

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 22, March 12, 1976

Present: Barnes, Blackstock, Breitman, Garza, D. Jenness,
L. Jenness, Jones, Lund, Lyons, Seigle, Sheppard,
Stapleton, Stone, Waters

Visitors: Morell, Rodriguez

Chair: Waters

- AGENDA:
1. National Finances Personnel
 2. Branches and Locals
 3. Houston
 4. Richmond
 5. Spark
 6. Plenum Location
 7. CLUW
 8. Socialist Forum
 9. Disclosure Suit
 10. Party Campaign against Government Harassment
 11. Plyushch
 12. World Movement
 13. Healy Slander Campaign
 14. Kentucky Mine Murders

1. NATIONAL FINANCES PERSONNEL

Jenness reported on national office assignment of Aspy to
Join Matson on national finances committee.

2. BRANCHES AND LOCALS

(Aspy, Matson, Ogden invited for this point.)

Stone, Jones, Rodriguez, and D. Jenness reported on recent
trips to branches to discuss the progress and problems of
implementing the party turn.

Discussion

3. HOUSTON

Rodriguez reported on proposal of Houston branch to establish
the Houston Local with three branches: Kashmere, Northside,
and South Park.

Discussion

Motion: To approve establishing the Houston Local.

Carried.

4. RICHMOND

D. Jenness reported on request by five party members in
Richmond Va., that a branch be constituted in Richmond.

Discussion

Motion: That the party members in Richmond constitute a branch in that city.

Carried.

5. SPARK

(Feldman invited for this point.)

Seigle reported on discussions with Spark (see attached).

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

6. PLENUM LOCATION

Motion by Jones: That the April 29-May 2 National Committee plenum be held in New York City.

Carried.

7. COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN

(Jaquith, Hildebrand, and S. Lovell invited for this point.)

Jaquith and S. Lovell reported on recent CLUW National Executive Board meeting and their endorsement of May 16 ERA demonstration in Springfield, Illinois (see attached).

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

8. SOCIALIST FORUM

(Feldman invited for this point.)

Feldman reported on recent evolution of Socialist Forum group (see attached).

Discussion

Motion: To contact the Socialist Forum group about the possibility of political discussion and collaboration.

Carried.

9. DISCLOSURE SUIT

(Burke invited for this point.)

Burke reported on new developments in the campaign committee's suit, being handled by the ACLU, against the disclosure provisions of the government campaign finance law.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

10. PARTY CAMPAIGN AGAINST GOVERNMENT HARASSMENT

(Perkus and Winter invited for this point.)

Stapleton reported on recent developments in legal suit against government harassment.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

11. PLYUSHCH

Waters reported on projected visit by Plyushch to the United States.

Discussion

Motion: To send out report by Frankel (see attached).

Carried.

12. WORLD MOVEMENT

Sheppard reported.

Discussion

13. HEALY SLANDER CAMPAIGN

Waters reported on articles in defense of Hansen and Novack received from Lambert and Hamilton and from British Socialist Action, and on proposal to circulate statement about Healy campaign and methods for signatures by individuals around the world (see attached).

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

12. KENTUCKY MINE MURDERS

Morell and Lyons reported that the Militant has sent Nancy Cole and the Campaign Committee has sent Ed Heisler to Kentucky to report on the mine explosion that killed 26 workers.

Meeting Adjourned.

Report on Discussions with Spark
by Larry Seigle, March 12, 1976

Several members of the Political Committee recently met with leaders of the Spark group to explore areas of political agreement and disagreement between Spark and the SWP, and to discuss possible collaboration on political work where there is agreement.

Spark considers itself part of the international current associated with the Lutte Ouvrière organization in France. Spark is a small group, with members in only two cities, Detroit and Baltimore, but they are now beginning to sell their paper regularly in Chicago and New York as well. Our estimate is that they have perhaps 30 members, not counting organized periphery.

They publish an 8-page paper, The Spark, which has recently gone from monthly to twice-monthly publication. The Spark identifies itself as Trotskyist.

Their organization was formed in 1971. Some of its founders had previously been in other groups calling themselves Trotskyist, notably the Spartacist League. Some of them had spent time in France, where they were influenced by Lutte Ouvrière.

The group was organized around a perspective of "implanting" its members in basic industry and organizing around protests over working conditions, racist abuses by foremen, and so on.

Their main activity since then has been the preparation and distribution of factory newsletters, which have some political content but usually focus on job conditions. They involve contacts in helping to prepare, finance, and circulate the newsletters inside the plants. They do not seem to be particularly interested in union politics. They do not openly identify themselves as Trotskyists in their day-to-day work.

In Detroit, they have people in several of the major Crysler auto plants, and in Baltimore they have members at the huge Sparrows Point steel complex and a couple of other factories.

They have carried out this work consistently over five years and obviously have some periphery around them, but there is no indication that they have made more than extremely minimal gains in terms of recruitment in the factories. The little growth they have experienced seems to have come from students.

However, their political positions and the nature of their activities haven't remained static.

Recently, they have begun holding public events, showing a film and presenting a short political program. In Baltimore, they showed a movie called "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," and drew 125 people to each of two showings. The audience was 90 percent Black. In Detroit, they showed the film "Last Grave at Dimbaza" and drew 80-90 people, mostly Blacks.

On many of the most important political questions of the day they now hold positions close to ours. They support busing, defense of affirmative action, passage of the ERA, and the right to abortion. Although they haven't yet taken a position on the 1976 elections, they generally support independent working class political action. They indicated that they planned to include in one of their factory newsletters in Baltimore information on a meeting planned for Peter Camejo. In 1972 they called for a vote for any of the working class parties -- CP, SWP, or SLP.

Our perspective with Spark is to pursue political discussions with them, both on the international questions facing the world Trotskyist movement and on questions of politics in the United States, at the same time as we explore possibilities for collaboration on specific issues. Although it is still too early to draw any conclusions, we made it clear to the Spark comrades in our initial discussion that our goal is to explore the possibilities of a fusion of our forces. We explained to them that the SWP isn't, and shouldn't be, a monolithic party. There is room inside our party for tendencies like Spark, provided there is substantial political agreement.

At the meeting we agreed to exchange publications and internal bulletins, and invited Spark to attend the SWP convention.

We also agreed to continue our discussions, both on the national leadership level, and on a local level in Detroit and Baltimore.

It would be useful for branches to follow Spark's publications. A subscription to The Spark costs \$3 for 12 issues or \$6 for 24 issues, and can be ordered from: Spark, Box 819A, Detroit, Michigan 48232.

Lutte Ouvrière publishes a monthly magazine, printed in both English and French (Class Struggle/Lutte de Classe), which is available for \$15 per year. It can be ordered from the same address.

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

Paris, February 16, 1976

United Secretariat of the
Fourth International
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Comrades,

Our group, together with the Spark groups (USA),
Combat Ouvrièr (Antilles) and the UATCI (Africa), is
sending to the whole Trotskyist movement the document,
"For Putting an End to the Crumbling of the Interna-
tional Trotskyist Movement."

We would be grateful, in the name of the four
signatory organizations, if you would forward this docu-
ment, along with the letter accompanying it, to each of
the member and sympathizing organizations of the United
Secretariat.

In thanking you, we send you, dear comrades, our
internationalist greetings.

for Lutte Ouvrière

*

*

*

Paris, February 16, 1976

Socialist Workers Party
New York

Dear Comrades,

We are sending you herewith a copy of the letter
that we are sending today to the United Secretariat of
the Fourth International in which we ask the latter to
distribute the document "For Putting an End to the
Crumbling of the International Trotskyist Movement" to
all the affiliated organizations of the United Secre-
tariat.

Please accept, dear comrades, our internationalist
greetings.

for Lutte Ouvrière
s/ André Frys

COPY

COPY

March 15, 1976

Lutte Ouvrière

France

Dear Comrades,

Thank you for your letter of February 16, the attachments, and the copy of the letter to the United Secretariat. We have circulated the two articles, "Putting an End to the Crumbling of the Fourth International," and "Rebuilding the Fourth International," to our National Committee and are reprinting them next week in an information bulletin [IIB No. 6 in 1976] for our members and sympathizers. Thank you for making them available. We look forward to discussing these questions with you.

Comradely,

s/ Jack Barnes
National Secretary
Socialist Workers Party

cc: United Secretariat
Spark

Report on CLUW National Executive Board Meeting, March 6-7, 1976

by Sarah Lovell

There were 60 voting delegates--including the 4 CLUW officers (Addie Wyatt, CLUW vice-president, did not attend because of involvement in primary elections)--and 11 observers. CLUW membership to date is about 1,200. Based on the 1975 rate of membership enrollment, it was predicted that 1976 membership would equal the 1975 5,300 figure.

The proposed agenda was: minutes of the officers' meetings, reports from officers and regional vice-presidents, review of the convention constitutional changes to see they were recorded accurately, questions about the elections and chapter charters, committees and task forces, and a final point (not taken up for lack of time), program implementation by CLUW chapters.

On the table with CLUW material there was a reprint from the Congressional Record--an FBI-type report on the October League and its Fight Back conference by Rep. Larry McDonald (D-Ga.), a John Birch Society member. Right at the start, Louise Runyan, United Steelworkers, Atlanta, objected to the distribution of this reactionary trash, stating that this was an attempt at intimidation. CLUW President Olga Madar replied that she put out the sheet on her responsibility alone, and justified doing so because it contained a reference to CLUW.

The argument was not picked up and questions continued about the agenda and the ERA task force.

The ERA task force, held that evening, was chaired by Madar. At first the floor was open only to delegates from the unratified states and there was a report about ERAmerica, a new organization headed by a Democrat and a Republican which has labor's blessing. The majority of those at the task force (25 or more in all) were from the unratified states, and the discussion was soon opened up. It was a good two-hour discussion, pro and con on participation in the May 16 Springfield mobilization. Madar indicated from the outset that she opposed CLUW participation.

Odessa Komer, UAW, Detroit, who now holds the post vacated by Madar, UAW vice-president, said at first that she was present only to announce ERA films available for rental. Later in the discussion she said that the UAW had been at the Springfield ERA demonstration last year, that there was nothing wrong with various organizations participating with their different signs, and if the ERA had not been ratified in Michigan she'd welcome supporters from other states to demonstrate there. Liz McPike, AFSCME, and Lillian Stoner, of National Education Association, also spoke in favor of May 16.

Finally Madar ended the meeting by saying it was obvious agreement couldn't be reached and the question would have to be decided at the board meeting on Sunday.

The question came up late in the Sunday session. A good, general ERA resolution based on one that had been prepared for the task force but with improved formulations, was presented by Sheli Lulkin, American Federation of Teachers, Chicago. This passed unanimously. Then McPike presented the May 16 Springfield resolution as a friendly additional ERA resolution. There wasn't much discussion--it was late and the dis-

cussion had already taken place in the task force. Madar, from the chair, opposed it on the basis that the National Executive Board could not tell the chapters what to do (in the task force, she worried about CLUW tailending NOW). Edie VanHorn, UAW, Detroit, who had spoken in favor of the first ERA resolution, spoke again for the May 16 resolution. The question was called and the vote was 24 or 25 in favor (Lulkin voted for it); the no votes weren't counted because it was plain the ayes had it. There may have been 10 no votes; some delegates were out of the room and there were abstentions (the officers did not vote).

There didn't seem to be any surprise at the division between Madar and Komer-VanHorn on this. After all, Madar is retired and no longer in the UAW administration. The UAW was one of the first unions to go for the ERA, and had already, as mentioned, been at a Springfield ERA rally.

The Saturday and Sunday sessions were mostly taken up with the agenda items and no time was lost on procedural points.

The regional vice-presidents reported on CLUW activities including work in coalitions for ERA, CLUW conferences, plans for summer schools, participation in labor conferences, etc.

The discussion on chapter charters aimed to simplify procedures for the 1975 chapters not yet chartered.

There were attempts to improve communication and membership participation inside CLUW:

1. After the minutes of the officers' meetings were read, there was a request that board members receive copies of these minutes. This was ruled out as too difficult or expensive. It was decided that minutes be sent to vice-presidents, who could then circulate them.

2. A proposal (by Sarah Lovell, ITU, N.Y.) that the names and addresses of CLUW members in each union be made available by national CLUW to these union members. The arguments against this were that printouts were expensive, some women might not want their names known, and it might be dangerous if used politically in the union. It was referred back to the officers.

3. A motion by McPike that the names and addresses of NEB members be available. Again, the argument against this was invasion of privacy. A substitute motion that NEB members be polled for permission to be listed carried 25-24.

The next meeting of the NEB will be in San Francisco, May 29-31.

The Socialist Workers Party was mentioned twice. The first time was in the ERA task force by Ora Lee Malone, ACWA, St. Louis. In St. Louis, she said, the head of the ERA coalition was a candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, running against a pro-ERA candidate, and that made it bad for legislative ERA work. Madar commented that's why it was important for her to appoint coordinators. The second time was by Runyan. In motivating an amendment (not seconded) to the May 16 ERA resolution to include economic demands, she said that in Atlanta the Jan. 10 ERA demonstration organized by the Socialist Workers Party failed to attract working women because it was called only around the ERA.

Report on Socialist Forum

by Fred Feldman, March 12, 1976

Socialist Forum was the publication of the Socialist Committee of Correspondence, which split from the Socialist Labor Party in July 1969. They opposed SLP's sectarian abstentionism, especially around the antiwar movement. This group, which included frequent SLP presidential candidate Eric Hass, regarded itself as De Leonist.

A section of the group began to get sucked into the milieu of the sectarian purportedly Trotskyist groups. This trend was represented by Malcolm Kaufman, who wasn't very prominent at the time of the break with the SLP.

A new split occurred in 1971 with a whole layer of more-or-less orthodox DeLeonists splitting off. They formed the DeLeonist League which publishes a magazine called Socialist Reconstruction.

Kaufman was now the main figure in the remains of the group which now called itself Socialist Forum. He began to describe himself as Trotskyist, making the standard criticisms of the SWP as Pabloist, opportunist, etc.

In the last issue published until recently, Winter 1973-74, Kaufman denounced us for allegedly violating democracy by not allowing him to sell inside a campaign meeting. We made him sell outside. That was our last contact as far as I can tell.

Kaufman then joined Vanguard Newsletter and Socialist Forum disappeared. He seems to have participated in the merger with the Leninist Faction that produced the Class Struggle League. The Class Struggle League disappeared in a very small puff of smoke last year.

Now Socialist Forum has surfaced again, putting out a mimeographed flyer called Socialist Perspective. They express the hope of issuing it at least annually, but they have put out two issues this year. The post office box is the same as the old Socialist Forum box, but no name or phone number is given, as was done in the past. So it is impossible to tell whether we are dealing with Malcolm Kaufman or with some other fragment.

The group describes itself as adhering to Lenin, Trotsky, and De Leon.

The most interesting items are on Portugal and Angola. On Portugal, they denounce the phony soviets, oppose the FUR, note the corporatist aspect of the MFA-People's Power plan, oppose the popular frontism of the CP and SP, and call all the provisional governments capitalist. On the level of broad analysis, it is close to us. As far as strategy goes, they simply note the desirability of soviets and a revolutionary party in an abstract way.

On Angola, the leaflet opposes all three groups as capitalist nationalists whose programs lead to neocolonialism. The difference between United States and Cuban intervention is correctly noted without giving support to MPLA. Their only counterproposal to these errors is to overcome tribalism through a pan-South-African socialist republic.

The lack of concrete proposals may not stem from hardened sectarianism, but from being so small and isolated they can't conceive of how to influence events. So they feel reduced to issuing circulars containing broad socialist propaganda. But the positive sides of their positions are very unusual among opponents today. Perhaps if they studied Barry's report on November 25 and Tony's on Angola, in an objective way, they would note that there really are areas of agreement.

The same circulars criticize our city crisis work for emphasizing the racist character of the cutbacks. That probably indicates some kind of a difference on the national question and how to overcome divisions in the class.

Given that they have moved towards some positions like ours and perhaps even under our influence to a degree, I think they are worth looking into. They clearly feel strongly a lack of what they call "effective communication with our readership and those who are active in leftist politics." An overture from us might help persuade them to look at our politics, including, for instance, the 1975 political resolution, objectively. Even a small and isolated group like this may have picked up a few healthy people interested in advancing the cause of socialism.

A move towards them would be a signal to the whole radical movement that we are serious about reaching out to and collaborating with people who are coming closer and are not out to count up and settle old scores, even when the groups involved are really tiny compared to the party. It would show that we are not content to let a group like this float out of existence or into some ultrasectarian outfit without giving it a chance to objectively consider another course.

We don't know what they'll do, or whether there will turn out to be anybody there worth having. But, given the relationship of forces and our own clarity, I don't think we have anything to lose.

It will reemphasize the point we made in our work with Tim and Nancy -- that the door is open to anybody who is honestly interested in working and collaborating in a fraternal and objective way with us. We will respond in kind, regardless of past conflicts.

Report on Coming United States Tour by Leonid Plyushch

by David Frankel, March 12, 1976

Leonid Plyushch, the well-known Ukrainian dissident, will be in the United States for two weeks beginning on March 25. Plyushch's visit is being organized by the Committee for the Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners (CDSPP), a Ukrainian group in New York with whom the SWP has collaborated on some defense efforts in the past. Many engagements have been scheduled including interviews, TV appearances, testimony before a congressional committee, a meeting with Ukrainian notables in the U.S., and a campus meeting at Columbia. However, the event which will undoubtedly receive the greatest publicity is the meeting being organized by the CDSPP on March 27 in Manhattan Center at which Senator Henry Jackson is scheduled to speak along with Plyushch.

CDSPP has informed us that Jackson, Rep. Edward Koch (D.-NY), Michael Harrington of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, Pavel Litvinov (a former Soviet dissident), and a Lithuanian emigre by the name of Kudurka will all speak for about ten minutes. Bayard Rustin may also speak, although he is reluctant to appear on a platform with Harrington. Plyushch will then speak for half an hour. Manhattan Center seats several thousand, and buses are being organized by Ukrainian community organizations along the East Coast to assure a capacity crowd.

Although Plyushch considers himself a Marxist and may try to differentiate himself from statements made by others on the platform, this meeting will clearly have an anticommunist, antisocialist character.

It will take place only ten days before the New York primary, and it will be seen by all as a pro-Jackson rally. We expect the audience to be very right wing, so Jackson is likely to get a good response. The effect of the meeting will be to tar Plyushch's reputation as a principled Marxist fighting for socialist democracy. It will take the heat off the Stalinists around the world, who will grab the Jackson meeting as further proof of their contention that all Soviet dissidents are tools of imperialism and capitalist reaction.

When we learned of the plans for the Jackson meeting, we met with two of the leaders of the CDSPP, and talked informally with other members of the committee to try to get them to reconsider the meeting. We explained that such a meeting would harm the defense of other Soviet political prisoners by helping the Kremlin to identify the dissidents as part of a reactionary anticommunist crusade. We explained that Plyushch could draw big crowds and get wide publicity in his own right, and that he could be instrumental in building a defense of Soviet dissidents that would appeal to the worldwide working class movement on a pro-socialist basis.

However, the CDSPP leaders are adamant. They want to build a base for themselves in the Ukrainian community, and they are using Plyushch as part of a maneuver with right-wing Ukrainian groups. They expect these groups to bring the audience to Manhattan Center, the CDSPP will provide Plyushch as a star attraction, and the CDSPP will become better known in the Ukrainian community.

In fact, the rally with Jackson as a featured speaker had been planned prior to Plyushch's release from the Soviet Union. The ability of the CDSPP to deliver Plyushch, however, greatly enhances their prospects amongst the Ukrainian "establishment."

While discussing our objections with the CDSPP, we also sent a letter to Plyushch himself trying to explain the problems with the proposed meeting (copy enclosed). In addition, we contacted the French-based defense committee that was instrumental in organizing the campaign to win Plyushch's release, and urged them to talk to him about the March 27 meeting. Finally, we will try to speak with Plyushch when he arrives in the U.S.

If we are unsuccessful in convincing Plyushch to pull out of the meeting, as seems likely, we will use the occasion of the Jackson rally to make our attitude clear in the Militant and to explain our views on how to build an effective defense for Soviet victims of Stalinist repression. In the meantime, we will print some of the new and interesting statements and interviews by Plyushch.

The Jackson meeting will compromise Plyushch's entire tour and his ability to contribute to an effective defense of the Soviet dissidents. The primary responsibility for this lies with the CDSPP which is consciously and cynically using a man who is unfamiliar with American politics and is still suffering from several years confinement in an insane asylum. Under the circumstances, the SWP has declined to endorse, sponsor or participate in any of the other meetings scheduled to take place during the Plyushch visit, since this would only serve to tar us also and make us appear to be giving cover to an anticommunist, anti-socialist campaign.

COPY

COPY

March 5, 1976

Dear Comrade Plyushch,

Since our telephone discussion on March 2, it has become clear that Roman Kupchinsky and the CDSPP are planning to go ahead with the March 27 meeting at which Senator Henry Jackson will speak along with you. The CDSPP members are generally aware of the objections we have and I want to lay them frankly before you.

Jackson is a major presidential contender. He has won the Massachusetts presidential primary. He will be coming to the March 27 meeting directly from the Florida presidential primary, on his way to campaign in New York and Illinois. Jackson may limit his remarks to the issue of Soviet dissidents, but that will do nothing to change the character of the meeting: it will be a right-wing and anti-communist meeting and that is the way it will be seen by the American people. Furthermore, there is every indication that it will be widely publicized as such by some of the groups building the rally, as well as the mass media.

Jackson was a diehard supporters of the war in Vietnam, which was widely opposed by the American people. He has never said a word about the torture of political prisoners in Chile. He has joined the racist forces in this country in fighting against the struggle to desegregate schools in the North through the use of busing. Your appearance with Jackson will greatly undermine the possibilities for you to speak with any authority to the European labor movement, to Black people and radicals in the U.S., and to those who are fighting against the oppressive policies of the U.S. government in the colonial world.

I realize that Roman believes that other speakers on the speakers list will limit Jackson's impact, but I do not believe that this will change the fundamental character of the meeting. It is an election year and Jackson is a candidate. The political tone set by his presence will be the dominant factor.

The basic question that is in fact being posed is do you really want to appeal to the U.S. government and the right-wing anti-communist forces in the U.S., as Solzhenitsyn has done, or do you want to appeal to the working class of the world as a Marxist and a socialist? By speaking at the meeting with Jackson, you--and Moroz and Gluzman and all the other dissidents you defend --are automatically going to be placed in the first category in the eyes of the world.

The problem that supporters of socialist democracy face here in the U.S. is not an abstract one. For nearly thirty years the issue of repression in the USSR has been utilized by anti-communist groups to further anti-communist ends. Organizations such as ours, who defended democratic rights from a socialist point of view, were simply too small to make a major impact. As a Marxist

who has been persecuted by the Kremlin, you can make a big contribution towards changing this situation. Your release was won because the defense campaign was successful in exerting pressure on the French Communist party, which in turn pressured Moscow. This set an important precedent and showed what can be achieved by united efforts of those who genuinely support democracy. With your help we will be able to organize for new victories-- the release of Plakhotnyuk, Dzhemilev, Moroz, and others. But that prospect will be hurt if you appear in the U.S. with anti-communists like Jackson. You will be compromised in the eyes of the American youth, Blacks, and Latinos fighting against discrimination, and others who fight against the right-wing and anti-communist forces for their rights. In addition, you would be playing right into the hands of the Stalinists, who would like nothing better than to identify you with Jackson and the right wing.

Jackson has made the issue of the right of Jews to emigrate a major part of his political career. But he has done so not because he supports the rights of the Jewish people and all other oppressed peoples, but because he is trying to fuel anticommunist sentiment in the U.S. The American people know a lot more about him than about you, and his views would overshadow what you have to say in their eyes.

To go ahead with the March 27 meeting would, at the very least, be a hasty step. If you are concerned that you would otherwise encounter technical problems of raising money or getting adequate publicity, we can assure you that these should not be a consideration. Your case made front-page news in the United States and many universities and prominent academicians would be happy to sponsor and subsidize mass campus meetings for you to speak at. A speaking tour can be organized which would include trade union appearances, meetings sponsored by the CDSPP, Amnesty International, and other groups, and it would be widely covered in the newspapers. This is the way you should be introduced to the American people, rather on a platform with Jackson. In addition, if you publicly refused to appear with figures like Jackson and explained why, it would make a very big impact, and would be a powerful force in promoting the movement to free imprisoned dissidents.

For example, I am sure that you have heard of the case of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were executed on the charge of stealing the "secret" of the atomic bomb during the Cold War, despite the testimony of famous scientists that there was no such "secret." The sons of the Rosenbergs are currently waging a campaign to force the government to turn over its secret files on the frame-up of their parents. It is by no means impossible that they could be enlisted to add their names to the defense of Soviet political prisoners on the strength of an appeal from someone with your background and views. I do not think that the impact of such a development on the world workers movement could be exaggerated. But the possibility of such an endorsement would be destroyed by a meeting with Jackson. Many similar examples could also be cited.

It is my opinion that it was not the intention of the committee to link you to the right, but as often happens in the process of negotiations with many groups, they found themselves committed to something before they really understood what the implications were. They cannot withdraw now without antagonizing groups in the Ukrainian community to which they have made hasty commitments. I feel that the force of events has brought about this meeting, which even many members of the CDSPP are now beginning to regret. The organization of the meeting was simply a mistake and it is not too late for it to be corrected.

I urge you to think through the tragic consequences this appearance will have in light of the points I have raised and to refuse the invitation to speak at that meeting. There are innumerable alternative speaking engagements that can be easily arranged through the CDSPP, Amnesty International, the Socialist Workers party, and other radical and left-wing groups. We will all, I am sure, support you and help you in every way possible.

s/ Gerry Foley

A Statement on the Slanders Circulated by the Healy Group
Against Hansen, Novack, and the Socialist Workers Party

For almost a year the Workers Revolutionary party, the British group headed by Gerry Healy, has conducted a vicious slander campaign against the Socialist Workers party of the United States and two of its veteran leaders, Joseph Hansen and George Novack. Healy and his followers in various countries have published articles and pamphlets, held public meetings, and distributed leaflets and posters accusing both men of "criminal negligence" in Trotsky's assassination and of being "accomplices of the GPU," alleging that they have covered up crimes of the Soviet secret police and shielded its agents.

They also insinuate that Hansen colluded with the FBI. By implication their charges likewise dishonor James P. Cannon, founder of the American Trotskyist movement, as well as Trotsky himself and his son Sedov.

Healy and his associates have not brought forward the slightest probative evidence, documents, or testimony to substantiate their libelous accusations against Hansen and Novack, the nominal targets of the attacks. The script of their polemics is fabricated out of baseless innuendoes, gratuitous suppositions and outright lies that do not have any political content or foundation in fact. They constitute a shameless frame-up.

The specific allegations have been exposed and refuted point by point in articles by various organizations and individuals printed in Intercontinental Press which can be consulted for extensive information.

The records of Hansen and Novack as political figures, writers, and editors are well known to us and many others the world over. Both have been continuously active for more than forty years as prominent members of the American Trotskyist movement and supporters of the Fourth International. It is especially odious that they have been singled out and falsely accused of aiding Stalin's assassins, since they devoted themselves to protecting Trotsky's life during his last exile in Mexico.

The signers of this statement feel obliged to speak out in defense of Hansen and Novack and the Socialist Workers party against the smear campaign impugning their integrity.

But there is more to the matter than that. We are concerned about the practice of such disruptive methods in the workers movement. They are not new. The Mensheviks maintained that Lenin was a paid agent of the Kaiser. Later Stalin accused Trotsky of being an agent of the Gestapo. Marxists and civil libertarians have from the first repudiated these frame-up techniques employed by the Stalinists against their political opponents and critics. Anyone else who resorts to them must be opposed. Otherwise the struggle for socialism, which includes the honest presentation of conflicting views, becomes discredited.

We call upon the leaders of the Workers Revolutionary party and their followers to cease their scurrilous attacks. They discredit the authors, not the accused. We further ask others who share our position that frame-ups have no place in the socialist movement to add their voice of protest and public condemnation to ours.