

(Typed letter)

xs (Gus, M-A, Joe, Doug, B/C, Jack, Larry,
Betsey, MALIK

4/5/78

Baroda

Gus Horowitz
New York

Dear Gus,

Received reply from Comrade Natalie on behalf of you. Meanwhile the attached letter written by Comrade Vibhati to us is concerning SWP-USA. The letter itself is self-explanatory. Please put it for the information of the national political committee. We here are anxious to understand the nature of the problem involved in it. Comrades and friends claiming to agree with F.I. and having some differences on tactical aspects do confuse some of us through their criticisms and complaints. The best course in my mind is to explain it so as to eliminate or minimize the damage caused to SWP-USA whom we keep in highest esteem. You can reply here if need be. I am also eager to know about the actual position of the questions raised by Comrade Vibhati.

Regards to our comrades,

Comradely yours,
s/Magan Desai

22.2.78.
Bombay.

Dear Comrade Maganbhai,

I am sending herewith, the leaflet on Kanpur episode, copies of which I gave to you, when I was there in Baroda. You might have forgotten to send it to the editors of ICP, but now please see that it is sent as early as possible. Don't you think that we should have a regular correspondent who keeps on informing ICP about the movements of the working class and oppressed masses in general, in India!

Regarding S.W.P.'s criticism by few Americans with whom I had talks at length.

Florence Howe is a socialist feminist who had participated in the Women's lib. movement of early seventies. She believes that S.W.P.'s policy in such United front activities is totally sectarian and secessionist. They always try to break the strength of the movement. They are very intolerant to the persons who differ from them. Her husband also worked with S.W.P. when the United front was formed by many organisations for organising Anti War Movement. His experience with S.W.P. was also the same. Because Florence Howe could not furnish her statements with adequate arguments I didn't take her so seriously.

After a month Ralph Schoenman and his wife Joan Melleh also told the same type of story regarding S.W.P. Joan alleged S.W.P.'s tactics while intervening the mass struggle, to be as bad as that of C.P.s in early thirties.

During Women's liberation struggles, when United front was formed by various feminist organisation, S.W.P. would always try to impose their views whether other members of the United front agreed or not. This repelled many feminists from this (S.W.P.) organisation. They killed the healthy atmosphere of opening the dialogue with various other groups whom they could will in a long run.

Ralph Schoenman said the same as regards S.W.P. when Anti War Movement was developing. He said they will infiltrate all the groups and impose their ideas and slogans without having enough discussion with the other members of various organisation. Their policy regarding S.D.S. (Students Democratic Society) was also extremely destructive by which they repelled thousands of youth from S.W.P. and Young Socialist Alliance. Sometimes S.W.P. and Y.S.A. members were behaving like the fanatics which brought much defame for the organisations (S.W.P. and Y.S.A.) within the Anti War Movement.

His personal experience while working with S.W.P. for the work regarding political prisoners and political dissidents was also bitter. The movement on Human Rights and protest against the arrests of political personalities and support to the democratic rights of the political dissidents was a united front activity of all the liberals, political organisations, S.W.P., who supported the fundamental declaration of Human Rights. Were S.W.P. will adopt such undemocratic methods that everything used to seem stage managed in the sense that everything was decided prior to having the meeting of all the members of united front. So when the meeting was held members were supposed only to carry out the decisions taken by S.W.P.

The same organisational practices were reflected within the organisation. To Ralph, expelled I.T. Comrades were quite very senior in the Trotskyist movement. The charges framed by S.W.P. that they were indulging themselves in 'destructive activities' were invalid in the sense that all these comrades very well know the organisational methods of giving internal war. Ralph's contention was that, that I.T. Comrades were not given chance to fight their case within the organisation and in a totally undemocratic manner were expelled and alleged.

About last year's S.W.P. convention whatever he said was also supported by Dr. A.P. Desai, Ralph and Dr. Desai were invited guests in the S.W.P. National Convention. Both of them found that all the resolutions were supported by all the delegates. None of the participants had dissenting voice. Ralph felt that those who didn't agree with the line of S.W.P. leadership were not given representation in the national convention.

Ralph also feels that though S.W.P. and Y.S.A. get very intelligent and capable youngsters but because they wholly engage their cadres in day to day routinist, localists political activity S.W.P. can't develop effective theoreticians who can give ideological battle to the other Marxist currents and various bourgeois theories influencing thousands of young activists. They never equip their cadres with classical literature regarding revolution-any Marxism. They insist only on second-hand literature like party organiser builder, I.I.D.B., education for socialist so on and so forth. So most of its cadres have superfluous knowledge regarding basic Marxist and Trotskyist postulates.

He also expressed his disagreement regarding the expulsion of two comrades who were lesbians(or homo). At that time, S.W.P. felt that these members' being lesbians was bring defame for the organisation; and these comrades were thrown out of S.W.P. Afterwards when the movement for the support of lesbianism became quite popular, S.W.P. openly and actively supported it. This showed the lack of principle on the part of S.W.P.

Ralph thinks that S.W.P. has extremely narrow perspective for the politics. During the time of his work with S.W.P. comrades, on political prisoners once he found that S.W.P. was getting disinterested from the work and its members started dropping out of the work. So he asked Ernest Harsh about this. Ernest told him that by this activity they could not get much cadres, so they felt that they should not employ much in the work regarding Human Rights. How can we have such an input-output approach with very important movement regarding the political victims? Even during the period of Stalinist aura Trotskyists never capitulated against the C.P., though numerically few, they continuously waged the War against the antidemocratic practices of Stalinists. If the same position would have been adopted by all the liberals and Trotskyist how could the great historical trial of Trotsky before the Dwene Commission be held? It is a duty of each and every Trotskyist to support the movement against the antidemocratic activities of imperialists, bureaucrats excesses of the distorted workers states or the dictatorial regimes of the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

This month, two Hyliates, International Committee members, one the Australian (Mikki) and the other, the Ceylonese (Ganesh) also said a lot against S.W.P., its Fablorite degeneration; we took it with much pinch of salt.

But the criticism of Ralph does make some sense because he did not have any personal prejudices against S.W.P., Y.S.A. or F.I. He very much finds himself to be a part of Trotskyist Movement. On many crucial (aspects) Political events he agrees with the analysis of F.I. At one stage, he also thought of being a member of S.W.P., but such narrow perspective regarding various movements, organisational practices, routinism, sectarianism of S.W.P. came in his way.

Can you suggest the topics for ~~pro~~Proletarian Political to Dr. A.P. Desai, so that he can start writing the article?

Comradely yours,

Vibhakar Patel