

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 45, September 17, 1976

Present: Barnes, Blackstock, Berman, Garza, Horowitz, D. Jenness, L. Jenness, Jones, Lovell, Lyons, Miah, Seigle, Stapleton, Thomas, Waters

Guests: Benson, Morell

Chair: Horowitz

AGENDA: 1. Campaign Against Government Harassment & Spying
2. Trade-Union Steering Committee
3. Propaganda Campaign Around Steelworkers Democracy Pamphlet
4. Wilmington 10 Demonstration
5. Five Puerto Rican Nationalist Prisoners
6. National Committee Assignments
7. Membership & New Branches

1. CAMPAIGN AGAINST GOVERNMENT HARASSMENT & SPYING

Lyons reported on the victory for the party and for democratic rights reflected in the Attorney General's order to the FBI to end its forty-year "investigation" of the SWP and YSA. Proposed a political and legal offensive to continue campaign against FBI, CIA, and other agencies carrying out government spying and disruption.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

2. TRADE-UNION STEERING COMMITTEE

Lovell reported on proposal to establish a trade-union steering committee to administer the party's trade-union work.

Motion: That a trade-union steering committee of seven be composed of Frank Lovell, the party's trade-union work director; Doug Jenness, New York City Local organizer; Andy Rose, Militant staff writer; Malik Miah, the party's Black work director; Cindy Jaquith, party women's liberation work director; Ed Heisler, labor director of National Campaign Committee; and Lynn Henderson, New York City trade-union director.

Carried.

3. PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AROUND STEELWORKERS DEMOCRACY PAMPHLET

Lovell reported. (See attached letter.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

4. WILMINGTON 10 DEMONSTRATION
(Bailey invited for this point)

Bailey reported. (See attached letter.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

5. FIVE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALIST PRISONERS

Garza reported. (See attached letter.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

6. NATIONAL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Miah reported that Derrick Morrison has agreed to transfer to New Orleans to strengthen the branch leadership and the party's antiracist and defense work there.

D. Jenness reported that the YSA NEC has agreed to proposal to transfer Ilona Gersh to Minneapolis to be party organizer of Southside Branch.

7. MEMBERSHIP & NEW BRANCHES

Waters reported.

Motion: To constitute a branch in Tacoma, Washington.

Carried.

Waters reported.

Motion: To accept as party members B.J., J.C., and E.K., now provisional members in Indianapolis, and to constitute a branch in Indianapolis.

Carried.

Waters reported Phoenix, Arizona, branch organizing committee proposes accepting R.E. as provisional member.

Motion: To concur with proposal of Phoenix branch organizing committee.

Carried.

D. Jenness reported.

Motion: That M.K., K.K., W.S., and D.M. be accepted as provisional members in Albany, New York. That a branch organizing committee be constituted in Albany, New York.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
September 20, 1976

TO ALL LOCAL AND BRANCH ORGANIZERS AND TRADE-UNION DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

For the next several months the Militant is planning regular coverage of the important developments in the United Steelworkers, especially the struggle for democracy in that union.

One of the best tools we have for participating in this movement, in addition to the Militant, is the pamphlet by Andy Rose, The Fight for Union Democracy in Steel. We are launching the campaign approved at the recent party convention to sell this pamphlet, in conjunction with our Militant circulation drive.

We are anxious to get this pamphlet into the hands of as many steelworkers as soon as possible. This is the best way anyone can learn what the Sadlowski bid for leadership of the USWA is all about, as well as the background of the struggle in this union, its relation to the earlier Miners for Democracy movement, and its roots in the history of the modern labor movement.

This pamphlet will be useful to steelworkers and, we believe, it will be popular with them. It is up to us to go to their workplaces, their communities, and their union meetings and introduce it to them.

Not only steelworkers will find this pamphlet useful and interesting. Workers in other unions will like it for its story of what is happening in steel, but also because it tells how their unions were built and what happened to them during World War II and the postwar period of repression. This is especially true of the auto union and the mineworkers, both closely related to the steel union in the formative years of the CIO. Students and other political activists who have an interest in current union struggles will also find this pamphlet valuable. Many of the same people who we are selling subscriptions to will also be interested in purchasing this pamphlet.

There are USWA locals close by nearly all party branches. This union includes workers not only in basic steel but also in aluminum, can, metal fabricating, chemical, and many other industries. Check in your phone directory. You will find sales opportunities there. In addition, we urge the sale of this pamphlet at all plant gates and union meetings. Don't limit sales to steelworkers.

We urge all branch and local executive committees to give this matter immediate consideration, order bundles of the pamphlet from Pathfinder in the next few days, and send us reports on your plans

and successes in this campaign.

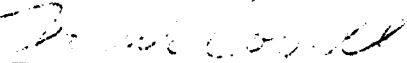
We expect that most branches will quickly sell an initial order of 50 or 100 of these pamphlets. Some branches in the steel centers will want several times more.

A review of the pamphlet will launch this campaign in the next issue of the Militant. Regular reports of this campaign will appear in following issues which will include the successes of pamphlet sales.

We have plans to keep you informed of what we are doing in the fight for union democracy in steel, but the first necessary step is to get this sales campaign started in earnest.

Please let us hear directly from you as soon as you have placed your order with Pathfinder.

Comradely,



Frank Lovell
National Trade Union
Director

P.O. Box 471 Cooper Station
New York, N.Y. 10003
September 21, 1976

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND ANTIRACIST WORK DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

Recently Imani Kazana, a leader of the National Black Assembly in Washington, D.C., announced the formation of a new independent national defense committee for the Wilmington 10. The Wilmington 10 were framed up on charges stemming from their involvement in a desegregation case in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1971. They received prison sentences totaling 282 years. (See Sept. 10 Militant for more details.)

Although general support exists for the Wilmington 10 around the country, little effort has been made to organize an ongoing national defense committee. Until now the Wilmington 10 defendants, in particular the Rev. Ben Chavis, have relied on the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR) to organize their public defense. The Communist Party plays the major political and organizational role in the NAARPR.

In the last five years the NAARPR and the CP have organized two major demonstrations for the Wilmington 10. The recent one held on September 6 in Raleigh, North Carolina, turned out 2,000 people after the CP and NAARPR predicted publicly that over 50,000 (then later 10,000) people would attend. (See Sept. 24 Militant for more details.)

As a result of the NAARPR's and the Stalinists' failure to effectively organize support for the 10, and following discussions with Chavis, Kazana decided to initiate a national defense committee. Chavis is presently an officer of the NAARPR.

Kazana had originally worked with the NAARPR in D.C. to build support for the Wilmington 10. She apparently disagrees with NAARPR leaders, however, in believing that an independent national defense committee is the best way to organize support for the 10. She is frustrated with what she feels have been feeble efforts by the NAARPR over the last three years to build an effective national defense effort.

In D.C., the local leaders of the NAARPR have participated in meetings of the Wilmington 10 Defense Committee that have taken place so far. Kazana also spoke at NAARPR's Labor Day rally in Raleigh.

Based on discussions comrades in D.C. have had with Kazana, it seems she shares our approach to building a defense campaign, with the idea of a broad and united defense involving

prominent groups and individuals across the country. She has a number of contacts in several other cities who she hopes to work with to build other chapters of the defense committee.

The formation of this committee provides a big opportunity to build an effective defense for the Wilmington 10. We want to get involved in it and help to build support for the case. In D.C., we have had discussions with Kazana about perspectives for building the defense and have attended defense committee meetings.

Enclosed is a list of several committees whose addresses were publicized in a leaflet that was distributed at the September 6 march. Comrades in these areas should contact the names listed and find out more about the committee's activities.

We should also encourage NSCAR to make the Wilmington 10 case one of its national defense campaigns. NSCAR has already invited Kazana to their third national student conference in November. She has accepted the invitation and will organize a workshop on the case. NSCAR leaders also plan to have more extensive discussions with Kazana soon on the type of activities SCAR chapters can organize in support of the 10.

Reports on any new developments should be sent to the national office.

Comradely,

Nan Bailey

Nan Bailey
YSA National Office

Local Wilmington 10 Defense Committees:

AMHERST, MASS.--Bonnie Cain, 92 Pufton Village (01002)
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN -- Rev. Herbert Lowe, Church of the Good
Shepherd, 2145 Independence Blvd. (48104)
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND -- Nancy Wagoner, 4141 Fairview Ave. (21216)
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA -- Michael Cato, Box 10622, Southern Univ.
BOSTON, MASS. -- Kenneth Bryant, 16 Center St., Roxbury, Mass.
(02119)
CAIRO, ILLINOIS -- Rev. Charles Koen, United Front, P.O. Box 544
(62914)
*CHARLOTTE, NO. CAROLINA -- Helen Othow, P.O. Box 16147 (28216)
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS -- Diane Alexander, 3625 S. Lake Park (60653)
DETROIT, MICHIGAN -- Carolyn Moody, 2209 Seminole St. (48214)
FREDERICK, MARYLAND -- Sylvia Hall, Black Student Union, Hood College
HARTFORD, CONN. -- Robert Gibson, Trinity Coalition of Blacks,
P.O. Box 1590, Trinity College (06106)
KINSTON, NO. CAROLINA -- Jessie L. Rouse, 313 Asphalt Rd. (28501)
LOS ANGELES, CALIF. -- Maria Caldwell, 930 So. Bonnie Brae #230
(90006)
MEMPHIS, TENN. -- Cheryl Little, 1430 Jefferson St. 12 (38104)
MIAMI, FLORIDA -- Ray Greenwood, 1834 N.W. So. River Dr. #3
(33125)
NEW HAVEN, CONN. -- Bro. Khalid, Afro-American Cultural Center,
Yale University, 3439 Yale Station (06520)
NEW PALTZ, N.Y. -- John Burton, Prison Workshop, room 318, Student
Union Bldg., State University College (12561)
NO. CHARLESTON. SO. CAROLINA -- Bob Jennings, 39B Bluffwood Ave.
(29405)
POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. -- Bernadette Whitsett, Vassar College (12601)
*RALEIGH, NO. CAROLINA -- Ann Mitchell, P.O. Box 14307 (27610)
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI -- Coraminita Mahr, 4838 Cote Brilliante
(63106)
SPRINGFIELD, MASS. -- Thomas Wilson, 441 Coldspring Ave., West
Springfield, Mass.
TALLADEGA, ALABAMA -- Karen Devis, Talladega College (35160)
YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO -- Sherline Brogdon, Black Student Union,
Antioch College

*chapters of the Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
September 18, 1976

TO ALL LOCAL AND BRANCH ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

The Political Committee approved a report to support the current campaign to free the five Puerto Rican Nationalist political prisoners in U.S. jails. A national demonstration to call attention to this important case will be held at the United Nations on November 13. Other demonstrations have been called for Springfield, Missouri and San Francisco. Plans are being made by the demonstration's organizers to send buses to Springfield from Chicago and from St. Louis.

The action has been called by the National Coordinating Committee to Free the Five. The NCC is composed of the New York and Chicago committees to Free the Puerto Rican Nationalist Political Prisoners, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party and the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee. The prisoners have charged with responsibility for activity on their behalf, the Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Nationalist Prisoners. The committee in New York welcomes whatever initiatives we feel will build the action and help publicize the plight of the five.

The CFPRNPP has buttons and tee shirts with pictures of nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos and a tee shirt with pictures of the five which they sell to raise funds for the committee. They also have a film on Puerto Rico which they rent for \$25.00 plus deposit. At the present time the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico has no one free to tour on behalf of the five nor has the CFPRNPP. The Committee is presently getting a phone for their office at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Wherever it is possible, comrades should consider holding forums, joint meetings, or supporting local actions around this issue. Many campus groups will also be interested in learning about the longest held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere. Meetings can serve to provide signers to a petition requesting commutation of the sentences imposed on the prisoners.

Further information may be obtained by writing to the National Coordinating Committee to Free the Five, c/o P.O. Box 319 Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003 or by writing to Pedro Torres, c/o the Socialist Workers Party, 221 E. 2nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10009.

Comradely,

Catarino Garza
Catarino Garza

for the Political Committee