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3/16/68

Brief description of activity or material

NOMDS "theory meeting" held at 528 St.

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3/19/68

On the afternoon of 3/16/68, at the apartment of ED CLARK, 528 St. Philip St., New Orleans, La., a meeting of NOMDS was held. This meeting was called a "theory meeting." The purpose of the meeting was to determine what direction NOMDS would take in the future.

Those in attendance at the meeting included:

ED CLARK

LARRY GRAY

MARIMAR BENITEZ

ED CAMPBELL

GAIL CAMPBELL

MURRAY LEVY

MORT THOMAS

SU SU HARE

JOHN (LNU), SU SU HARE's boyfriend

DOTTIE ZELLNER

ERIC GORDON

An unknown white male with gold-rim glasses and blonde hair, fair complexion, approximately 23 years of age

The meeting started at approximately 4:00 PM and lasted until 6:00 PM. It was chaired by ED CLARK. Discussion centered around where NOMDS is going and the relationship of NOMDS with other leftist organizations in the area.

The idea for the meeting was suggested by ERIC GORDON. He pointed out that the meeting was necessary because of the factionalism in NOMDS. He pointed out that the members of the different factions should bring out their true feelings.

According to source, within the group there are individuals who identify with the PLP, CPUSA, and there are those who are anarchists.

Those who are oriented towards the PLP include ED CLARK, ERIC GORDON, MORT THOMAS and FRED LACEY. Those who are CPUSA members are ED and GAIL CAMPBELL. Those who are anarchists include BOB HEAD, DARLENE FIFE, MARINAR BENITEZ, FRED LACEY and ERIC GORDON (GORDON and LACEY may properly be included in both the PLP group and the latter group).

Nothing definite was decided at the meeting and it is to be noted that NOMDS is a microcosm of the left, for all leftist viewpoints are represented in NOMDS.

ED CLARK, who was the most organized person at the meeting, stated that NOMDS should decide what their relationship will be towards TUSDS. CLARK is unhappy because CATHY CADE is the present chairman of TUSDS.

(After the meeting, MARINAR BENITEZ explained that several years ago ED CLARK, ED DUBINSKY and CATHY CADE lived together in New Orleans. DUBINSKY, CADE and CLARK reflect very different approaches to politics. CADE and DUBINSKY are consensus anarchists; they both do not follow any line and do

not believe in any form of government. They are, however, extreme in their radicalism. DUBINSKY and CADE feel that all should agree before any action can be taken. They feel that each individual in a leftist group is important and that each person should agree with all others before anything is done.

ED CLARK on the other hand feels that there must be a dogmatic line that should be followed. He feels that there must be one person who functions as a leader and there must be a party dogma.

Because of these differences, which are extremely important to CLARK, CADE and DUBINSKY, CLARK and CADE are enemies.

ERIC GORDON feels as does ED CLARK regarding this matter; however, he is definitely not an enemy of DUBINSKY or CADE. GORDON also recognizes that there must be one person acting as a leader and that there must be a party line.)

CLARK indicated at the meeting that he preferred that NOMDS not cooperate with TUSDS in the future. In fact, when the NOMDS members heard that CATHY CADE had been elected as TUSDS chairman, they believed that ERIC GORDON "sold out" TUSDS to the other faction.

At the meeting GORDON tried to explain that he had not "sold out" TUSDS. He pointed out that it was dangerous for him to be so closely associated with the image of TUSDS. He argued that to survive TUSDS had to broaden its leadership base. Most NOMDS members felt that DUBINSKY and CADE came in to take over control of TUSDS.

ED CLARK argued that both DUBINSKY and CADE are ineffective.

Those at the meeting also discussed an incident that occurred at the recent PETE SEEGR concert in New Orleans. BOB HEAD stated that NOMDS had been betrayed by those organizing the function. He stated that the organizers conformed to the rules of the establishment, for those in attendance were required to wear suits and there were "NO SMOKING" signs in the theater. During the concert BOB HEAD got up and made a speech to the audience. He remarked that the whole thing was a mistake and that all there should leave. He also argued at this meeting that the entire concert had no political significance.

At the meeting DOTTIE ZELLNER talked for approximately 20 minutes and objected/HEAD's behavior at the concert. She stated that the purpose of the concert was to make money for SCEF and GROW. Other members at the meeting sympathized with BOB HEAD whom they consider an uncompromising person, but they agreed with DOTTIE ZELLNER. ZELLNER stated that in the future HEAD's behavior could be extremely harmful to their cause.

ZELLNER commented that she had been working in the movement for 13 years; and she argued that occasionally one must compromise and do things that are distasteful. She stated that the ends justifies the means.

ZELLNER commented regarding the SCEF house which was recently purchased at 713 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans. She stated that this house will eventually be the headquarters for GROW. ZELLNER is planning six week training sessions which will be modeled after Chicago Join in Chicago, Ill. After completing these training sessions, individuals will be sent to the poor areas in the New Orleans area.

ZELLNER stated that she is having difficulty obtaining money and was pleasantly surprised at the success of the PETE SEEGER concert.

ZELLNER made a very impressive appearance at the meeting and spoke with intelligence and logic. Based upon her statements, it was obvious that she spoke from experience.

BOB HEAD, who lives in New Orleans with DARLENE FIFE, informed the group that DARLENE has been conferring at length with MARK LANE. He stated that LANE is extremely close to New Orleans District Attorney JIM GARRISON and DARLENE is now working for the "National Guardian" newspaper in New York City and will cover the SHAW trial. FIFE has a press card issued by the above paper.

LANE informed FIFE that the "right wing" in New Orleans is now against GARRISON and that he is willing to accept any support from the left. HEAD stated that it is essential that NOMDS decide whether or not they will support GARRISON.

All at the meeting indicated that they believe that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President KENNEDY, but they are not sure whether GARRISON is doing the right thing. No decision was made; however, the concensus was that they should support GARRISON merely because he is appealing to the left.

At the meeting several comments were made regarding the SPL and CPUSA.

It is the concensus among NOMDS members that the SPL is hated. Members pointed out that they come on "too strong" and NOMDS will not support them. Members at the meeting agreed that the Spartacists are too destructive and that they "turn people off." When SPL members approach a leftist they immediately attempt to recruit him. This tactic is ineffective.

Regarding CPUSA, ED CAMPBELL stated that the CP in Louisiana is extremely small and not strong enough to warrant NOMDS taking a stand on the party.

Regarding TUSDS, the concensus was that NOMDS would help when it can, but that NOMDS does not want to be known as off campus agitators.