

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 26, April 16, 1976

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

Visitors: Morell, Rodriguez

Chair: Garza

- AGENDA:
1. Chicago Local
 2. YSA Organizational Tours
 3. Implementing the Party Turn Report
 4. World Movement
 5. Mexico
 6. Puerto Rico
 7. San Jose

1. CHICAGO LOCAL

(Aspoy, Matson, and Ogden invited for this point.)

Jones reported on Chicago city membership meeting and further progress on implementation of party turn in light of new divisions.

Discussion

2. YSA ORGANIZATIONAL TOURS

(Aspoy, Matson, and Ogden invited for this point.)

Gersh reported on recent organizational tours to YSA chapters.

Discussion

3. IMPLEMENTING THE PARTY TURN REPORT

Jones reported.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the general line of the report for presentation to the plenum.

Carried.

4. WORLD MOVEMENT

(Baumann and J. Hansen invited for this point.)

Barnes reported on assignment of Waters to National Office and Sheppard as responsible for international work.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

5. MEXICO

(J. Hansen invited for this point.)

Sheppard reported (see attached).

Discussion

6. PUERTO RICO

(Baumann, J. Hansen, and White invited for this point.)

Camejo reported on campaign tour of Puerto Rico.

Discussion

7. SAN JOSE

D. Jenness reported on proposal of San Jose branch to establish the San Jose local with two branches.

Discussion

Motion: To concur with the proposal of the San Jose branch to establish a San Jose local with two branches.

Carried.

Meeting Adjourned.

Report on Mexico to SWP Political Committee

by Barry Sheppard

The IEC motion on Mexico established a commission of three people to observe the implementation of the motion and to report to the United Secretariat (See SWP Internal Information Bulletin No. 6 in 1976). The first series of meetings of this commission took place in the week of April 4 to April 11. The commission is composed of a comrade of the IMT, one from the LTF, and one from the PST-led grouping. The commission met with representatives from the GCI, Internationalist Communist Group; the LS(FBL), Bolshevik-Leninist Faction of the Socialist League; and the LS(TM), the Militant Tendency of the Socialist League.

There were a number of charges made by both the LS(FBL) and the LS(TM). The LS(FBL) charged that the LS(TM) had printed an article that re-raised and extended the issue of alleged charges against Comrade Ricardo of the LS(TM) that he was a police agent, an issue closed by the IEC motion which contained statements by both the LS(FBL) and the Steering Committee of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction that there were no charges or suspicions against Comrade Ricardo.

Most important, the LS(FBL) documented four instances in which members of the LS(FBL) were physically attacked by members of the LS(TM). Two of these attacks occurred after the IEC meeting. (See attached translation of article from Clave.) The representatives of the LS(TM) admitted that in at least one instance, the attacks resulted from a decision by the LS(TM) Political Committee to prevent the members of the LS(FBL) from selling their press. The leadership of the LS(TM) made a declaration to the commission that it was opposed to these methods, and offered to print in their paper a statement to that effect (attached). The leadership of the LS(FBL) welcomed this statement, and said that if it is carried out in practice and the physical attacks stop, this would remove an obstacle to proceeding with the political discussion between the two groups.

The LS(FBL) returned to the LS(TM) the material that was in the Socialist League headquarters prior to the December convention of the Socialist League, with the exception of personal property, as was indicated by the IEC motion. The leadership of the LS(TM) disputed that some of the items not returned were personal property, and broke off any further negotiations with the LS(FBL) until and unless these items are given to them. The TM leadership added that, although they stood by the declaration they had previously made about stopping any physical attacks they were no longer bound to print the declaration in their press. Hopefully the TM leadership will reconsider this stand and go ahead and print this declaration against physical violence. This would begin the process of overcoming the damage done to Trotskyism in Mexico as a result of these attacks.

Both the LS(FBL) and the LS(TM) agreed to exchange political documents and proposed statutes with the GCI, so that the political basis for a principled unification can begin to be explored as outlined in the IEC motion.

The three members of the commission unanimously agreed to make no formal report, recess for several weeks, and meet again in May, after the process of this political discussion has begun.

April 16, 1976

Another Attack by the Tendencia Militante
Assault against the Liga Socialista (FBL)

Two members of the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction of the Liga Socialista (FBL) were assaulted by a member of the Political Committee of the Tendencia Militante on Saturday, March 13, at about noon in the Preparatoria Popular at Nonoalco.

What prompted this new attack was that the two activists were selling Clave in the name of the Liga Socialista (FBL). This was what made comrade "M.E." of the Tendencia Militante charge into the FBL members swinging.

This is the third time that the Tendencia Militante has resorted to physical violence against the FBL as a substitute for political discussion.

They have said that the other instances were really the individual actions of this or that comrade, but that the leadership "was trying to prevent such things."

It is now clear that this is a dishonest argument, unless they are no longer able even to maintain discipline over members of their political committee.

This is especially serious since the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, to which both the Tendencia Militante and the FBL belong, recently agreed that the two public factions of the Liga Socialista and the Grupo Comunista Internacionalista (GCI) should adopt a course leading to a principled unification.

In our opinion, this was more than sufficient reason to end immediately the physical attacks against Clave sales teams and members of the FBL.

This has not happened, and this failure puts in question the validity of the agreements made by our international leadership: Can anyone think they can ask us to sit down and discuss whether there is a possibility for a unification with people who are assaulting our members?

Moreover, the guarantee of unrestricted freedom of expression for all political groups has been a tradition in the Preparatoria Popular, and we Trotskyists have always been the principal defenders of this tradition.

We think that the outbreak of fights and attacks within the Preparatoria Popular can only provide the government with arguments to help them repress the school. Only the class enemy benefits from such activity.

These actions by the Tendencia Militante could have very serious consequences. Their attacks tend to start a course that, if continued, could result in an all-out physical struggle among the left groups.

The Bolshevik-Leninist Faction of the Liga Socialista and the comrades active in the Clave sales teams are determined not to play into the hands of the TM's provocations.

For us, the interests of the movement are more important than the bickering among political groups. We think the method for sorting out the different political tendencies is public political discussion. The physical violence employed by the Tendencia Militante is alien to the working class.

We believe that the time has come for the GCI and Rojo, also sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International, to break their silence with respect to this state of affairs. They cannot fail to speak out clearly against the methods used by the Tendencia Militante against the FBL of the Liga Socialista.

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TRANSLATION

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Statement of the Leadership
of the Liga Socialista

Following the split in the Liga Socialista, there have been various incidents of physical violence between the groups that emerged from the division.

The leadership of the Liga Socialista (sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) states:

1. We disapprove of any act of physical violence within the workers movement and above all in the Trotskyist movement.
2. We pledge to avert any repetition of such incidents.
3. The fact that the Fracción Bolsheviqúe Leninista is using the name of the Liga Socialista and of its newspaper does not justify the use of violence.
4. The leadership of the Liga Socialista considers it a duty to investigate these incidents and to call anyone who is responsible for any attacks from our side to order.
5. We also appeal to the ranks of the LS not to engage in violence for any reason.
6. The leadership of the Liga Socialista pledges to make this statement public.

Mexico City, April 8, 1976