

April 16, 1974

TO MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Dear Comrades,

Attached is a report by Brian Williams, the YSA regional organizer in the Illinois-Wisconsin area. This report covers the intervention of the Madison YSA local and SWP members Pat and Martha Quinn in a Community Action for Latin America conference held in Madison, April 4 - 6.

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On April 4-6 the Community Action for Latin America group in Madison sponsored a national conference on Repression and Development in Brazil and Latin America. At 1:00 on Friday, April 5, across the street from where the conference was taking place, the Spartacist League called for a demonstration to free Van Schouwen and Romero. The YSA attended a planning meeting on the demonstration but walked out. However the YSA's name was not put down on the leaflet publicizing the demonstration as an endorser of it. The YSA Exec approved a motion by John H. that they would build the demonstration by passing 1,000 leaflets on it, that they would put out a leaflet of their own to build the demonstration, and that they would participate in the demonstration by making up placards for it. The EC also passed a motion that the YSA would pass out the Sept. 19 United Secretariat statement on Chile which John H. claimed was unanimously passed by the United Secretariat. Part of this motion was that these statements were just to be placed on the lit table. All these motions were approved prior to the Conference.

On Wednesday eve, April 4, I was sent to Madison to coordinate our intervention into the Conference. I explained to the comrades that because of the national importance of the Conference - the priorities of our intervention had to be changed with the priority put on the USLA table, giving out USLA Reporters, and selling USLA buttons, as well as coordinating sales of the YS, Militant and the hawking of our Chile pamphlets. All the comrades were called for a fraction meeting scheduled for the next morning as well as to find out the times that the comrades were available. Bruce, Bones, Carol, Ted, Bob D, and Trudy attended the fraction meeting. No objection was raised to this perspective. At the fraction it was made clear that because of our priorities we did not have the forces or consider it desirable to build the Spart called rally - that the sales of our press to people at the CALA Conference came first.

Edelstein spoke at 4:00 PM on April 4, opening up the CALA Conference. At 3:55 Pat Q, Judy H and John H entered the Chapel where the speech was to occur and mass leafleted the statement of the Fourth International calling for solidarity with the Chilean working class. After the session several IT comrades distributed the leaflet to build the Spart demonstration entitled "Free Romero and Van Schouwen. John remarked to me that they were busily involved in building the united front."

Because of the confusion about our political priorities in intervening in the CALA Conference, which Thursday displayed, the Madison EC decided to form a steering committee to organize and coordinate our intervention into the remainder of the Conference. This steering committee was composed of myself, Carol L, Ted S, and John H. Three members of the steering committee spent an hour looking for John H. so that a meeting of this body could be convened. We finally located him at home at 10:30 PM. John refused to meet with us because it was too late. He agreed to come to an 8:00 AM fraction meeting which was mandatory for all comrades to attend ~~whom~~ who would be participating in the remainder of the intervention. If attendance at this fraction was absolutely impossible, comrades had to speak to myself or Bones to get an assignment. The following people agreed to attend the 8:00 fraction meeting - Bones, Carol, Ted, Bruce Judy H. & ~~and~~ Bob D, and John H. No ITers showed up at the fraction meeting. At this fraction, every member of the local was given an assignment.

Friday morning, I found out from a Spart that Pat Q. was one of the scheduled speakers at the 1:00 Spart ~~demo~~ demonstration. I had a meeting with Pat that morning and clarified for him that his assignment as a Party member participating in this fractional intervention was to sell Militants. He made it clear that he had to work during the day so he would not have much time but that he would sell 12-1 and speak at 1:00 at the rally. I explained to him that if he is to speak on behalf of the Party at demonstrations, he should consult with the Party first. He asked me if I was going to put him under discipline not to speak - I told him that was not my decision to make and that I was here to coordinate our national intervention into the Conference, and his assignment in this intervention was to sell Militants.

When the ITers were told about their assignments, they did not refuse to take them. They either did not show up for their assignments at the times they said they would or they took newspapers and continued to carry out what Pat Q. told them to do. During the time of the Spart rally - it was very clear that faction d

discipline exceeded XK YSA discipline. As members of the IT showed up and began to pass out the YSA's statement on why people should attend this demonstration and as they began to march in the picket line with YSA placards, they were informed by myself and Bones of their assignments, but they proceeded to carry out these other tasks. ~~And~~ Before and after the demonstration some of them did sell Militants, YS' and USLA Reporters, but during it they refused. Several IT YSA comrades were confused on what they should do and they consulted with Pat who instructed them to march in the picket line. The ~~signs~~ signs they carried said "Revolution Until Victory in Chile," "Smash the Junta - For a Socialist Chile," "Solidarity with the Chilean working class" "Free Luis Vitale" All the signs said YSA and had a hammer and sickle on them with a 4 underneath. ~~XXXXXX~~ All the members of the IT in Madison including Pat and Martha participated in the picket line. At 1:05 PM - 2 new visitors arrived. Massey and Barzman came to join the ~~pick~~ picket line. I made a point of asking both Massey and Barzman if they had come down on assignment to help in the CALA Conference intervention. Both of them got very upset. Barzman exclaimed to me, "I'm here to instruct you to hand out the Fourth International statement." Massey acted his appropriate self, telling me to fuck off, go to hell and to stay out of his way because he didn't have to much sleep last night. Massey kept exclaiming "who do you think you are talking to o- you better check with N.Y. on what you are doing." There were 40 people at the height of the picket line - the Sparts had a regional mobilization for it - about 20-25 S participated, 10 ITers, 1 PLer and 6 independents. Right before Quinn spoke, Massey and Quinn came up to me, hoping for a provocation. They told me that I should write down that I put Quinn under discipline not to speak. Much to Massey's disappointment I did not do it and Quinn spoke at the demonstration. Quinn spoke on behalf of his union and on behalf of the SWP. At the end of the rally, the Spart chairman stated that a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International was at the rally.

Instructive of how the ITERS handled assignments was typified by Holton. He agreed to be available from 1:30-2, 4:30-5:15 and 7:30-8:15 on Thursday. At 1:30 and 4:30, he took his papers only if you cornered him. At 7:30 he did not show up.

The leaflet passed out by the Sparts at the rally illustrates that the Sparts and the IT could form a united front - only it was around factional hostility to the line of the Party. Quinn appeared very upset that finally some tabs were being kept on his activity.

The SPARTS are making a big push in Madison. They recently sent in 2 full-time organizers. They try to be as nonsectarian as possible toward the ITers, but their line in the outside world is as sectarian as ever. They totally isolated themselves at the Conference. They ~~finally~~ finally walked out of the conference taking all 2 of themselves. Their approach to the conference was one of the reasons hardly anyone from the Conference showed up at their rally.

The USLA intervention went well. We sold over 80 reporters, 60 buttons, plus the YSA intervention of over 40 pathfinder pamphlets on Chile, 40 Militants and 20 YS'.

*Brian Wilson*

YSA Regional Organizer