

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, No. 1, September 14, 1973

Present: Barnes, Breitman, Britton, Camejo, A. Hansen, J. Hansen,
Horowitz, Jenness, Jones, Lovell, Morrison, Shaw,
Thomas, Pulley
Consultative: Dobbs, Kerry, Novack
Visitors: Evans, Foley, Scott, White
Chairman: J. Hansen

AGENDA: 1. Tenth Chinese Party Congress
2. Chile
3. World Movement

1. TENTH CHINESE PARTY CONGRESS

Kerry reported.

Discussion

2. CHILE

Shaw reported.

Discussion

3. WORLD MOVEMENT

Barnes reported.

Discussion

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TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND EDUCATION DIRECTORS:

Dear Comrades,

The National Education Department is suggesting two focuses for branch educational activities this fall.

1. Socialist Conferences

We suggest that, in collaboration with the YSA, socialist educational conferences be held similar to those that have been organized in previous years. These conferences are not primarily internally oriented, but should be seen as propaganda activities for our movement. Well-planned and well-organized conferences of this type can have considerable appeal at this time, and can be a powerful recruiting tool.

These conferences offer the opportunity to present in one weekend a concentrated series of talks by prominent SWP and YSA speakers. The interest generated by these talks can provide the basis for classes to be held in the weeks afterwards.

The conferences should focus on major questions of international and domestic politics today. Possible topics include:

- *The Meaning of the Detente
- *Behind the Coup in Chile
- *Who Rules America? The Real Meaning of Watergate.
- *Inflation: What Causes It? How to Fight It.

Other possible topics could include talks on the issues most currently relevant in the Black, Chicano, and women's movements.

Branches may also want to schedule banquets celebrating the forty-fifth anniversary of The Militant as a highlight of the educational weekend.

Past experience has indicated that the period around Thanksgiving is a good one for holding these socialist conferences. Since many of the conferences are likely to be built and organized on campuses, they will probably be held under the sponsorship of the YSA. Where appropriate, there can also be cosponsorship by youth committees supporting the SWP election campaigns. The conferences can also be tied in with efforts to increase sales and subscriptions for The Militant, Young Socialist, International Socialist Review, and Intercontinental Press. Previously, some areas have had good experience with special subscription offers to those attending the conference.

A future communication will list national speakers available for talks at these conferences. Since their number is limited, we encourage branches to rely primarily on local speakers.

2. Fall Internal Education

As noted above, internal classes can be held after the fall educational conferences. The goal, as in past years, should be to involve every comrade in a class, with every comrade having the time to devote serious study to the given subject, as during the summer schools. Our experience over the past couple of years has shown that this can best be accomplished through special concentrated class series, limiting the number of class sessions to a realistic number (3-6) over a 2-3 week period of time, and organizing the political activity of the branch during this period to give a very high priority to education. Other classes held over a more lengthy period of time are useful and should be continued. However, it is likely that, because of the press of other activities, these classes will not involve the entire membership.

The National Education Department suggests that this fall's concentrated class series center on some of the major theoretical and political problems that have faced the Trotskyist movement since its inception. Suggested subjects include:

1) The Revolutionary Party and the Revolutionary Perspective

Cannon's Speeches to the Party can provide the basis for a series of classes on the important inner-party struggle with Cochran, Clarke, and Bartell.

2) History of the Fourth International

A series on this topic should make use of the Education for Socialist Bulletin, Towards a History of the Fourth International: Three Contributions on Postwar Developments, by Conner, Evans, and Kerry, and Documents of the Fourth International, 1933-1940 (Pathfinder).

3) The Class Nature of the State

This series can take up the Marxist theory of the state as developed by Lenin in The State and Revolution and by Trotsky in the debates over the class character of the Soviet Union.

4) The Postwar Transformation In Eastern Europe, China, and Cuba

This advanced-level series should take up the theoretical questions posed by the overturns of capitalism in the post World War II period. The concept of a "workers and farmers government" and the role of Stalinism in the transformations are important topics for this series.

A study guide currently exists on "The Class Character of the Eastern European States" which includes a class on the discussion on Cuba. This study guide is now being revised and expanded. In addition, an Education for Socialists bulletin containing additional materials on the overturns and on the concept of "workers and farmers governments" is now in preparation.

Study guides are also in preparation on the history of the Fourth International, Cannon's Speeches to the Party, and the class nature of the state. These will be sent as soon as they are completed.

Comradely,
Gus Horowitz
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National Education Director