

## Minutes NCNP Board Meeting: 11/12 - 11/13, 1966

Following are the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board of the National Conference for New Politics held in New York City on November 12th and 13th, 1966.

Present were: Paul Booth, Jane Buchenholz, William Coffin, June Dagnan, Ivanhoe Donaldson, Gregory Finger, Warren Hinckle, Sandy Lee (Grey proxy), Seymour Melman, Lucy Montgomery, Martin Peretz, Sumner Rosen, Robert Scheer, Robert Schwartz, Benjamin Spock, Marc Stone, Monroe Wasch, Arthur Waskow, Lee Webb, and Henry Weinberg.

Much of the time of this meeting was spent discussing the substantive issues facing new politics. Below is a summary of the specific programs decided upon for NCNP. A list of the resolutions is appended.

### FUND RAISING

A fund raising committee of three was established (Jane Buchenholz, Theresa Liss, and Peter Weiss). Their job is to investigate ideas and set up a plan for an overall fund raising program that would hopefully not need the large capital layout that NCNP has had to provide thus far in fund raising plans. Some suggestions were: setting up a tax exempt committee for NCNP; a big do with performers committed our way; or an evening with Fullbright at Carnegie Hall. Though a committee has been set up for fund raising, it was suggested that all Board and Council members take a much more active role in fund raising and not let the burden fall on one or two people on the East coast.

In the future our fund raising tact should take on a more positive tone. NCNP should concentrate less on attacking Johnson and more on our positive points-- we are the only national group which combines the ideas of peace, civil rights and an effective war on poverty. Tell people specifically where our money goes on the local level.

### REGIONAL STRUCTURE

NCNP should isolate the regions (which will be divided geographically) that it wants to work in: i.e. areas where it is possible to obtain saleable results (victories); areas where elections were held with new politics candidates and an effort needs to be made to keep the coalitions formed from dying; and big cities with conservative leadership such as in Los Angeles.

The regions will be autonomous and will support themselves and organizers where at all possible. The regions will decide the tactics to be used in organizing coalitions, while we will provide a nationally defined program with which they can identify. We will hire 2 additional field organizers (to make a total of 3) to help set up regional conferences which may or may not affiliate themselves with NCNP as they choose. These conferences are to be held before the National Convention which is scheduled for the spring of '67. During the weeks that the regional meetings will be held, the Board will meet frequently and expand to pick up representatives from the regional meetings. Each region is permitted to elect 2 members to the Board of NCNP.

It was the feeling of the group that the regional meetings should be open ended both right and left. The main emphasis of the organizers should be on getting to the rank and file people who have worked on campaigns and in the movements. NCNP can be the umbrella under which these groups can gather, and still air out real political differences.

### NATIONAL CONVENTION

It was decided that the National Convention be moved up to late spring or early summer of '67 to allow the regions to have their meetings before the Convention. The mid-west was chosen as the site for the Convention so that people from the West coast as well as the East coast could attend. It will preferably be held at a university campus during a recess.

The keynote speaker should be a person who is familiar with and concerned with the problems with which NCNP is concerned. He should be able to point out these problems and what has to be resolved. He has to emphasize the work that is needed to move forward. "Name" people can be on a panel or general debate where they can cross swords.

A planning committee was set up for the substantive planning of the convention. Mike Wood, chairman, Lucy Montgomery, Dr. Spock, Paul Booth and Arthur Waskow are on the committee. They are to work on setting up of discussion groups, choice of speakers, call for working papers, etc.

Another planning committee was given the job of making the physical arrangements necessary for the Convention. They are: Mike Wood, chairman, Lucy Montgomery, Louise Boulding, David Finnigan and Arthur Waskow.

#### PUBLICATIONS AND SPEAKERS BUREAU

INTER/CHANGE should be a useful organizers tool with information on how to do research and how to organize. It should go to a broad list of people across the country including names of people Board and Council members submit and to candidates who have follow up programs.

A felt need that INTER/CHANGE and a separate publication can fill is the need for information about campaign material. An issue of INTER/CHANGE will have details of how to go about getting campaign material-- buttons, bumper stickers, etc. A separate publication will have samples of good and bad campaign literature. The national office is commissioned to gather the material needed from campaigns. Board and Council members are requested to send campaign literature from their areas to the national office.

A kit should be prepared that would have the history of significant information about movements around the country i.e. the Scheer campaign, Lowndes County, MFDP, etc. This kit could be put together through the call for working papers for the Convention.

Marc Stone and Paul Booth will work together on a speakers brochure which will include pertinent information on Board and Council members and other people willing to speak for NCNP.

#### RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were moved, seconded and carried.

- \* to form a three man committee to deal with the specific problems of fund raising. Jane Buchenholz, Teresa Liss, and Peter Weiss were nominated for the Committee.
- \* that Bob Scheer prepare for Sunday's meeting his proposal for regional meetings and their connection with the National Convention.
- \* that Marc Stone deal with the specific problems of the press concerning regional meetings and their connection with NCNP making sure to clarify to the press that the regional groups are autonomous.
- \* that Arthur Waskow extract from the preamble a call to the National Convention.
- \* that Marc Stone investigate the idea of a professional ad agency putting together a brochure of the ideal samples of campaign material.
- \* that we adopt the Scheer resolution with changes for regional meetings.
- \* that Lee Webb be made a member of the steering committee.
- \* that Bob Scheer and Bob Schwartz form a committee of two to work out wording for a call to the National Convention using the Statement of Purpose and the Preamble.



the Appalachian Associates, Don West's program to establish a school for mountain young people in West Virginia. Anne said the criterion used in deciding which projects to terminate when funds were short was that with its limited resources and shortage of funds, SCEF could not afford to support projects designed for one state or one community alone, as valuable as they might be. The GROW project was continued both because it was a commitment made prior to other projects and also because it is an area-wide program, designed to operate throughout the Deep South, as the Mountain Project is designed to operate throughout the Appalachian South.

COMMENTS ON THE LAUREL, MISS. STRIKE: Victoria Gray spoke briefly on the strike, and thought that the people are confused and not making any real progress. (The Masonite strike involves white strike leaders; black workers who are disenchanted with the union and who feel they have no hope for equality within the union; and the company which is seen as beginning to break the strike. Mrs. Gray said there has been some dialogue between black and white workers but no effective concessions or solutions.)

REPORT OF PEACE PROJECT: Nancy Hodes who works on this project was unable to attend the meeting because of commitments on a "peace tour" in North Carolina. Her written report was presented and was mailed to all board members soon after the meeting. Anne briefed us on the background of Nancy who had lived some years in China and is uniquely equipped to bridge the China-U.S. understanding-gap.

REPORT OF SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PROJECT: Suzanne Crowell presented the report, copies of which were sent to the board after the meeting. In addition to the written report, she talked about the critical issue of strip-mining, and its impact on the people. She reported that Ratliff, who prosecuted the McSurelys and Bradens for sedition, was defeated in his race for lieutenant-governor of Kentucky in the November election---lost his own Pike County and almost lost his own precinct. Carl reported on the sequel to the sedition case in which the McClellan Committee in Washington has subpoenaed the material taken from the McSurelys and Joe Mulloy in the Pike County raids. SCEF is fighting this effort in the courts and will carry that fight to the U.S. Supreme Court if necessary. There is a parallel between this effort of a congressional committee to obtain movement material with the actions of Sen. Eastland in stealing the SCEF records that were originally seized by state authorities in Louisiana.

Printed material produced by personnel of the Mountain Project was distributed and later mailed to the board. This included: "Free School Lunches --- For Your Children?", "Bige Hensely, Charles Engle, Clayton Turner, Herb Stacey --- Four Kentucky Miners Face Prison Terms", "A Petition for Clemency" for the four listed above, "Common Group Problems", "Hang-Ups," and others in the SCEF Organizers' Library series.

ANTI-HUAC PROJECT: Barbara Flynn submitted her written report which was mailed to the board. She noted that at least three congressional committees are now operating to suppress civil liberties and rights: HUAC, the Eastland Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, and the McClellan Committee which is actually the same as the old Senate committee headed by Joe McCarthy. The McClellan Committee's stated purpose is to investigate the uprisings in our cities but so far it has been used only to attack the movement and blame movement people for the disturbances. Barbara explained that her work this year would go beyond just educating people about HUAC but would be an attempt to organize fight-back against all forms of repression.

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The meeting reopened at 8 p.m. A panel of the following persons was set up to lead a discussion of the issues that were presented at the beginning of the meeting: Ben Smith on "Independent Political Activity"; Margaret Rigg on "Informing the Uninformed"; Victoria Gray and Lawrence Guyot on "Counter-Attack to Eastland;" and Joy Fenston on "Aftermath of the Uprising in Nashville."

Ben Smith: Discussed his campaign in New Orleans for the state legislature. 1948 was the last independent political campaign in Louisiana. Smith campaigned on realistic issues, including the war in Vietnam and his opposing view. He is positive and optimistic and feels the importance of having candidates of this type entering elections.

Margaret Rigg: Reported on how her teaching career in a college enables her to generate interest and involvement in pressing issues concerning freedom and civil rights in both local and broader areas. (1) She works with students by exposing them to ideas and materials, and she encourages them, as artists, to contribute to a better community. (2) She communicates with neighbors verbally to keep them informed of interactions between students, Negroes and community. (3) She participates in organizing ACLU meetings, and seeks other persons who may have demonstrated in some show of interest to join in such civil liberties activities, so that not only will the organization be strengthened but the individuals' libertarian attitudes are strengthened. (4) She constantly communicates with other faculty members of the school so as to engender social action on their part.

Victoria Gray: Gave a historical account of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, pointing out that it had been prevented in 1964 from being seated at the Atlantic City Democratic Convention, and on its return court orders were sought to prevent the use of the name "Democratic" in its name. However, notwithstanding the attacks, the MFDP has announced that it would return to the 1968 convention. The MFDP has again come under censure of the established Democratic Party when Sen. Eastland reported on the floor of Congress that there has been correspondence between the NPC and MFDP--which correspondence he had stolen.

Larry Guyot added that it was necessary for the people to take the brunt of the anti-communist attack, and that they should build leadership now for future campaigns. He encouraged the setting up of meetings and involving masses of people. He also advocated attacking problems of the state, and attacking them directly and objectively.

Joy Fenston: In her reporting of the "riots" in Nashville, Tenn., in April, 1967, she termed the word "riots" a misnomer. The police shot and injured, clubbed and tear-bombed the citizens, and the picture of the situation, as reported in the press, was rationally contradicted by her.

Tom Armstrong had been invited by Buford Posey to address us this evening, and he did, attending with his wife.

Mr. Armstrong has been a reporter and civil rights worker since 1945 in Jackson, Miss., and being black and militant he experienced much hardship. He said he was compelled to take strong militant action because of the undue pressures inflicted by injustice and inhumanity. His early treatment by police and other agencies such as the revenue department, for example, only served to strengthen his commitment to act for freedom and justice.

Following the preceding addresses, the entire board engaged in free discussion on the above pertinent topics. Adjournment of the first day's meeting was approximately 10:30 p.m.

(This concludes the section of the meeting recorded by Roz Laventhal. The remainder of the meeting was recorded by the secretary, Clarice Campbell.)

The SCEF board meeting reassembled about 9 a.m. November 25, 1967.

REPORTS OF STAFF MEMBERS: Joy Fenston reported that the Patriot has completed its first year as an 8-page publication. It is used by the staff as an organizing tool. Anne and Carl have regular columns and staff members act as correspondents. The circulation of 10,500 is commendable but, for more effective work, needs to be increased. Anne Braden called attention to the 25th birthday of the Patriot in December, 1967. She noted that it is rare for a radical publication to survive so long. Mark Suckle of the New York SCEF fund-raising group has suggested an exhibition



of 25 years of Patriot photos. A booklet to promote the Patriot is being prepared.

In addition to written staff reports mentioned previously, a written report was presented from the New York staff and was later mailed to the board. All reports were formally accepted by motion with the understanding that the written reports would be filed and copies sent to the board members.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Dottie Zellner, unable to be present, sent recommendations that each board member organize a fund-raising party in his own locality, name professional people such as doctors and dentists or persons with other skills who might be willing to serve the SCEF staff free of charge, name people with property which could be used instead of cash for bonds, help in other practical ways, and consider himself a front-line fighter against racism in his own community. Moved, seconded and carried that these recommendations be accepted for consideration.

**BAILBONDS:** After a discussion it was moved, seconded and carried that SCEF give publicity to the bond money held by the states. The power structure is making money off some quarter of a million dollars still outstanding in bonds. SCEF has some \$7000 still tied up. A clamor should be raised until all cases involving bonds have been settled and a conclusive audit of bond recoveries made.

**COURT CASES:** Carl Braden reported that when the money is received from the Sourwine verdict (which may require a contempt-of-court action, the staff proposes to set it up as a J.G. Sourwine Memorial Fund, and use it to help fight the new Eastland attack on the MFDP and other groups. It was noted that the above-mentioned verdict clears the way for trial of the SCEF suit against Sourwine, who is counsel for the Eastland committee and that this trial should proceed within the next few months. Depositions already taken in this case have further implicated Eastland himself in the conspiracy to steal SCEF's records, the lawyers report. The Supreme Court had upheld SCEF's right to sue Sourwine but not Eastland.

Other cases pending or recently settled which involve SCEF people: the McSurely-Ratliff case, in which the McClellan Committee has now subpoenaed material taken in the Pike County, Ky. raids; the John Salter case in Mississippi, still pending; the Louisville cases in which SCEF along with other groups went to federal court to challenge the local and state laws used to arrest open housing demonstrators last spring. This case was finally won and all the laws used during the demonstrations were declared unconstitutional. The case in Knoxville against three former SCEF staff members who rode integrated in an auto has been dropped.

**RESIGNATIONS:** Bishop C. Ewbank tucker resigned from the SCEF board at the peak of the Louisville open housing demonstrations. In a press conference he expressed his opposition to the open housing fight in Louisville and his opposition to the presence of so-called "outside agitators" in the city. (These were SCLC organizers.) He announced his resignation from the SCEF board at this press conference. John Beecher resigned because he has moved to Massachusetts. Both resignations were accepted with regret.

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** There are openings for new members but the executive directors stressed the need for personal contacts before such elections to assure that new members realize the commitment they are making. Anyone having suggestions for new members on the board should refer the names to Carl or Anne Braden.

**MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** Jim Dombrowki suggested that the committee should either be used or disbanded. Recommendations regarding this committee should be brought to the next meeting.

**RESERVE INVESTMENT FLOOR:** Because the minutes of the April, 1967 meeting state the reserve investment floor should be at least \$20,000, it was moved, seconded and carried that the subsequent action of the board by written ballot to lower the floor to \$7000 be hereby confirmed with the understanding that the floor will be restored to \$20,000 as soon as possible.

SEMINAR: Anne Braden reported that the seminar on law enforcement and the court school decision was not held as voted at the April, 1967, meeting because of inadequate finances and manpower.

REPORT ON WHAT THE WHITE SOUTH CAN DO: The drafting committee's report was discussed by the board. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the staff revise the suggestions in line with the discussion. The re-write will be submitted to the drafting committee and to the executive board for approval before final printing.

BLACK POWER: It was moved, seconded, and carried that Anne Braden re-write with the authority of the board the pamphlet on Black Power formerly done in the name of the staff only.

RESOLUTIONS: The staff was asked to enunciate the following SCEF positions:

1. Support of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in its efforts to win seats at the Democratic National Convention in 1968.
2. Opposition to recent outbreaks of violence in Mississippi and concern for the political and social climate which encourages such violence. Telegrams were ordered sent to the governor and attorney-general of Mississippi.
3. Opposition to irresponsible use of white power which provokes riots.
4. Opposition to the McClellan Committee which apparently seeks to revive McCarthyism.
5. Opposition to the reclassification as 1-A of young men who protest the war, thus making a prison camp out of Vietnam.
6. Proposal that the national political parties be urged to incorporate a peace plan in their platforms.

SPRING MEETING: Moved, seconded, and carried that the next meeting be held the last weekend of April, 1968, in the Atlanta area if possible.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at noon, November 5, 1967. Shuttlesworth adjourned the meeting at

Respectfully submitted,

Clarice Campbell,  
Secretary.