

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
September 30, 1974

TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

As is our tradition, the policy of the SWP with regard to the conduct of SWP members in the YSA pre-convention discussion has been decided after consultation with the leadership of the YSA. This is because one of the main factors in determining our policy is the needs of the YSA, as determined by the YSA leadership.

Please note the letter sent to all members of the YSA on September 25, 1974, by Rich Finkel, YSA national secretary. (a copy is enclosed). This letter explains why discussion for this YSA convention will be centered around American questions. Comrade Finkel's letter states that "the NEC does not intend to submit or solicit written discussion articles on disputed international questions."

Since this is the view of the YSA leadership, party members in the YSA are not to initiate discussion on disputed international questions at this YSA convention.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a September 18, 1974, letter received from Peter Graumann, and my reply.

Comradely,

Jack Barnes
Jack Barnes
National Secretary

P.O. Box 471 Cooper Station
New York, N.Y. 10003

September 25, 1974

TO ALL MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

As determined by the July National Committee plenum, the pre-convention discussion period for the YSA's fourteenth national convention opens on September 29, 1974 -- 90 days prior to the St. Louis convention, December 28, 1974-January 1, 1975.

The Convention Call states, "The pre-convention discussion bulletin is open to all YSA members on the subjects listed in the agenda or others which they may wish to present for the consideration of the YSA. All material submitted to the pre-convention discussion bulletin must be received in the National Office no later than December 7, 1974." All contributions must be submitted in typed, triple-spaced format and should include title, author and author's local or at-large area.

The central tasks of our upcoming convention will be to assess the American political situation and to chart a course of action for building the YSA in the next year.

The National Executive Committee would like to encourage written contributions on topics such as how the current economic crisis affects youth, the impact of Watergate, the changes in the student movement, new opportunities for the YSA in the labor movement such as CLUW work and strike support activities, the state of the radicalization and recent struggles in the Black community. Other articles on YSA-building activities, such as recruitment classes, campus and high school work, our Watergate lawsuit, sales of the press, youth support for SWP election campaigns, finances and regional work would also be valuable.

The discussion prior to last year's YSA convention occurred during the international discussion period leading up to the World Congress of the Fourth International held last February. Because of this, the YSA devoted a significant portion of its pre-convention discussion bulletin and oral discussion time to the disputed questions within the world Trotskyist movement. At the convention itself, delegates voted on the general line of the key international resolutions submitted to the pre-World Congress discussion bulletin.

The upcoming YSA convention occurs during the post-World Congress period. The international discussion bulletin has been limited to selected theoretical and organizational questions, and a new international pre-World Congress discussion has not been opened. In this situation, the YSA will want to closely follow new International Internal Discussion Bulletins, but there are no new international resolutions that our convention must discuss and decide upon in order to select fraternal observers for a World Congress.

Thus the International Reports indicated in this year's proposed convention agenda will not be analogous to last year's debate, which was intended as a guide for the selection of the YSA's fraternal delegation of observers to the last World Congress. The National Committee plenum placed the point "International Reports" on the proposed convention agenda to indicate our intention to have informational world movement reports which will not be voted on by the convention. The NEC does not intend to submit or solicit written discussion articles on disputed international questions.

The YSA's pre-convention discussion period this year will be most valuable in discussing our current American perspectives. We want to begin now in thinking out our campus and high school perspectives, our tasks in the Black, Puerto Rican and Chicano struggles, and how we can best build the YSA through our support efforts for the 1976 Socialist Workers Party election campaign.

Comradely,
Rich Finkel
Rich Finkel
YSA National Secretary

Peter Graumann
 San Francisco, Ca.
 September 18, 1974

Political Committee, SWP
 14 Charles Lane
 New York, N.Y. 10014

Comrades,

I am writing for clarification of the nature of discipline applying to Socialist Workers party members assigned to political work in the YSA.

I request explanation of the party's policy relating to pre-convention discussion scheduled by the YSA this fall. In some past years, party members were restricted to supporting the SWP's positions within the YSA pre-convention discussions. The 1971 and 1972 YSA conventions are examples of this. During the 1973 pre-convention discussion period, however, this restriction was lifted and YSA/SWP members were given the opportunity to present their own political views--even if they were in disagreement with the positions adopted by the SWP.

I specifically ask for clarification in regard to the following:

- a. Would it be a violation of party discipline for a party member to put forward, in the YSA discussion, positions other than those held by the party on international questions; many of which have been in dispute within the World movement?
- b. If a party comrade disagrees with the YSA N.E.C. Draft political resolution, would it be a violation of discipline for them to oppose this resolution?
- c. Would it be a violation of discipline for a party member to collaborate with non-party members of the YSA in writing discussion bulletin articles?
- d. Should SWP/YSA members contributions to the YSA discussion bulletin be sent to the party national office first for screening? What is the correct procedure?

These questions are especially relevant in that the Control Commission in its report published in the "Material Related To The Split Of The Internationalist Tendency from the Socialist Workers Party" quotes on page 10, paragraph 12 that "party members in all areas of work are bound by party discipline."

To restate the question: how does this quote apply to party comrades who are members of the YSA--in specific to their participation in the YSA pre-convention discussion and discussion bulletins?

Comradely,

s/Peter Graumann

cc: USFI

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
September 30, 1974

Peter Graumann
San Francisco

Dear Comrade Graumann,

We have received your letter of September 18 asking for "clarification of the nature of discipline applying to Socialist Workers Party members assigned to political work in the YSA." More specifically, you requested an "explanation of the party's policy relating to pre-convention discussion scheduled by the YSA this fall."

For this upcoming YSA convention, SWP members who are members of the YSA must conduct themselves in strict accord with the line of the SWP, as decided by the convention votes, and applied by the elected leadership bodies of the SWP. The norms guiding all aspects of the functioning of SWP members in the YSA are explained in the resolution, "The Organizational Character of the Socialist Workers Party," adopted by the 1965 SWP convention and reaffirmed by the August 1973 SWP convention.

As always, SWP members in the YSA who write articles for the YSA preconvention discussion bulletin send them in directly to the YSA national office.

Note the letter to all members of the YSA sent out by Rich Finkel, YSA national secretary, on September 25, 1974. (A copy is enclosed.) This letter explains why discussion for this YSA convention will be centered around American questions. The letter states that "the NEC does not intend to submit or solicit written discussion articles on disputed international questions." Accordingly, party members in the YSA are not to initiate such discussion.

Comrade Finkel also states that according to the agenda, there is time scheduled for informational world movement reports. Under this point on the agenda it is permissible for party members in the YSA to report for any of the tendencies or factions in the world movement, or, if delegates, to speak on behalf of any point of view on disputed international questions without restricting their remarks to the party's position on disputed international questions.

Comradely,

s/ Jack Barnes
National Secretary