

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 50, October 14, 1976

Present: Blackstock, Berman, D. Jenness, Lovell, Lund, Lyons, Miah, Seigle, Stapleton

Guests: Jaquith, Morell, Rodríguez, Wohlforth

Chair: Miah

AGENDA: 1. NOW National Bylaws Conference  
2. Critical Support to Raza Unida Party Candidates  
3. South Africa Protests  
4. NAACP  
5. Miami Organizing Committee  
6. Membership  
7. National Education Department

1. NOW NATIONAL BYLAWS CONFERENCE

Jaquith reported. (See letter from Jaquith attached.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

2. CRITICAL SUPPORT TO RAZA UNIDA PARTY CANDIDATES

Rodríguez reported on Raza Unida Party campaigns in Texas; New Mexico; Los Angeles; and Pueblo, Colorado. We have consulted with the Denver and Texas branches on the recommendations on the RUP campaigns in Pueblo, Colorado; Texas; and New Mexico. The Los Angeles Local has recommended that we extend critical support to the two RUP candidates in the Los Angeles area.

Discussion

Motion: To extend critical support to the Raza Unida candidates running in the 1976 Texas elections for offices for which the SWP is not fielding candidates.

Carried.

Motion: To extend critical support to the candidates of the New Mexico Raza Unida Party in the 1976 elections.

Carried.

Motion: To extend critical support to the two RUP candidates in Pueblo, Colorado: Fred Archer, for Congress in the 3rd C.D.; and Joseph Eddie Montour for County Commissioner, District 1.

Carried.

Motion: To concur with the Los Angeles Local recommendation to extend critical support to Raza Unida Party candidates José Gonzales, in the 63rd State Assembly District, and Andrés Torres in the 39th State Assembly District.

Carried.

### 3. SOUTH AFRICA PROTESTS

Miah reported on NSCAR plans to initiate a call for a national day of protest actions in January or February focusing on the U.S. role in southern Africa.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

### 4. NAACP

Miah reported. (See attached.)

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

### 5. MIAMI ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

D. Jenness reported.

Motion: That M.G., G.L., B.E., A.B., J.S., C.J., and B.S. be admitted as provisional members at-large in Miami, Florida, and that a branch organizing committee be constituted in Miami, Florida.

Carried.

### 6. MEMBERSHIP

Seigle reported Central San Jose branch proposes readmitting S.C. to party membership.

Motion: To concur with proposal.

Carried.

Seigle reported Boston branch proposes readmitting K.B. to party membership.

Motion: To concur with proposal.

Carried.

Seigle reported Crenshaw branch proposes readmitting A.M. to party membership.

Motion: To concur with proposal.

Carried.

7. NATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Seigle reported on the expansion of education committee with addition of Tim Wohlforth to the staff.

Motion: To establish National Education Department and that Fred Feldman be assigned national education director.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.

14 Charles Lane  
New York, N.Y. 10014  
October 18, 1976

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

At an October 12 national board meeting, the National Organization for Women (NOW) called for January 13 "women's state of the union" protests in cities across the country. The protests, scheduled for one week before the inauguration of the new president, are intended to focus national attention on the unmet needs of women, including abortion rights, the Equal Rights Amendment, child care, jobs, and other issues.

NOW plans to hold a major news conference in Washington, D.C., on January 13, where NOW President Karen DeCrow will deliver a "women's state of the union" address. Simultaneous news conferences are encouraged in other cities, tying in national issues as well as local struggles for women's rights.

The January 13 activities offer a focus for the continuing campaign to ratify the ERA and defend abortion rights. We want to help build these protests and urge NOW chapters to involve other organizations that support women's rights, such as campus feminist groups, trade unions, and the many organizations supporting the ERA and legal abortion. Because of the blatantly racist nature of the recent cutbacks of Medicaid funds for abortion, a special effort should be made to involve Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican groups in the news conferences and other activities.

Since January 13 is a Thursday, making it difficult to involve large numbers of working women, NOW chapters may also want to organize support events--such as rallies or picket lines--in the evening or on the following Saturday, January 15. NOW chapters in Indiana, an unratified state, are already planning a January 15 ERA rally in Indianapolis, for example.

The January 13 activities are being coordinated out of the NOW National Action Center, 425 13th St. N.W., Washington, D.C., telephone (202) 347-2279.

The NOW board also heard a proposal from the Seattle NOW chapter for March 5 East and West Coast demonstrations for the ERA. This proposal was ruled out of order, however.

The NOW board meeting took place at the end of a three-day bylaws conference in Kansas City, Kansas. Three hundred NOW members attended the conference, which approved a new structure for NOW. Twenty-eight Militant subscriptions were sold to participants.

The next national conference of NOW is scheduled for April 22-24 in Detroit. Unlike the bylaws conference, the purpose of the Detroit gathering is to discuss NOW's political perspectives and map strategy in fights like the campaign to ratify the ERA and to defend abortion rights. The last national NOW conference of this type attracted 3,000 women. This year's conference will be delegated. Delegates from local NOW chapters will have voice and vote, but the conference will be open to all members of NOW.

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The National Executive Board of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) met in Memphis October 9 and 10. The board passed a number of resolutions, including resolutions reaffirming CLUW's support for the ERA campaign and for busing, but tabled a resolution on abortion. The abortion resolution, submitted by Sarah Lovell of the International Typographical Union, called for CLUW to mobilize labor in opposition to a constitutional amendment banning abortions and to the cuts in Medicaid.

The next national convention of CLUW is planned for April 1977 in Washington, D.C.

Comradely,

*Cindy Jaquith*

Cindy Jaquith (32)  
SWP Women's Liberation  
Work Director

Report on the NAACP  
by Malik Miah, October 14, 1976

As reported in recent issues of the Militant, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) may be forced out of existence if it is required to pay a \$1.6 million bond to the state of Mississippi. The NAACP has until October 21 to pay the bond. They have launched a national fund-raising campaign with newspaper ads and radio announcements across the country to raise the money.

This racist attack against the NAACP, the largest and oldest civil rights organization in the country, is the result of a suit filed by twelve white merchants from Port Gibson, Mississippi. The suit was filed after Port Gibson Blacks organized a boycott of white businesses from April 1966 to February 1967. The purpose of the boycott was to demand more jobs for Blacks. At the time, the boycott was legal. But in 1968, Mississippi passed a retroactive law prohibiting "conspiracies" by two or more persons to injure a business. After several years of litigation, last August the Hinds County Chancery Court awarded the racist merchants \$1.2 million in damage claims.

The NAACP has appealed the case. However, a Mississippi law requires that a bond equivalent to 125 percent of the awarded damage claim be paid to the state. The NAACP is seeking to revoke the bond, since it would tie up all of its resources--in fact, render it bankrupt--until a higher court rules in its favor. NAACP lawyers expect the appeals process to take at least three to five years to complete.

Since the adverse ruling against the NAACP, Blacks in Port Gibson have organized picket lines at stores owned by merchants who filed the suit against the NAACP and other community organizations. (Although the racist suit is mainly directed at the NAACP, a total of 133 individuals and community agencies, including one funded by the federal government, are liable for the \$1.2 million.) Support for the NAACP has also been growing around the country. Numerous organizations, groups, churches, unions, and prominent people have come to the NAACP's defense. However, this broad support to date hasn't generated the needed funds to pay the bond. Only \$900,000 has been pledged to the NAACP. Recently the AFL-CIO said it would back all loans given to the NAACP by others up to \$800,000. As a result of this dire financial situation, the NAACP is now urging everyone, Blacks in particular, to give whatever they can.

It is clear that this racist attack on the NAACP must be answered. More is involved than a crude attempt to destroy the strongest Black organization in the country. It is a warning to all Blacks that past victories can be taken away unless Blacks are organized to defend them. The racists feel if they can force the NAACP to its knees in Mississippi, it will encourage reactionary forces from Boston to Los Angeles to step up assaults on Black people. This is the deeper meaning of the Mississippi attack.

It is therefore important that we try to work with NAACP branches where we can in their defense. SWP candidates who haven't

yet expressed their support to the NAACP in this fight should do so. Branches can schedule forums and invite NAACP leaders to come and speak on the case. It would be appropriate at such forums for a collection to be taken up for the NAACP.

Comrades who are members of the NAACP should also try to meet with local NAACP leaders to discuss what can be done to help in this defense effort. These comrades should consider joining the publicity or fund-raising committees of their chapters. SCAR and YSA chapters should also try to arrange campus forums with the NAACP, where collections can be taken.

By taking these steps, where possible, we can further our collaboration with the NAACP. We will be seen by NAACP leaders as serious people and thus our collaboration with them on other issues--such as school desegregation, the death penalty, and affirmative action--will become more possible.

Reports on our work with the NAACP should be sent to the National Office.