

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 25, April 9, 1976

Present: Barnes, Blackstock, Breitman, Garza, Gersh, D. Jenness,  
L. Jenness, Jones, Lund, Lyons, Seigle, Waters

Visitors: Morell, Rodriguez

Chair: Blackstock

AGENDA: 1. Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Resolution  
2. Party Suit  
3. Party Suit and Fourth International  
4. New Branches  
5. Boston  
6. World Political Situation  
7. Plenum Agenda and Reporters  
8. Correction to Minutes

1. PUERTO RICANS IN THE U.S. RESOLUTION

Garza reported.

Discussion

Motion: To approve general line of the report for circulation to the National Committee before the plenum.

Carried.

2. PARTY SUIT

(Dawson invited for this point.)

Barnes reported on recent developments in party suit against government harassment. Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee has just announced endorsement of PRDF. This should facilitate a new drive for trade union and Black endorsers. Series of depositions scheduled for FBI officers, known informers, and New York City cops.

Discussion

3. PARTY SUIT AND FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Barnes reported Hedda Garza opened April 6 news conference by stating to the press "I'm representing today the Fourth International supporters."

Discussion

Motion: To issue the following joint statement of the SWP Political Committee, John Barzman, and Joseph Hansen:

"We recognize that the Revolutionary Marxist Organizing Committee and the former members of the Internationalist Tendency who organized the Hedda Garza news conference in

New York on April 6 have shown by this action that they are not seeking to collaborate with the Socialist Workers party; that in view of their action any statements some of them may have made expressing a desire to join the SWP can no longer be taken at face value; that thus they have not acted in accordance with the January 1975 IEC motions defining the status of persons who could be classified as members of the Fourth International were it not for reactionary legislation in the United States; and that these motions therefore no longer apply to them."

Carried.

Statement by John Barzman:

I support this joint statement because I consider it to be valid whether or not any of the comrades involved had followed the IEC resolution up to the April 6 news conference.

John Barzman

#### 4. NEW BRANCHES

D. Jenness reported on proposals of Los Angeles local to establish a San Fernando Valley branch; of New York local to establish a Bronx branch; of the San Francisco local to establish the Southern San Francisco and Northern San Francisco branches to replace the central branch; and of Chicago local to establish the Austin, South Chicago, South Side, North Side and Northwest Side branches. (See attached.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

#### 5. BOSTON

Miah reported on physical assaults by racists in Boston and building of the April 24 march (see attached).

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report and mobilize the East Coast and Midwest branches to participate in the April 24 march.

Carried.

#### 6. WORLD POLITICAL SITUATION

(J. Hansen, Novack, Roberts invited for this point.)

Barnes reported.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the general line of the report for presentation to the plenum.

Carried.

7. PLENUM AGENDA AND REPORTERS

Barnes proposed agenda and reporters for the plenum:

Convention Perspectives and Call - Miah  
World Political Situation - Barnes  
Chicano Resolution - Rodriguez  
Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Resolution - Garza  
Implementation of Party Turn - Jones  
Youth - YSA NEC representative  
National Finances - Sheppard  
World Movement - Sheppard and Horowitz  
Party Campaign Against Government Harassment - Stapleton

Discussion

Motion: To approve the proposal.

Carried.

8. CORRECTION TO MINUTES

D. Jenness reported that membership point had been omitted from minutes of Political Committee meeting, April 5, 1976. Minutes should show that Political Committee voted to accept T.O. as a provisional member-at-large in Phoenix, Arizona.

Meeting Adjourned.

## Progress Report on April 24 March

by Malik Miah, April 9, 1976

The attempted murder of a Black attorney at city hall plaza represents an escalation of racist violence in Boston. (See April 16 Militant for further details.) This lynch attack received national news coverage. The photo of a racist student stabbing the Black victim with the American flag was reprinted in newspapers coast-to-coast. Since that attack on Monday, April 5, there have been daily attacks on innocent Blacks by white hooligan gangs.

In response to this new racist violence, Boston Black leaders have called on the city and federal governments to protect the Black community from further attacks, including, if necessary, with troops. Black youth in retaliation to the racist assaults, for two days after the Black attorney was attacked, threw stones at whites coming into the Black community. A deep frustration exists in the Black community.

The leadership of the racist gangs have not only defended these unprovoked attacks but have even issued a call in South Boston for the white racists to arm themselves in order to protect whites from being assaulted by Black "criminals."

This is the picture of Boston just two weeks before the April 24 march takes place. April 24 has now become the focal point for all supporters of Black rights and those who are opposed to racist terror. The organizers of the march have made the focus of the march: "Stop the racist violence now!" Efforts are now being redoubled to get everyone -- Black and white -- to march through the Black community and rally at City Hall on April 24.

In a short period of time key community leaders have agreed to speak and several national Black leaders, who initially said they couldn't speak, have now agreed. This includes Rev. Ralph Abernathy of the SCLC; Tom Turner, president of the Detroit Metro Council AFL-CIO; and Joe Madison, executive secretary of the Detroit NAACP.

Nationally we should utilize the new objective situation in Boston to redouble our efforts to get people to march on Boston. In Boston we expect reaction to this racist offensive will mean more people will come out into the streets to oppose the new racist violence on April 24.

In line with the new developments and the efforts we have already undertaken to build the march, the party should mobilize all the branches on the East Coast and the Midwest to come to Boston on April 24.

Other notable developments in the last week concerns the Nation of Islam and the NAACP. The Nation of Islam has still not endorsed the April 24 march. After contacting the Nation about the error in the April 2 Militant, we have not heard from them. The April 24 Coalition has not heard from them either. All efforts to reach a person of authority have failed. With the new violence,

the Coalition hopes to convince the Nation to support April 24.

There have been two significant developments regarding the NAACP. First, over the weekend of April 10-12, Region II of the NAACP, which includes branches in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, held a conference. At this conference a vote was taken, at the initiative of two moderate leaders of the Boston NAACP, not to support April 24. The reason given by the Boston leaders was that the action was not "timely" and it would only aid the racists, who are divided into two major factions. Before any real discussion could take place, a vote was quickly taken, with many people not voting out of confusion. Jerry Guest, head of the Region II, who had agreed to speak at April 24 two days earlier, did not speak in support of the march. Tom Atkins, president of the Boston NAACP, was not present at the conference.

This vote marked a serious setback for the demonstration. The result of the vote means local branches in Region II are discouraged from participating in the march. Already NAACP branches in New York who were helping to build April 24 have begun to pull back on their support.

The two leaders of the Boston NAACP who intervened in the conference, however, were not expressing the total opinion of Tom Atkins. On April 14, the Boston NAACP Board of Directors met. At this meeting, which Maceo Dixon and I attended, Atkins indicated the Boston NAACP's position on April 24. He said that the Boston branch would not endorse the march because they would not be able to commit themselves to building it. This did not mean he opposed the march. He made it clear that he personally supported the demonstration and would speak at it if he is in town. But his name could not be included as an endorser. He said if he did so, the press and others would hold the NAACP responsible for anything that may happen at or after the march as the city did after the Carson Beach "picnic" last summer. Even though we answered his reasons for not endorsing the march, the Board still refused to endorse. Atkins, however, made it clear that he was not discouraging members of the NAACP from participating in the march which, he stated, he could have done. In fact, after the Board meeting several members of the Board bought April 24 buttons and took literature.

Although this decision not to endorse April 24 is a setback for the march, the Boston NAACP's conscious decision not to attack the march and to encourage members to march if they like is significant. We should point this fact out to NAACP branches we are trying to get involved in April 24.

These new factors all indicate both the potential of the march and also some of the objective problems to make the demonstration as large as possible. Whatever the size of the march, which will likely be quite modest, it will mark a step forward for the pro-busing movement. This is especially true since April 24 will be the only public and visible response to the recent escalation of racist violence.

Branches are encouraged to mobilize and bring as many unionists, community leaders, and activists, and students to the march as possible. The emergency situation requires a redoubling of our efforts.

One final point. The National Student Coalition Against Racism will be holding a national steering committee in Boston in the evening of April 24 from 6-8 p.m. Student and community leaders should be encouraged to stay for this meeting that will discuss future perspectives for pro-busing supporters.

March 31, 1976

National Office

Dear Comrades,

On March 28, a city membership meeting of the Chicago Local voted to redivide our forces here into five branches.

1) The Austin branch will begin to deepen our work in Chicago's far west side Black community. Some of our most successful Militant sales have been in Austin, a mostly Black but partially integrated community with a history of desegregation and housing struggles. The branch is made up of comrades living in nearby (and some not so nearby suburbs), comrades who work out west and some who will be commuting for now.

2) The South Chicago branch will have a special focus on steel and will have opportunities for work in the large Chicano and Black communities in the area.

3) The South Side branch will remain based in Hyde Park with the perspective of moving further west into the more heavily Black part of that community. This branch will probably be stuck for a few months with its current headquarters, which would be too expensive for a smaller number of comrades to sustain. Much of this branch's activity will revolve around Andrew Pulley's Congressional campaign, laying the basis, we hope, to set up a branch in Englewood/West Englewood, the scene of racist attacks in recent years over the right of Black families to move into previously all-white neighborhoods. Such a branch would have to be mostly Black, one of the reasons we've concentrated seven of our nine Black comrades in the South Side branch. Randi, the new organizer, reports that the branch has about twenty-five "key" contacts, most of them Black.

4 & 5) We felt the North and Northwest sides of Chicago, where many of our comrades live, could sustain two branches, one of which will orient heavily to a large Puerto Rican community. As can be gleaned from the temporary designations of these branches their exact "turf" -- geographically and politically -- is less clear than the others. The idea is to take a few weeks to experiment around and have further discussions in these branches and in the Local Exec. Committee.

A strong LEC was elected consisting of Andrew Pulley, Barbara Mutnick, Bruce Scheff, George Basley, Howard Packer, Linda Thompson, Pat Grogan, Steve Chase, Suzanne Hait, Joel Britton, and a youth representative to be selected by the YSA.

For now, the city office will remain at 428 S. Wabash.

Comradely,

Joel Britton