

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, No. 30, July 21, 1972

Present: Barnes, Breitman, Britton, Camejo, A. Hansen,  
Horowitz, Jenness, Lovell, Morrison, Rose, Shaw,  
Sheppard, Waters

Constulative: Dobbs, Kerry, Novack

Visitors: LaMont, Lund, Scott, Seigle

Chairwoman: Waters

AGENDA: 1. Democratic Party Convention  
2. Women's Liberation Report  
3. Youth Report

1. DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONVENTION

Jenness reported.

Discussion

2. WOMEN'S LIBERATION REPORT

LaMont reported.

Discussion

3. YOUTH REPORT

Rose reported.

Discussion

Meeting adjourned.

JULY 25, 1972

AUG 7 1972

The Political Committee  
Socialist Workers Party  
14 Charles Lane  
New York, New York 10014

Dear Comrades:

We are writing to register our protest against certain aspects of the recent trip to Argentina by the Party's Presidential candidate, Comrade Linda Jenness. Our primary concern centers around the following quotation from the June 9, 1972 issue of the Militant:

Toward the end of a lively one-and-a-half hour discussion period Jenness was asked to comment on the activities and policies of urban guerrilla groups. In Argentina there are at least five such groups which attempt to influence national politics through armed actions by small guerrilla units. Jenness began by pointing out that it was not her intention to use her visit here to intervene in Argentine politics. She then stated that her party's position is that small groups of people isolated from the majority of workers and their allies cannot successfully mobilize the masses in the struggle for national independence and socialism.

While it is certainly true that "small groups of people isolated from the majority of workers and their allies" cannot make a socialist revolution, the context in which Jenness delivered this answer transforms her statement into what is effectively an open and public attack on the Argentine Section of the Fourth International. Neither this statement nor the coverage of the tour in the Militant and the Intercontinental Press reflected the necessary solidarity with our Argentine Section now under repressive attack by the bourgeoisie. Likewise, the Jenness statement and the subsequent coverage constitute further public attacks on the Argentine Section of the Fourth International.

When asked about her attitude toward the guerrilla movement, of which "there are at least five such groups" in Argentina, Jenness' primary concern should have been to fully solidarize herself and her Party with all of those revolutionary forces struggling against the Argentine dictatorship by any means necessary.

While her remarks might be fully appropriate at an internal meeting or discussion of our movement the fact is that they were made at a large public meeting sponsored by an opponent organization of our Argentine Section-- and according to the Militant the event received full coverage from the bourgeois media! Comrade Jenness' statement could easily be used by rightwing repressive

forces and other opponents against our own comrades in the Argentine Section who are carrying out the armed struggle perspective! At the same time that Comrade Jenness was condemning such a perspective before the bourgeois media, many of our comrades were (and still are) languishing in Argentine prisons.

While the primary error of Comrade Jenness' statement is in how it affects the current struggle in Argentina itself, that is not the only error in Comrade Jenness' actions, actions which we presume, and the coverage in the Militant substantiates this, which have the full support of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party. These actions by the SWP not only characterized unfavorably and denounced the activities of our comrades in Argentina, they were also in direct contradiction to the whole approach the Majority of the United Secretariat has taken toward the Latin American question. Comrade Jenness was undoubtedly aware of the international differences on Latin America and was most likely also aware that the SWP leadership had already been reprimanded by the majority of the United Secretariat for the lack of solidarity toward and its public attack on the Argentine Section of the Fourth International in the Militant on April third. Further she must have been aware of the decisions of the United Secretariat at their April 15-16th meeting which specifically instructed the SWP to refrain from further public attacks on our Argentine Section.

Not only do we feel that the SWP should abide by the decisions of the majority of the United Secretariat but that the differences which exist in the Fourth International are best discussed and worked out in the internal documents and pre-World Congress discussions that will take place inside our World movement, and not in the public forums. And certainly not in the circumstances that Comrade Jenness utilized for her statement of attack on the politics of the ninth World Congress and the Argentine Section.

That this incident takes place after the SWP had been officially reprimanded for similar actions only further generates a factional atmosphere hampering the reaching of a correct policy for the International and damages the realization of a fully democratic and centralist International. In that regard it is recommended that in the future our spokespersons remember that they speak not

only as members of the United States Section of the Fourth International itself. If we answer such questions at all we should give the position of the World Movement.

The reports in the Militant and Intercontinental Press give the Impression that this tour was conducted and was organized without the collaboration of our co-thinkers of the Argentine Section of the Fourth International. We would like an answer as to whether or not this is true; and if it is true we would like to know why.

We have written this letter because of our extreme concern in regard to these matters, and would appreciate an answer. During the recent Plenum reports in our branch these questions were raised and it was additionally requested that the reporter (Comrade DeBerry, a National Committee Member) read to the branch the recent statement of reprimand from the United Secretariat since only the SWP's answer to the reprimand had been read; the request was denied and those who raised the questions were simply attacked.

We are sending a copy of this letter to the United Secretariat for their information, since it clearly concerns an international question.

Comradely,

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