

Feb 22, 1971

New York

Dear Joe and Barry;

A big dilemma over here--whether to light the fire or not. It hardly seems worthwhile but it is damnably cold. Solved it last night by lighting it--but what to do tonight?

The big development is the split in the Ligue Communiste and the repercussions that it is certain to have in the Italian movement.

Among the pile of correspondence that we are supposed to read before the meeting I found a copy of a printed IC internal bulletin. From a hasty scan I gathered that the leadership was having trouble with a minority tendency whose contributions to the ~~discussions~~ pre convention discussion were considered of such a character as tending to take it outside of the party. Charlier grabbed it, I must say nothing is a lonely copy so I never had a chance to read it. However at one point in the meeting a phone call came in from Paris to the effect that the split had taken place.

Here is what I recall of it;

At a mass membership meeting in Paris attended by about 1,000 the Greek ~~leader~~ leaderhip that had opposed affiliation with the FI prior to the last World Congress launched an attack against both the Ligue Communiste and the FI as being right wing and then walked out with about 250 supporters.

According to Sender they have taken half the university student membership and 1/3rd the high school membership. Their forces are concentrated in Paris, Rouen and Marseilles. They have connections in France with La Voie Communiste and Groupe 66 in Marseilles. They also have international connections--a group of our late Italian comrade Ilario and a group in Spain around a paper Bandiera Rosa headed by a Borja(sp). They were reported to have had about 25% of the Ligue Communiste membership at the last congress and are now estimated to have about 10% of the ~~membership~~ present membership. Livio considered the matter to be of very grave significance to the Italian section. I gather that Ilario has 100 to 200 members in Milan and has been making modest connections ~~from that base elsewhere~~. I gather that we have almost nothing in this key Milan area.

The general appreciation of this tendency both in France and internationally is that it is capitulationist to Maoism, adaptationist to Maoism and that it is a oneist in the concept of the building of the party.

There was really no discussion on this development--there was a motion that the French prepare a simple and popular statement for Rouge. At one point it was interesting to hear Livio relate an experience with the Ilario group. We were apparently participating in a united demonstration with other forces and Ilario's supporters were trying to provoke the police as against Livio's line of building a mass action.

What the defection of this spontaneist force means for the ~~future~~ future evolution of La Ligue Communiste, the IC and of course the whole international including the coming congress I will leave at this time to your speculation.

The IMG was tied up in a Spartacus conference this weekend so nothing was said about my attack on Red Mole. None of the documents for the IMG convention are out so far and it is now proposed to postpone it from Easter on to Whitsun which I gather is May 29-30-31. Tariq will not be there. He is taking a jaunt to Pakistan of a limited duration and preliminary to making a harder decision on where he is to work. Alan reported that Healy's trade union operation had a conference which according to the daily press attracted over 4,000. While polls show labor has increased its popular majority over the Tories from 4.5 to 7.5 the IMG has published a leaflet on the Tory anti-labor offensive which attacks the idea of a Labor party government with a slogan-for a workers government based on Democratic trade unions. A big TUC rally is being held in Trafalgar Square Sunday so I will send in an article in a day or so on Britain

This meeting seemed to me ~~much~~ more than any others that I attended to lack any focus, meaning or purposes. Lots and lots of little bits of information. It seems that we are making real progress in Germany--but the Austrian operation had blown up again. The coming issue of Quatrieme was discussed. Amazing--Pierre makes no mention of our Quebec resolution which under my pressure they agreed to publish back in September and October. He doesn't even make any explanation other than that he doesn't actually have in his own hands a copy--although Alain has a copy and Ernest said he had a copy.

Naturally I was asked to take the minutes. If there is anything else of importance as I go through my notes I will let you know. Here are a couple of addresses

The Japanese Revolutionary Communist League sent is a new address for publications, booklets etc; ~~Togeshob??~~
6/8 Tobunsha
telephone 03-291-9727 Sarugakuchō, 2-7-9-
neither I nor anyone else Chiyosaku, Tokyo
could make out the two letters
that I have marked ??

Luxembourg address

LCR
7 rue Victor Hugo
Luxembourg, Grande-Duché de Luxembourg

Unity Movement of South Africa
C.T. Brecker, V.K. Ntshona
1 Caterham Road, Lewisham
England

The Feb 20-21 Herald Tribune reports 20 arrests in SA--"as far as newsmen could determine the 20 detained were either members of the Unity Movement or the African Peoples Democratic Union."

Ernest has pressed on me the task of writing up an article for the world press on recent developments in the Philippines (he has received a pile of clippings from the bourgeois press) I told him that it was ridiculous and that you in the US had connections with Philippine leftists on the West Coast. Are you acquainted with the facts of a big student struggle in early February and are you carrying anything on it in ICP shortly?

fraternally

Alan has a tape of the class on the FI given by Tariq in London wherein he attacks the SWP and USA. I gather it was public--Pierre attended and said nothing. Will get a copy and send to you

Rosa