

November 1, 1975

To Political Committee members:

We'll discuss the letter below at the next Political Committee meeting. You have already received a copy of Gellert's letter.

Doug Jenness

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

Stu Singer

Houston

Dear Stu,

Enclosed is a copy of a letter the Political Committee received from Peter Gellert, a former member of the Houston branch who has applied for readmission to the party.

Comrade Gellert inquires about the party's policy in respect to the distribution of our press. We decided at our convention to launch a sales campaign and sub drive for the Militant and support the Young Socialist Alliance's efforts to increase the circulation of the Young Socialist. We reaffirmed the responsibility that we've accepted since 1963 of making Intercontinental Press widely available, thus making its publication economically feasible.

This is the only national policy we've established. Concrete division of labor in carrying this out is of course a branch decision. Any proposals of Comrade Gellert for most effectively implementing this policy would be more properly made to the Houston branch leadership.

Comrade Gellert raises the question of Inprecor. None of our bookstores have refused to carry Inprecor, the number depending on the demand. In addition branch bookstores often have copies of several publications of the world movement available.

The decision of the Houston branch to utilize a publication of one of the Mexican sympathizing groups of the Fourth International to reach Spanish-speaking readers isn't against any national decisions or policies. To the contrary, we salute your initiative and look forward to a report on the results we can share with the other branches that are in areas with a large Spanish-speaking population.

If it would be helpful, I suggest that you show Comrade Gellert this letter the next time you meet with him.

Comradely,

s/Doug Jenness
for the Political Committee

Houston, Tx 77019
October ~~21~~ 23, 1975

Political Committee,
Socialist Workers Party
14 Charles Lane
New York, NY 10014

OCT 23 1975

Dear Comrades,

Several weeks ago I noticed that the comrades of the Houston branch were selling and distributing copies of El Socialista, organ of the Mexican Liga Socialista, as part of the branch's campaign work.

Since there has been "problems" in the past with distribution of the press of other sections and sympathizing groups, including the distribution of Inprecor, the official organ of the United Secretariat of the FI itself, I inquired of Stu S, the branch organizer, 1) who made the decision to distribute El Socialista, the branch or the National Office 2) whether comrades could similarly distribute Bandera Roja, organ of the GCI, also a Mexican sympathizing section of the FI 3) whether comrades who support the positions of the FI, as adopted by its 10th World Congress and its leadership bodies would be required to circulate El Socialista, inasmuch as this is obviously a way of building the prestige and influence if not the actual organization of the LS (a goal I'm not particularly keen on devoting myself to, given a far better alternative, the GCI)

His answers were (respectively): the branch had made the decision, comrades could NOT distribute BR; and that if requested to, comrades supporting the FI majority would be expected to distribute El Socialista. He added that this is not being done as a factional act or a way of denigrating the GCI but that the branch felt the need for Spanish language papers from Mexico given the interest in Mexican politics in the Chicano community and that the SWP agrees with the analysis of Portugal contained in that particular issue of El Socialista.

In July 1974 when I was attempting, as a member of the branch sales committee, to get the branch to distribute Inprecor, which again, is the official organ of the FI and moreover, was voted for by the SWP's fraternal representatives on the FI leadership bodies, I was told that only the National Office could make such a decision.

Which in fact is the case? What is the policy of the Party towards the distribution of the press of other sections? Are IMT comrades in Houston expected to carry bundles of El Socialista with them as other comrades do?

Finally, as an enthusiastic reader of Inprecor, I'd very much like to see its circulation increased in the U.S. I am not aware of any policy by the Party leadership forbidding its circulation by SWP members, just as I am not aware of any decision by the Party to organize its sale and distribution. Therefore, could you inform me if any decision has in fact been made on this question. If none, I would like to request permission to sell and solicit subs for Inprecor, as part of my regular sales of The Militant.

As you know, I am still not a member of the SWP, however since I'm attempting to operate under the direction and discipline of the Party, I am following this procedure as the correct way as I understand it.

Comradely,

Peter Gilbert

c.c. Inprecor, GCI, IMT