

MINUTES, N.Y.LOCAL.....24 February 1966

Present: Jim, Danny, Al, Roger, Ron, Shirley, Lynne, Helen, Jack, Dave, Hugh, Sam,  
Winnie(late), Lyndon(late) Others: Bob, Shelly

Absent: Harry(exc.), Price(exc.), Paul(exc.), Phil, Shane, Hammett, Tippy(l.o.a.), Peter

Meeting convened at 8:30 p.m.

1. Organization of Meeting: (a) Chairman - Roger  
(b) Agenda adopted  
(c) Minutes of 10 Feb. 66 adopted

2. Membership:

Shelly, formerly of SWP-YSA, is applying for membership.

Disc: Al, Dave, Sam, Lynne, Jack

Motion: To accept Shelly as a full member of Spartacist. Passed

3. General Information and Correspondence - Jim

- a. General State of Spartacist: At present we are not growing--entries and drop-outs are about the same--whereas in the past there was a rapid increase. However, we are continuing to exert and increase our influence, and Nelson's tour helped us greatly in the South. Recruitment has declined because today's recruits are coming mainly from the campus, and we are lacking students.
- b. Orientation toward the SWP: Over the last few months the SWP has shown itself to be politically crudely reformist and organizationally wreckers in the anti-war movement. Theoretically it is in a state of catastrophe, having staked all on Castro, and this is widely apparent. We would not wish to re-enter the SWP as it now is, and view it simply as a competitor, far to the right (though this does not mean we adopt a sectarian stance towards it). Given the foregoing, and in light of our own coming fusion, the period of our left oppositional role towards the SWP appears to be coming to an end.
- c. JUC of 21 Feb: This was a full meeting with all regular members. Discussed ASOC- has fallen into a moribund condition. Its central local, Chicago, had a series of sectarian opinions and was voted down by centrifugal locals, which, however, are not prepared to assume leadership and are in the process of liquidating anyway. The organization is paralyzed and disintegrating, and we will do our best to recruit a few of its departing members. SWP- Plenum of the Nat'l Committee one week ago compelled Frazer, the last oppositional NC member, to come in from Seattle on one day's notice and paid his plane fare. Swabeckites are fragmenting out of the SWP to the right, but Frazerites are leaving with some left and some right positions, but in a leftward direction. They are planning to leave after the YSA convention (INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS GROUPING IS CONFIDENTIAL), and plan to remain independent of all national organizations for a while. This cuts the SWP out of the Pacific Northwest. The Frazerites have a strong Maoist streak but have been radical on American questions though these have softened somewhat over recent years. We want to politically polarize them as well as the Foxites, a grouping that presently stands between us and the SWP. These groupings contain extremely valuable, experienced cadre whose acquisition would strengthen us greatly. However, we are not interested in mere recruitment or in a widely heterogeneous organization. Therefore we need polarization through political struggle in the course of common work, in order to win the best of these to our positions. This is not easy as these groupings have members spread throughout the country. Frazer is proposing a Vacation

School/Midwest Conference, a week of education and discussion on "What Road for American Revolutionists and Trotskyists", late in the summer, preceded by a written discussion. We also anticipate further internal troubles within the SWP and PL. PL is having visible difficulties: (a) they have approached ACFI comrades for common defense work; (2) Challenge has gone from weekly to bi-weekly (and possibly less frequent); (c) the bureaucratic dissolution of M2M. We will watch for further cracks. Also anticipate cracks in SWP Majority. YSA just revised Constitution to eliminate 15-day notice required for trials and requirement to give minorities proportional representation on leading bodies.

- d. Unification: Next JUC will consider draft of Resolution on Tactics. As soon as draft is accepted by a majority of the leading committees of both organizations we will propose that we start to dissolve our separate identities and function on an ad hoc basis in a fused fashion. The 6th issue of SPARTACIST will be the last and until the founding of the new organization we will use the Bulletin. The founding conference of the Spartacist League will probably be in June, and we will be "in political solidarity with the Fourth International." We have tentatively agreed that the publication of the fused organization will be called "Bulletin of the Spartacist League" and that it will appear semi-monthly, alternating 4 and 8 page issues, until such time as it becomes a weekly. We have also tentatively agreed that the theoretical journal, when we are able to have one, will be called "The Spartacist" and will bear a hammer and sickle. However, name and frequency of publications are still subject to renegotiation. For the new organization we are thinking of proposing, in addition to proportional representation on leading bodies, that Wohlforth be editor of the new publication subject to political control by an editorial board of Robertson, Wohlforth and Henry. We consider at least 4 documents desirable for consideration by the founding conference: the International Resolution of the IC; Resolution on Tactics in the U.S.; our Founding Principles, and our Organizational Rules. It would also be desirable to have a draft document presenting our position on Stalinism though it would be premature to adopt such a document at the Founding Conference. Disc: Sam, Helen, Al, Lyndon, Dave, Hugh, Shirley, Lynne, Jim, Roger

Motion by Shirley: To recommend that the REB carry back to the JUC that the paper be called SPARTACIST and that the magazine be called the (Theoretical) BULLETIN.

Motion by Roger: To table Shirley's motion since no one understands it .

For: Roger      Against: All others      Motion Lost

Vote on Shirley's Motion: All for, except Roger, Ron and Dave who abstained.

Motion Passed

4. Tour Report - Al

(Report will cover only the final Southern leg). Itinerary included New Orleans, Houston, Austin, Baton Rouge, and Mississippi.

New Orleans- N.O. is wide open, many radicals and no competing radical organizations, though PL has sent in an organizer, Ed C. 150 marched in the rain on 12 Feb. against Viet Nam War. Prior to tour, New Orleans local was not meeting on a regular basis and this was destructive because they were not able to work effectively as a unit, especially since the comrades there are not very experienced. Comrades now have a discussion group of 5-6 people. Ed.C. had infiltrated this, posing as a "good guy", but has been since exposed and removed and he is now trying to build an SDS chapter. If our comrades are patient, they will be able to take out PL entirely because of the superiority of our line which is able to expose such PL catastrophes as Indonesia and Algeria. Errol P. is resuming some activity. In addition to

our 4 members there, we have 4-5 close contacts. On 2/5, spoke at Tulane and felt made good impact for Spartacist there.

Baton Rouge- Al's speech at LSU teach-in made headlines (Baton Rouge is so conservative that last year they had a big fight just to get a Quaker on campus!) After Al's talk, Governor of State wanted to have him put in a mental institution. Mayor wired Governor who phoned President of U.S. about arresting Al. There was radio and TV coverage for 3 days of the events, several cross burnings, and some particularly reactionary branches of the Klan that hadn't met in years met. We have made one black recruit there, and the head of the LSU Liberal League is considering membership.

Mississippi- a former Spartacist member there has reapplied for membership.

Houston- Ramon and Jose are the only active members and possible Larry Sch. These comrades are inexperienced and do not fully understand our positions. Ramon will be working with SDS group. Larry has been active in his high school. Al spoke to about 40 at Houston Socialist Forum. SWP has one close contact. Jose made \$5 pledge, Ramon a \$4 pledge.

Austin- 3 good, active comrades, John & Ann S. and John Sw. Local SDS ebbing; maverick M2M plans to continue, operating inside SDS. John and Ann pledged \$25 monthly, a financial indication of their intentions toward the organization. Al saw Charlie Smith who now supports "The Worker" and offers CP arguments. He admitted he deliberately meant to expose us to the police by his last letter. Al was in Austin 3 days.

South- An experienced comrade in the area will attempt to act as coordinator and help put out a SPARTACIST SOUTH.

5. Public Meeting - Jim

The last 6-8 months have been a period of tremendous catastrophe for the peasant-guerilla road to socialism, and this must be the focus of the last issue of SPARTACIST. Our Tendency has uniquely anticipated and predicted the course of events in Algeria, Indonesia, and Cuba, and we should capitalize on this. We will hold a big public meeting on the Upper West Side and tape Jim's speech which can then be transcribed and edited for use as lead article in SPARTACIST #6. Will incorporate Fanon material.

Tasks facing Spartacist- Jim reports there are 4 major urgent tasks facing the N.O.: getting out SPARTACIST #6; writing the Resolution on Tactics; drafting a document on Stalinism; and writing introductions and finishing up Marxist Bulletins. In good part these tasks must be done now or never, as rapid changes are taking place. Therefore Robertson especially will need less involvement in day-to-day local and national work.

Disc: Helen, Dave, Al, Roger, Lynne, Roger

Al will organize meeting. Lynne suggests party weekend following talk.

6. Van Ronk Benefit Concert - point tabled.

7. Sales:

Helen, Bob and Sam will cover CP rally 2/25.

Al and Shirley will cover Stalinistic "Harlem Council for Peace" rally 2/27.

Lyndon, Winnie, Bob and Shelly will cover Ramparts meeting, 3/3.

Motion: To discontinue public sales of SPARTACIST #5 in NYC following these meetings. Passed

8. Announcements:

Tompkins Square picket line on Dominican Republic tentatively set for 3/5 with post-picket party at Gato's pad.

Meeting adjourned at about 11:30 p.m.