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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 21, 1971

TO MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Dear Comrades,

Attached is the text of a motion the Administrative Committee is submitting to the Tuesday, May 25, 1971, meeting of the Political Committee.

The meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M. at 14 Charles Lane.

Comradely,

Barry Sheppard
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Barry Sheppard
for the Administrative Committee

MOTION

1) That the party conduct a probe of the gay liberation movement for the purpose of gathering information. The information sought includes facts about the present size of the gay liberation movement, its geographical spread, the history of its development, the specific nature of the different gay liberation groups, the demands which have been raised by the gay liberation organizations, the political positions of the different currents within the gay liberation movement, the positions of our opponents concerning it, and its relationship to the developing radicalization.

2) The probe will be conducted within the framework of the party's unconditional support to the struggles of homosexuals for civil and human rights against the discrimination and oppression they suffer under capitalism. However, steps taken for the purposes of this probe do not signify setting in motion at this time a process of party fractional intervention based on a defined strategic and tactical orientation in the gay liberation movement. The purpose of this probe is solely to gather the necessary information about gay liberation formations and actions so that the party can then determine its policy toward them.

3) The party branches are responsible for carrying out this probe in their areas. The decisions on how to do this in each case must be made in light of the overall personnel situation and the responsibility of the branch to carry out the major activities of the party.

In cases where there are openly gay comrades, individuals can be assigned to attend meetings and participate in selected activities of different gay liberation organizations and ad hoc formations as part of this probe. However, these comrades should not be assigned to this probe on any premise that in their particular case such an assignment should automatically have priority over other party tasks. Homosexual comrades have joined or will join the SWP on the same basis that anyone else joins the SWP, on the basis of acceptance of our full program and agreement to loyally build the SWP and help to carry out its decisions in all

spheres of party work. Conversely, the party as a whole has the responsibility to see that a homosexual comrade, like any other comrade, is integrated in a rounded way in party life and activities.

The deepgoing personal consequences for anyone to openly declare themselves to be homosexual emphasizes the importance of the fact that the question of whether or not a homosexual comrade decides to so declare himself or herself is a personal decision. No pressure from the party should be placed on any comrade either for or against them openly declaring themselves as gay.

4) This probe will be carried out in collaboration with the YSA, which has initiated similar action. It is to be conducted under the supervision of the Administrative Committee. All reports, results and questions concerning this probe should be addressed to the Administrative Committee.

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N. Y. 10014

May 22, 1971

SAN FRANCISCO

Roland Sheppard

Dear Roland,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your May 17 letter to the Political Committee. I have made copies of it and circulated it to the members of the Political Committee.

The Political Committee is currently discussing the Gay Liberation Movement. There will be written communication to the party following the completion of this discussion.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

May 17, 1971

To The Political Committee of The Socialist Workers Party:

Dear Comrades,

The Draft Political Resolution and report to the Plenum does not make the nature of our support to the Gay Liberation Movement clear. It does not say whether the Party should or should not intervene in the movement. It does not say whether the divisions within the class over Gays are decisive to the success of the revolution; whether oppression of Gays is basically economic or psychological; or whether oppression of Gays is basic to the maintenance of capitalism.

When the Black Nationalist and Womens Liberation Movements first developed, we already had a rich history and tradition on these movements and we therefore had political clarity on the principled questions as we developed our transitional approaches and demands for these movements.

With the development of the Gay Liberation Movement we have no past history, to my knowledge, that can give us the necessary clarity on the principled questions. The PC should assume its position of leadership and take a clear position on this movement, explaining what is basic to the principles of the Party and how strategic the movement is to building a Leninist Party and to the revolution.

We should take advantage of the pre-convention period to have a full discussion in the Party before the Party intervenes in this movement.

Comradely,
s/Roland Sheppard
San Francisco

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 22, 1971

CLEVELAND

Barbara Gregorich

Dear Comrade Gregorich,

We received letters today from the Seattle and Atlanta branches requesting speakers for the resolution For A Proletarian Orientation.

The Atlanta letter reads in part: "The branch voted at the last meeting to invite a representative of the Gregorich grouping to make a presentation on their resolution during our pre-convention discussion in the following manner:

1/2 hour presentation - Gregorich group representative
1/2 hour presentation - John Votava (supporting the National Committee)
1 hour discussion
10 minutes summary - Gregorich grouping
10 minutes summary - John Votava

The date that we allotted for this discussion is July 6, at 9:00 PM."

The organizer of the Atlanta branch is Ilona Stanton. Her home telephone number is 876-2112.

The Seattle branch proposed no date or format in their letter.

The organizer of the Seattle branch is Stephanie Coontz and her home telephone number is LA4-4327.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

cc: Ilona Stanton - Atlanta
Stephanie Coontz - Seattle

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May 18, 71

Dear Jack:

We just received your communication about arrangements for getting one of the authors of the counter-resolution to present their position to the branch. We had already decided that we would like to do that, as we have no one in the branch who supports the position. Could you communicate our request to comrade Gregorich?

We have already begun discussion of the documents. We discussed the political resolution and the mideast resolution, and the discussion was enthusiastic and very good. Most of the comrades have begun to set aside money to get to Oberlin, so we should have a lot of Seattle people there.

Comradely,
s/Stephanie Coontz

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P. O. Box 7817
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

May 19, 1971

Jack Barnes
SWP National Office

Dear Jack,

The branch voted at the last meeting to invite a representative of the Gregorich grouping to make a presentation on their resolution during our pre-convention discussion in the following manner:

½ hour presentation - Gregorich group representative
½ hour presentation - John Votava (supporting the National Committee)
1 hour discussion
10 minutes summary - Gregorich grouping
10 minutes summary - John Votava

The date that we allotted for this discussion is July 6,
at 9:00 PM.

Although no one in the branch at this time supports their resolution, we feel that it is important in order to hold the most complete discussion of their resolution, that one of their representatives be at the branch meeting to present their position. Please inform Gregorich of this invitation, format, and date.

Comradely,
s/Ilona Stanton
Organizer

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AUSTIN SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

P.O. Box 5586, West Austin Station, Austin, Texas, 78703

Jack Barnes
Organizational Secretary
Socialist Workers Party
New York, N.Y.

May 24, 1971

Dear Jack:

At its meeting of May 23, the Austin branch voted to invite a spokesperson from the Gregorich-Massey-Passen-McCann resolution, "For A Proletarian Orientation." In line with this, I am advising the National Office as outlined in your recent communication on this matter. We had planned to begin our pre-convention discussion on June 6th, with the Political Resolution. We would like to know the arrival time for the Gregorich et al resolution spokesperson so that we can re-adjust our schedule accordingly.

In addition, the communications indicated that a tendency or faction has not been formally organized. I would like to know the usual procedure for such action, so that I can explain it to the branch if needs be. I intend to ask Barry S. when he's down here, but Evelyn thought I should write you also.

Related to the above, Travis Burgeson of the Houston, Texas branch, an announced "supporter" of the resolution "For a Proletarian Orientation" offered himself as the speaker in Austin. Is this correct procedure? He did not offer himself to the organizer, but rather to an individual branch-member, Al Gordon [Greengold] who also "supports" this resolution. Al brought it up to an exec member, who brought it up in the exec meeting. I questioned the entire procedure.

Comradely,
s/ Melissa Singler
Austin Organizer

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

May 27, 1971

AUSTIN

Melissa Singler

Dear Melissa,

Enclosed is a letter that I sent to Comrade Gregorich informing her of the Austin branch's request for a spokesperson for the resolution For a Proletarian Orientation.

Representatives of the Gregorich grouping are speaking to branches that request it on the basis of the authors' characterization of the document For a Proletarian Orientation as a counter-resolution to the Political Committee's political resolution. Comrade Sell has a complete set of the correspondence of the national office with Comrade Gregorich on this question and related matters. I'm sure that she would share this correspondence with you.

The authors of the document For a Proletarian Orientation have given the party no indication as to how they view their grouping other than to describe themselves as proponents of their counter-resolution. It is on the latter basis alone that the question of their sending a spokesperson to Austin arises. In these circumstances I am not at present in a position to offer you any precise comment about the organizational nature of the grouping. I can only offer you a suggestion about background reference material on the subject of organized oppositions. The most authoritative single compilation of the party's experience with and view of tendencies and factions is in the document The Organizational Character of the Socialist Workers Party, a resolution adopted by the 21st National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, September 1965.

The correct procedure for a branch that wants a spokesperson of the Gregorich grouping from outside their branch is outlined in my May 11, 1971, communication to the branches. This was the procedure you comrades followed. It is up to the Gregorich grouping to decide who they want to speak for them in Austin.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

cc: Evelyn Sell

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Portland Ore.
May 24, 1971

S W P-NO

Dear Comrades;

Please be informed that the Portland branch would like a member of the Gregorich grouping to present their document to the branch. The branch will set aside time for this presentation after Comrade Gregorich contacts me.

Comradely

s/Larry Birkner
Portland Organizer

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 27, 1971

CLEVELAND

Barbara Gregorich

Dear Comrade Gregorich,

We received a letter today from the Portland branch requesting a speaker for the resolution For a Proletarian Orientation. They did not mention any specific format or date in their letter.

The organizer of the Portland branch is Larry Birkner. His home telephone number is 503/223-2492.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

cc: Larry Birkner - Portland

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Howitz

Philadelphia
May 26, 1971

NATIONAL OFFICE

Dear Jack,

We would like to have a representative of the Gregorich grouping give a report on their document here around the end of June. The format would be like that of our other reports -- a presentation of one hour by someone defending the line of the document, discussion by the other comrades, and a summary by the reporter.

We started our local discussion yesterday with the political resolution, and the discussion which continues next week should be helpful in clearing up any questions comrades have.

Comradely,
s/Fred Stanton

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 28, 1971

CLEVELAND

Barbara Gregorich

Dear Comrade Gregorich,

We received a letter today from the Philadelphia branch requesting a speaker for the resolution For a Proletarian Orientation. The appropriate part of the letter reads as follows:

"We would like to have a representative of the Gregorich grouping give a report on their document here around the end of June. The format would be like that of our other reports -- a presentation of one hour by someone defending the line of the document, discussion by the other comrades, and a summary by the reporter."

The organizer of the Philadelphia branch is Fred Stanton. His home telephone number is 215/SH7-0946.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 28, 1971

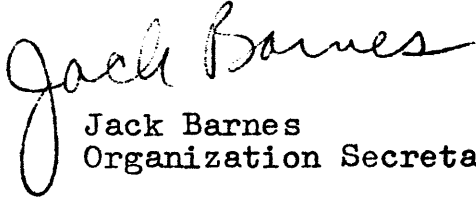
TO ALL ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of an exchange between the Philadelphia organizer and the national office relating to YSA representation on party branch executive committees.

Some branches do not at this stage have the local YSA elect a representative to the branch executive committee. But we thought the ones that do might find the exchange useful.

Comradely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Barnes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary