

MINUTES OF THE ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE  
OF THE WORKERS PARTY

November 8,9, 1947

Saturday, Nov. 8, 1947

The conference was convened at 11:30 by Comrade McKinney, National Secretary. The representatives of the SWP Minority were welcomed and seated as regular delegates.

The conference then proceeded to a roll call for the seating of delegates.

Election of Committees:

The National Committee designated Comrade Bern as a member of the Presiding Committee.

Nominations:	Donaldson, Seattle	Seymour, Chicago
	Gannick, Buffalo	Murrain, Buffalo
	Byer, Frisco	Levsky, Bronx
	Saunders, New York	Smith, Akron
	Mary Bell, NY	Martin, Chicago
	Ferguson, Chicago	
	O'Connor, Frisco	

O'Connor, Gannick, Byer, Saunders, Bell, Ferguson, Seymour, Levsky, declined nominations.

Presiding Committee of Bern, Donaldson, Smith, Martin was elected.

The National Committee designated Comrade Barsh as a member of the Credentials Committee

Nominations: Gannick, Buffalo  
Morris, Manhattan, Local NY

Credentials Committee of Barsh, Gannick and Morris was elected.

Comrade McKinney presented recommended changes in the agenda of the Conference. (See attached "1")

Motion: (Billy) Report on UAW fraction be struck from the agenda and the time distributed among the other discussions. Defeated.

Motion: (Beyer) To leave the unity report intact and accept the recommended changes. Defeated

Motion: (Murrain) To leave the UAW report as is. Defeated.

Motion: (Shachtman) That on these motions there be one speaker for and one against. Carried.

Motion: (Billy) We accept the recommendations for today and refer to the Presiding Committee the schedule for tomorrow. Carried.

REPORT OF CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

There were 43 regular delegates to the conference:

	Delegates	Alternates
AKRON	2	2
BALTIMORE	1	
BUFFALO	2	2
CLEVELAND	2	2
CHICAGO	5	
DETROIT	3	3
LOS ANGELES	1	
NEWARK	1	
PHIL DELPHIA	2	2
FRISCO	3	
SEATTLE	2	1
WEST VA	1	1
HARLEM	1	1
INDUSTRIAL	5	4
MANHATTAN	5	4
BRONX	2	1
BROWNSVILLE	2	2
SWP MINORITY	3	2

Fraternal Delegate

NY City Comm.	4
Baltimore	3
Buffalo	1
Cleveland	1
Reading	1
West Va	1
Harlem	1
Youth	1
Youngstown	1
National Office	2
National Comm.	20

UNITY AND THE EPC - Goldman for 45 minutes (See attached "A")  
MCKinney requested 15 minutes to present his views. His request was granted. (See attached "B")

The following participated in the discussion:

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Donaldson, Seattle   | Falk, Youth         |
| Hauser, Cleveland    | Murrain, Buffalo    |
| Beyer, Frisco        | Draper, Los Angeles |
| Findley, Brownsville | Orozco, Frisco      |
| Jenkins, Baltimore   | Howe, Industrial    |
| Judd, NY             | Kimbay, Harlem      |
| Miller, Baltimore    | Gates, NC.          |

Summary - Goldman 30 min.

Motion (Kimbay, Harlem) The AWC recommends to the PC that it amend its statement on Unity along the following lines: While the question of unity is no longer an immediate issue as it was in February and should no longer be kept at the forefront of our program, the

WP should nevertheless continue its fight for unity.

That it spell out the rights and conditions on the basis of which a fruitful unity will be possible.

That it place the blame for nonachievement of unity on the SWP leadership's failure to guarantee these minimum conditions which alone can result in a lasting unity.

14 for - 15 against - 2 abstentions

Motion (Howe) That we reverse our line on unity.

3 for - 31 against - 1 abstention

Motion (McKinney) (1) In view of the concrete political situation in the US and in the world at large, and the clear need for the banner of the WP to remain unfurled, the Party resolves to exert all its efforts toward making the Workers Party, the rallying center for the building of the revolutionary party in the US. Looking to this consummation, the Party resolves to maintain its political integrity, to hold to its organizational independence and separateness. The Party resolves to propagate its theoretical principles and its political ideas and program, to advance its organizational principles in order to win the workers and toilers to its own banner, and to defeat its opponents by the superiority of its program and its effectiveness in the class struggle.

Basing ourselves on the concrete political situation as the Party has analysed it, for the US and for the world; and on the real situation in the 4th International, we affirm and take cognizance of the fact that the US is and will remain the center of world political and economic activity. The accompaniment to this is the strategic importance of the proletariat in the US. The organization of the workers of the world depend upon and will wait upon the political leadership of the powerful and politically educated American working class.

This determines for us our role and our place. This is a call to our Party to assume the leadership in this development and indicates the responsibilities we must assume. This means nothing less than that the WP establish itself a political center. We establish the Party as such a center here in the US and seek the adherence of all those individuals and groups which are in substantial agreement with the theoretical, political and organizational principles of the WP.

In order to project the Party into this situation and in order that the Party may fulfill this mission without political and organizational restriction and constraint, we reverse on the question of unification with the SWP. This shall include all unity commitments to the IEC, the SWP and the commitment to the IEC on conditions for attending the EPC.

To inform the IEC of this decision. At the same time to demand that the WP be admitted to the EPC with full parliamentary, political and organizational rights.

Should the IEC refuse full participation to the WP on the above conditions, the WP will refrain from participation in the EPC.

0 for - 31 against - 5 abstentions

NC Resolution on Unity - 26 for - 5 against - 4 abstentions.

TASKS OF THE PARTY - Shachtman - 45 minutes (See attached "C")  
34 for 1 abstention (Cleve. amend. - Carried - "D")

UAW FRACTION MEETING REPORT - Widick for 15 minutes

ADJOURNMENT

SUNDAY November 9, 1947

Conference convened at 9:30 . Because of small attendance it was decided to postpone discussion on UAW fraction report until after Youth Report.

YOUTH ORGANIZATION - Falk 30 minutes

Motion: (Gannick) Where it is acceptable to the elected delegates they allow their youth representative to take the floor. Carried.

The following comrades participated in the discussion:

Kidd, Seattle	Dean, NY
Lieberman	Billy, Detroit
Young, Buffalo	Hauser, Cleveland
Martin, Chicago	Phyllis, NY
Harper, Phila	Bob, Frisco
Morgan, Seattle	Bea Gray, NY

UAW FRACTION MEETING REPORT - Widick - 15 minutes

Widick summarized the fraction meeting and the following participated in the discussion:

Noah, Industrial	Hillyer, Chicago
Harper, Phila	Bern, NC
Gannick, Buffalo	Murrain, Buffalo
Beyer, Frisco	O'Connor, Frisco
Hauser, Cleveland	Ferris, Buffalo

ORGANIZATION REPORT - Gould - 75 minutes (See attached "E")

Changes in personnel:

Berg to Chicago  
 Draper & Russell to NY  
 Gates & Bell to Los Angeles  
 Fenwick to Newark  
 McDermott to West Virginia  
 Stan and Tova Lauren to Pittsburgh

Supplementary report on Press - Bern

Amendment by Beyer to Program of Action - that the section of document dealing with the organization of the trade union department be amended to read "move the UAW fraction or center of UAW fraction to Detroit". Referred to Political Committee.

Amendment to Section III on Popular Literature by Corbin:

That we place high on the priority list a pamphlet, simply written, slanted primarily toward industrial workers, tying together our transitional program with our socialist perspective, and showing the road which we think open to the American working class to a socialist society. This pamphlet would not only present transitional demands to the working class but show how, thru organizing into real rank and file groups in the unions, fighting for transitional demands, we end up with a new society. In short, its a "straight from the shoulder" pamphlet explaining what we are trying to do and how, in the union movement and our perspective for the American working class.

The pamphlet would be in a sense a programmatic statement and useful in all fields of party work. Referred to PC.

Motion: (Brad) Postpone fund drive one month. Defeated  
" " To conduct a national FEPC campaign. Carried.

Report on Program of Action - Carried  
Report on Press - Carried

The conference closed with the following remarks by Comrade Shachtman and the singing of the International.

Comrade Shachtman - Let me announce the official decision of all the comrades of the SWP Minority group to join the Workers Party and the decision of our National Committee to accept them as members with full rights. I am very happy to take this opportunity on the part of all of us to extend to these comrades and other members of the SWP who have joined us in the last weeks the warmest fraternal welcome.

I feel that this conference marks a real turning point for our Party. As Comrade Goldman said the mythology so built up by the SWP about its party which had such an effect on its membership and such a different effect upon our membership is now in ruins dispersed by the cold air of reality. Mythology always gives way to the advance of science which is based upon truth.

We note with satisfaction the resolution of our militants in the UAW, the first national meeting of our fraction of 35 delegates.

We have seen this general conference now being concluded which was living proof that we have a politically educated, growing and active cadre actively participating in the class struggle and presenting the program of our party to wider and wider sections of the people.

We see that for the first time in years the question of a youth movement is being taken up seriously by the party. We know at this conference the question of reinstating the youth movement was not taken with sufficient seriousness, with sufficient confidence that it can be built. We must absolutely build up a youth movement. Even where we don't have youth comrades we must assign other comrades to try in the next period to provide the party with this good right arm which it now lacks. We cannot and must not ignore this problem.

(Balance of remarks not recorded)

(1)

ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 8, 1947

Organization of the Conference	*10-11	60
Roll Call		
Seating Minority Delegates		
Agenda, Time Schedule, Rules Committee		

REPORTS FROM THE PLENUM

I. Unity & EPC - Goldman		45
	LUNCH	90
Discussion (7 min)	*1:30-4:30	180
Summary		30
Voting		
	DINNER	60
II. Tasks of the Party - Shachtman	*6:45	45
Discussion - (7 min)		180
Summary		30
Voting		

Sunday, November 9, 1947

Roll Call	*9-9:30	30
III. Program of Action - Gould		75
Discussion - (7 min)		
	Lunch	
Discussion	*1:30-3:30	180
Summary		30
Voting		
IV. Report on UAW Fraction Meeting - Widick		30
Discussion - (5 min)		60
Summary		15
	DINNER	
V. Youth Organization - Falk	*8:30-9	30
Discussion (5 min)		60
Summary		30

ADJOURNMENT

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The following changes in the agenda were approved by the Conference:

Discussion on Unity and EPC	150
Lunch	60
Discussion on Tasks of Party	150
UAW Fraction Report -	15
Discussion	30
Youth Organization - changed to first point on agenda Sunday.	
Discussion on Program of Action	150

## RULES FOR ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE

1. Conference sessions shall begin at 10AM Saturday and at 9AM Sunday. The Conference shall adjourn at no later than 11 PM each day.
2. There shall be a Presiding Committee of five elected by the Conference from among the regular delegates, except for one member who shall be designated by the National Committee from among its members.  
  
The Presiding Committee shall have general charge of the procedure of the Conference and shall select the Chairman for the Conference sessions.
3. Only regular delegates and fraternal delegates shall be entitled to the floor.
4. Voting shall be by show of hands.
5. The speaking time for reporters and delegates shall be as adopted in the Conference schedule.
6. No delegate may get the floor the second time until after all delegates who have not spoken and who desire the floor have had a chance to speak.
7. A session of the Conference is the period between roll call and recess for meals.
8. If a regular delegate has not been seated by the conclusion of the roll call the alternate who has been seated shall remain seated for the session.
9. There shall be a Credentials Committee of three, one member of which shall be designated by the National Committee.