

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

November 1, 1979

TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

Since the party convention in August, the branches have reported to the national office a number of resignations from the party. Some of these include individuals who expressed differences in the preconvention discussion with the general line and policies of the party.

Attached is a selection of letters from comrades who resigned or reports from branch organizers of resignations.

This material is for your information and should not be left around the headquarters or distributed.

Comradely,

Doug Jenness
Doug Jenness
National Office

San Francisco Membership Report
September 1979

On September 29, 1979, the San Francisco branch voted to accept the resignation of Nancy Fields. Although Nancy has declared political differences on a number of questions, including the character of the Cuban workers state, she explained that she is not resigning because of her differences. She is resigning because at this time she does not choose to actively participate in the revolutionary party. She intends to be an active sympathizer of the SWP, campaigning for our candidates in the 1979 and 1980 elections. Nancy has said that she has the perspective of rejoining the party at some time in the future.


Louise Armstrong
San Francisco branch organizer

Gary - August Membership Report

Dropped

Robb Wright - resigned, left Gary for Connecticut
was having personal difficulties

Dave Canwright - resigned, basic conflict between personal
job situation (family business) and time
to devote to party. Also, confusion over
party view on anti-nuke work. He is
activist in anti-nuke movement here and
works with us on friendly basis.

4868 Rainier Avenue S.
Seattle, WA 98118

OCT 9 1979
Oct. 5, 1979

SWP National Office

Comrades:

Diane Chaddock asked to resign from the party last week. The branch voted to accept her resignation at the September 30 meeting.

Diane had been in and out of the YSA and the party for 12 years. During the last several years she had been inactive, missing a large number of meetings, never carrying out a major assignment, rarely doing much of an assignment at all. On several occasions it came to our attention that she had carried internal discussions outside the party, including to opponents of the party. On these occasions we warned her to stop such activity.

Diane views herself as a sympathizer of the party with no political differences and expressed her intention to make regular financial contributions to the party.

Comradely,

Margaret Trowe

Margaret Trowe
Seattle SWP organizer

retyped from Salt Lake City September Membership Form

Sterne McMullen decided to drop out of the party this month. We have been speaking with him about his relationship to the branch for the last three weeks.

Basically Sterne decided that the number of tactical differences that he had with the leadership of the branch were too numerous to allow him to participate in the branch's activities. These differences were related to the way our branch handled the Tony Adams Defense work to the party defense that we carried out over the recent threat to our members. Sterne had also given a counter-report on Indochina.

Sterne had been in an isolated industrial situation and we were attempting to have him in a fraction (Mining Machinery Fraction) while waiting to get into our target industry. It was clear that Sterne didn't really understand the turn when he decided that he should stay in his workplace (nonunion) and learn a journeylevel skill so that he would be more sellable in the job market.

This is the second time that Sterne has left the party.

12. Members dropped:

Sarah Wright: for personal reasons. Indicates political support for the turn however is unwilling to change jobs, and wants to pursue personal goals right now. Wants to be considered a sympathizer and has continued to do some work for the party. She plans to make a weekly donation and will pay outstanding \$30 owed.

Cedric Burns: for personal reasons. However had some questions around our position on the gay struggle. Had been on LOA for several months before resigning. Owed \$33 when he resigned; had no sustainer for several months.

Victoria Grimes: for personal reasons. Indicated no political differences. But personal situation with new child and work situation doesn't allow participation. Owes \$38.

Nanette Carter: for personal reasons. Had been on LOA for several months with frozen sustainer. Owes \$50.

6. Ted McCabe, provisional member, decided not to apply for full membership. He planned to accept a full time position for the Alliance for Survival and indicated no desire or willingness to join our industrial fractions at this time. Wants to be considered a sympathizer of the movement.

retyped from Dallas September Membership Report

Luz Germain, 28 year old Chilean-American, became a provisional member May 13, 1979, and was brought into full membership July 29. The branch voted to accept her resignation on September 30, two months later. Luz was recruited as a result of our work in NOW. She resigned citing "personal reasons" and reasons of time, explaining she wanted to devote full time to feminist issues. She said she remains a Marxist and considers her experience in the party to have been very productive and valuable. In the course of discussing this with her, however, she began to raise several serious political differences -- differences she had begun to raise two weeks earlier with members of the IUE fraction, which she was a part of. These were: 1) uncertainty about the turn-- was it "narrowing" the party's outlook? 2) doubts about the need for a cadre-type party 3) disagreements over how to carry out work in the unions -- we should raise feminist and trade-union issues, but not be open socialists. These all represent a political retreat from positions she held a short while ago--she went through PCD, the convention, etc. without raising any of them, and even said, when another comrade we recruited through NOW work resigned from the SWP: "I think the most consistently feminist thing I can do is to be in the party." She wants to continue working with us in NOW and on the job, is open to contributing to our campaigns, etc.

from Capital District September Membership Report

Andy Jewitt and Liz Mearthen dropped out after being in the party about 9 months. They lived in Saratoga about 45 minutes from Albany. They came to 2 branch meetings all summer. They did not feel they could get anything out of branch meetings or the preconvention discussion. Generally pessimistic about the working class. Viewed socialism more as moral thing. Still consider themselves supporters of the party.

MIAMI SWP
8171 NE 2 Ave

OCT 10 1979

Oct. 1, 1979

Stuart Rogers was dropped from membership in the party at the Sept. 19 meeting of the Miami SWP.

Stuart resigned from the party because of deep-going political differences. He stated that he would submit a statement explaining why he resigned, but as of Oct. 1 nothing has been received.

When he first told the organizer he was resigning, Stuart stated he intended to join the Socialist League. Three days later he said he would not join that group. However, he does believe that the SWP has adapted to "Pabloism" and "Castroism" since the 1963 reunification congress of the Fourth International. Stuart also expressed fundamental disagreement with the Fourth International's support to the FSLN in Nicaragua. Stuart believes the Fourth International should call for the overthrow of the Sandinista leadership.

Stuart owes \$83 in back dues and sustainer to the party. He said he would pay this off in weekly installments, but as of Oct. 1 nothing has been received.

Submitted by Sharon Cabaniss, Organizer

Twin Cities September Membership Report

Dan Kuschke had been in the party for six or seven years. For the past two or three years, he has been involved in the Hotel and Restaurant Workers. Against the decision of the branch, he ran for office in the local as part of a radical slate. He is now Secretary-Treasurer of the local. He has had quite severe health problems for the last year and a half, was in the hospital for quite a long time.

Both his health and his involvement in his local union made him virtually inactive in the branch for the past two years or so. (I only met him a couple of times.)

When he asked to resign, his two main reasons were inactivity in the branch and unwillingness to put his union activity under the direction of the exec and branch, two problems which I had discussed with him.

The exec and branch voted unanimously to accept his recognition. We hope he will remain sympathetic to the party. However, he recently signed a letter urging support for Don Fraser, the Democratic Party candidate for Mayor of Minneapolis.

MIAMI SWP
8171 NE 2 Ave
Miami FL 33138

Sept. 17, 1979

Lin Davis was dropped from membership in the party at our branch meeting Aug. 29.

Lin requested to be dropped for "personal" reasons. Although she supported the Minority Draft Resolution, she stated she is not dropping for political reasons.

Lin's reasons for dropping include the fact that she has very little time because she works full time and has a young son whom she supports and cares for. She does not at this time want to devote what available time she has to political activity as a member of the SWP

Lin plans to be a sympathizer of the Miami branch and attend whatever public activities she can. She paid up her sustainer and dues and plans to pay her campaign pledge soon. She wants to make financial contributions when she can.

Lin stated that some time in the future she may be able to be more active and may then reapply to join the party.

Submitted by Sharon Cabaniss, SWP Organizer

MIAMI SWP
8171 NE 2 Ave
Miami FL 33138

Sept. 17, 1979

Marilyn Markus was dropped from membership in the party at our branch meeting Aug. 17, 1979.

Marilyn resigned from the party because she has political differences with the party's program and did not feel it was worth her time and effort to remain in the party to fight for her ideas.

She plans to be politically active in the Miami area around issues that interest her. She also plans to attend some party events, such as forums, when they interest her.

She said she will pay \$72.00 in back dues and sustainer over time, but has paid nothing in one month.

Submitted by Sharon Cabaniss, SWP Organizer

During September 1979, the St. Paul branch dropped four comrades from membership: Rob DeRubis, Marc Shaver, Dennis Rudquist, and Barbara Rudquist.

Dennis and Barb became full members of the party in St. Paul in March 1979. At that time they raised doubts about whether they could be active enough to be members, because of family obligations. Early this month Dennis called me and said that they had been thinking about their membership for several months, and had decided to drop from membership. They still want to come to forums and classes. Both Dennis and Barb had been somewhat active in the spring, and both came to meetings sporadically. I and another comrade from the exec tried to convince them not to drop out, but to no avail. They say they want to rejoin the party when they get their lives straightened out.

Rob DeRubis joined the branch about 18 months ago. He is currently administrating a health research project and trying to finish off his PhD. Over the winter he was branch secretary; since then he has had no assignment, has not sold, and does not come to meetings. I raised the question of his membership with him and he agreed that he should rop his membership from the party for reasons of inactivity.

Marc Shaver has been a comrade for a number of years. Over the last year he has been inactive - for the first 9 months, he mopped the floor occasionally. Since then he has done nothing except attend a few branch meetings. He has had a sustainer of \$31 a month, which he has paid regularly. Marc approached me about dropping his membership after our discussion on the political resolution, and has approached me since. His reasons for dropping membership are because of long inactivity. He has been attempting to write fiction, and for a long time has been considering moving. He just moved to Indianapolis. If he reapplies for membership, I think his request should be carefully thought out. He has refused to take an assignment or to sell. He has expressed antileadership sentiments to me and other comrades.

UCT 17 1979

Philadelphia Socialist Workers Party

October 12, 1979

SWP NO

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are membership reports for the months of August and September for the Phila. branch.

Note to the August report: Richard Rogers decided not to join the party as a full member, although we had encouraged him to, or at least extend his provisional membership.

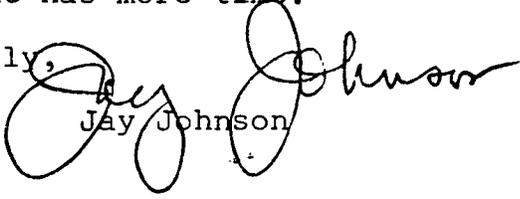
Richard, who had been active in the civil rights and gay movements in the past, had been playing an active role in all aspects of party work, from sales, to the campaign committee, to preconvention discussion. Unfortunately, a combination of personal problems and political and political disagreements led him to leave, although he has remained active in the campaign committee.

Richard's central disagreement was on the character of the party. He tends to view the party as a meeting ground for activists in progressive causes. He takes a moral approach rather than a political one. This became clear, particularly in the discussion around gay rights. He agreed with the position that the gay struggle is more than a civil rights struggle, and that the party should give it more weight, although he missed the branch discussion of it, and didn't come to Oberlin. He also said the party was bending to prejudices of backward workers because of the turn.

We hope that further common work and discussions will win him to our political positions, and to a more confident view of the party.

Note to September report: Marta Reinhart resigned from the party for personal reasons after a prolonged period of activity. Marta has two small children, and has to work as well. Though she remains sympathetic to the party, and plans to rejoin when she has more time.

Comradely,


Jay Johnson

5811 N. Broad St., 19141

Tel. 927-4747

August 17, 1979

Lower Manhattan SWP
108 East 16th Street
2nd Floor
New York, New York

Dear Hal,

I am writing you this letter to let you know that I wish to resign from the SWP. While there are personal factors involved, such as the need to slow down a little bit from so much activity and the desire to spend more time reading and writing, my reasons for doing so are largely political.

Essentially, I have serious questions about both the implementation of the turn and the democratic functioning of the organization.

While I agree that it is critical to get more comrades into basic industry, I feel that we have not really studied the direction in which U.S. industry is going, the changing composition of jobs or the growing importance of certain non-manufacturing sectors of the economy and that we have not developed our orientation within basic industry. As a result, we are placing some people in jobs or industries that hold limited possibilities for political gains and we have not clarified what our comrades are to do in situations where there are opportunities for intervention. Also, I think we are making a mistake in taking people out of certain leading-edge public sector jobs, such as the hospitals, where the composition and militancy of the rank and file present many opportunities for recruitment and for forcing the union to play an exemplary role which other unions can look to. Finally, I feel the analysis on which the turn rests looks for too quick an upsurge in the class struggle in this country and ignores a growing coalescence of the right. This is dangerous, for it leads our comrades to think that an upswing in class consciousness leading to battle will be coming any day now and discourages them from doing the slow, patient groundwork that is necessary to be prepared for that point. It also leaves us politically unarmed to combat the attacks of a consolidated right wing, just as our pulling back from the independent mass movements deprives us of many of our organizational weapons of defense.

As for democracy, I feel deeply discouraged by the former IT comrades who were kept or driven out of the Party or isolated within it. And I have noticed that this has tended to happen to a number of other comrades who have had political disagreements. Therefore, I really wonder if one who has once been labeled a dissident can ever get a hearing for his or her political ideas, can ever play a leading role in the organization, can ever regain credibility. Perhaps I'm wrong, but I've never felt that what I personally had to say was taken seriously, and this limits my ability to put forth my ideas and analyses.

For these reasons, I feel that I can no longer function in the organization without becoming tremendously demoralized, and that would be helpful to neither the Party nor myself. And so I would rather carry on my political activity outside the SWP, while remaining in close contact with the organization. I want to continue to come to forums and other public events, to support the SWP campaigns, to make financial contributions and to back up the antinuke fraction, for my questions about the way in which coal is being put forward as the immediate substitute for nuclear power do not swerve my conviction that the Party has the only correct strategy for the movement. I am also still considering trying to get a job in rail and would like to work with comrades there if I am successful.

(over)

I hope you will read this letter to the branch, so comrades will know why I am leaving the organization and be assured that I still view it in a friendly and supportive way.

Comradely,

M. G.

[Marthe Gotwals]

Sept. 4, 1979

SEP 6 1979

Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party
14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Comrades,

Please accept my resignation from the Socialist Workers Party, effective immediately.

The experiences of the last several months have unfortunately compelled me to make this decision. Should I reinstate much of what was said during the pre-convention discussion period and at Oberlin itself on the gay question? I frankly do not wish to do that. Let it be said, however, that the SWP leadership had made an initial error in 1973 (the Memorandum) and has only repeatedly attempted to justify it rather than change it to coincide with a real historical-materialist analysis of the relationship between the gay struggle and the overall needs/demands of a revolutionary socialist program for the working class. "The turn" and its theoretical needs have only exacerbated these errors and formulated new and more dangerous ones as well.

Already (as seen in the enclosures), history is proving you wrong again and leaving you on the sidelines as spectators of these developments. This also shows that in reality/practice the position held by the party is in direct conflict and opposition with the gay liberation movement and objectively puts you on the wrong side of the class-line.

This also brings up the question of internal democracy within the SWP. For too long I sat and incorrectly (naively) hoped that the aberrations of democratic centralism before me were "momentary". I can no longer participate as a member under discipline

to an organization that belittles any attempt by fellow comrades both inside and outside of the party as "opponents", etc. and this constant factional approach of the leadership. (I need not bring up the more "apolitical" characterizations which circulate in the hallways of West St. when referring to "opponents" et al.) This has always disturbed me greatly and I can now see the results of such an inward/internal sectarian approach to the real world and its struggles. (Again I need not mention the treatment of any opposition to the majority line of the party over the last six years as I have personally observed).

Perhaps the discussion around Cuba is the most convincing argument for resigning. Here you clearly say to lesbians and gay men that in the "interests" of "constructing socialism", living a 'closeted' and repressed existence is not too bad. Shame on you -- you'll pay the political price for this -- especially when the Cubans themselves will come forward with a self-criticism of their position current and you'll be remembered for your opportunism.

You force open lesbians and gay men to choose between fighting against their oppression and "building the revolutionary party and fight for socialism" -- you counterpose the two and this convention's resolutions, etc. only further confirm it.

I choose to be a "field gay" and will never be a "house faggot" for any organization -- especially for one that says it will liberate us all in the unforeseeable future, but today will not struggle to do so.

This backward and retreating position will have to be made known to other revolutionists (gay and straight) to aid in the discussions going on within the left in general on the gay question.

By using the SWP's errors as lessons to learn from, a correct and serious theoretical analysis and a fighting program will be pushed forward.

Since you have already started an international campaign to enshrine the Memorandum and its successors as the "Marxist" analysis of gay oppression and the program to fight it with (witness the Canadian developments, Philippe Andrea's article in Rouge, etc.), taking this struggle public is imperative. By doing so, a revolutionary position can be developed that links the struggles for gay liberation and socialism. This alone necessitates my resignation and allows me to participate in this process -- otherwise my mind and hands would be tied down under "internal discipline."

As harsh as I may sound, let it be clearly understood that I remain committed to the goals of revolutionary socialism and the program of the Fourth International. (Here too one can hear a snigger and smug chuckle of contempt from certain comrades as they read this). I find no contradiction between resigning from the SWP and this commitment. The revolutionary workers party still has to be built in the U.S. and it will involve the regroupment of many diverse forces as the class struggle broadens and deepens.

In struggle,

Steven R. Forgione

cc: Mike Lux, Lower Manhattan
Organizer

Denver, Colorado
October 13, 1979

To the members of the Denver Branch
Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades;

It is with sadness that I submit this letter of resignation from the Socialist Workers Party after ten years membership in the Trotskyist movement.

Two main factors have entered into my decision. Firstly, my practice of dentistry allows me precious little free time. When I came to Denver it was with the hope that I would be able to work a forty hour workweek for the first time in many years. After two years here, I find that while I am closer to my goal I still put in much more than that, and typically the hours are in the evening or on weekends sometimes arising unexpectedly.

Secondly, this period of my life is very much a result of processes that began some thirteen years ago. At that time the pressures of secondary study began, which lasted some eleven years and often averaged workweeks of eighty hours or more. Twelve years ago I began my involvement in the main cause for social justice of the day: the antiwar movement. Soon I was a central campus leader and about ten years ago joined the Y.S.A. because of agreement with their approach to the mass movement and my respect for their professionalism. I served as the first organizer for the Long Island, N.Y. local, and subsequently became involved and helped to lead struggles around the war, Latin American defense, election campaigns, a strike at University of Chicago, internal factional fights, and work against the death penalty amongst other campaigns which comrades are familiar with. The result of this process in part has been that I have postponed or neglected some areas of my personal life that should contribute to my own growth and development. Now I find that the value I place on relationships with friends and people in general has increased markedly. In general, I am more in contact with the things I have been neglecting that bring me joy in life. This includes going to the mountains, transforming the old house I've recently purchased, and just spending quiet time alone at home with my dog. The time to do these things must come from somewhere. While I do plan to continue cutting back my practice hours, that process will go only so far, as I truly do love my work and the

opportunity to be of service to people in a way that brings immediate results in their lives. Therefore I have begun to take that time and energy from that which previously went to the branch. Whereas the time I allot and the perspective I have Both fall out of the range of the norm for membership, I have reached my conclusion.

I would like very much for all comrades to be clear that I have not changed my opinions as to the need for socialism, the neccessity of a revolutionary party, nor the role of the S.W.P. as that party. Further, I feel that the turn towards the working class is the correct process for the party in this period and I have every confidence in the ability of comrades to carry it out. Comrades have my deep personal respect and admiration for their knowledge and ability to dedicate themselves. Certainly, I am not submitting that I have found a more correct path or one that I feel everyone should follow; understanding the worldwide class struggle, the role of the revolutionary movement and the individual within it is a process of import and one worthy of dedication and intensity. However, for me to continue this pursuit after a full decade would unbalance the process of me learning to be who I am.

On the other hand, I have been irreversible influenced by the movement and continue to see the context for my life as including involvement in the struggle for social change. I therefore offer my continued participation in the following areas:

1) participation in the party's campaigns, such as sales and Nicuragua defense, without neccessarily taking on key organizational responsibilities. As at lease some of the branch and national leadership are aware, I am currently trying to use my professional skills in Nicuragua to give concrete material aid to the revolution. I also plan to continue my sales efforts, and am willing to take on a personal goal for the remainder of the drive. If the branch is willing, I would like to continue to receive a branch newsletter so that I can be aware of activities I could plug into.

2) my house continues to be available to the branch for use in housing visiting comrades, especially foreign ones, and for activities such as parties.

3) financial support through pledges at fund-

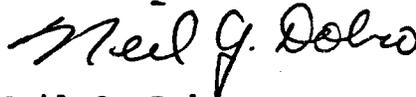
raising events.

4) Over the years I have given several educational talks and spoken at forums and rallies. I would be pleased to accept assignments to do these things in the future.

5) I would be happy to continue to act as the "dental insurance policy" for the branch by providing no cost care to the full time "volunteers". This could include nonresident full timers at the discretion of the N.O.

In conclusion, I would urge the branch leadership to keep the lines of communication open between us. I look forward to a continued long term association with the revolutionary party.

Comradely,



Neil G. Dobro