

873 Broadway
New York, N.Y.
March 14, 1969

To All Branch Organizers and Educational Directors:

Dear Comrades:

The concept behind the summer schools -- that there is a need to use the summer months to concentrate on studying the basic principles of our movement -- is more graphically illustrated this year than ever before. Since the end of last summer, the YSA nationally has more than doubled in size, with the bulk of this recruitment in areas where there are party branches. This means that over half of the present YSA members (and some new party members) have never participated in a summer school, or never had the opportunity to concentrate on studying our program in an organized fashion.

The summer schools, which have become an important part of party building educational work, serve to inspire and assimilate into the party young people interested in our politics. But to do this, they must be carefully planned, both in respect to the material covered and the scheduling of classes in relation to other activity. The schools have become a major branch activity during this period, and have to be scheduled accordingly, and participated in as such.

An important aspect of the schools will be drawing individuals throughout each region into a party center for the summer. The Cuba tours, trailblazing, and campaign work can build the schools, and a real effort should be made to draw in serious individuals or groups for the summer period. The YSA National Office will be encouraging isolated YSA locals and at-large members to move to such a center for the summer. Where this move is impossible we will try to give extra help from here in the form of speakers, printed material, and tapes.

The National Education Department is working to offer more aid to the branches than has been available for any previous summer school. You have already received the inventory of available study material. In addition to the study guides, bulletins such as the compilation on Cuba and Farrell Dobbs' collected MILITANT articles on the labor movement are excellent materials around which to organize classes.

The tape library is being reactivated. Until a complete list is available, comrades can buy specific tapes or request a partial list of available tapes on a certain subject from the National Education Department.

There are a number of key areas which are important to study at this time. Comrades can utilize these suggestions in the light of their own local needs.

I. A study of the Transitional Program. The study bulletin containing discussions with Leon Trotsky is currently available from the National Education Department. In addition, the New York branch is having a study class on this subject, and if possible, materials used in the class such as reading lists, individual reports, etc., will be made available to the branches. These can be used as starting points for the study of this important aspect of our program.

II. The basic political and organizational principles of the Trotskyist movement. New books such as THE CASE OF LEON TROTSKY, LETTERS FROM PRISON, and FIFTY YEARS OF WORLD REVOLUTION can be used for both the newest recruit and most experienced comrade. These, along with basic reading such as THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION, THIRD INTERNATIONAL AFTER LENIN, REVOLUTION BETRAYED, IN DEFENSE OF MARXISM, STRUGGLE FOR A PROLETARIAN PARTY, and HISTORY OF AMERICAN TROTSKYISM are the invaluable handbooks of our movement. It is important to remember that most of the young people in the YSA have not studied these basic works in an organized way, and many have not read them.

The bulletins of the World Congress will be available by June 1 and these, along with the International Information Bulletins now available from the National Office can provide the basis for excellent classes.

The party preconvention discussion will be taking place during this period, will complement the schools, and in essence be a part of them. A natural culmination of the summer study period will be the party national convention held over the Labor Day weekend.

The following pamphlets are in the process of being completed and should be available from Merit Publishers in time for the schools. These can be used as supplementary reading, or as the basis for discussions and classes.

- "Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party"
- "Leon Trotsky on Trade Unions"
- "Leon Trotsky on Fascism"
- "Key Problems of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism" (A compilation of articles by Frank, Novack, and Mandel)

As in the past we will be organizing comrades from New York to speak in the various areas. As soon as the details on speakers, schedules, and subjects are available we will let you know. In addition, some branches have comrades who have developed a series of talks on a particular subject or have studied a particular subject in depth. If such comrades in your branch would be available for a few days or a weekend to teach in other areas, please let us know.

Please send us any ideas and suggestions you have, as well as keeping us informed of your summer school plans.

Comradely,
Joyce DeGroot
Joyce DeGroot
Summer School Committee