

1. Marroquin

Larry reported on latest developments and openings in our Marroquin defense work. Agreed that in view of fact that deportation hearing date has been set, to go on seven-week drive between now and April 3 to step up defense campaign in a major way, adding personnel where necessary to help defense committee and raise funds.

2. Proposal for Suit in Louisville

Larry reported on possibility of comrades in Louisville launching suit against harassment of Burfeind. Agreed to hold off on decision until report is received from branch, which is checking with lawyer about feasibility of such a suit.

3. Draft of "Policy on 'Active Sympathizers'"

Decision to distribute draft to PC for suggestions and comments (see attached) and then send out to branches with edited version of memo from Sally R. Comrades on PC with suggestions should give them to Larry before Feb. 16. No proposal for PC discussion unless someone on PC feels strongly about it.

Agreed that Jenness would draft letter to branches on procedures for readmitting former members and at-large members.

4. Portland and Sales Campaign

Agreed to send attached letter from Seidman.

5. Personnel

- a. Progress report on personnel decisions from previous meeting.
- b. Seigle reported on situation in Cleveland branch.
- c. Jenness reported discussions with Peggy about personnel situation in Cincinnati.

6. Correction to OC Minutes of February 5

On point regarding Northeast Field Organizer, that Dave P. be responsible for keeping on top of correspondence, phone calls, minutes, etc., for Boston branch, as well as Capital District and Philadelphia branches.

1/

Policy on "Active Sympathizers" by Larry Seigle, February 7, 1979.

Sally's memo poses some good questions, ones that come up time after time. Comrades in the field often seek advice on how to handle this or that situation involving someone who is not a citizen. Naturally, there is no way to provide ^a general formulae to cover what are really a series of individual situations, with many different factors to be taken into account in each case. Nevertheless, it might be helpful to clarify some general norms, and to clear up some confusion that has arisen on how to approach this problem.

1) The ~~category~~ ^{category} of "active sympathizer" is designed to protect the individual involved from possible legal victimization they might be vulnerable to if they join the party ^(or the YSA) because of their status in this country.

This could include deportation, denial of citizenship, suspension of student visas, and so on.

The category of "active sympathizer" is not primarily

for the purpose of protecting the party as such, or the
USA. No laws exist that could victimize the party for
having non-citizens (green carders, people on student
visas, etc.) as members. In fact we do have and always
have had such members.

The problem comes in where individuals may be
victimized on the grounds of their membership in the
party. In the case of people living here whose country
is in the grip of a brutally repressive regime, deportation
can be a very serious problem. That is why ¹⁷ some of these
revolutionists make the decision, in collaboration with
the party, not to become members, but to function as
"active sympathizers."

By the term "active sympathizers" we mean not just
sympathizers who are active, but people who would, by all
criteria, be members of the party except for the legal
question. This is the way the term is usually used in
the party.

2) There is no automatic, universal rule that people from other countries living here should be "active sympathizers" instead of members. There is no reason why under normal circumstances someone from, say, Australia, or ~~not~~ France, or Germany should not be a member of the party rather than an "active sympathizer."

Naturally, this has to be their choice. For example, someone who holds a green card and is applying for citizenship may run the risk of having citizenship status denied on the grounds of party membership. This would be unconstitutional, of course. But there is no guarantee that it could be successfully fought. We have no reliable experience to be able to judge if ~~this would~~ ~~the~~ the government would make such a move. In any case, times change, so what they might not do today, they might do tomorrow.

If becoming a citizen is a big thing for them, they might ~~not~~ decide not to apply for membership, but instead

to function as an "active sympathizer." This would give them greater legal protection -- though, of course, still no guarantee that political activity won't be used against them in deciding on their citizenship application.

Someone who is here on a student visa from a country where there is not a repressive regime might well decide to apply for membership. The risk they face is that their student visa might be lifted on some pretext or other. For many of them, the benefits of membership in the party or the ICA far outweigh the risk, which today seems rather slight anyway.

3) Being an "active sympathizer" is not being a member-with-a-wink. "Active sympathizers" are not members. They do not pay dues, participate in the election of delegates to conventions, or have a decisive vote in the branches to which they belong. Only members are members, and the constitution defines membership quite clearly. There is no secret or off-the-

The worst position in the world for us to get into would be to delude ourselves into thinking that we could hide members from the government by keeping their names off the books and referring to them as "active sympathizers" (wink). That is a naive and self-defeating concept of security. People whose residency in this country might be jeopardized choose not to be members, but to be "active sympathizers" instead.

4) "Active sympathizers" may be invited, ~~z~~ on a regular basis, to attend branch meetings, or executive committee meetings. That would be a decision of the branch. They may be urged to make a regular, weekly, financial contribution. They may be invited to participate in fractions and committees, again by membership decision. That doesn't make them members. They may have voice, but not decisive vote. The branch, by simple majority vote, can decide ^{to} / stop inviting any "active sympathizer" if it sees no reason to continue doing so.

January 31, 1979

~~MEMO TO: BETSEY STONE~~

FEB 5 1979

FROM: SALLY REES

During an organizational tour to ^a ~~the Washington DC~~ chapter of the YSA I came across a situation I would like your advice on, ~~Washington DC has one of the highest concentrations of foreign students in the country.~~ The YSA there has been able to convince many of the students that they came into contact with to work with the YSA. Almost one-third of ^{This Chapter} ~~the YSA in DC~~ is composed of foreign students from the Bahama's, Iran, Palestine, Greece, and South Africa. Most of these students are not presently members of the YSA, due to various reasons ranging from visa status to personal reasons. In discussions with these comrades and with the organizer it became clear that there were several questions on the role and rights of active sympathizers that needed to be answered.

While questions involving security and the extent of participation in activities needs to be decided on an individual basis certain general criteria regarding visa's, laws in this country, and what considerations should be made when people are planning on returning to their respective countries were felt to be needed.

Some of these people are leading activists in the chapter. Because they are not officially members however they could not be elected to EC's or become delegates to the convention, or take on positions such as organizer. The chapter has been trying to work out how to incorporate actual day to day leaders and their elected bodies. To this end they at one point had sympathizers volunteer to collaborate with the EC. They have also tried electing people to collaborate and taking them into consideration on the overall size of the EC. There needs to be a general explanation of what rights in terms of elections and in preconvention discussion, etc. active sympathizers have and what roles they can play in the chapter.

A related situation to the role of active sympathizers in the chapter is the organization of several sympathizers from a single country who intend on going back to their country to form a section in their country. (There is presently no known Trotskyist in Bahama's) These comrades would like to know what is the best way to go about preparing themselves for their eventual return. Should they work together as a fraction, studying the specific situation in their country, getting used to working together as a group. How can they "speed up" their political development. These comrades have looked at both the Iranian comrades and others work . They want to be totally integrated into the YSA's work and expressed concern that they did not want to become a party within a party.

This situation I am sure is and will be repeated in several areas of the country, especially where there are large concentrations of foreign students and due to upsurges around the world bringing us into contact with many more of these potential YSA'ers. As well as some specific advice perhaps a more general discussion on active sympathizers that could be sent out to chapters would be helpful.

~~SECRET~~

THE MILITANT

THE SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

February 10, 1979

Curt Johnson
Portland SWP

Dear Curt,

We talked over the things you told me on the phone February 7 about your branch executive committee's proposals for implementing the national circulation drive in Portland. In this letter I want to share our thinking with you.

As I understood what you said, the executive committee was asking the national circulation office to approve your launching--and ending--the drive three weeks earlier than the national dates.

Your thinking was that the branch wanted to begin campaigning now to sell subscriptions to striking members of the Association of Western Pulp and Paperworkers. You felt that it was only logical to launch the sales drive on the heels of this big local push to get subs--even though the national drive wouldn't open for three weeks. You also felt that since you would start the drive three weeks early, you would also finish it while the rest of the party was still on its circulation campaign.

You said that if the circulation office wouldn't agree to this plan--which the executive committee expected we would not--then the branch would go ahead anyway, ending its drive before the party's national campaign was completed and keeping its own records of the drive regardless of what was shown on the national scoreboard.

Of course, we haven't yet received your proposals in written form--so perhaps I misunderstood some of them.

But if my understanding of your proposals was largely correct, I'd like to urge the Portland executive committee to reconsider them.

The first point is that I think it's excellent that Portland is making a big orientation to get our paper into the hands of striking paper workers. From the start of the recent series of articles in the Militant on the strike, the branch has taken extra papers to sell and made a big effort to get subscriptions as well.

We are planning to include your efforts in our coverage aimed at explaining what branches should do to get ready for the big national subscription blitz week that begins February 23. It's a good example.

That's just the spirit we want to have with the circulation

of our press. There's no reason in the world why we should wait for "official" national sales drives before jumping into local sales opportunities. It should become more and more the norm that branches respond quickly and vigorously to such openings. It's one of the goals we've been trying to achieve this past year.

But it would be just as wrong to turn these local initiatives into a reason for not actively participating in the national drives the party organizes in the fall and spring.

Properly thought of, these national drives are also big opportunities to boost the party's press. This is not because it is assumed that the national drives will automatically correspond to every local opening. Far from it. But because these drives provide an opportunity on a nationally-coordinated basis to increase the attention we pay to sales in every city. They help us to strengthen a basic institution of the party. The party nationally can take big steps forward in its sales in every local area through these drives.

For example, during the last two drives, we've made significant progress with our plant-gate and on-the-job sales-- a high priority for our orientation towards industrial workers.

In the process of organizing these particularly intensive sales drives, each branch can benefit from our national experience and learn the techniques which hopefully will allow it to sustain a higher level of sales all year round.

These drives also help us close the gap between those branches with the strongest sales and those that are weaker.

And in the process, the party as a whole maintains the overall quantity of single-copy and subscription sales that are vital to the financial and organizational maintenance of our press.

Obviously, none of these considerations weigh against the party nationally seizing on particular sales opportunities whether we're on a sales drive or not.

One example of this was during last winter's coal miners strike. The party launched a special sales effort one month before the official drive was to begin. This helped us get out the truth about the miners' strike and make new friends in the coal fields. But we didn't shorten the official drive as a result of the gains we made in the extra month of stepped-up sales before it.

Another example. The Baltimore, Raleigh, Morgantown, and D.C. branches are now sending comrades into Newport News, Virginia, to make sure that the Militant's coverage of the steelworkers strike there is as widely-read as possible. We even put together some special national teams to go there. But none of the branches involved in this effort felt this meant they should "start"

their part of the spring national circulation campaign earlier--or end it earlier--in order to take advantage of the enthusiasm for sales that comrades brought back with them after going to Newport News.

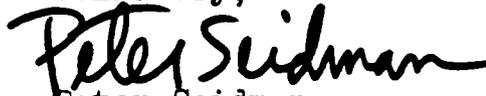
Another example of this spirit has been Cleveland. There comrades ordered and sold hundreds of extra papers to get out their candidate's answer to the city "crisis" cutbacks that were being jammed down the workers' throats.

As all these cases show, we recognize that no matter what dates are set for our national circulation drives--and no matter how carefully--these won't always coincide with particular local openings. All we can do is work out these national drives as best we can, recognizing this fact.

We're confident that our party will both carry out these campaigns and be ready to jump into local opportunities--without seeing one as being counterposed to the other.

For all these reasons, I hope the executive committee will reconsider its proposals.

Comradely,



Peter Seidman
National Circulation Director

cc: Catarino Garza

Comrades, 4 included 1/22/79

Is it possible for us to start counting these subs towards the sales drive? 4 of them are from the paperworkers strikers, where we have been focusing our work. We want to get subs from them now -

While morale is still high - before they're forced back to work. Please let us know if we can begin counting them. Thanks.

Comradely,
Bew

January 26, 1979

Dear Bev,

Glad to see the branch is selling subs to striking paper workers.

We can't start counting these subs towards your spring cumulative goal, however. Such subs are coming in from every branch during non-drive periods like this one. If we counted all of them towards the drives, we'd in effect be starting them before they actually began. It would also mean we'd have to propose higher goals for the branches so that these would be challenging ones--and also so that our yearly national subscription totals (which are made up both from subs secured ~~XXX~~ during drives as well as during no -drive periods) would be maintained.

Obviously, we are glad when branches go all out to meet political opportunities whether there's a subscription or sales drive on or not. Hopefully you'll agree these new readers of the Militant should be their own reward.

Comradely,

Circulation Director

2-8-79
5:40

Doug:

I just had a stragge discussion with Curt Johnson, the Portland organizer.

He told me their EC had discussed the sales drive and had decided to launch it three or four weeks earlier than the national drive--and end it similarly earlier in the spring.

The reason: to latch on to the enthusiasm around sales of subscriptions to the paper workers on strike. The branch has done pretty well at this, selling, he says, about 7.

They also distribute free about 30 papers a week to strikers and at union shacks and campers near picket lines.

Bev had written us earlier to request that we begin counting these subs towards their goal. I'd written back to explain that we couldn't do this. Otherwise, we'd never really be on a sub campaign. Selling subs during non-campaign periods should be reward enough--especially as part of our orientation to the paperworkers strike.

I guess the EC didn't like my answer. So they've unilaterally launched the sales drive in response.

Curt says they'd give themselves credit for those subs no matter what we did.

Anyway, he says he's going to call the N.O. to seek relief. I encouraged him to do so and told him we'd talk it over here and get back to them. But, I said, I really didn't understand why they were doing this. He said he didn't understand either, but that this is what his EC had decided so this is what he was going to do. FORWARDED IS FORARMED PS