

TO: All Members of the Communist Party, U.S.A.  
FROM: National Organization Department  
SUBJECT: Charges Preferred Against Comrade Paul Novick

Dear Comrades:

At its November 12-14 meeting, the National Committee established a trial committee of nine comrades to hear charges brought by Comrades Claude Lightfoot, Hy Lumer and Jose' Ristorucci, acting as a subcommittee of the Political Committee, against Comrade Paul Novick. The National Committee unanimously agreed to the following proposals of the trial committee:

1. That the committee hold its hearings by February in order to make recommendations on the charges to the February meeting of the National Committee, in accordance with the Party Constitution.
2. That the documents, including the charges, Comrade Novick's reply addressed to the National Committee, and material dealing with this reply, be circulated among the membership as soon as possible.
3. That the National Committee reject Paul Novick's reply because, in addition to other things, it reflects a factional approach in threatening to mobilize Jewish progressive leaders further against the Party's policies on a whole series of questions and because it reflects chauvinist influences in saying that Comrades Lightfoot and Ristorucci are misled by Comrade Lumer and other unnamed "experts who read Yiddish." Comrades Lightfoot and Ristorucci are fully capable of making their own assessments.

In his reply, Comrade Novick would have it appear he has no differences with the Party on policy, save for a difference on the character of the 1967 Six Day War, which he considers no longer relevant. Therefore, he asserts, the reason charges are brought against him is that a small handful of Yiddish-reading "so-called experts" such as Comrade Lumer hate the Morning Freiheit and wish to destroy it, while the great bulk of Jewish progressives support its policies.

Comrade Novick does not argue against Party policy or defend his positions. Rather, he uses a method he has used on other occasions of selecting facts and quotes in an effort to show that the problem is not policy differences but inaccurate information supplied to the

Party by the "few so-called experts."

The present charges follow many years of efforts by the National Committee, the Political Committee, officers of the Party and other members of the Political Committee in many meetings, all conducted in English, with Comrade Novick. Every effort was made to get him to change his mind, to correct his ideological and political errors, or, at least, to prevail on him to abide by democratic centralism and adhere to Party policy in his work with non-Party progressives in and around the Freiheit.

Comrade Novick, from the outset, characterized the 1967 war as a defensive, just war on Israel's part, in the face of the Party's position that the war was one of Israeli aggression, encouraged and supported by U.S. imperialism, aimed at toppling progressive national liberation regimes in Syria and Egypt. At that time, the National Committee strongly criticized Novick's projection of such views. It is just such an estimate of the June, 1967 war which logically leads him to failure to support commitment to complete withdrawal from the occupied territories as required by the U.N. resolution. Instead, while Novick claims to oppose annexation, he misinterprets the resolution to mean withdrawal only to "secure and recognized boundaries."

In early 1969, the National Committee was compelled to address a letter to the clubs criticizing the Freiheit and others for their wrong positions on the Middle East, on Black-Jewish relations and on the situation of the Soviet Jews. Far from having the support of nearly all progressive Jews, as Novick contends, his position represents a tiny minority of the Jewish membership of the Communist Party, so small that not one delegate nominated Novick for re-election as a member of the National Committee at the May, 1969 Convention.

Using his credentials as a prominent Party member, Comrade Novick has contributed substantially to the confusion that exists primarily in non-Party circles in the progressive Jewish organizations, in large measure because these people have had little opportunity to hear the Party's position.

Frequently, Comrade Novick has minimized his differences but in franker moments he has sought to justify them on several grounds. Thus, he asserts that progressive Jewish leaders in Canada, France, as well as certain Communist Parties, have positions "approximately the same" as those of Novick. There is no substantial disagreement

in the world Communist or progressive Jewish movements on the war. But, even if there were, our Party would still make its own decisions and would have every right to demand adherence to them by its own members.

The position of other organizations in no way justifies Novick's claim to the right to dissent from positions of his own party. United front relationships are not permissible within a Marxist-Leninist party; such a party can operate effectively only on the basis of strict disciplined adherence to its decisions by all members. That is why the Party cannot be satisfied with positions which depart from basic Party policy on the grounds that they are better than liberal or Zionist positions.

Nor is there any justification for Novick's maintenance of comradely relationships with the degenerate Mikunis-Sneh group, which has become an appendage of the Meir regime and has long forfeited all right to be called a Communist party. The world Communist movement has completely repudiated this clique and has recognized as the only genuine Marxist-Leninist party in Israel that led by Meir Vilner and Tawfiq Toubi. This party Novick totally rejects.

Novick also argues that it is impossible to take the position the Party advocates because it flies in the face of mass Jewish sentiment and would isolate us from the masses. But this is sheer opportunism. It means that the Party cannot oppose reactionary policies to which the masses are for the moment attracted, that the Party must become a tail rather than a leading force. Mass sentiment can only influence the manner in which positions are presented, but never their basic content.

Novick has made criticism of his policies synonymous with a campaign to destroy the Morning Freiheit. The Party, has, however, behaved in a most responsible manner. It has long refrained from public criticism of the Freiheit and has sought to make it clear that it does not wish its destruction. But the policies which Paul Novick is pursuing will destroy the paper as a progressive Jewish organ. Fulfillment of all the terms of the UN Resolution, including commitment to full withdrawal, is the only possible basis for peace. It will not be possible to unite the Jewish progressive community behind a Freiheit that rejects such a real policy of peace between Arabs

and Jews, a policy which alone can guarantee the existence of the state of Israel.

Despite individual good articles, the Freiheit loses its distinctive character when it "equally" criticizes the aggressor, Israel, and the victims of its aggression. "Even-handed" treatment of racism among Jewish masses and individual expressions of anti-Semitism among some Blacks, reflected in the hesitation shown in branding the Shanker teachers' strike of 1968 as racist, also destroys the paper's progressive character.

In his June 22 letter Novick acknowledges that for ten months the Freiheit had few articles defending Angela Davis and began campaigning only after a New York Party committee met with him. Novick attempts to throw the blame on the Party for this weakness. But who is to blame for the fact that the paper's annual conference in October calls only for a fair trial and bail but fails to demand complete freedom for Angela Davis because she is innocent?

It is not possible to fight anti-Sovieteers effectively while denying that the Soviet Union pursues a Leninist policy with regard to the Soviet Jews or while criticizing in the same breath the trial of the Leningrad plane hijackers and the fascist "trial" of a group of Basques in Franco Spain.

The only policies that can save and build the Freiheit are those of the Communist Party. Only such policies can strengthen the fight against anti-Semitism rather than undermine it, even if unintentionally.

This is some of the background Party members should take into account in considering the charges against Comrade Novick now pending before the National Committee.

Attached are some documents relating to this situation, including Novick's reply to the charges. Some further material documenting the positions taken in the Freiheit will soon be ready.

Comradely,

Hy Lumer

Daniel Rubin  
for the National Organization  
Department