

MINUTES OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

February 11, 12, 13, 1966

Friday, February 11, Morning Session

Chairman: A. Hansen

Roll Call: Regular: Dobbs, Kerry, Shaw, DeBerry, Halstead,
Ring, Weinstein, Sheppard, B. Chester,
Lavan, Torres, Vernon, J. Barnes, Warde,
Reed, J. Hansen, B. Hansen, Alvin,
Breitman, Simon, F. Lovell, Sharon,
Harris, Coover, A. Hansen, Himmel, Kirk.
(F. Lovell, Kirk arrived after roll call.)

Alternates: Feingold, S. Lovell, Leonard, Kirsch,
Scheer, Graham, B. Barnes, Spangler,
Porter, Wulp, Britton, Henderson,
Horowitz, Taplin.
(S. Lovell, Graham arrived after Roll Call)

Advisory: Mayhew

Control Commission: Aubrey, Conway, A. Chester.

1. Organization of Plenum

Motion: That in case of procedural disputes, discussion be limited to two speakers, one for and one against, and that each speaker be limited to 2 minutes.

Carried

Motion: That general discussion be limited to 10 minutes per speaker and that no one speak twice until all who wish to do so have spoken.

Carried

Motion: That the Presiding Committee consist of the Secretariat (Dobbs, Kerry, DeBerry, Halstead, Shaw) plus J. Hansen Warde and J. Barnes.

Carried

Motion: To designate as plenum secretaries Ellen, Sherry, and Reba.

Carried

Motion: To invite as observers: Control Commission members, co-thinkers, heads of national departments, (press, literature, and finances) and members of youth NEC.

Carried

Motion: To adopt the following agenda:

1. World Movement
2. Political Report
3. Infractions of Party Organizational Principles
4. Party Constitution
5. Breitman Proposals
6. Organization Report
7. Election of Political Committee

Carried

Motion: To approve Plenum schedule. (See attached.)

Carried

Motion by Presiding Committee: That the night session be cancelled and that discussion be continued tomorrow in order to grant a request for a caucus of majority NC members tonight.

Carried

Motion by Presiding Committee: That schedule for World Movement Report be changed to allow one hour 10 minutes for J. Hansen and 20 minutes for supplementary report by Sharon.

Carried

2. World Movement

Report by J. Hansen

Supplementary report by A. Sharon

Motion: To adjourn at 12:30 and reconvene at 2:00 p.m.

Carried

Friday, February 11, Afternoon Session

Discussion on World Movement Report: Ring, Warde, Torres, Lavan.

Summary by J. Hansen

Motion by Presiding Committee: To approve the general line of the World Movement Reports.

Carried

3. Political Report

Motion by Presiding Committee: That 45 minutes be granted to Kirk for minority report with corresponding summary time.

Carried

Majority Political Report by Dobbs

Minority Political Report by Kirk

Motion: To adjourn.

Carried

Saturday, February 12, Morning Session

Chairman: C. Scheer

Discussion on Political Report: J. Barnes, Sheppard, Henderson, Harris, Shaw, Simon, Alvin, A. Chester, Halstead, DeBerry, Britton, Kerry, Porter, Weinstein, Vernon, Torres.

Motion: To adjourn at 1:50 and reconvene at 3:20 p.m.

Carried

Saturday, February 12, Afternoon Session

Summary by Kirk

Summary by Dobbs

Motion: To approve the general line of majority report.

Regular: For: Dobbs, Kerry, Shaw, DeBerry, Halstead, Ring Weinstein, Sheppard, B. Chester, Lavan, Torres, Vernon, J. Barnes, Warde, Reed, J. Hansen, B. Hansen, Alvin, Breitman, Simon, F. Lovell, Sharon, Harris, Coover, A. Hansen, Himmel.

Against: Kirk

Carried

Consultative:

Alternates: For: Feingold, S. Lovell, Leonard, Kirsch,
Scheer, Graham, B. Barnes, Spangler,
Porter, Wulp, J. Britton, Henderson,
Horowitz, Taplin.

Against: None

Advisory: For: Mayhew

Against: None

Control

Commission: For: Aubrey, Conway, A. Chester

Against: None

Statement by Kirk: I vote for the Kirk resolution but want
to support that section of the Political
Committee report dealing with the economic
discussion.

4. Infractions of Party Organizational Principles

Report by Kerry

Motion of the Secretariat: That Comrade Kirk be censured for
his violations of Party rules and procedures and that
this Plenum issue a warning that any repetition will
lead to more drastic disciplinary action and that the
incoming Political Committee be instructed to
investigate all the ramifications of the incidents
described in the report.

Discussion: Kirk

Summary by Kerry

Vote on Secretariat Motion:

Regular: For: Dobbs, Kerry, Shaw, DeBerry, Halstead,
Ring, Weinstein, Sheppard, Chester,
Lavan, Vernon, J. Barnes, Warde, Reed,
J. Hansen, B. Hansen, Alvin, Breitman,
Simon, F. Lovell, Sharon, Harris,
Coover, A. Hansen, Himmel

Against: None
Abstentions: Kirk

Carried

Consultative:

Alternatés: For: Feingold, S. Lovell, Leonard, Kirsch,
Scheer, Graham, B. Barnes, Spangler,
Porter, Wulp, J. Britton, Henderson,
Horowitz, Taplin.

Against: None

Advisory: For: Mayhew

Against: None

Control

Commission: For: Aubrey, Conway, A. Chester

Against: None

5. Party Constitution

Report by Dobbs

Motion of the Secretariat: That the Plenum designate a commission of three to review the party constitution and report any recommendations they may have to make for changes back to the National Committee; and that two of the three be Aubrey and Ring; the third member be designated by the incoming Political Committee.

Carried

6. Breitman Proposals

Report by Dobbs

1. On the designation "Trotskyist".

Breitman withdraws proposal and will provide a statement for the minutes.

Statement by Breitman:

After the Secretariat had discussed my proposal that we discontinue designating ourselves as "Trotskyists," I was informed that the adoption of this proposal would result in misunderstanding and confusion abroad. I replied that in that case I would be willing

to withdraw the proposal and replace it with another -- to reaffirm the 1951 decision on self-designation -- which would accomplish the same purpose without giving the impression that we now were making some new decision.

Shortly before the plenum, I received a letter saying: "Although the Secretariat does not share your view that the 1951 decision on the party designation has been flouted, we have no objection to a reaffirmation of the essential purpose of that decision. We think it important, however, that there be no ambiguity about continued use of the designation Trotskyist where necessary.

"So the Secretariat plans to submit the following motion on the subject: 'To reaffirm the essential purpose of the 1951 decision on the party designation as follows: We use the designation Trotskyist to define our movement historically and ideologically and to differentiate ourselves from opponent tendencies. Otherwise, in our propaganda approach to the masses, we continue to use designations such as socialist, socialist workers, revolutionary socialist, etc.'"

I was willing to accept a simple reaffirmation of a decision which I felt was and is frequently flouted, but I cannot accept a motion which, if adopted, actually would alter the intent of the 1951 decision, although couched in the name of reaffirmation. The proposed Secretariat motion would, in my opinion, really be a step back from 1951. I am therefore withdrawing my proposal altogether for the time being.

2. On changing the slogan "For a Workers and Farmers Government" to "For a Workers Government"

Recommendation of the Political Committee: To continue literary discussion of this question in the National Committee.

Motion: To accept Political Committee recommendation.

Carried.

Session adjourned.

Sunday, February 13, Morning Session

Chairman: Reed

7. Organization Report

Report by Shaw

Discussion: Aubrey, Ring, Scheer, Alvin, A. Hansen, Harris, K. Kerry, Simon, Kirk, T. Kerry, Kirsch, Spangler, J. Barnes.

Announcement by Dobbs: Jean Simon has been giving some thought to the Party Constitution and wishes to be part of the Constitution Commission. The Presiding Committee recommends to the Plenum that Comrade Simon be added to the commission on the Party Constitution.

Motion: To accept recommendation.

Carried

Motion: To adjourn for a 45 minute lunch break.

Carried

Sunday, February 13, Afternoon Session

Summary of Organization Report by Shaw

Specific proposals contained in report.

1. Acceptance of \$22,000 fund drive.
2. Refer Boulton letter (see attached) to Plenum to incoming Political Committee.
3. Refer Kirk proposal on Gregory campaign (see attached) to incoming Political Committee.

Motion by Presiding Committee: To accept Organization Report.

Carried

8. Election of Political Committee

Report by Dobbs

Recommendation from the outgoing Political Committee: That the Plenum elect at this time a Political Committee of ten members.

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The outgoing Political Committee also recommends the following slate:

Shaw

Halstead

DeBerry

Dobbs

T. Kerry

J. Hansen

Warde

Sheppard

J. Barnes

and a member to be designated by the youth.

Further nominations: Ring

Declinations: Ring

Motion: To accept Political Committee recommendations and slate.

Carried

Plenum adjourned