

TO ALL NC MEMBERS AND BRANCH ORGANIZERS

Peace and Freedom Parties

(Transcription of PC Report by Tom Kerry and Discussion, Feb. 1, 1968)

I have pieced together from various sources this material on the development of the national "peace and freedom" movement. I'll deal only briefly with the California development which played a very important part in giving impetus to the national development. In order to savor the full flavor of the rather intricate maneuver that the Stalinists especially are involved in, I shall quote rather extensively from their press.

I'm not going to go into the dispute in our California organization over tactics. The other comrades can fill in whatever gaps are left in the presentation.

* * *

So far as I could determine from a study of the material and from conversations with some of the comrades who are familiar with the development, the origin of the California peace and freedom movement can be traced to the Scheer campaign of 1966. The elements around Scheer played an important part in promoting the peace and freedom movement and continue to do so -- both in the apparatus and in the determination of policy -- up to this point. We noted before what effect the Scheer campaign had on the antiwar movement. It practically destroyed the Vietnam Day Committee at Berkeley, one of the largest and most promising antiwar organizations in the country, by diverting substantial sections of the group into electoral activity and by subordinating mass action in the streets to electioneering which is a natural concomitant of all these developments.

The Scheer campaign was followed by the Conference of New Politics in Los Angeles in the fall of 1966 in which the major action taken was the refusal to endorse Brown for governor of California in which the antiwar activists emerged as a majority against the Stalinists and the Democratic elements who favored the lesser evil theory -- that is, Brown as a lesser evil to Reagan.

This was followed by the National Conference for New Politics in September 1967 in Chicago which came to no very definitive conclusions except to explore the possibility of third tickets, and in which there emerged for the first time, this gimmick of demanding and getting 50% of the vote for the so-called "black caucus," giving them in effect a veto power over the decisions of the conference. I have seen no subsequent manifestation of the exercise of this control in the NCNP national board or in any of the actions they've taken. It was more of a token thing that succeeded in arousing a lot of controversy at the conference and in giving the CP a useful lever to pry their way into the top leadership of NCNP.

The follow-up was the San Luis Obispo Conference in California just after the Chicago conference. The Chicago conference probably exercised some influence in prompting and promoting the San Luis Obispo Conference which was called ostensibly for the purpose of determining whether it was feasible to seek ballot status in California. There were two methods: one was by collecting 670,000 signatures on independent nominating petitions and the other was by registration campaigns in which individuals would be asked to register or re-register as members of the Peace and Freedom Party, which would require a minimum of 67,000.

The Stalinists again injected the "black caucus" demand for 50% representation in this conference but it was rejected. Whereupon whatever blacks who were there under their influence, together with the CP representatives, walked out of the conference. The conference then proceeded to arrive at a decision to engage in a registration drive, that is, to employ the method of registering 67000 for the Peace and Freedom Party as against the well-nigh impossible alternative of collecting 670,000 signatures on an independent nominating petition.

One of the main lines of division, so far as I can determine, and this applies not to the ranks but to the conscious elements, the "politicals" in the so-called New Politics formation, was the difference between the concept of a third party as against the idea of a third ticket in 1968. The same division was manifested at the National Conference -- third partyism versus third ticketism. Now, we should understand that the advocates of third partyism don't mean independent working class political action. It's third partyism of the Dubinsky Liberal Party type. It's third partyism in which the third party, with rare exceptions, is used as a pressure lobby participating in two-party politics, as the Dubinsky outfit has done in New York from the very beginning.

Among the PFP third partyites I would include the Socialist Party, the Draperites, some of the Scheer group, the so-called left wing of the New Politics formation, none of whom are at all averse to playing Democratic Party politics as exemplified by Scheer's own campaign in the Democratic Party as a candidate in the 1966 election.

The third ticket tendency includes the CP and its periphery, the leaders of the NCNP, and assorted "grass roots" Democrats. This tactic promoted by the CP consists of latching on to the dump Johnson movement, of trying to persuade a Kennedy or someone of that character to enter the primary contest against Johnson, holding in reserve the prospect of an "independent" campaign in the event that no "peace" candidate emerges from the major party conventions. This tendency became even stronger after McCarthy announced his intention to enter the primaries in a contest against Johnson for the Democratic Party nomination.

The CP supported the line of a convention delegate contest in California prior to McCarthy announcing his intention to run. They operated primarily through the California Democratic Council, which decided to run its own slate of candidates in the Democratic primary under the Peace, Progress and Equality ticket. And when McCarthy announced his candidacy, they proceeded to latch on to McCarthy. They finally had a candidate. Prior to McCarthy they had no candidate; they were just going to contest the election of delegates to the convention on a so-called peace ticket or Peace, Progress and Equality -- the Progress was subsequently dropped and it's now known as the Peace and Equality ticket of the California Democratic Council, which set up a steering committee to promote the primary contest. I understand that some old Democratic hack by the name of Lynch is heading up the Johnson slate. So they call that slate the Lynch-Johnson slate. A very appropriate designation, I thought.

To begin with the Communist Party took a dim view of the Peace and Freedom project of registering 67,000 members. For a whole period, they concentrated on developing the McCarthy movement.

Given the present condition of the CP and the fact that they no longer exercise the kind of discipline over their membership and periphery that they did in the past, I surmise some of their periphery became active in the Peace and Freedom movement -- maybe from the very beginning -- but the official line of the party was against it. They didn't think it was an effective medium; they didn't think it was possible to meet the ballot requirements. They attacked the PFP leaders for promoting what they called an all-white grouping because of the action taken by the conference at San Luis Obispo in rejecting the 50% proposal. They proceeded to concentrate on the CDC Peace and Equality gambit. But while doing so they posed the question undoubtedly raised in the minds of all of those who were in favor of supporting the McCarthy movement: What to do in the event the Democratic Party convention nominated Johnson? And what to do if confronted with a Johnson-Nixon slate in the November election?

I quote for example, The Worker of Dec. 12 in which they say, "The McCarthy movement now seems to have provided a significant outlet for one phase of this struggle, a vigorous primary and possibly convention battle. But, to answer the what-next phase of the '68 elections for many Democrats as well as a large number of voters who have moved and will move beyond the two parties by next November, there is an urgent need for some new and bold initiatives on the independent, third-ticket level." That is, in view of McCarthy's announced statement that failing the success of his campaign to win the Democratic Party nomination, he would support the ticket of his party -- the same position Kennedy holds -- under such circumstances, what to do.

One alternative proposed at the Chicago conference was a King-Spock ticket which didn't get very far because King immediately

disavowed any intention of becoming a candidate and Spock said he would prefer to wait until after the party conventions had been held to see whether or not either party produced a peace ticket which could be supported. This posed somewhat of a dilemma. To wait until after the nominating conventions of the two major parties, would obviously make it impossible in the overwhelming majority of states to even entertain the idea of getting a place on the ballot. The electoral requirement in each state is different, but in the overwhelming majority of states the process of achieving ballot status must be undertaken in advance of the dates set for the two conventions. In grappling with this technical difficulty the CP finally came up with the rather devious solution of trying to make the ballot in those states where it was possible to do so while concentrating by and large on local campaigns; on promoting the McCarthy primary contest and on pressuring the Democratic Party convention to dump Johnson.

The McCarthy campaign is headed by the national organization called the Conference of Concerned Democrats, and, of course, a considerable conflict developed, especially in California about who's going to run the campaign -- whether it's going to be the CDC steering committee or whether it's going to be the Conference of Concerned Democrats; what the policy is going to be and especially who's going to handle the money.

The devious Stalinist maneuver in relation to this problem of the electoral requirements in the various states becomes clearer when we examine the extension of the PFP movement on a national scale. They would prefer, of course, to have McCarthy -- in the event he is not nominated by the Democratic Party convention -- named as the candidate on these so-called independent peace and freedom tickets. But, it's very unlikely that he will agree. And, lacking that, they're in a dilemma. They can't support Johnson and they certainly can't support a Nixon. In fact they exclude the possibility of the Republicans nominating what they call a pro-peace candidate. They still cling to the remote possibility of the Democrats dumping Johnson and nominating McCarthy, a Kennedy or some such Democratic dove.

The walk-out of the CP left the Draperites, the SP, the left wing New Politics group in control of the California Peace and Freedom movement from the time of the San Luis Obispo conference. In their campaign material, the PFP group rejected the alternative of supporting McCarthy. They attacked McCarthy as being little different than Johnson -- contending he just had tactical differences; that there were no essential differences between his approach to the war in Vietnam and the approach of Johnson, and they called for a "genuine alternative" with the emphasis on the necessity of establishing a political vehicle for the expression of the peace movement and the Negro struggle on the electoral arena.

It was not only the Stalinists who were convinced that the Peace and Freedom Party would not make the ballot. It was the general consensus among all sections of the movement. In an article published in The Nation, by Phil Kerby, editor of Frontier Magazine, entitled, "California's Four Parties," he comments that: "As late as mid-December hardly anyone, including its organizers, expected the party to qualify, although several thousand students fanned out over the state during Christmas holidays to pick up registrations." The deadline for the registration drive was Jan. 2. Kerby further observes:

"Then, ironically, the Wallace headquarters, by announcing in the last week of December that its drive had been successful supplied the Peace and Freedom Party with vital last minute momentum. Thousands of dismayed liberal and left-leaning Democrats registered with the party." Now that's precisely what occurred. The Wallace party, which few people believed would be able to meet the ballot requirements, succeeded in doing so. The announcement came the last part of December that the Wallace party had made the ballot under the designation of the American Independent Party. The shock was felt immediately by the whole liberal Democrat and New Politics formations.

The comrades tell me that during this period groups like the Spartacist and PL also became involved, participating in getting the party on the ballot, though I haven't read their literature. I haven't seen any confirmation of it in their publications.

Even more important, the announcement that Wallace had made the ballot created a great deal of consternation among the militants in the black community who felt that, with the Wallace party on the ballot -- and this is the way they expressed it -- with the Wallace party on the ballot, the tendency would be for the whole axis of the political campaign in California to shift to the right in order to meet the challenge of the ultra-racist, Wallace of Alabama. And in order to counter the effect of the Wallace party being on the ballot it would be necessary to go all out to get the Peace and Freedom Party on the ballot in California.

At about this time, some of the leaders of the Peace and Freedom group in San Francisco met with the representatives of the Black Panther Party which is now conducting the defense of Huey Newton, arrested for killing a policeman, and agreed to issue a statement calling for support to the Huey Newton Defense. As part of the agreement, the spokesmen for the Black Panther Party came out and called for support to the Peace and Freedom Party, urged all blacks to register for the party. In addition, one of the leaders of CORE in the Bay Area, who is also, by the way, on the steering committee for the Peace and Equality slate of the California Democratic Council, made a statement urging all blacks to register for the Peace and Freedom Party.

This gave a tremendous impetus to the last week or ten days of the campaign, to such an extent that the momentum achieved was sufficient not only to put them over the top but to go far beyond the 67,000. They claim they got over 100,000 -- 105,000 -- which was about the same number the Wallace party got. So you can imagine the impact that the Wallace thing had on the consciousness of many liberals and Democrats and anti-Wallaceites in California in giving this final push to get the PFP on the ballot.

It was just about at this period at the latter part of December that the Communist Party decided to switch their position on PFP. In the December 30 issue of Peoples World, there appeared an article ostensibly emanating from the staff -- it's marked "From the Staff" but it's signed by somebody by the name of Judy Baston. It's called "Some Thoughts on Peace and Freedom Party."

It's an interesting commentary on the reason for their switch, the acknowledgment that they had been in error in walking out at the San Luis Obispo conference, and in leaving the organization in the control of these other elements. It called upon CP members to get into this movement and get in quickly. I'll just read one significant portion.

They say: "If the Marxist left [which is a euphemism for the Stalinists and their periphery] had participated from the very beginning, they could have influenced the course of development of this entire movement so that it wouldn't have developed as a movement against McCarthy, but as one complementary to the Peace and Equality ticket [of the "grass roots" Democrats in California] and," they go on to say, "the Marxist left could have pointed out to the third party activists and Democrats alike, the complementary nature in the immediate future of this third party drive and the California Democratic Council sponsored Peace and Equality slate. There are perspectives for future involvement in this reflection on past activity."

This statement appeared before it was announced that the PFP had made the ballot. They go on to say: "Whether or not it makes its registration goals, the Peace and Freedom Party has begun to develop the organizational framework from which the transition to a third party can eventually be launched. The embryo organization intends to maintain its structure expanding it in some areas to involvement in local issues and electoral struggles." And then they conclude: "Although the registration drive officially ends Monday, the struggle for a representative third party does not stop with the drive's failure or success. Consistent and active involvement on this front by the Marxist left will assure the development of the most viable independent political alternative possible."

What is ironical about this sudden switch was that their political expert on California politics, Steve Murdock, apparently

hadn't caught up -- either that or his article in the January 6 issue, which is the following issue, had been written prior to the decision taken by "the staff" to publish their statement on the turn towards infiltrating the Peace and Freedom Party, because his article in the Peoples World of January 6 concludes by saying: "The organized political radicals of the New Left are currently split into two camps: the virtually all-white Peace and Freedom Party people (who are trying to make the ballot by the same registration route as Wallace) and the New Politics people who have black militants involved and who are seeking to push a blend of local community organizing and selectively local-based political action." That had been their line. They, of course, are the "New Politics people" referred to who allegedly have the black militants and who were pursuing a line contrary to the Peace and Freedom Party.

But, by the following issue, January 13, the CP is already in the Peace and Freedom formation, up to their eyebrows. The PFP organized a conference in Pasadena on January 6 and 7 in which the article in the Peoples World here refers. They say, and I quote: "The Communist group urged that the new party 'develop a working relationship' with other groups moving in the same general direction, including those searching for 'an alternative' in the Democratic Party." The latter was an apparent reference to the forces mobilizing behind the candidacy of Sen. Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. In this connection the statement points out, (referring to a statement by the Communist Party of Northern California) that Peace and Freedom Party will provide "an electoral alternative were the two major parties to fail to provide one."

The January 6-7 conference of the PFP in Pasadena was billed as a planning session, the original date for the convention had been announced as February 21-22, at which time the party was to proceed to elaborate its organizational structure and begin to formulate a program. It was ostensibly for this purpose that the Jan. 6-7 conference was called. The Peoples World reports, "A planning session for this convention here in Pasadena last weekend, January 6-7, was attended by about 150 Peace and Freedom activists from throughout California. The bulk of the planners had hoped last weekend's meeting would arrive at some specific decisions about a convention, for example, date, place, structure and minority representation. The conclave tended instead to serve as a clearing house for proposals on these various questions for P&F branches in various parts of the state. No specific decisions were made, although the body decided to seek a location for the meet either in San Francisco Bay Area or in Los Angeles area either on March 9, 16 or 23." So the convention date has been shoved back at least a month and has been tentatively scheduled for the middle or the latter part of March.

To give you some idea of a different and correlative report on the convention, this Kerby, who attended the convention says that: "In the argot of the hippies, the temporary chairman said, referring to the participatory democracy that prevailed at the conference, 'We'll just rap around for awhile, get acquainted, and shed some of our hostilities.' A sympathetic observer, evidently gifted with extra-sensory perception, reported that the 'rap around' interlude served to 'define, clarify, sort out and give priorities to a multitude of issues' which nevertheless remained nebulous, unranked, and unclarified. The problems of homosexuals got sympathetic attention. It is agreed they were discriminated against, along with students, women and the poor. Vietnam was scarcely discussed, perhaps because there were no differences to provoke comment. The session devoted several hours to 'the movement for black liberation,' but the only tangible result of the meeting was the appointment of a steering committee to prepare another planning session, which, in turn, would work out the specifics of a state convention." So actually nothing was decided at this planning conference except to hold another meeting on January 27-28. I've seen no written report of this latter conference although I understand that Ed received a call from one of the comrades in the Bay Area who gave him a report over the telephone.

In referring to the composition of the PFP Kerby observes that: "The movement has the potential to become the basis of a new and revitalized left in the United States to counterbalance the extreme right. But, despite its unexpected success in becoming a legal political party, the Peace and Freedom Party has today an aura of surrealism. It is principally white and middle class. It has no working class base. And its connection with the black community and other minority groups is tenuous." This appraisal confirms the reports we get from the comrades in California that this is true. Kerby then adds: "Youngsters that will vote for the first time this year make up perhaps 30% of the Peace and Freedom Party. Spin-offs from the liberal California Democratic Council and miscellaneous older radicals make up the remainder of the 90,000 registrations claimed by the party." How he arrived at these figures, I don't know.

The decision of the Stalinists to plunge into the PFP has caused no little anguish in the Socialist Party, and probably among the Draperites. Writing in New America, someone by the name of Mike Hannon, who they list as a member of the national committee of the SP, points to the danger involved in the CP switch. He says: "An organization built as loosely as the PFP is in danger of being captured or destroyed by any one of several disciplined groups. It is the job of every third-camp socialist in California and of everyone committed to independent politics to become actively involved in PFP and make sure that does not happen. Many members of local Los Angeles have been busy in the registration campaign, and their policy is to establish Peace and Freedom as a third party in California instead of as a temporary device for running a third ticket in November as part of the dump Johnson movement."

Of course, they have very good cause for concern as the CP among all the groups involved in the PFP is the largest numerically, has greater resources, a more effective organization than any other grouping inside the formation. And the entry of the CP, with their line, given the composition of the party, which is primarily of a left-Democratic, liberal type, will shift the balance to the right and create great difficulty for the present leadership. And it's even more questionable whether they will be able to maintain their leadership monopoly as they have exercised it -- that is, without any real challenge from any substantial organized faction with the exception of some small ultra-leftist groupings.

It's worth mentioning in passing that in the same issues of New America a discussion has broken out in the SP over the feasibility, advisability, desirability and legitimacy, of engaging in united front actions with the Communist Party on specific issues. I'm sure that there's going to be some commotion inside the SP once the CP begins to throw its weight around in P&F on particularly this "unity" gambit. If I recall their attitude toward the Henry Wallace movement they viewed it as merely another Stalinist organization and on that score would have no part of it. And to become involved in a third political party in which the Stalinists will begin to play an increasingly important role is going to create some problems for the leadership of the Socialist Party. From the discussion material in New America I don't see very much promise at this stage of the SP altering its policy on united front actions with the Communist Party.

What is important for us to note is that the success of the California Peace and Freedom Party in making the ballot has given an impetus to the movement to acquire ballot status in other states in the country. The national board of the National Conference for New Politics has recently announced plans to try and make the ballot in such states as Pa., N.J., Michigan, N.Y. and a number of states in the South. They're claiming they have the support and the commitment of King's outfit -- the Southern Christian Leadership Conference -- in getting on the ballot in a number of Southern states. There are other states where it would be no great problem for them to make the ballot in addition to those mentioned.

But what has happened is that the extension of the movement from California to other areas of the country has served to clarify the character of the tactic which the CP and others supporting their line are following in this movement. In Pennsylvania, for example, where a conference was held recently in Harrisburg, the Philadelphia Tribune, which is a Negro paper carries a report and quotes a leader of one of the groups that participated in the conference, who admitted he had campaigned for President Johnson and was now disillusioned. He says: "The purpose of our party is to project peace and freedom politics the best possible way. And if either of the major parties comes up with a candidate who favors ending the Vietnam War and using the money to end slums here at

home, we will be able to support him. However," he went on to add, "if we wind up with two men like Nixon and Johnson, which means no real choice, we will then use our option of whites and Negroes for peace and freedom to support Dick Gregory." Then they go on to explain what is involved. There is a report in the Worker which will indicate precisely what's involved. At this Harrisburg gathering the conference proceeded on the basis of agreement that the conference itself would take no position on any of the questions discussed, so there was sort of a free-for-all discussion in which the various individuals and tendencies presented their views which ranged all the way from supporting the idea of backing Stassen, Rockefeller, Kennedy, McCarthy to running a King-Spock ticket and promoting the idea of establishing a third political party.

This is the Worker's comment: "The call to support Sen. Eugene McCarthy in the Democratic primary drew enthusiastic support. So did plans to elect peace and freedom delegates to next summer's national convention, delegates mandated to vote for a peace ticket and to back the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party's bid to be seated when the Democrats convene in Chicago. It remained for third ticket supporters, though, to raise the question of what peace forces can do if the major parties offer Americans a Nixon-LBJ choice. 'We welcome efforts within the major parties,' said a third ticket spokesman, 'and many of us will work in these efforts, but,' he warned, 'these efforts may fail. How many of you would work for a third ticket to assure a real alternative in Pennsylvania?' The speaker was greeted with a near unanimous show of hands. By Sunday morning, the third ticket caucus had begun to create a statewide organization to circulate petitions for a Dick Gregory-Benjamin Spock ticket. This group now faces the task of collecting nearly 11,000 valid signatures in order to appear on the ballot." The article concludes: "If they succeed, Pennsylvania will join California, Michigan, N.Y., N.J., and 11 southern states on the growing list of states where independent electoral action for peace and freedom promises to become a reality in 1968."

The vagaries of state ballot requirements fits in with the entire maneuver. That is, it absolves them from the responsibility of formulating a program in advance of the action of getting on the ballot. The state requirements are very specific. Petitioning must begin on a certain specified date and end by a certain date. And, these dates are usually far in advance of the dates of the conventions of the two major parties. All that is necessary is to get people to agree to make the effort to acquire ballot status, and then, after having acquired ballot status, to wait to see what the outcome of the Democratic and Republican Party conventions will be, before deciding whether or not to utilize the independent ballot status for a third party ticket. Or the alternative, of providing like the Liberal Party or like the ALP did here for years, another line for a pro-peace candidate who is either a Republican or a Democrat. So long as the issue is confined to the effort to make the ballot at least a superficial kind of homogeneity can be established. The moment, however, such questions as program, structure

and candidates are raised the whole thing tends to fly apart. The one thing agreed upon is getting on the ballot in the event there is no other choice in the national elections but to vote for a Nixon on the Republican slate or a Johnson on the Democratic slate. It's a very neat and very tricky bit of manipulation and the CP, of course, is playing it to the hilt. In New Jersey, for example, in the Worker of January 30, they report on a similar development there, where one of the members of the national board of the NCNP, David Frost, officiated. This meeting was reported held under the auspices of the Political Alliance for Peace and Human Rights, "a confederation of 15 peace and civil rights organizations [which] is planning to support a primary campaign for Sen. Eugene McCarthy, and the launching of a petition drive to get an independent ticket on the ballot." At one and the same time they're supporting McCarthy in his primary fight and getting ballot status in the event that there is no other "peace candidate" alternative. Frost said last week according to this Worker report: "Many of our members want to work within the established parties, while others favor independent politics. Most of the group's members will be working for McCarthy soon." McCarthy is opening a campaign headquarters in Newark's Military Park Hotel on January 27, according to Frost.

Now, just to summarize, it seems obvious to me what the line of the CP is and will continue to be, in all of these so-called independent political formations. It is more clearly expressed in the Pennsylvania and New Jersey affairs than in Peace and Freedom in California because of their walkout. They now confront a different problem in California inasmuch as the PFP leadership has been given free rein over a considerable period of time to establish its control over the organization, and the CP is therefore constrained to engage in a more complicated maneuver. The maneuver has to be more slick, because there is considerable opposition among the activists against supporting McCarthy, against lesser-evilism in the campaign as manifested by the 1966 Los Angeles conference, which refused to go along with the lesser-evil theory of supporting Brown against Reagan.

These formations, in my opinion, can in no way be considered a progressive development in which we can participate even critically. In fact, they serve just the opposite purpose. So far as the black militants are concerned, and the black community in this country, the CP's gimmick -- and it's nothing but a gimmick -- is devised to create the illusion that by weighting the black group's participation in these formations, it is establishing their hegemony over these formations. It's not true on the basis of the actual experience of what has occurred. It is not true in life itself, because you will not have that kind of participation from the black community. And in somehow or other involving them, first through the device of supporting the McCarthy campaign and then this device of the third party ticket, the object is to derail what we consider to be the main course of political development that holds the future for the black community, that is black independent political

action. That's our line in relation to the black struggle and our line in the election campaign.

It is true that we have to make a distinction between the antiwar militants and activists caught up in this movement because of their naivete, their inexperience, and the leadership, most of whom are hardened political opportunists, either of the SP, the Draperite, the CP or the Scheer variety. We've got to confront this leadership in head-on opposition against the whole concept of third ticketism-third partyism as it has developed in the recent period. First, on the basis of actual experience we know that the effect of such electoral activity is to divert the activists from manifestations of opposition in the streets, from antiwar actions to electoral ward-heeling. Secondly, that the tendencies of these formations is to appeal more and more to the moderates. That is, in their anxiety to capture votes, they feel impelled to water down the so-called peace or antiwar program with which they were originally able to rally support of some of the antiwar activists. This has happened before. And it can only happen again. We have to make a distinction, of course, between the leaders and the ranks, like we always do, when we're dealing with any formations involving social elements that we're trying to reach --in this instance, blacks and student antiwar activists; but we can't afford, either to make any concessions to them or refrain from posing very sharply precisely the character of these formations and the road they're being led down to. I'm convinced that they're going to go through some very salutary experiences with popular front politics in the next period. They're going to learn by bitter experience what it means to embrace this opportunist line of adapting themselves to the exigencies of the American two-party system or of playing around with the idea of a heterogeneous political formation based upon diverse and conflicting elements having no viable class or social position in society which could guarantee any kind of longevity or of effective political opposition such as would a party based upon the working class or a party with a working class program -- that is, a revolutionary socialist program.

First, to counterpose to this, we have our own campaign, the SWP campaign, in which these two aspects of our program are constantly and continually emphasized. That is, the necessity for a black independent political party, the necessity for a break with the two-party system, and the establishment of an independent working class political party. What we've lacked up to now is specifically dealing with this phenomenon in the paper. We haven't done it. We've been somewhat derelict in not doing so. I can understand why this has occurred. First, because of how the question arose in California and how the comrades there became involved in a dispute over "tactics" and the necessity for us reaching a decision and getting our line clear before beginning to deal with it effectively in the paper. But now that has been done. Both the Bay Area and Los Angeles have had an extensive discussion on the

question of how we relate to this formation. They have now reached a conclusion and we can now proceed to deal with the problem in the paper.

What I think is necessary now is to designate somebody here in the National Office to closely follow this development as it occurs throughout the country and to regularly report it in the paper. We've got to communicate with the branches and get regular reports from the branches. So far it has been very difficult even collecting the material, the facts, as to what is taking place. In some instances our people have not attended these conferences, which are open for observers. And, in most instances we've received no direct reports, except when the controversy developed and when a controversy develops then, of course, a whole flood of reports comes in of a special character, that is, defending one view or another. That's not the kind of reports I'm talking about.

We've got to begin to deal in the paper not only with the basic question of our differences with these formations and with the slippery, slimy, twisting tactics of the CP, but also with the treacherous popular front policy of the ex-Schachtmanites and social democrats and the professional New Politics opportunists.

* * *

Discussion:

Camejo: Well, I think Tom covered what's happened in California as well as anybody probably could cover it. There were no inaccuracies as far as I could tell, in his whole report. There's one question about the SP. It's interesting -- I hadn't thought it out -- but the SP has a different line in Northern California than in Southern California. I think it's just a quirk of individuals.

This Mike Hannon is quite active and he's got a little group of SPers around him working in LA. There's no indication of any SP participation in the Bay Area. There their line seems to be to stay totally separate from anything that's for withdrawal from Vietnam and therefore they have stayed outside the CNP (Committee for New Politics).

In the split that took place in San Luis Obispo, when the CP separated itself from the "New Leftists" -- the ISC and the radicals -- the CNP in Berkeley, for instance, did not split. In other words, it was one organization that had two wings. One wing started working on the Peace and Freedom Party and the other one didn't. And it became very confused as to who was leading what; the leadership of CNP remained a coalition of both wings. And the P&FP was supposedly being run by CNP. So you had utter confusion. And from

this point, the CP in terms of its day-to-day activists appeared much more to be pro-P&FP than their newspapers would indicate. That is, you would run into a CPer and he would say he was working for Peace and Freedom. But as Tom correctly reports, they weren't doing anything in terms of the party's mobilization. And in fact, were sniping at the re-registration project all the time.

Also, it's important to understand Scheer. I thought Scheer was going to go the CP-CLR-Liberal Democrat wing but he didn't. He's gone with the ISC group. He tends to have a foot in each a camp but he and what he represents have been tending to move towards a more left-wing position. I'll just make a few brief comments about how I see the problem.

First of all let me state this -- it's secondary but it is important -- I think we're paying a heavy price for not having a new What Is the SWP or America's Road type pamphlet to go along with our election campaign. That is, something that can be handed to people beyond a brochure that says this is our total program for social change in America. If we had had such a pamphlet available during this whole development, right now if we had such a thing available to go to their conference and say to people, "This is our position. This is our answer to what has to be done in America." We had no such thing. And it's sort of hard to approach them with a pamphlet from the 1940's like Cannon's Socialism On Trial and say this is our answer when it doesn't relate to any of the things they're involved in. This is a weakness because one of their weaknesses is having no program for solving the problems, we can't answer except for having a brochure in terms of campaign literature. That's a disadvantage which is unfortunate. I understand why that is.

The other thing is you have no idea what it is like right now in California on this question. That is, one must answer what is our position on Peace and Freedom before you can discuss with anybody about anything. In other words, that's the issue now that separates us from the antiwar and progressive milieu. That's the issue which any person who comes around us first we must answer. That is, you can't recruit anyone without settling the question of Peace and Freedom first. It's perplexed the whole student movement around the Bay Area because they don't understand why we stay out of Peace and Freedom.

And this is understandable why they don't understand this because there's a class question involved. Therefore their whole basis of agreement with it, their attitude towards it runs into a concept that they don't understand. I'd like to say there's another side to it though. A funny thing has happened. They have a peculiar respect for us. That is, many, many of these indepen-

dents are nervous over Peace and Freedom Party because we're not in it, and they sort of sense that the SWP is not a nut group, that it engages in broad coalitions, that it is not sectarian, that it's willing to work. They can't grasp what it is that keeps us out of the P&FP and it makes them nervous that maybe something's wrong.

In other words, they tend to be very receptive to our arguments. The very fact I was working on this pamphlet on Peace and Freedom; the word leaked out and at the Peace and Freedom Party meetings, our comrades are being asked by all these people, "When is that pamphlet coming out? We want to understand your position." In fact one of the comrades came to sell the Militant there and ten people said they'd buy the pamphlet as soon as it comes out. And we didn't even tell them about it. The word has leaked out because of the fact that the YSAers knew about it. So that I think that as soon as Tom gets the material ready and whatever else we're going to put out, we're going to get a tremendous receptivity, because students are suspicious to begin with about all electoral politics for the wrong reasons generally, and even though there's a tremendous momentum for this thing, the fragmentation has already begun. I'll give you a brief report.

Now, there have been meetings of the Peace and Freedom Party continuously for the last couple of weeks, and we've been attending them and just recently they get into these fantastic fights over almost anything. They got into a fight over the defense of Huey Newton, for instance, and they ended up after about a three-hour fight voting 33-31 not to include a leaflet on the Huey Newton case in their mailing. Well, that's the type of thing that's just tearing them apart.

One guy got up who was a leader in it, threw his papers in the air and walked out. The guy wants nothing to do with Peace and Freedom. Some student who had worked all the time in the campaign quit and sent a letter to the editor of the Daily Cal blasting the Peace and Freedom Party as a total sell-out. What we see is that, though there has been tremendous initial momentum for the P&FP, there are endless openings for us out of it. This is what we should see instead of taking a negative viewpoint seeing ourselves isolated, as many of the comrades tended to view it at the moment they made the ballot -- it was one of those moments you want to stay up in the headquarters.

It was like the movement had said the Vietcong had taken Saigon in the way these kids reacted. The kids saw the petition campaign like an antiwar action. That is, the average antiwar activist did not look at the thing as an electoral thing. To him it was another antiwar activity and to get on the ballot was another victory for the antiwar movement. That's exactly how it was looked

upon. They did not differentiate in any way from another antiwar action, like going out on a demonstration or something else.

So, that moment has passed in California, and I expect that as soon as we can begin really intervening in the discussion -- there's a big discussion going on as to what the program is -- and that's the key to our intervention. We've got to go away from organizational stuff, the business of maneuvering, forming factions in the Peace and Freedom Party, trying to line up people to do some organizational move, to get motions passed, etc.

The important thing is the discussion, get the kids to hear our viewpoint, because now there's interest in this question, and to push our campaign is our answer. And I think we might be able to end up, now, for instance, I gave three talks -- one at Berkeley, one in San Francisco and one in LA -- on the Peace and Freedom Party and in each case a lot of active Peace and Freedom people came, especially in Berkeley. And in each case they were easily convinced. They ended up at least feeling that we had a good point and we have found, for instance, no difficulty in taking the close contacts and convincing them that we're correct.

Hansen: You mentioned about the differences in the SP. Where's Mike Hannon? Is he in the LA area?

Camejo: Yes.

Hansen: One question, among the people who are more pro-Cuban, what is their pitch on this? How do they react? Students and others who are pro-Cuban?

Camejo: They're all for it. You've got to understand, as I wrote into my report, everyone is for Peace and Freedom Party except us. PL's in it completely; Spartacist joined it with big leaflets; right now they're trying to form a labor caucus in it. But all of them, the whole pro-OLAS milieu, they're all in it, but they're among the first that we can...

Kerry: But that doesn't reflect the view of the Draperites; they're not pro-Cuba.

Camejo: The ISC is basically Schachtmanite; we haven't been in contact with too much of it, except in Berkeley. Let me make a couple of comments about it there, where Hal Draper is their leader. First of all, they're quite strong, they probably have 75 members. So they're a power there, they've played the role of being able to organize ... no, no, that's their paper membership. In terms of activists, let's say in Berkeley, they don't have more than 25 people who are activists. But this whole getting on

the ballot was due to the Draperites, it could not have happened if it wasn't for them, they were the ones who put the muscle in to build the apparatus -- to get the thing started.

Now, they are playing down their third camp position. On campus you never hear about it. They recruit people now on false pretenses. That is, they don't present the third camp line until someone becomes a member. They're recruiting people on formulations that are very close to ours. They put out leaflets on campus trying to cover up their third camp position. Their paper they publish in New York, the Independent Socialist, comes much closer to being a third camp position than the stuff they're saying at Berkeley. And they're paying a price for it; they're now developing a pro-Cuba tendency inside the ISC. They just started internal discussions on Cuba to try and straighten out their members.

Hansen: They haven't gone so far in their thinking as to think out the relationship between this business and the Cuban line of being against dirty politics, against electoralism and pro-guerilla, pro-action or anything like that?

Camejo: No, because they make a fundamental error of not differentiating that there are classes in America. You see, they think the Cuban line on the international scale works out all right, in the colonial revolution, they're all for that. But in this country, of course, there's no working class, you see. Whether they say that consciously or not, it's the logic of their thinking.

Hansen: Now, one other question, you say that they think, at least this sector, they don't really think in terms of being like a real party, the real business of getting into parliamentary activity; they think more of it as an antiwar action. Now, from that, suppose that you have a big antiwar action scheduled, like say, April 26, would their attitude be to participate to the maximum in it, because they would see no conflict?

Camejo: There's an interesting contradiction that is now hitting the Peace and Freedom Party. The main meeting in Los Angeles, that Tom mentioned, they began by singing the song, "We aren't marching anymore," which was indicative of one side of this electoralism. The other side is that the leaders of the Peace and Freedom Party tried to grab control of antiwar activism at the same time. They tried to call a demonstration against Rusk in San Francisco and lead it under the banners of Peace and Freedom Party. That's an action in the streets.

They also called a demonstration in support of Huey Newton and got 300 people out picketing at the time of his trial, so that on one side they're already talking about how to get into electoralism and stop the actions. At the same time, other wings of it are for actions. Now, I see the part where they go in for actions as a temporary thing, the part of the general upswing where everything was centered around Peace and Freedom and that they will not be able to block us because we're strong, I mean, because we exist, that's the only reason. They won't be able to block us for these mass actions, but these mass actions will immediately pose problems for them.

Hansen: In other words, we have sufficient strength so that if we got the impetus going for a big action, we could turn it against them by confronting them with the problem, what is their attitude to the action, rather than turning it to what is our attitude to their party or their electoral campaign? What's their attitude toward the action? You've got sufficient forces to do that.

Kerry: Let me say on this question, I don't think we should be under any illusions that there are going to be any big national antiwar actions after the Democratic Party convention. There are the April actions and the only actions after that are the demonstrations at the Democratic Party convention, in August. After that, the whole thing is going to be shifted to the electoral arena. You're not going to be able to get any mass actions thereafter, I don't think, unless something very unforeseen happens. The general line expressed most blatantly by McCarthy and Kennedy, is that this so-called challenge to Johnson, was specifically designed to divert actions from the street to a "more effective" arena, because demonstrations haven't been effective. The argument advanced is that demonstrating and engaging in civil disobedience and so forth, hasn't led to the end of the war. It hasn't led to a reduction in the escalation of the war, and that now it is necessary to shift the axis of activity onto the political arena, which they interpret as the electoral arena.

Hansen: That's the basis of their diversionary move.

Kerry: The Stalinists, of course, are heartily in agreement with this, as are a large part of those who become involved in these movements, you see, because once they've got candidates on the

ballot, and with the limited forces and resources at their command, they're constantly going to be compelled to divert whatever forces they have onto the electoral arena. They don't object to that. They probably haven't clearly decided in their own mind, but the logic of the situation will drive them in that direction.

The CP, for example, still insists that there's no conflict between actions in the street, that is, demonstrations, and electoral activity. That's for the boobs, that's boob-bait; they know damn well that they've already begun to make this shift onto the electoral arena. But the reality of the thing is that that's what's going to happen. If you get such "peace" ticket formations in a number of states throughout the country, and their forces are primarily the ones depended upon to organize actions and participate in actions, there's going to be a conflict. And they're going to resolve the conflict on the side of electoral activity.

Now, here is where the Student Mobilization Committee can play such an important role. If there are going to be any actions, they're going to have to take the initiative. Even if the actions are of a more limited character than previous national actions. I don't think you'll have any of a national character after the demonstration at the Democratic Party convention.

Hansen: That seems to me to be the only possible line to take in terms of the practical approach to this question, because the basis of the diversionary effort being mounted by the CP, the Democrats and all that there, the whole basis excludes any kind of a maneuver on our part. You can't participate because you're participating in maneuvers on the electoral arena. That's out for us. The only tactical approach you can have is on the line of some kind of action, and the action's got to be attractive to those sectors that we're appealing to. And there the possibility depends on what the real relationship of forces is, on the mood of these people and like that.

I can't see any other axis whereby we can approach this thing in a tactical way that would be attractive to these people, because you can appeal to these groups to come and join the action, to get involved in the action, but as soon as you begin debating the pros and cons of electoral politics, that's a different area where you're debating and of course, you have to meet them head-on in a confrontation, there's no question about that. You've got to be very sharp on that, because that's one place to shake some of these people, but that's not always the most attractive approach; it can be repellent, but you have no choice, because the attraction is the action.

Kerry: You see, that's why I emphasize, for example, that I consider the fact that they have not adopted a program a very superficial and formal approach. That would offer a possibility of a tactical intervention -- that is, if it was a formation moving to

the left, then we could say, well, the question is still open. They have not adopted a program, and there's the possibility then of convincing them or of intervening, in the question of the determination of the program, in which we would advocate that they adopt a socialist program. Lacking any class base, the only basis on which they could effectively engage in what is essentially going to be a propaganda campaign is programmatic. I don't care how significant whatever forces they have -- they don't hope to emerge victorious. It is a propaganda campaign, and therefore we could intervene on that basis. But that's complete fiction. We'd make ourselves ridiculous, I think, if we intervened on that basis. In order to intervene, you'd have to register as a member of the party, intervene at their convention in order to advocate that they adopt a socialist program. We're a party with candidates in the field with our own program. We can only say adopt our program, then, and support our candidates. That would be the only thing that would be understood. To think that we could make any kind of effective intervention on that level is absurd.

Dobbs: Comrade Chairman, I concur in Tom's general appraisal of the Peace and Freedom Party, concerning both the situation and our approach to it. I'd like to add a couple of thoughts on our tactical attitude toward it. I believe there's no room for maneuvers at this stage. It will only confuse things. You've got to confront it head-on. Roughly I would appraise the development as follows: fundamentally, we confront the identical situation that we confronted in 1964. That is, the continued attempt by the political class collaborationists to keep the mass movement tied to the Democratic Party. There's no sign here of seriously trying to get a third capitalist party on the road at this time, there isn't any concept of trying to organize a break from the two-party system. In that fundamental sense there's no difference from '64. They're averse to a third capitalist party for all the obvious reasons. So the problem of combatting a trend of that kind does not appear to be a factor at present.

What's different is that the class collaborationists could use Johnson in 1964 as a lesser evil against Goldwater and they don't know how to use Johnson now as a lesser evil against anything or anybody. They're thrashing around trying to figure some way to get this monkey off their backs and get on with the business of politicking through the Democratic Party. Now part of their problem is that there's a tendency among antiwar militants, black militants, and even among trade union militants to break loose from serving as a tail of the Democratic Party kite and take another road. In the case of the young militants, they're not so much concerned with the how of it, because they don't understand all the fundamental mechanics of political struggle, they have some very definite ideas of the what of it, in the sense that they want a real change. At this juncture, they're susceptible to all this fakery, this demagogy, maneuverism of the Stalinists, the social

democrats and the rest of that ilk. And, if we gave primacy to maneuvers aimed at influencing these militants, within the PFP milieu, we'd only wind up helping to feed their illusions and make it that much harder for them to draw the necessary political conclusions.

I think we've got a little problem with our own cadres on this. You get the impression that some comrades tend to feel that this development has taken all the steam out of our presidential campaign. That could only indicate that, for some reason or other, they thought the electoral situation would be largely characterized by clear-cut Johnsonism and Republicanism on the one side and the SWP on the other. Insofar as this may be the case events will help the comrades perceive more clearly that life is just never that simple. A tendency among comrades to think that in view of this development we've got to retreat more toward abstract propaganda in our campaign and not relate it as pointedly to the concrete issues of the day. So it is necessary to make very clear to the comrades that they need have no apprehensions about us being walled off in this situation and not being able to influence the militants. We're not going to quickly get cadre-rich in terms of new recruitment but nevertheless we're going to have a real influence.

Whatever happens during the campaign year, we stand in a far superior position in 1968 than we did in 1964 and we're going to be in a much better position after 1968 no matter what kind of a class collaborationist binge militants in the mass movement may get suckered into in 1968. Moreover, we aren't going to have to wait until election day for this to be shown. As Tom correctly pointed out, these geniuses of class collaboration have got a first class headache on their hands. Everything that they try to do at this stage is made contingent on what they may or may not be able to accomplish at the Democratic Party convention. And no matter how the Democratic convention works out in specifics and in detail, it's going to become increasingly clear to the militants that they're being sold a bill of goods. So we will begin to influence them during the campaign itself.

Finally, on the concluding remarks in Tom's report -- very clearly, we've got to pay extra special attention to this problem in the next period. It's not a thing that can be done by the Militant staff alone because the Militant staff has the total problem of the paper. It can't be done by the campaign committee alone, because it must devote itself to implementing our presidential campaign as a whole. So we clearly need an assignment for special attention to this and we should welcome Tom's volunteering. I'll make a motion to assign Tom to pay special attention to the Peace and Freedom Party situation and collateral developments.

Barnes: We made three basic points at the convention about the campaign.

One was the fact that we had to approach the entire campaign in a dual manner. That is, not see the campaign as a substitute for our leadership of the antiwar actions, but to combine both arenas to weaken our opponents and draw people to us.

The second as the fact that we would see all kinds of twists and turns by the Stalinists and other class collaborationists -- third tickets, third parties, and different kinds of attempts to dump Johnson. We listed a paragraph of different variants they might go through that we would be running into for the duration of the campaign. We would on the other hand be running a clear-cut socialist campaign, but as Farrell said, not some sort of abstract socialist propaganda campaign, in other words, not an SLP campaign with our program. Rather, we will teach our own young cadre what it means to apply the transitional program, to educate and propagandize and intervene to the degree there are even small openings in the mass movement. It is by doing this that we draw student activists into the revolutionary movement. Not by going to them about their problems but by offering them a campaign that fights on the central issues of the day and takes this fight to the American people.

The third thing was that by running this kind of campaign as the socialist alternative in 1968, due to the increased radicalization we think we can come out of it with a significantly larger socialist youth organization. Especially given the central fact that Tom outlined, that is, what will happen in the dynamics of the evolution of all the variants of this Peace and Freedom phenomenon. That is, the contradictions that will make them incapable of carrying out the kind of consistent antiwar and pro-black power campaign the militants expect them to carry out. The development of the Peace and Freedom Party in California and other states reemphasizes all three of these points. Let's relook at them in the light of P&F tickets and parties.

They cannot and will not be able to carry out the fight to continue to lead antiwar actions in the streets, to continue to fight to build the united front in action against the Vietnam war. No one understands this now except us and some of their leaders, but this will be shown in practice. And some of those they initially influence will see this way before November 1968. We will not be playing less of a leading role in the antiwar movement, relative to the P&F leaders, but more of a role. And we will pick up a certain number of the activists. We received an initial taste of this at the Student Mobilization national conference in Chicago.

It's important that we reemphasize this. Forgetting about this summer and next fall for a moment we have the April Student Strike and April 27 mass action before us. How are they going to face up to this action? It's not just a student action that's called for the spring. It's an action that's called for the whole movement in all of the different cities. So right away they've got

counterpose the labor party and black party as the wave of the future to the whole Peace and Freedom perspective. We should be known as the greatest opponents of Peace and Freedomism -- and I think we can inspire significant numbers of youth with our perspective.

Now as to the third point, that is the significant increase of our youth forces throughout the campaign. There is no sign that because of P&F developments we should alter this perspective whatsoever. All the initial evidence of the campaign to the contrary is that we should push ahead with it, as rapidly as we can. Many of these young people, the youth we approach with our campaign, are going to find themselves in a contradiction. There are young people who are very taken with this idea of the Peace and Freedom Party being a "movement" formation. Many of them feel favorably disposed toward the phenomenon and some of these same people are favorable toward Halstead and Boutelle, toward our comrades who are spokesmen, toward our ideas, toward our literature, toward our brochure on the troops, toward our idea of getting out and campaigning and campaigning as socialists. But that's not a contradiction the Socialist Workers Party suddenly finds themselves in; it's a contradiction that many of the young activists find themselves in, a contradiction that will be worked out over differing lengths of time.

A new phenomenon will now develop. Remember we discussed the phenomenon of SDSers finding themselves in Young Socialists for Halstead and Boutelle; we've seen large numbers of them since September 1967. We began signing up SDSers at the NCNP conference. They are SDSers and they're also Young Socialists for Halstead and Boutelle. There is an ultimate contradiction there, but we think we'll help a large number of them resolve this contradiction in the correct way. That is, having them come into our movement. We're going to start finding Young Socialists for Halstead and Boutelle who are favorable to and even registered members of, or activists to some degree in, Peace and Freedom Parties. We signed up two at the Student Mobilization Conference. But that doesn't change our perspective one whit. In fact it's especially among the youth, who have been activists in the antiwar movement and who are prone to accept or consider socialist, revolutionary ideas that there will be the ones who will discover in the course of this campaign a lot about the difference between class collaborationist and class struggle politics, very abstract ideas to them right now, especially as the Peace and Freedom Party begins to develop a program and a concrete campaign. One thing the rise, even if brief, of P&F formations will create is an increase in interest in politics and larger potential audiences for us. Thus it puts an even greater premium on getting trailblazers and state candidates out taking advantage of this interest and confronting these people.

Kerry: There is at least one positive thing about the California PFP making the ballot with its limited forces and resources.

It provides an object lesson for black militants of how easy it would be, from a practical view, to establish their own party, with their own candidates, and their own program. And the same with the trade union movement; the trade union movement as powerful as it is, with its resources, its finances, its apparatus, its know how, of which it boasts, down to the very precinct level.

So far as the practical problem is concerned, what an easy thing it would be for the workers in this country to establish their own political organization, that, from the very beginning, would be in a position to contest, either or both, of the two capitalist parties.

We can use this positive aspect as an argument to show that it's not some very remote pie in the sky proposals that we make; it's a very realistic proposition. And this just demonstrates how easy it would be, given the right policy and a minimum of organization. I agree with Jack, that far from there being any reason for us to be concerned about the effect of this development on our campaign, I think it's going to have a very salutary effect.

It's going to have a very salutary effect because, different than the leaders of this movement, these kids that come into the movement are just full of illusions; they're naive. They think that these "peace" tickets could perhaps be a vehicle for conducting an effective struggle for a basic social change. Not only against the war but against all the other things that they think are wrong. They're going to be horribly disillusioned. And they're going to feel greatly betrayed by the development, and they're going to recoil from it.

This present state of euphoria is not going to last very long. And to watch the change that occurs is a wonderful lesson, not only for us but it will be for them too. In recalling the experience they'll say the only people who really saw, who warned us, who predicted this development, was the SWP. Many of the best of them are going to draw that conclusion, so I don't feel at all concerned about this temporary euphoria -- it will last until they meet to name a candidate and try to hammer out a program. Because the whole business, the whole operation, is designed as a pressure lobby on the Democratic Party. It's intended as a threat to the Democratic Party -- "either dump Johnson and provide an acceptable "peace" candidate or the Democratic Party is going to be split, you see, with the danger of losing this election." That's what is behind the whole dump Johnson movement: the fear that with Johnson they can't win.

It's upon this fear that the Stalinists and the others play. As a pressure lobby on the Democratic Party, they hope by posing the possibility of splitting the Democratic Party in some key states, to impel some of the liberal Democrats like Kennedy or McCarthy or somebody else, to jump out in front and to lead the movement

for an acceptable "peace" candidate.

You know, even the Peace and Freedom people in sending out their letters asking people to register Peace and Freedom assured them that if they did so, right after January 2, on January 3, they can go down and re-register as Democrats again. Of course, it's not going to work that way. They're not going to get these 100,000 people rushing down to re-register as Democrats. They have, whether intended or not, effectively split the Democratic Party in California. They're split three or four different ways. They may get some Stalinists and some confirmed Democrats to re-register, but to expect people to go down, after registering Peace and Freedom, after most have been convinced that an alternative is necessary, is utopian. Large numbers cannot be so easily manipulated to carry out a questionable maneuver so that the McCarthy slate can be elected as delegates to the Democratic Party convention.

This may have cost them the victory of the McCarthy slate in California by taking 50 or 60 thousand votes away -- because they would have voted for McCarthy if not given the PFP alternative. Take 50 or 60 thousand Democratic votes away from McCarthy, and that may be the difference between his Peace, Progress and Equality slate and the Lynch-Johnson slate.

Anyway, I think it is very good that the comrades in California went through a very thorough discussion on the whole question and arrived, without the intervention of the PC, at what I consider a generally correct political conclusion. And we have every reason to be optimistic. I see the reports from Berkeley on their trailblazing; it appears to me an amazing response to our election campaign, right in the midst of all this Peace and Freedom business. They report an amazing response from the places they visited. That's what we need, more of that. And supplemented, now, by the paper beginning to deal with the problem from week to week.