

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, No. 62, June 15, 1973

Present: Barnes, Breitman, Britton, A. Hansen, J. Hansen,
Horowitz, Jenness, Jones, Lovell, Morrison, Pulley,
Shaw, Sheppard, Stone, Waters

Consultative: Dobbs, Kerry

Visitors: Rose, Scott, Seigle

Chair: Shaw

AGENDA: 1. YSA Representative
2. Draft Political Resolution

1. YSA REPRESENTATIVE

Rose reported that the YSA NEC has designated Pulley to replace him as the YSA representative on the Political Committee.

2. DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION

Sheppard opened discussion.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the general line of the draft political resolution.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

June 15, 1973

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Attached is a letter to the national office from Oakland-Berkeley branch organizer Frank Boehm regarding the recent Militant sales campaign. Comrade Boehm raises some ideas which comrades will want to consider in thinking through our future sales and subscription activities especially for the fall of this year.

Comradely,



Lew Jones
SWP National Office

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3536 Telegraph Ave.
Oakland, Calif. 94609

June 12, 1973

SWP N.O.
14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Comrades,

With The Militant bundle sales campaign having officially drawn to a close, I wanted to note some observations about that effort. The observations are largely based on the experience of our branch and may be limited in that sense.

The campaign was obviously successful in terms of the party taking a first step in correcting a weakness of some seriousness, that is, in increasing the single issue circulation. Also, the campaign made possible the easing of the financial burden that accompanied low sales. In our situation, this was highly successful. I believe we went from around a high of a \$1000 debt to around \$100 at this time. We can easily project wiping this out in a few weeks and beginning to actually make money on sales.

Increasing the single issue sales and reducing the financial debt in and of themselves would have made the sales campaign entirely worthwhile. But these two things that are immediate gains for us are not what I would assess to be the fundamental acquisition of a campaign of this nature. The most significant thing about the sales campaign is that it began to cut into and turn around the poor education our ranks have received in practice regarding the primacy of the sales of our press. It is impossible to judge from here how far this process reached in the party as a whole, but in our branch the change has been qualitative.

The atmosphere in the branch around Militant sales is beginning to approach what our goal ought to be, that is, an atmosphere where every comrade sells regularly and consistently as a fundamental aspect of membership in the party, and where any new person who comes around the YSA or the party automatically assumes sales as a basic activity. It is in this sense that I think we have achieved something through this campaign that can be of more lasting value than the massive sub drives -- if the experience is built upon.

The key now is to campaign for the maintenance of the new level of bundle sales over the summer, with an eye to moving sales ahead, even if only a little, and utilizing this whole period of experience to launch a fall campaign. The worst thing that could happen now is for comrades to feel, like after a massive, hectic sub drive, that the campaign is over. Our branch had adopted the perspective of maintaining the new sales level of 500. Last week, with the campaign officially over and the first week after the major push to sell over 1,000, the branch sold around 550. That achievement is all the more important as an indicator of what we can do in light of the fact that this was achieved without the sales at UC Berkeley or Merrit because of "dead week" at both schools. Those two campuses have generally yielded well over 100 in sales.

It is important that there be some kind of national focus on maintaining the new level of sales simply because of the effect that this has on comrades. It is obviously beneficial, as this recent campaign proved, to have local projections be coupled with a national focus. Perhaps we could continue this in some sort of public way through The Militant. At any rate, the emphasis should be on continued sales around our new level with examples made of those areas that are able to move ahead over the summer -- even if only by 50, 100, or 150. Comrades have started getting into the swing of selling due in large part to the fact that it was a national effort. And whether or not we can continue high sales will depend largely on the attention paid to it nationally.

It is clear from the progress we made in this campaign that the party was ready for this type of effort. The comrades responded extremely well. The campaign fit in with burning objective necessities and a level of consciousness in the party of the gap between that objective situation and our performance record. One thing the campaign proved also is the potential that exists for increasing bundle sales and establishing consistency. In that regard, I think we should consider the just-ended campaign as a forerunner to a larger one in the fall. Assuming there is no qualitative leap in membership, I would still venture to say that there is room for significant further advances in bundle sales. It is impossible to quote a figure from here but I would approach it big.

Increasing the subscription base for the paper is obviously still a major task also. One idea we have been toying with here and will probably experiment with is beginning to tie in sub sales over the summer with the increased regular bundle sales. One of the gains of the sales campaign was the establishment of regular sales places. The idea would be try selling to regular customers. In addition, with the coverage on the farmworkers, we have been thinking of canvassing some of the Chicano areas with The Militant, and beginning to sell some subs there.

As you can tell, I am extremely happy with the results of the bundle sales campaign. I would urge that in whatever form the fall campaign around the press is projected, further increases of bundle sales be an integral part, and that as an immediate step we think through very carefully how we can map out a campaign to maintain the current levels of sales so that we will be in a stronger position this fall for whatever kind of campaign we decide to launch.

Comradely,
s/Frank Boehm