POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES NO. 7, March 31, 1966

Present: Barnes, Dobbs, Halstead, Hansen, Kerry, Shaw, Sheppard Warde, Jones.

Chairman: Kerry

AGENDA:

1. Internal Matters
2. West Coast Vacation School
3. International
4. Anti-war Movement
5. Organization Secretary Report
6. Resident National Committee Meeting

1. INTERNAL MATTERS

Shaw read letter from F. Powers, Seattle, in reply to request of P.C. for specific information in regard to his circulating to non-SWP members the Kirk letter of Dec. 13. While the Powers letter can be understood to be an admission that he did circulate this material to the several individuals indicated he neglects to reply to our request for specific information and an explanation for his conduct as regards others to whom the material was sent.

Discussion: Kerry, Barnes, Dobbs.

Motion: That this correspondence be attached to the minutes and that Powers be instructed to reply to the specific questions posed in the P.C. communication.

Motion carried.

2. WEST COAST VACATION SCHOOL

Shaw reported on a communication from Harris on West Coast Vacation School. Main theme will be "The Building of a Revolutionary Party in the U.S." They request Farrell and Marvel or Tom and Karolyn and a youth leader attend. Propose we assign Farrell and Marvel to attend the West Coast Vacation School in response to this request.

Discussion: Warde, Dobbs.

Proposal Carried

3. INTERNATIONAL

Report by Hansen.

Discussion: Dobbs, Barnes, Warde, Kerry.

4. ANTI WAR MOVEMENT

Report by Barnes.

Discussion: Halstead, Kerry, Warde, Hansen, Shaw, Dobbs.

5. ORGANIZATION SECRETARY REPORT - SHAW

(a) Cleveland Case: Hearings postponed again to May 5.

(b) Joe Johnson Case: National Defense effort will be centered in New York within a month.

6. RESIDENT N.C. MEETING

Motion: To have a resident N.C. meeting April 6.

Motion carried.

MEETING ADJOURNED

February 23, 1966
New York, NY

Frank Powers
Seattle

Dear Comrade Powers,

Under date of Dec. 13, 1965, Comrade Kirk addressed a letter marked "Confidential" to the Political Committee opposing party policy in the anti-war movement. Copies of the letter were mimeographed in Seattle and circulated to various individuals inside and outside the party. The Plenum of the National Committee censured Comrade Kirk for his part in this violation of party discipline and warned him to cease and desist from any further violations. The Plenum also instructed the PC to investigate all the ramifications of the case.

One of the matters requiring investigation is a formal complaint from a co-thinkers group that you gave copies of the Kirk letter to A.E. and P.C. who are members of that group. In view of this complaint about your conduct the PC has instructed me to direct the following questions to you:

What is your explanation concerning the charge that you gave copies of the Kirk letter to A.E. and P.C. of a co-thinkers group? Who else received copies of the Kirk letter from you and what is your explanation in each case?

Please let me have your reply to these questions at an early date.

Comradely,

s/ Ed Shaw
Organization Secretary

ES:ba

March 21, 1966
New York, NY

Dear Comrade Powers,

We have not yet received a reply to our letter of February 23, in which we asked for an explanation of the charge that you circulated Comrade Kirk's Confidential letter of December 13, 1965 to the Political Committee, outside the party.

The Political Committee has instructed me to write to you again and request an immediate reply to the questions directed to you in our letter of February 23.

Please reply promptly.

Comradely,

s/ Ed Shaw
Organization Secretary

ES:ba

Seattle, Washington
March 28, 1966

TO: Comrade Ed Shaw and the N.C., S.W.P.

Dear Comrade Shaw,

Your letter of March 21, 1966 is doubly confusing.

You write that you have not yet received a reply to your letter of February 23 in which you "asked for an explanation of the charge" that I "circulated Comrade Kirk's confidential letter of December 13, 1965 to the Political Committee, outside the party."

In the first place, your letter of February 23 was quite thoroughly and promptly answered by the Kirk-Kaye tendency and the Seattle Branch in a letter to you and the N.C. dated March 8. If you have not received a copy of this communication, please let us know immediately.

In the second place, your letter of February 23 did not charge me with circulating Kirk's letter "outside the party." Specifically, it asked for an explanation "concerning the charge that you gave copies of the Kirk letter to A.E. and P.C. of a co-thinkers group". I am at quite a loss to discover by what sophistry you are able to equate the giving of a letter (which we clearly marked confidential) to two leading and trustworthy majority supporters (who have always had access to SWP internal material) with "circulating...(the letter)...outside the party."

The charges are evidently being escalated, and I do not know how else to answer you except to refer you again to our letter of March 8.

Comradely,

s/ Frank Powers