

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, Number 24, April 19, 1971

Present: Barnes, Boehm, Breitman, Britton, Dobbs, Horowitz,
Lovell, Novack, Sheppard, Stone, Waters

Visitors: Bolduc, Kerry

Chairman: Boehm

- AGENDA:
1. Administrative Committee Report
 2. Membership
 3. Administrative Committee
 4. Convention Call
 5. Convention Attendance
 6. National Director of 1972 Presidential Campaign
 7. International Socialist Review
 8. Women's Liberation Movement Resolution

1. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Britton reported.

- a) Gregorich and Keil correspondence (see attached).
- b) Texas and Colorado branches extended critical support to La Raza Unida Party municipal campaigns.

Discussion.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Britton reported.

Motion: To concur with the recommendation of the Minneapolis branch to readmit R.G. into membership.

Carried.

Motion: To concur with the recommendation of the San Francisco branch to readmit G.M. into membership.

Carried.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Barnes reported.

Motion: To add Barry Sheppard and Betsey Stone to the Administrative Committee.

Carried.

The Administrative Committee is now composed of Barnes, Bolduc, Britton, Dobbs, Horowitz, Sheppard, Stone.

4. CONVENTION CALL

Barnes reported.

Motion: To issue call for the Twenty-fourth National Convention to take place August 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 in Ohio as decided by the March 1971 plenum (see attached).

Discussion.

Carried.

5. CONVENTION ATTENDANCE

Barnes reported that the Administrative Committee had discussed the question of the Young Socialist Alliance and the party convention. Due to the proliferation of YSA locals and at-large members in areas where there are no party branches, the Administrative Committee proposes that the Political Committee issue an invitation to the YSA to attend the convention as observers and that all issues of the pre-convention bulletin be made available to the YSA.

Motion: To invite the Young Socialist Alliance to attend the Twenty-fourth National Convention of the SWP and to make available to the YSA all issues of the party pre-convention discussion bulletin. (see attached)

Discussion.

Carried.

6. NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF 1972 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Sheppard reported.

Motion: To assign Larry Seigle national director of 1972 presidential campaign.

Carried.

7. INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW

Sheppard reported.

Motion: To assign Les Evans editor of the magazine.

Carried.

8. WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT RESOLUTION

Stone reported.

Discussion.

Motion: To approve the general line of the resolution.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.

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

CLEVELAND

Dear Comrade Gregorich,

In response to the two points in your letter of March 16.

1) The March 13-16 plenum of the National Committee decided to open the pre-convention discussion on May 1.

The national office staff is already at work preparing four initial resolutions and several plenum reports to submit to the pre-convention discussion. The comrades responsible for preparing these items for printing and mailing inform me that if your document arrives here by April 2, they are confident it can be fully prepared, submitted to the printers and mailed out to the branches for circulation with the National Committee resolutions.

2) It might be useful to the pre-convention discussion for you to indicate at the beginning of your document your intention, if I understand your letter correctly, to submit this document as a line resolution to the party. The proposal for a convention vote on the general line of a document can be made to the convention by any delegate supporting such a document.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

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3861 Montevista Road
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44121
March 16, 1971

Jack Barnes
New York, New York

Dear Comrade Barnes,

We understand that the SWP 1971 Convention will begin on August 8. We would like to know the following things regarding pre-convention discussion:

1) Assuming that May 8 will be the first day of pre-convention discussion, if we submit our document to the National Office by April 26, will the document be printed and distributed to the branches by May 8? (The document will be about 50 single-spaced pages.)

If this is not sufficient time for the N.O. to print and distribute the document by May 8, when should we submit the document in order to have it out for the full 90-day discussion period?

If pre-convention discussion opens earlier than May 8, please let us know when it opens and when we should have the document in.

2) We feel that our document, which will call for the SWP to send comrades into the industrial trade unions, is a clear alternative to present party policy. For that reason, we would like to submit our document for a vote by the Convention. Is this correct procedure?

Comradely,
s/Barbara Gregorich

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
April 5, 1971

CLEVELAND

Barbara Gregorich

Dear Comrade Gregorich,

This is to acknowledge receipt on April 5 of the document "For a Proletarian Orientation" signed by you, Bill Massey, John McCann and Phil Passen.

You will note minor editing and the deletion of one sentence for security considerations. This affects in no way the general line of the document.

Comradely,

s/ Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

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David Keil
3523 Hennepin Ave. S.
Mpls., Minn. 55408
Feb. 25, 1971

To the P.C.:

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of my article, "The European Sections' Activity in the Working Class and our Trade Union Work." I submitted it to the Party Builder before Oberlin, and it was rejected because "it deals in part with policy and line questions that are not now under discussion."

I am considering resubmitting it for the pre-convention discussion coming up, together perhaps with an article explaining better what I think should be done and why.

(I still, by the way, don't consider these articles to be raising immediate political differences in the party, only organizational and policy questions.)

I have shown my July article to a number of comrades who I thought might be interested in it or agree with it. I also showed it to Ken S., after we got into an informal discussion on our orientation to the working class. He told me that, since it is not a pre-convention discussion period, it might be best for me not to show the article to comrades, since the other side has had no chance to answer it. Since then, I haven't been showing the article to people.

I would like to ask you, do I have the right or permission to show this article to comrades before the pre-convention discussion starts? In any case, I would not distribute it to any and all comrades, just those I think might agree with it or to better show my position to comrades with whom I get into a discussion.

I also have another question. I have heard that some other comrades have asked the P.C. a related question. From one source, I heard that they asked for permission to form a faction and were refused, and from another I have heard that they asked for permission or whether they had the right to co-author a document even though they lived in different cities, and were refused.

(I hope that neither version is true: I hope nobody in the party is trying to form a faction, and on the other hand I hope that comrades have the right to co-author documents freely.)

So I would like to ask, does one have the right or permission to co-author a discussion article (or even a resolution, for that matter), with anybody one pleases, and if so, when? Before a pre-convention period, or during, or when?

The matter isn't urgent, but I hope you will reply soon so that my confusion will be ended.

Comradely,

s/David Keil

Copy to Ken S., Charles S.

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

TWIN CITIES

David Keil

Dear David,

In re: your letter of February 25, concerning proper procedure governing internal discussion within the party, I call your attention to the resolution adopted by the 1965 convention on "The Organizational Character of the SWP." This document is available to all members and I'm sure copies are available in the branch.

I call your attention especially to the section of "Factionalism and Party Unity" which deals with the problem of selective discussions prior to our regular pre-convention discussion period.

I would commend this official compendium of our organizational principles and practices as a more reliable and authentic source than the anonymous authorities cited in your letter on the question of our alleged refusal to grant "permission to form a faction," and the "right to co-author" discussion documents.

We are about to enter our pre-convention discussion period. The opening date of the discussion will be made known to all party members through official action of the National Committee. You may, at that time, submit whatever material you wish for publication in the internal discussion bulletin, whether singly authored or co-authored by multiple signers, for circulation to the entire membership.

I trust that neither corridor gossip nor malicious rumors to the contrary will deter you from fully exercising your right to submit your views and opinions, not to just a select few, but to the entire membership for free and full discussion.

Comradely
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

cc: C. Scheer
H. Scheer
K. Shilman

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
April 19, 1971

TO ALL BRANCHES

Dear Comrades,

The Young Socialist Alliance and the Party Convention

The Political Committee of the party has invited the Young Socialist Alliance to attend the twenty-fourth national convention of the SWP and has advised them that all issues of the party internal pre-convention discussion bulletins will be made available to the YSA.

The branches may invite non-party YSA members to observe the pre-convention discussion sessions held in each party branch.

To most effectively organize the distribution of pre-convention discussion bulletins to YSA members, the national office, after consultation with the YSA national office, suggests that in areas where there is a party branch bulletins for non-party YSA members be ordered along with the regular branch order. In areas where there are locals or at-large members of the YSA and no party branch, the organizer or members will receive the standard order form sent to all party branches.

Comradely,

Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

CALL FOR THE TWENTY-FOURTH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

April 19, 1971

TO ALL LOCALS, BRANCHES AND MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Pursuant to the provisions of the party constitution, the National Committee hereby calls the Twenty-Fourth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party to convene in Ohio at 10:00 AM on Sunday, August 8 and continue through five days (August 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, 1971).

AGENDA

The Political Committee proposes the following agenda for the convention:

World Movement
Israel and the Arab Revolution Resolution
Political Resolution
Women's Liberation Movement Resolution
Chicano Liberation Movement Resolution
Black Liberation Struggle Report
Youth Report
Organization Report
Presidential Ticket
Election of National Committee
(Recommendations will be made later
concerning the handling of the
trade union and antiwar questions.)

PRECONVENTION DISCUSSION

The party preconvention discussion is formally opened May 1, 1971. The Discussion Bulletin is open for all party members on the subjects listed in the agenda or others which they may wish to present for the consideration of the party. As authorized by the party constitution, the Political Committee has set a deadline of July 31, 1971 for acceptance of preconvention discussion articles for the bulletin.

Branch membership meetings shall be arranged for discussion of the various subjects on the agenda. Our traditional provisions and safeguards for the adequate and free presentation of all points of view shall govern all discussion.

CONVENTION ASSESSMENT

As authorized by the party constitution, a convention assessment of \$3.00 per member is hereby levied, the payment of which is obligatory for every member not totally unemployed.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION

1. Representation from the branches shall be as follows: One delegate for the first 7 members or less, and one additional delegate for each 7 additional members or major fraction thereof (4 or more constituting a major fraction).

2. Each branch having 4 or more members is entitled to a voting delegate.

3. Delegates are to be elected by branches in accordance with the actual number of members in good standing who have been admitted to the party prior to April 19, 1971, and who have paid their convention assessment, as certified by the branch executive committee on the day of voting.

4. Branches organized after April 19, 1971 are entitled to send fraternal delegates as provided by the party constitution.

5. Members admitted to the party after April 19, 1971 are entitled to voice in the party discussion but no vote on resolutions or in the selection of delegates.

6. Absentee votes on political resolutions and in the election of delegates shall not be permitted except in clearly established cases of occupational necessity (for example, regular night workers, etc.). In all such cases the votes must be submitted in writing and recognized by motion at the branch meeting at the time of the branch voting.

7. Members transferring from one branch to another within the same locality subsequent to April 19, 1971, must vote in the branch from which they transferred.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

In case of political differences defined by conflicting resolutions, the election of delegates in the branches is to be on the basis of the vote on resolution or resolutions voted on at the meeting at which the delegates are elected. Members voting for a given resolution are entitled to designate the delegate or delegates to which they are entitled on the basis of proportional representation laid down in this call, the designations to be ratified by the branch. Abstentions in no case count as votes.

1. If a branch is entitled to one delegate, the delegate goes to the majority of those present and voting at the time of the election.

2. If two delegates, a minority with 40 percent gets one.

3. If three delegates, a minority with $33\frac{1}{3}$ percent gets one.

4. If four delegates, a minority with 25 percent gets one delegate, but a minority with 40 percent is entitled to two delegates.

5. If five delegates, a minority with 20 percent gets one.

6. If six delegates, a minority with $16\frac{2}{3}$ percent gets one delegate, a minority with $33\frac{1}{3}$ percent, two delegates, but a minority with 40 percent gets one half the delegates.

In general, if a branch is entitled to n delegates, then a minority is entitled to x delegates if it receives at least x/n of the votes, with the one exception that if n is even, a minority receiving at least 40 percent of the vote is entitled to half of the delegates.

CONVENTION ATTENDANCE

The Political Committee proposes that all party members in good standing may attend the convention as visitors, and that friends may be admitted to the sessions provided they have been invited by a branch.

Fraternally yours,

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY



Farrell Dobbs
National Secretary