

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, Number 4, May 1, 1970

Present: B. Barnes, J. Barnes, Breitman, Britton, A. Hansen, J. Hansen, Horowitz, LaMont, F. Lovell, Waters.

Visitors: Kerry, Seigle

Chairman: LaMont

AGENDA: 1. Active Workers and Educational Conference
2. Antiwar Report
3. UAW Convention
4. World Movement

1. ACTIVE WORKERS AND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

Britton reported.

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

2. ANTIWAR REPORT

Horowitz reported. (Written report to follow)

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

3. UAW CONVENTION

F. Lovell reported. Articles to appear in press.

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

4. WORLD MOVEMENT

J. Hansen reported.

Meeting adjourned.

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N. Y. 10003
May 4, 1970

TO ALL N.C. MEMBERS

The enclosed letters are for N.C. information. They are not for general membership distribution at this time.

Comradely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Barnes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Comradely,".

Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

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Houston, Texas

April 14, 1970

Dear Jack,

This is a report to the N.O. on a union situation that is opening up in Houston.

We have two comrades who are now working in a petroleum refinery here. The refinery employs about 2,500 people and is organized by the OCAW. For the first time in 20 years, there are some signs of motion in the local union. This is due to the hiring of about 300 young workers at the plant this year. In the previous ten years, no new workers had been hired, and the company had pretty well tamed the older guys.

The young workers are militant and impatient with the do-nothing attitude of the older workers. The youth have begun initiating motions from the floor of the union meeting, aiming to strengthen the plant bargaining committee by doubling its size. They intend to stack it with younger men. The union meetings are getting larger and livelier as more kids show up for them. Their informal leader is a long-haired hippy type who wears a peace symbol on his hard hat. It's very interesting to see all the young cowboys and rednecks speak and vote for the motions placed on the floor by this hippy.

The meetings are conducted very democratically and the young workers carry most of their motions. The older blacks that attend the meetings usually vote with the young workers.

We intend to begin an intervention into this development by trying to get them to formalize themselves by holding caucus meetings.

We could also probably get a newsletter started to provide space for rank and filers to discuss various issues.

Also, we have a big strike coming up next January.

Unless we hear otherwise from the N.O., we will begin a modest intervention in this caucus.

There are a couple of possible future hang-ups: membership in the union is "expressly denied to members of communist organizations." Also, the plant is a defense facility and SACB-listed organizations cannot have members working in it. So far this only includes the CP, as far as we know.

Fraternally,

s/Paul

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April 29, 1970

Paul
HOUSTON

Dear Paul:

Your very interesting letter of 4/14 to Jack was turned over to me. It sounds as if our comrades ought to be able to make some recruits in that refinery, or sell Militant subs.

I don't think there is much to worry about at the moment from the SACB which has just last week received some adverse rulings from the courts. If you are interested in the details of this check the N.Y. Times of Sunday, April 26, News Review section.

The other matter of the union constitution is more likely to give us trouble at some future date. But even this I'm not inclined to worry about at this stage. If and when we become involved in a struggle for leadership of the union, this will be a problem for us. Most likely our most experienced and politically prominent comrades will not then be candidates for high union post. As we recruit, and if it develops that we are working in the course of a big strike with a very close friend who proves to be a popular leader, we would probably advise him not to formally affiliate with the SWP. This is what was done in the case of Harry Bridges (because he was an alien) in 1934 in the maritime strike. He never formally affiliated with the CP. Consequently, the necessary grounds to deport him (years later) never existed.

I think you are right to begin your "modest intervention" with the idea of interesting some of the young workers there in the anti-war movement, in our party, and in the paper. In the course of our work we will, naturally, attend and participate in discussion at union meetings. There should be no hurry on our part, however, to take on heavy union assignments or become candidates for union offices.

Re: the organization of a caucus, I doubt if anything useful can develop at this time from efforts along these lines. You can't do much in a caucus as a rule without a party fraction. You will gain more now if you concentrate on political education and recruitment. If a so-called "progressive" caucus should be organized by others, we would want to then consider whether to join it. In the UAW there is (or maybe I should say was) a little power caucus which is mentioned in my report of the Convention. Such caucus formations usually have all kinds of conflicting elements and are incapable of doing anything meaningful, as was the case in the UAW.

Comradely,
s/Frank

P.S. I have an invitation to come to Austin August 2-9 which I am accepting. I will see you then. We can talk more about the refinery and other matters.

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N. Y. 10003

April 30, 1970

TO ALL BRANCH ORGANIZERS AND FINANCIAL DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

April 1970 Financial Notes

Starting this month, we will try to send out a monthly round-up on how the branches are doing on finances as we try to really dig into the sustainer system and regularize the financial functioning of the party.

These reports should be useful to the financial directors and branch leadership in comparing their progress with that of other branches, in getting ideas of how to move ahead more quickly and in keeping the importance of party finances more in the forefront.

* * *

Financial directors will notice that we have revised the three forms we ask all branches to send in each month. The revisions are designed to clarify some things about branch composition and performance and to place more attention on areas of branch income that should be increasing as the radicalization deepens (contributions, socials, etc.).

The changes on the sustainer form came as the result of a big step forward taken by the Oakland-Berkeley branch which will be reported on in one of the other notes this month.

* * *

The attached chart gives comparative figures on sustainer pledges and payments for March and April. In evaluating the per cent paid columns, comrades should also look for the number (?) beside the branch name since a payment over 100% may indicate arrears payments while the branch is still behind on its current sustainer obligations.

* * *

The branch of the month is Oakland-Berkeley. Not only did they close to double their monthly per capita pledge to the N.O. -- from \$7.45 to \$14.30 -- but they also instituted a weekly payment system which from one week to the next took into account changes in membership. The first week in April we received \$3.30 as their weekly per capita pledge; by the second week in April, they had recruited three more members and sent \$9.90 more than they had for their first week's payment! Even though this makes it hard for us to keep track of exactly what the branch owes for the rest of the month, we are certainly glad to remain in that state of confusion when a branch is keeping finances up front like this!

Anyone else want to join Oakland-Berkeley?

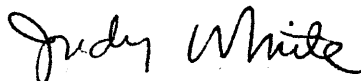
* * *

A reminder to financial directors: even if the branch is not in a position to mail in any payments the day you receive the sustainer forms, please mail in the form right away to let us know what your per capita for the month will be so we'll know what to expect. That way we'll be able to budget more accurately.

* * *

The branches currently owe more than \$9,365.00 in arrears to the N.O. If we are to carry out the plans we made at the Plenum to increase the circulation of the paper, continue with the new monthly magazine, increase the collaboration between the center and the field and work toward establishing and building new regional centers for the party, we need the financial support of each and every member of the party. Let's work to whittle away that figure in the coming months so that by the time of the active workers' conference we'll be up-to-date on our finances and ready to move forward to take advantage of all the openings there are for our movement.

Comradely,



Judy White
National Financial Director

Branch	March 1970		April 1970	
	Per Capita Pledge	Per cent Paid	Per Capita Pledge	Per cent Paid
Atlanta ⁽²⁾	7.50	100%	7.50	100%
Austin ⁽²⁾	4.00	0%	4.00	150%
Boston ⁽²⁾	11.00	100%	11.00	100%
Chicago	15.00 ⁽¹⁾	0%	8.38 ⁽¹⁾	119%
Cleveland	7.58	140%	7.58	100%
*Detroit ⁽²⁾	8.33	100%	8.50	110%
Los Angeles ⁽²⁾	16.00	100%	16.00	100%
New York	13.00	56.6%	13.00	71.4%
*Oakland-Berkeley ⁽²⁾	7.45	214%	14.30	100%
Philadelphia	10.00	0%	10.00	92.6%
Portland ⁽²⁾	6.00	100%	6.00	100%
*San Diego ⁽²⁾	4.70	221%	5.22	100%
San Francisco	13.00 ⁽¹⁾	0%	13.00 ⁽¹⁾	0%
Seattle	10.00	0%	10.00	221%
Twin Cities	10.22	54.3%	10.25 ⁽¹⁾	145% ⁽¹⁾

*Per capita increases

(1) Approximate; no report received to verify per capita pledge or total pledge.

(2) Up-to-date in sustainer payments with no arrears as of end April.