

TO: All Clubs
FROM: National Organization Department
SUBJECT: Paul Novick Case

Dear Comrades:

You were previously informed of the charges brought against Comrade Paul Novick by Comrades Claude Lightfoot, Hy Lumer and Jose Ristorucci after they had been established as a subcommittee of the Political Committee to look into the actions of Comrade Novick. The National Committee's Trial Committee met with those making the charges and at length with Comrade Novick. The Trial Committee then made a report to the National Committee on February 16, 1972 and the following statement was adopted with no dissents and 2 abstentions.

The Trial Committee established by the National Committee at its November 12-14, 1971 meeting to hear charges brought against Paul Novick by Comrades Lightfoot, Lumer and Ristorucci, acting as a subcommittee of the Political Committee met on Monday, Feb. 14, 1972. After the presentation of an additional statement by Comrade Paul Novick, and after brief statements by the comrades who brought charges against Novick, there was a period of questions directed to both Novick and to those who brought charges against him.

The Trial Committee then met in a closed session to consider the entire case. The Trial Committee unanimously concluded:

1. That Paul Novick's line, policies and activity are incompatible with Party membership.
2. Paul Novick in his statements both written and oral does not indicate any self critical approach and fully defends his position, policies and activities.
3. The Committee feels that he should be expelled, and in order to afford him a final opportunity to correct his policy in line with Party policies, the Trial Committee submits the following motion:

THE STAND AND ACTIONS OF PAUL NOVICK ARE IN COMPATIBLE WITH PARTY MEMBERSHIP. IT IS THEREFORE DECIDED THAT HE BE EXPELLED FROM MEMBERSHIP IF, WITHIN SIX MONTHS, HE DOES NOT ALTER HIS POSITION AND SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATICALLY ESTABLISHED POLICIES OF THE PARTY AND COMBAT AND DESIST FROM ALL FACTIONAL ACTIVITY, AND IN THE MEANTIME HE STANDS SUSPENDED FROM MEMBERSHIP.

Comrade Jack Kling, Chairman of the Trial Committee reported for it to the National Committee. In his report he stated that "Novick, on a number of occasions said 'we may have made some mistakes,' yet nowhere is there to be found either in his written documents or oral statements before the Committee, any self-criticism on any question"

The Committee report cites seven areas in which Comrade Novick acted publicly contrary to Party policy.

1. "An evaluation of the Six Day War, assessing its roots and responsibility.
2. "On interpreting the meaning of the U.N. Resolution in relation to the Mid-East including the complete withdrawal of all Israeli forces from all occupied territory and the guaranteeing of the right of all nations in the Mid-East to exist in peace and security including Israel."
3. "Estimating the internal situation and developments in Israel, including the fact that while our Party recognizes and has established fraternal relations with the Communist Party of Israel headed by Comrades Vilner and Toubi, Novick has established close relations with the renegade group headed by Sneh and Mikunis; -- a group fighting our Party's position on the entire Mid-East situation."
4. "On an assessment of developments in the Soviet Union in general and in particular as it relates to Jews in the U.S.S.R."

5. "On the concepts of bourgeois nationalism and Zionism and how to struggle against these anti-Marxist ideological currents."
6. "On the concepts of racism and how to struggle on this front; and in the first place, on the Angela Davis case....After a long period of almost silence or very poor handling of the case, after prodding on the part of both New York State and national leadership of our Party, an improvement took place in the pages of the Morning Freiheit on the Angela Davis case. But even since, the Committee pointed out, often the demand is for a "fair trial" and not for "freedom" from this frameup, on the part of Novick and the Freiheit. Such a demand is satisfactory from civil libertarians but not from progressives and even Communists.
7. On the question of democratic centralism and factionalism. Comrade Novick claims the National Committee gave him the right to dissent from the Party's position on the nature and responsibility for the Six Day War. No one on the National Committee agrees that any such thing was done or even could be done.

The Party Constitution in Article III, Section 2, says:

Section 2: After a thorough discussion in any club, committee or convention, decisions are arrived at by majority vote. All members, including those who disagree, are duty bound to explain, fight for and carry out such decisions.

Those who disagree have the right to reserve their opinion; to appeal a decision to a higher body and request that the question be reopened; and to express their views through the channels established for that purpose during pre-convention discussion periods. But no member or leader has the right to violate such decisions or to combine with others to conduct an organized struggle for their point of view. Factions are impermissible in the Communist Party.

Section 3: The principle of democratic centralism includes a common discipline for all members and leaders to fulfill the decisions arrived at by the majority.

While a member is not compelled to change his or her opinion and in that sense can disagree, the times and places for expressing that disagreement, even within the Party organization are proscribed as in the Constitution above and no one may express their differences publicly and must fight for the carrying out of all decisions unless and until they are officially reversed. The Committee found that Comrade Novick expressed his differences publicly and waged a public struggle against ^{Party} policy decisions.

Two examples of open fighting of Party decisions were given:

Novick knew the Party had been instrumental in stimulating the demonstration at the Israeli Mission November 23, 1971 against Israel's aggressive policies in the Mid-East and against the policies of Israel and its U.S. supporters that spawn and encourage the Jewish Defense League. The Freiheit printed a long editorial attacking this demonstration on a whole number of grounds. Regardless of the grounds, which also ran counter to Party policies, this was in reality a public attack on the Party.

On another occasion, Paul Novick sent a greeting to the Convention of the Senh-Mikunis renegade group in Israel without consulting the Party's leadership. This was printed both in the Sneh-Mikunis paper and used in its struggle against the Communist Party of Israel and in the Freiheit where it helped confuse progressive Jews here. Later, a tour was organized to the major U.S. centers by Novick and others for Lipsky, the editor of the Sneh-Mikunis paper. Since this group is able to get visas, while the C.P. of Israel led by Vilner and Toubi is not, the tour was carried through.

The report indicated that these acts, including the open challenging of Party policy decisions, were often justified in the name of avoiding isolation.

The report concluded:

"Our Party has never asked our comrades, whether working in the Jewish community, or in trade unions, or in mass organizations or, for that matter, in any community, to mechanically apply our Party policies. We do expect all comrades to accept agreed upon policies, try to implement them and, in a most creative manner, find ways of implementing them. Sometimes in the struggle to carry through our Party's policies, we may have to 'swim against the stream'....no comrade can use any argument, including that of possible isolation to justify a policy of accommodating oneself to wrong and harmful ideas. Even worse behind the argument of not being isolated to join in a struggle against the Party and its policies."

At a later time, some additional material will be made available on this case.

Comradely,

Daniel Rubin
National Organizational
Secretary

DR/bb

