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Freeport, N.Y.
June 19, 1973

Dennis Richter
YSA City Office
706 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10003

Dear Comrade Richter:

After you called me today about where we could attend SWP convention discussion, a motion was made by the LI YSA exec and passed by the local to protest the fact that we could only come to the Lower Manhattan discussion.

To our knowledge this has never been done before in the history of the party. We feel we should be allowed to attend any of the discussions, in relation to our transportation problems and on what discussion we want to hear. We feel this policy is undemocratic because it prevents us from hearing a full discussion in the city, and to help us gain a full political understanding, and to arrive at the correct political conclusions.

During discussion at the exec we discovered from Comrade Frank M. the reason for this action. He explained that the Brooklyn organizer tried unsuccessfully to exclude some LI comrades from the discussion there. He said they should go to Lower Manhattan. There seems to be some coincidence that we were called the next day.

We urge you to change this policy, for the reasons stated. Because this is in the context of discussion before the World Congress, we are sending a copy to the United Secretariat.

Comradely,

s/ Charles Rachlis
Long Island YSA
Organizer

Copies to:
Andy Rose, YSA National Chairman
Lew Jones, National Organizational Secretary, SWP
Ernest Mandel, for the United Secretariat

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St. Paul, Minn.
June 24, 1973

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

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to you in protest of what I feel is an undemocratic situation in the party's preconvention discussion, in the hope that the P.C. will exercise its responsibility towards the membership and take action to make party democracy a reality.

As you may know, I am a supporter of the International Majority Tendency. According to the procedure outlined in the convention call, it would take about 15 International Majority supporters in our branch in order to receive any representation at the convention. Since it is unlikely that we will have 15 supporters in the Twin Cities branch, this means that I will be totally unrepresented at the convention, unlike all supporters of the SWP majority who will vote for delegates and, in effect, each be represented by one fifteenth of a convention delegate. It is unacceptable that the highest body of the party, the national convention, should not genuinely reflect the political composition of the party's ranks. It is unacceptable that some comrades will have no say regarding what our line is for the next two years. It is hard to see how the party leadership can expect the ranks to faithfully carry out such a line arrived at in an undemocratic manner. It should be obvious that a serious discussion is made impossible when the cards are stacked against one side through such organizational ingenuities. A leadership with confidence in their politics would naturally bend over backwards to see that minorities in the party receive fair representation. And when the minority concerned is one which represents the Majority of the International, the present policy has even more far reaching political implications of which you are surely aware.

I could cite many grievances I have towards the party's organizational conduct in the past period. The purpose of this letter, however, is only to make the simple request that I not be unrepresented at the convention. I would like to request, therefore, that I be allowed to transfer my convention vote to a different branch where it will have some effect. I wish for the Political Committee to act upon this request immediately. Please inform me of your decision as soon as possible, so that if you reject my request, I will have sufficient time before the convention to take action to correct this basic infringement of party democracy.

With the SWP posing as the foremost defender of a democratic discussion in the Fourth International, you must expect that the eyes of the world movement will be turned on the party's internal practices. Milt Alvin's words should be taken quite seriously when he writes: "...those sections that have made all the material available to their memberships, held discussions and voted, would have to propose that those at the [World] Congress who have not taken these steps participate with voice but no vote." It would

Meisner Letter/2

be a pity, wouldn't it, if the SWP goes through all the trouble of electing fraternal delegates to the World Congress, only for them to receive a very cold welcome by the credentials committee when they arrive there.

Comradely,
s/Jeff Meisner

cc: Internationalist tendency
c/o Bill Massey

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
July 5, 1973

MINNEAPOLIS

Jeff Meissner

Dear Comrade Meissner,

This is in answer to your letter of June 24, 1973, to the Political Committee.

The party Constitution and the Call for the Twenty-Fifth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party adopted by the National Committee on April 29, 1973, preclude transferring votes of individual branch members in the manner you request.

Comradely,

s/ Lew Jones
SWP National Office

cc: Greg Guckenberg
Charles Scheer
Helen Scheer

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June 29, 1973
1 University Ave. NE
Mpls, Mn. 55413

Lew Jones
SWP National Office

Lew,

Comrade Jeff Meissner, member of the Internationalist Tendency in the Twin Cities branch, has indicated that he is going to appeal to the Political Committee decisions made at our branch meeting of June 27, 1973. The minutes of the executive committee meeting and branch meeting of that day should also be looked at.

The executive committee and branch meeting approved of a proposal for the scheduling of three weeks of pre-convention discussion. The proposed scheduling of a debate on the Political reports of the Political Committee and the Internationalist Tendency met with no opposition.

We also scheduled reports on Vietnam and Women's Liberation, with reporters designated to present the party position on these questions. Comrade Meissner proposed that the Internationalist Tendency be given equal time to report their position on these two questions. Questions put to Comrade Meissner, however, indicated that the Internationalist Tendency does not intend to put written positions before the entire party on these areas (Vietnam and Women's Liberation). Comrade Meissner also indicated that there is no position currently in any bulletin that the Internationalist Tendency agrees with and would be reporting on.

The motion for equal time on the two reports was defeated by the branch when it was made clear that the tendency would have no position before the party to report on. It was felt that simply stating that the tendency had a position was insufficient for granting equal time and that what was required was a written position in the discussion bulletin of the party, or, as in Latin America and Europe, agreement with a written contribution in the International Discussion Bulletin. The branch rejected the idea that the Internationalist Tendency, as a representative of the IEC Majority, had an inherent right to present a position, even if it disagreed with the only contribution of a supporter of the IEC Majority (Stern).

Other motions made in the branch meeting are contained in the minutes and are self-explanatory.

Comradely,

s/ Greg Guckenburg
Twin Cities SWP
Organizer