, Kipp reports that local 10 and 6 of the ILWU, and the Women's Auxiliary, local 16, have both voted to officially endorse the Mobilization and have pledged to mobilize their members to come out. The Golden Gate branch of the National Association of Social Workers has officially endorsed the Mobilization.

It is especially important to note the agreement by Emil Mazey to be a featured speaker at the anti Vietnam-war rally in Chicago March 25. Other speakers will be Dr. Spock and Martin Luther King. The fact of Mazey's speaking was noted today in a column in Chicago's major newspapers so it appears Mazey's appearance will get significant publicity. This is the first time any figure of this rank in the labor movement has publicly spoken at a big antiwar rally -- and everyone recognizes it is not simply a personal decision.

In Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York, there are labor sub-committees of the Mobilization Committees and the ones in

San Francisco and Los Angeles have been actively working to get labor support for the Mobilization, and the one in New York is making plans to do this on a large scale in the next five weeks. Of course this doesn't represent large labor forces, but what is important is that the small breakthrough into the labor movement we have been looking for has been made for the first time.

Our comrades are very active in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York in the labor sub-committees of the Spring Mobilization Committee.

In the Negro movement the breakthrough has not been as big as in the labor movement, though formal support has been obtained as in the previous mobilizations, from leaders of SNCC and CORE. On the West Coast two Negro student organizations -- the San Francisco Friends of SNCC and the Black Student Union of San Francisco State College and Carlton Goodlett, the publisher of the San Francisco Sun Reporter, have become official endorsers of the Mobilization. Also, Eldridge Cleaver is heading up an Afro-American sub-committee of the West Coast Mobilization Committee whose purpose is to build a separate feeder march from the ghetto into the march in San Francisco. In New York a separate feeder march is being organized from Harlem. It is too early to tell how successful it will be. More importantly, plans are being made for an anti Vietnam-war rally in Harlem on April 1, at which the Harlem nationalists, radicals and James Bevel will speak together. Also, Martin Luther King's attack on the war, and his demand last week for withdrawal of troops from Vietnam is an indication of the pressure that exists.

Perhaps the biggest new development in this Mobilization as compared to past Days of Protest has been in the increase in sheer quantity of people who are beginning to turn out to support and actively build the Mobilization in the two centers. The numbers of volunteers, the numbers of those willing to do work, to distribute leaflets, etc., the numbers of people attending organizing meetings and the numbers of new young people coming around, are all much greater than in any previous action -- and they are becoming active at an earlier stage before the mobilization than previously. Now we are five weeks away from April 15, and this may not seem to the comrades to give us much time, but in the last mobilizations we were two or three weeks away from the dates before we could be sure they would be successful.

We have had little trouble in getting sponsors for the Mobilization though some "moderates" have balked. Already the West Coast has signed up 400 sponsors.

The major problem thus far has been in maintaining the support of the conservative peace groups. To understand the trouble we have been having with such groups as Women Strike for Peace, the American Friends Service Committee, and SANE, that led to the blow up last weekend, we have to review the history of the devel-

opment of this mobilization a little. At the Cleveland Conference on November 28 neither the youth organizations or the conservative peace groups were widely represented. The conference bulk was made up mainly of the radical pacifists, various sponsors of the November 5 Mobilization, and the YSA and SWP. Much of what we did in Cleveland was therefore an anticipation of bringing in larger forces. We nailed down April 15 and set the wheels in motion in cooperation with A.J. Muste as chairman, to start building the Mobilization. We did not force a vote there on the withdrawal line, but concentrated on getting a date set and the best possible organizational structure set up to build the mobilization. We then had three jobs; try to draw in the other youth and campus forces, draw in the broader forces that we thought existed, and set a political tone around the country that would maximize the effect of these mobilizations to be clearly for self-determination for Vietnam. A month later at the student conference in Chicago we turned a conference organized by the Stalinists into a vehicle for setting up the Student Mobilization Committee which was for withdrawal in support of April 15. This student conference played an important role in preventing the reversal of the decisions made in Cleveland and it helped to get the organization of the Mobilization off the ground. By mid-January a representative of the civil rights movement, James Bevel, agreed to become executive director of the Mobilization Committee.

It wasn't until February 1 that Muste returned from north Vietnam and helped to write the first draft of the call. There was a great deal of debate and foot-dragging by the right wing in connection with getting out the call. But what was finally arrived at was a call that for the first time in a national protest had the line of withdrawal. Up until now the themes of the official calls have been "end the war" with us trying to impose the withdrawal slogan and spirit as much as we could on the action. This April 15 call addresses itself specifically to the G.I.'s and black people, and for the first time, to the labor movement. The call says "to labor, facing higher taxes and prices while war profits soar and pressures are applied against wage increases and the right to strike." Secondly, the call attacks the U.S. for violating the right of self-determination for the Vietnamese and states, "We march to dramatize the world-wide hope that the United States remove its troops from Vietnam so that the Vietnamese can determine their own future in their own way."

The line of the call is in contradiction to the public line of both the traditional peace organizations and many of the new forces that are starting to be drawn around the Mobilization. The right wing came in too late to dominate the writing of the call and they were "trapped" by their own rhetoric which over the past months has been in words for the withdrawal of American troops. They tried to hedge by supporting at the same time the contradictory position in favor of negotiations -- but even or-

ganizations such as Women Strike for Peace have given in somewhat in the past period to the increasing pressures within the movement to support the withdrawal line.

The biggest attempt to water down the call came after the draft call was actually mailed out. On February 27 at a steering committee meeting of the San Francisco Spring Mobilization Committee, representatives of the AFSC, Women Strike for Peace, the CP, and the Democratic Party opened up an attack on the call. Their position was that a demand which included negotiations had to be substituted for the withdrawal section of the call. After a long debate a motion was passed by a vote of approximately 44 to 35, to ask the national Mobilization Committee to reverse its position in the call. Following this defeat we were able to gain a majority in favor of a motion saying that if New York ended up keeping the original call, the West Coast wing of the Mobilization wouldn't break away or draw up a new call of their own.

Three days later there was scheduled a national working committee of the Spring Mobilization Committee. A delegate from Women Strike for Peace brought in the decision made on the West Coast and opened up the same debate here. Once again there was a debate, but this time we were able to defeat the attempt to change the call -- with Keating, Bevel and Abner Grunaur of SANE supporting us -- by a vote of nineteen to seven. Thus the withdrawal character of the call was maintained and the right wing was held in the Mobilization Committee, in spite of this.

We could of course function as we have in the past with a call that did not demand withdrawal as long as it did not contradict self-determination and left us freedom of action. However under the present conditions, watering down the call -- even without imposing the negotiations position -- would have been a step backwards politically and a blow to the morale of especially the youth in building for April 15.

There are two more things to be noted. One is the appearance of the reform Democrats, and Kennedy Democrat types in the mobilization committees. This has been noticed especially in New York and San Francisco. Second is Arnold Johnson's affirmation, at the New York Steering Committee meeting following the defeat of the proposal to put negotiations in the call, of the determination of the CP to help build the mobilization. This was made clear in the March 7 Worker which opened a campaign with a signed article by Johnson stressing the importance of the Spring Mobilization, along with an editorial urging the organization of buses for transportation to the two mobilizations and a front page box advertising the mobilization.

While there will be more differences and frictions, it looks now as if the Mobilization will be large. Also, the destabilizing effect of Muste's death on this coalition has been neutralized for the moment although his absence has made the practi-

cal organizational and financial problems of the Mobilization Committee more difficult to solve and has put a cloud over the post-April 15 regroupment for the next step forward.

All this takes place within the framework of Lyndon Johnson's most recent escalation. Johnson has, for the moment, turned away from a negotiations posture, and has begun what is clearly another major escalation of the war which, in itself has had an impact on the people we are working with, including the right wing of the movement.

All of these new developments and our consideration of the general tasks and problems that will face us following April 15, re-emphasize our key tasks in the next five weeks of preparation: 1) the building of student participation in the movement as an independent and strong force; 2) maximizing the small but important breakthrough into the labor movement; and 3) bringing about the further participation of the Negro movement. These tasks are the key both to making this Mobilization qualitatively bigger than the previous ones and to giving us the best possible situation within the movement to work after the current coalition is hit by the severe stresses likely after April 15.

In addition to our work inside the antiwar organizations, we are intervening in the movement through our own propaganda campaign. The Militant has opened up a new column -- a Spring Mobilization campaign column -- which will be carried from now until April 15. Most locals should have started to organize getting the combined \$1.00 Militant-YS subscriptions into the hands of the forces we are working with.

The youth have distributed a 54,000 run of three brochures in the name of the YSA supporting the Mobilization, as part of building support for the Spring Mobilization, and have ordered their second run. In addition the YSA is running two national tours to present both the position of the YSA on the Vietnam war and the antiwar movement and to build the April 15 Mobilization.

Finally, the practical details of the marches have been tentatively laid out. In San Francisco there will be a four mile march up Market Street ending up in a rally in Kezar Stadium. In New York the demonstrators will gather in Central Park's Sheep's Meadow and the plan is to march down 5th Avenue and across town on 42nd Street to the rally at the United Nations.

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Report on the Student Mobilization Committee -- G. Horowitz

The Student Mobilization Committee has been able to maintain its united front character including the CP and a greater involvement of SDS than before.

The CP, as was reported previously, had initiated the conference which resulted in the formation of the Student Mobilization Committee. They had hoped to set up a popular-front type of student organization which they would essentially control. We prevented this from occurring and forced them to accept a united front type of set-up. They were never happy with this, of course, and tried to work towards reversing the organizational form of the Student Committee at the January 28th continuations committee. This too failed.

After the continuations committee meeting, the CP requested a meeting between their national youth director, their staff member on the Student Mobilization Committee and Lew and myself. At this meeting they expressed their view that the meeting was weighted too heavily toward the radical youth groups and the militant antiwar committees. They indicated that they wished the meeting had been "broader" involving greater participation from NSA, ADA, and other liberal campus organizations.

We agreed with the desirability of broadening the participation in the committee but indicated that we are not willing to do this by watering down the committee's program or orientation. We pointed out that the independent committees and the radical youth groups with their program of immediate withdrawal are the backbone of the campus antiwar movement and that unity with the new antiwar forces on the campus should be on this basis.

The fact that such a meeting took place set a good precedent for joint work in the Student Mobilization Committee. Since then the CP has thrown some forces into the Student Committee, the Parade Committee, and the Spring Committee.

SDS nationally had been quite hostile to the April 15th Mobilization and some local reports in their newspaper, New Left Notes, still show signs of this attitude. However, there are indications of a change in the position of the leadership of SDS. A regional meeting in Illinois decided to work with the Chicago demonstration on March 25th and many SDSers expressed willingness to help build April 15th. Jane Adams, former national secretary of SDS, and now a campus traveler for their national office, has agreed to publicize the Mobilization. In addition many of the individual SDS chapters will be supporting the Mobilization.

The call that has just been printed includes a broad spectrum of sponsors, including the YSA, the SWP, the CP, SDS leaders,

CEWV leaders, Stokely Carmichael, Floyd McKissick, and student body presidents, college editors, and even some members of fraternities.

The actual preparations for the spring actions have been proceeding very well on the campuses. The mail that the Student Mobilization office receives indicates that there will be a good response.

The Student Mobilization Committee office has just printed its basic literature. Fifty thousand copies of the call were printed, and within 10 days they were all gone; 50,000 more will be ready soon. There were 25,000 copies of issue No. 2 of the Student Mobilizer printed, and in less than one week they were all distributed. A new press run of 25,000 more is in the works. Some 40,000 of 50,000 pledge cards have also been sent out; the office now receives about 5 a day in the mail -- these include \$1.00 contributions. Some 6,000 buttons have also just come off the press. In addition the Parade Committee has mimeographed many thousands of a leaflet announcing time, date, and place for the demonstration and these have been distributed by many students. The Parade Committee office has been functioning as a central distribution point for the printed material and many young people come in every day to help out or to pick up material for distribution.

The New York City aspect of student involvement also shows real potential. There have been three high school meetings, organized by high school students, to coordinate their city-wide activities. These meetings have been attended by about 50 high school students at each -- from about 25 high schools. There have also been 3 New York area college meetings of 50-75 people, also representing some 25 campuses. This is more than ever before. Three public meetings at high schools have already been organized and had an attendance of 100-300.

A special international call has been sent out -- to our co-thinkers, to various antiwar groups, and to various CP organizations. The international mailing includes the U.S. call with the explicit listing of the SWP and CP as sponsors.

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Local Reports on Progress of Vietnam Week and Spring Mobilization --
D. Jenness

Boston -- Thirty-five students attended a city-wide Student Mobilization Committee meeting on February 23rd and a New England Area Conference is planned for March 16th.

The YSA and SDS are working together at MIT to organize an outdoor rally during Vietnam Week. At Boston University there is an unprecedented amount of political activity and the head of the student government has endorsed the call for Vietnam Week. A teach-in is being planned as the main activity during Vietnam Week.

The greater Boston Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Massachusetts Peace Action Committee (PAX -- conservative Democratic Party-oriented peace group) are working together to organize people to come to New York on April 15th. PAX has donated their headquarters to help organize for the Mobilization.

Philadelphia -- There are united front committees at both the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University. One hundred and twenty-five people attended a city-wide conference on February 25th including 45 high school students. A city-wide Student Mobilization Committee has been organized that is going to send speakers to campuses in the area.

A Spring Mobilization Committee of 23 organizations has been established including CORE, Women Strike for Peace, CP, YSA, SWP, Student Mobilization Committee, etc. An office has been established and it is expected that 3500-4000 will be coming to New York.

Baltimore -- The SDS chapter in Baltimore is actively organizing for the April 15th demonstration and is holding a meeting this week for a speaker from the Student Mobilization Committee.

Antioch -- A trailblazing team consisting of an AFSCer from Dayton and a YSAer from Antioch will be organizing for the Spring Mobilization on campuses in Southwestern Ohio.

Detroit -- The Detroit Student Mobilization Committee is having excellent luck and has received responses from outlying areas such as Flint, Ann Arbor, Michigan State University, and Albion College. At Wayne State University in Detroit the head of the student government has come under attack by the administration for being an officer of the Vietnam Week committee. Consequently a great deal of publicity has been generated for the war crimes hearing against campus complicity planned on the campus.

The Detroit Spring Mobilization Committee is also having good luck and is signing people up for buses. They held a state-wide conference on March 5th. CORE and Rev. Cleage are organizing Negro participation in the Mobilization.

The committee immediately reprinted the call from the national office of the Spring Mobilization Committee as well as the national leaderhead with the addition of their own local address.

Madison -- There has been considerable protest at the University of Wisconsin against CIA recruiters on the campus. The protest mushroomed into demonstrations involving hundreds and a sit-in was held in the administrative offices.

Minneapolis -- Eighty people attended an area-wide conference in sub-zero weather. Sidney Peck, Mulford Sibley (local pacifist) and a professor from Gustavus Adolphus College spoke. Students from nearby colleges attended including Carleton College, Wisconsin State University, Macalester College, etc. Out of the conference a city-wide coordinating committee was established to organize people to come to New York.

Bay Area -- There has been a rather slow start on getting the Student Mobilization Committee going in this area and in drawing in the CP youth.

However, there are signs that there may be an upswing in activity in the next few weeks. Student Mobilization Committees have been set up on both the Berkeley and San Francisco State campuses, and there has been considerable interest at San Jose State College. The West Coast office of the Student Mobilization Committee, which is located in the West Coast Spring Mobilization Committee office, is in contact with about 60 campuses in the Western states. The Student Committee is planning to sponsor speakers from the sub-committees of the Spring Mobilization Committee on campuses during Vietnam Week.

Chicago -- A large rally has been scheduled for March 25th at which Emil Mazey, Martin Luther King, and Benjamin Spock are scheduled to speak.

A Spring Mobilization Committee has been established and is planning to use the March 25th rally to win support for going to New York. The Committee has agreed to print up 100 signs and a couple of banners which will be carried on the march, which will say "On to New York."

Thousands of Spring Mobilization leaflets will be distributed and cans will be circulated to help raise money for transportation. A downpayment has been made on buses and people are being signed up.

The newly formed Trade Union Division of Chicago SANE is

supporting the March 25th event and will be distributing a special trade union leaflet.

The Student Mobilization Committee is going ahead full speed. Trailblazing to outlying areas such as Champaign-Urbana has been very successful and buses are being organized from several of these areas.

New York -- The number of volunteers coming into the Parade Committee, Student Mobilization and Spring Mobilization Committee offices has increased considerably in the past two weeks.

The New York Student Mobilization Committee has held a number of successful street meetings outside high schools and has had increasing participation at its weekly meetings. The most enthusiastic response has come from high school students who have set up their own city-wide committee as well as committees of up to 60 people in several high schools.

Charlie Bolduc's Tour -- Charlie reports that Clark University and Amherst University in Massachusetts and Colgate University and the Buffalo area in upstate New York are all planning to send at least one busload. At least one busload is coming from Nashville and possibly one from Memphis. Charlie had several successful meetings in Nashville.

At Georgia State in Atlanta Charlie spoke to an audience of 300 white students as well as to two political science classes on the campus. The Atlanta area is planning to send at least one busload. There are a couple of people in Atlanta who are very interested in joining our movement.

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