

# SYL

socialist youth league

## Discussion Bulletin

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S.Y.L.  
114 WEST 14<sup>th</sup> ST.  
N.Y.C.  
1951

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This bulletin is the first one to be published by the SYL in its pre-convention discussion. It has been late in appearing only because comrades have sent in their reports and discussion articles late. If we are to publish several more bulletins before the convention then articles, resolutions and reports must be sent in soon.

The reports in this issue are by no means a complete picture of the SYL national activities. There are a number of localities which have yet to report. These absent reports should be in the next bulletin.

This bulletin is not for general public sales. It is only for members and close friends of the organization and not to be displayed at literature counters and tables.

If articles are received already stenciled it will facilitate the issuance of future issues. All of the near seventy stencilled pages in this number were cut in New York which took at least one week.

The charge of fifteen cents per copy is to partially defray the cost of mimeographing and mailing. We trust that comrades will send in the proper amount without any special billing.

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE

114 West 14 Street  
New York, N.Y.

May 21, 1951

Convention Call

To All Members Fractions and Units of the SYL

Dear Comrades:

The first National Convention of the Socialist Youth League will be held on June 27-28. This founding convention is being called by the National Bureau of the SYL after consulting the membership of the SYL as to the desirability and timing of such a convention.

The SYL was initiated as a provisional youth affiliate of the Workers Party, now the Independent Socialist League. Of necessity, much of the organizational structure of the SYL was therefore of a provisional nature, and because of this the political and organizational decisions made by the present national committee of the SYL were in the best democratic traditions possible under the circumstances. Today, however, the Socialist Youth League has grown sufficiently in numbers, stability and influence to warrant a national convention and to set up the SYL as a democratically constituted organization.

This founding convention of the SYL will have as one of its tasks the establishment of the democratic structure of the SYL. Delegated comrades will meet nationally for the first time to decide on policy, constitution and elect a national leadership responsible to the convention. The convention will afford us an opportunity to assess our work of the past years, to plan future activities, to democratically discuss and vote on whatever differences may exist within the SYL.

The forces of capitalism and Stalinism are mighty, threatening to throw back culture to a primitive level. It is precisely the seeming invincibility of the forces of war and barbarism which makes the need for an organization of idealistic and educated socialist youth more pressing than ever before. A serious, well attended First National Convention will make possible the growth of the SYL as a significant force for peace, democracy and socialism.

Delegates:

Each SYL unit or fraction is entitled to one regular delegate with full rights to voice and vote for every five members or major fraction thereof. Members of the national committee will be recognized as fraternal delegates with voice but no vote other than a consultative vote. Members of the national committee, however, have the right to run\* regular delegates in their unit or fraction.

\* as

Agenda:

The following proposed agenda can be changed by the national committee or by the convention itself:

1. Convention opened by the National Secretary
  - a. roll call

- b. Adoption of Agenda
  - c. Adoption of Convention Rules
  - d. Election of Convention Committees
2. Reporter from ISL
  3. Constitution
    - Discussion of "3"
  4. Youth and the War Resolution
    - Discussion of "4"
  5. Role and Tasks of the SYL including
    - a) Relation to ISL b) General perspectives c) United Fronts on campus
    - d) SYL work and campus clubs 3) National SYL publication
  6. Report on Anvil and SYL
    - Discussion on "5" and "6"
  7. Unit Reports
    - Discussion of "7"
  8. Resolutions
  9. Election of an SYL National Committee

Forward to a successful First National Convention of the Socialist Youth League.

With socialist Greetings

JULIUS FALK  
National Secretary  
Socialist Youth League

## BERKELEY SYL ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT

### I. Introduction

The Berkeley (University of California) SYL has steadily grown, during a period of three years, to become one of the three most active and influential units in the organization. Since its activity has been based on a special emphasis toward youth work, and since any political or organizational policy must be tested in action, this report will attempt an evaluation of the "Berkeley approach" as well as a survey of membership, stability, growth and campus influence. Only in this manner can a fruitful discussion be initiated.

It must be remembered that although the University of California is a State school with low tuition, and although it is fairly politicalized, the attitude of the administration and the loyalty oath defeat has made functioning for the SYL an extremely difficult problem. Though relatively a "sophisticated" school, this is not the University of Chicago

### II. Campus Functioning

#### A. General Approach

SYL growth depends upon solidly integrated campus fractions. The Berkeley unit looks upon itself as a group for educating revolutionary cadre. The unit therefore demands intensive study, discipline, and hard work. This view has at times impaired the growth of the unit and has produced scholastic difficulties for some comrades, but it has produced people with exceptional order, and has made it possible to actually industrialize and colonize people.

The Berkeley unit has never made use of a front group. Although no political group can have any on-campus rights, the SYL has never used the tactic (important for the Stalinists) of capturing innocent on-campus organizations, but has preferred to function openly off-campus as a local section of a national youth organization.

The unit has been exceptionally aggressive in pushing its political point of view against all comers. This has been done through our frequent street meetings at Sather Gate, the "radical haven" of the University. Through a continuous and bitter political struggle lasting for many years, the SYL has won a decisive political and intellectual victory over all political opponents. All other groups have lost influence, become demoralized, or dropped out of the political picture. Today Sather Gate is known as the property of the SYL. Every other political group appears there only at its intellectual peril.

#### B. Political Organizations

Besides the SYL, there are only two others worth mentioning—the Socialist Club and the Stalinists. The Socialist Club is the youth group of the local East Bay Socialist Party which is in turn a left-wing, third-camp, anti-war section of the SP. Both groups are small, new, and cooperate with us on many points.

The Stalinists have long been the most active and the most powerful group on campus. In 1937 the YCL had over 200 members at Cal., and the local Young Progressives had around the same book membership during the height of the Wallace campaign. Today the Stalinists operate through the Labor Youth League, the Young Progressives, and various "peace" front groups, but they have lost their real predominance and are less influential than the SYL.

Although the SWP, the IWW, the SLP, have attempted again and again to penetrate campus life, they have been unsuccessful. The SYL has only one real opponent--Stalinism. This "opponent" dares not appear openly, and has been bereft of even its front groups by vigilant and merciless SYL attack.

The proof of our influence is our enemies. The SYL is attacked, maligned, threatened, on every hand. The organizer has been bothered by cranks, involved in fist-fights, and personally attacked in the newspaper. A group recently put out a paper attempting to "prove" that the SYL is a "communist-front", and a day hardly goes by when the SYL does not hit the student newspaper. We are no longer merely the anti-Stalinist left-wing group; today we are the political organizatio

C. United Front Berkeley has never looked upon the united front strategy as a panacea; but it has used it constantly and effectively, as conditions allowed, as the best method of political functioning. In a campus which has been weighed down by Stalinist front groups for fifteen years, the unit has raised the consciousness of the average political student to the point where the Stalinists have failed to set up a really effective front for over two years. The unit feels no compunction about openly exposing and destroying Stalinist front groups, and has done so on many occasions.

Over a period of two years many successful united fronts have been held. The most notable one was the United Action Committee for Academic Freedom, which was initiated by the SYL, which took the leading role in the students' struggle against the Regents and the loyalty oath, and which contained 25 on and off-campus organizations at its height. The unit held the Shachtman-Landauer debate jointly with the SDA, the Durant election campaign jointly with the SP, and a recent anti-Franco meeting jointly with the Socialist Club. The justification for united front activity is the results obtained. Because of our leading role in these united fronts the SYL gained as much, if not more, than any other single organization.

D. Socialist Unity and the War. Our united front activity with the Berkeley and Los Angeles socialists, and their acceptance of the anti-war socialist perspective of the SYL-ISL, has led to a general view in favor of socialist unity. Under the overwhelming danger and pressure of the Cold War, the Berkeley Unit initiated a series of conferences with the YPSL, the Libertarians, and other socialists and pacifists. The first conference was held in November 1950 under the joint sponsorship of the LSL and the YPSL, and put out an anti-war statement, signed by all three groups, which has now been printed for use all over the country.

The second conference will be held in Los Angeles on the 26th and 27th of April and will be two days in length. One day will be turned over to educational material completely in line with the general political views of the SYL.

The unit feels that conferences of this nature should be held wherever conditions permit and that they should lead to organic unity between all anti-war socialists who have the general third camp point of view.

E. Elections The unit has run two candidates for student council in the last two years. These people ran openly as socialists and were known throughout the campus as the SYL candidates. Since everyone

else on campus (including the Stalinists) runs as an "independent" the SYL vote was amazingly high.

F. Student Socialist. From an ineffective, poorly written, sectarian little sheet, the S.S. has gradually developed over the years into the voice of socialism and progressive policies on the campus. While at first it was turned out as a mass media, it is now pointed toward the politically advanced section of the campus and is put out in less than 1500 copies. The S.S. is the only regular political organ put out on the campus. It has taken the place of the old Communist Campanile which was turned out for about ten years as the voice of radicalism, but has not appeared for years.

The most important thing the unit has learned is the necessity of an excellent technical job and the importance of regularity of publication. The tone of the SS has become more expository, its articles more interesting and its stand less and less sectarian. The S.S. is today being put out by the newer and less experienced comrades.

G. Labor Action and Anvil. The Berkeley unit has taken Labor Action seriously and has made its name a byword on the Cal. campus. A stand has been set up outside of campus, huge quantities are distributed during registration, and serious attempts are made to sell every sympathizer a student subscription. The intellectual level and general content of Labor Action is excellent and it attracts students.

Anvil, of course, has been an important part of SYL work. It has not, however, become the chief function or overriding consideration of the Unit but has remained subordinated to general political functioning. Anvil by itself should never become a major part of SYL activity.

H. Membership and Periphery. Although the Berkeley unit has a huge periphery its membership remains small. This paradoxical situation is the result of many factors: (1) the revolutionary cadre nature of our orientation, (2) the fact that we must function off-campus as a semi-pariah organization, (3) the tremendous effect of the loyalty oath defeat and the Korean War, (5) the subversive list and its results, and (6) a certain amount of sectarianism and ultimatism in our public approach. All of these factors, except the last, are out of our hands. The last is a fault which we are attempting to change and which should lead to an increase in membership and influence.

III. Regional activity. Besides the factors mentioned above, regional activity has forced the unit to partially withdraw from campus life.

A. West-Coast Units. The unit has expended a tremendous amount of time and effort in spreading the SYL onto other West Coast campuses. This activity has included trips, correspondence, conferences, the Student Socialist, etc., and has seriously impaired the actual growth of the Berkeley Unit.

1. Fresno. In the last year, the Unit has made the 200 mile trip to Fresno about six times. At one time a group of four was set up, but this dissolved. We have recently gotten an excellent worker-student with connections among the agricultural workers, and he should make a unit feasible. Fresno State College, however, is a very reactionary school and great growth cannot be expected.

2. Stanford. We have two people at this "richman's" school and so far little public activity is possible.

3. Oregon State According to the latest reports from Oregon State, a unit should be set up before the SYL Convention. Our friends were able to get a series of meetings for Max Shachtman at Reed College in Portland and have been exceptionally active in student political work.

4. Los Angeles. To get an organization started in Los Angeles has been a major effort of the Berkeley unit. Friends and sympathizers from Los Angeles came to the Anti-War Conference, the Unit has made one trip to LA, and a person has been sent down to help organize the Los Angeles SYL and the 2nd, Anti-War Socialist Youth Conference. In the last analysis the Los Angeles situation is far more fruitful than the Berkeley situation and the possibilities for growth are excellent. There is now a functioning group in L.A. with a solid fraction at Los Angeles City College. The 400 mile trip to Los Angeles is difficult and competent comrades should be colonized as soon as possible.

5. University of Washington. The Berkeley Unit made the 1000 mile trip to Seattle in order to help set up a unit. Two meetings were held near the campus and a beginning was made. Recent information on the Shachtman trip indicates that the Seattle people are making good progress and should be able to set up a functioning unit in short order.

6. Reed College (Portland) Shachtman's Reed College meetings should make the setting up of a unit possible.

7. Other Areas. Although Berkeley has been active for over three years in the Bay Area, it has not yet been able to penetrate other local schools. There may be a possibility in the next period of fractions at Mills College and at S.F. State.

B. Joint Anti-War Conferences In line with the general anti-war perspective of the SYL, the Berkeley unit initiated a United-Front Anti-War conference in November 1950 with the Libertarian Socialist League and the YPSL. This exploratory conference issued an anti-war statement which has been printed by the various groups and which can be used by the entire SYL. It also planned another conference in Los Angeles to be held on the 26th and 27th of April.

C. A Regional Student Socialist? With the approval of the National Buro, the Berkeley unit has begun to expand and improve the Student Socialist in the direction of a regional publication. With this expansion will come the need for aid in the form of money, news items and articles, and good circulation. The Los Angeles conference can make the official decision to do this.

One of the problems in front of the SYL Founding Convention is a national publication. This pressing necessity can be put off only at the expense of the growth of the national organization. The Berkeley unit feels that such a publication should be edited by the National Buro, but if this is impossible it is willing to take this task on its shoulders.



D. "The Cold War on the Campus" This pamphlet was published with great effort and time by the unit in order to take advantage of the intense activity spent in the loyalty oath campaign and also, and not less important, to demonstrate the possibility and the absolute necessity for an SYL programmatic pamphlet. This pamphlet, is one of the tasks of the Founding Convention.

IV. National Functioning. The Berkeley unit has always looked upon itself as a local unit of a national youth organization. It has always attempted to put the face and banner of the SYL before the students as opposed to all other youth groups. This has meant a deep-dyed and irreconcilable political struggle especially with the local Stalinist movement, combined with a united-front, friendly attitude toward those who approached (no matter how slightly) the political conceptions of Independent Socialism.

Whenever a choice had to be made the Unit chose open SYL activity to any type of popular frontish, "peaceful coexistence," conception of political behavior.

The unit has attempted to use the voice of Labor Action as often as this was possible. So long as the SYL has no monthly or weekly publication, it is highly desirable that units learn of each others activities. Silence is not golden in politics and the activities of the other SYL units (except for New York) has remained a deep-dyed mystery. This means the repetition of errors, the difficulty of exchanging experiences and the disintegration of the SYL into independent local grouplets.

#### V. Lessons and Perspectives.

A. Regional Organization. The West Coast is a natural area and the SYL should organize a regional SS, a regional committee, and a regional center. The natural place for this (at present) is Berkeley.

B. Back to the Campus- Berkeley has overextended its non-campus activities and must now make a turn back to campus life and politics. A beginning has already been made and good results followed.

C. Women and the Draft. The unit has consciously and systematically attempted to find women leaders to carry on activity if and when the draft begins to deplete the male ranks. This has proved very successful and today we have a woman editor of the SS, and a woman who gives successful street speeches. The SYL nationally should make a real effort to attract competent women into leading positions in the organization. Such a policy if consistently followed, should lead to a continuation of SYL activity for a considerable period.

D. Industrialization. We have already industrialized one comrade and are thinking of industrializing a few more during the summer. We have picked good industrial concentration points and will set up fractions. These people will become ISL people as soon as possible.

E. Summer and Next Fall. It is difficult to predict what will happen to the unit by next Fall. As long as the draft situation remains the same, the unit will be able to continue strongly next Fall, with the inevitable slackening of activity during the summer.

DETROIT UNIT REPORT

The purpose of this report will be to present a complete picture of the Detroit unit, the milieu in which we function, the activities which we carry on, the problems with which we are faced and our perspectives for the coming year.

The Detroit unit has become a live organization in the course of the past year. The most important reason for this was the arrival in Detroit of several comrades who had the perspective of devoting their time to the building of a youth unit. This had the effect of raising the morale of the Detroit comrades to the point where we now have a living and growing unit.

Most of our members attend school either full time or part time. Five work full time in the shops where there are ISL comrades, but their political activity is on campus. This is in part due to the fact that they don't have a shop perspective.

We hold business meetings every other week, with good attendance. Most important points of discussion at these meetings are: campus work and education. We have an executive committee of three and an educational committee of three, with responsibilities distributed throughout the branch.

Our educationals are of two types: internal and public. We hold the former every other week, alternating them with the business meeting so that we have a meeting every week. The reasons for internal educational meetings are two-fold. First, they deal with topics that are not of broad educational interest, e.g. the transitional program, Germany 1918-1923, the New Course, etc. Secondly, we feel that it is easier for our own comrades to develop in a small group without non-members present. All of these discussions are led by youth members.

We held a series of public forums, once every two weeks with speakers from the youth, ISL and sympathizers. In the last term we had a class on Marxist fundamentals, running over a period of 7 consecutive weeks. Attendance at these classes ranged from 20 to 25, with several sympathizers following the entire series. While we did not get any new members as an immediate result of the class, it did serve to bring several people much closer to us.

The most difficult problem we face in planning a series of public meetings, is that of providing a sufficient variety of speakers. The more political our topics the more limited we are in choice of speakers. However, with a greater frequency of responsible speakers from New York, this should not be much of a problem in the future.

Our contacts are for the most part students at Wayne University, plus a few high school students. The high school students present a problem for us in the sense that they are in a much younger age group, and that while we are able to provide them with education, serious difficulties are encountered when attempting to integrate them in our unit where the average age is about 23. We are making an effort to establish a high school discussion group under the direction of one or two of our comrades. In this manner we will be able to direct them toward our group at whatever college they may attend. For example, there is one of them who is graduating high school in June and plans to go to Oberlin in the fall. We intend to accept the individual in the SYL before the summer so that he will be a member and have some feel of the organization upon arriving at Oberlin. This is our present approach toward high school students. In this manner they don't join the organization at a time when it is impossible for them to be integrated, find themselves out of place and, consequently, drop out of the organization and politics.

Almost all of our activity is directed toward Wayne University. This is the only campus in Detroit at which we are able to work. It is a city college with a reactionary administration. At the present time there are no political "action" groups on campus. This is the policy of the administration which caters to the reactionary whims of the state in an effort to obtain additional funds for the school. AYD, and then all "political and social action" groups were banned from the campus. Needless to say, the administration has never defined the phrase "political and social action."

There are no Stalinist organizations on campus at the present time. They do have some students at school, but they play almost no role in the political life of the campus. There is no SDA, UFW, etc. SLID is the only political club on campus.

There are 4 clubs which we have contacted and with which we tried to do some work.

1. NAACP - The Wayne Chapter is typical of NAACP groups in general. They hold business meetings and socials, and little else. Two comrades attended their meetings for some time, attempted to get a series of discussions started with little success. We got one contact (who was disillusioned with NAACP for its inactivity, joined SLID, became disillusioned with that, and is very close to the SYL at present) and sold several Anvils, but were unable to seriously influence the club or the people in it. We gave it up as a waste of valuable time.

2. Philosophy Club - This is a ULP (United Labor Party) front in the sense that it was set up by several faculty supporters of the ULP with a few students. It is not a membership club, and plays no role on campus other than providing a series of lectures each term. We were friendly with these people attended their meetings, (which had an attendance of from 75 to 150) made contacts, took the floor and sold anvil. Recently they expressed the desire of having a speaker on "The Philosophy of the Russian Revolution." We suggested Draper, and they were enthusiastic about the idea. A date was set and they accepted the responsibility of handling all preparations for the meeting. As the time for the meeting drew close we, seeing that nothing was being done about it, continually inquired of them as to what they intended to do. They repeatedly assured us that everything was being taken care of. The end result was that the meeting was not held. They had not even made a sincere effort to secure approval for the meeting from the administration, or bothered to notify us that the meeting would not take place. It appears to have been a case of deliberate sabotage, as a result of which we have broken all relations with them.

3. SLID - This Chapter was reactivated several years ago by a coalition of all socialist groups at Wayne. It contained the YPSL, the Cannonites and two of our comrades. The activity of the club was due primarily to the initiative and leadership of our two comrades. The Cannonites became totally inactive and the YPSL's worked in the club in their usual inefficient and incompetent manner. They did not protest our leadership because: 1. they were not able to supply an alternative leadership 2. they felt reasonably secure as long as they had a majority in the club. This situation continued until September 1950.

In September we had about half a dozen comrades at school part time who joined SLID. At this point the YPSL's began to worry, for while our comrades were responsible members of the organization, attending meetings regularly, the YPSL's could scarcely count even a half dozen votes at meetings. We had the orientation of doing everything to avoid a split with them. We were willing to give them almost anything they wanted in an effort to prevent the organization from breaking up. We were determined to attempt to maintain good relations with them, in the interest of SLID, which is the only club in which a political

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person at Wayne might possibly function.

In September the YPSL's insisted on having certain posts of responsibility other than chairman, who was an SYL'er. For example: they insisted on having the post of publicity director, whose functioning can make or break a meeting. They were given the positions they desired and the organization died in short order. There was not one successful meeting held all term, in contrast to several the term before.

In February we decided to adopt the policy of allowing the YPSL's to have all the responsibility for the organization, with our people maintaining membership and attending meetings. In so doing we would be relieved of responsibility for the organization's lack of activity, and yet would be in a position to function and possibly resume leadership of the organization at a future date.

SLID has done almost nothing this term. It held a "successful" business meeting six weeks before the end of the term. There were twelve people present - 6 of our people, one close sympathizer, 4 YPSL's and 2 new people. A motion was passed criticizing the national executive committee for the manner in which the SLID program as printed in the Spring '51 issue of Outlook was drawn up, and for the nature of the program. There will probably be one more meeting this term, at which the convention will be discussed.

It should be noted that Wayne is considered to be one of the strongholds of SLID nationally. The national convention is being held in Detroit. They expect about 20 people. All members of SLID are entitled to attend and vote at the convention. At present our tentative strategy is that all comrades will attend and take the floor on: 1. the adoption of a third camp program and 2. the elimination of the clause on the Trotskyists from the constitution.

In SLID, we have several sympathizers: students who are opposed to the status quo and deeply concerned with such issues as academic freedom. These people follow us in SLID and attend SYL functions off campus.

4. Vanguard - With the development in SLID, we decided in February to initiate a club which would afford ISL speakers and others an opportunity to address students and would facilitate the growth of an additional periphery for the SYL. We had no intention of becoming active in the club but wanted to give it our political direction and advice. The result was a club composed of "independent liberals", bohemians, inactive Cannonites and ourselves. The leadership was in the hands of the "independent liberals". The club took on the character of an avant garde group with general and varied interests from jazz and surrealism to politics in Spain and India. In our attempt not to become influential in the policy making of the club, we found ourselves tending to cater to the unstable, bohemian element of the group. However, as soon as we realized that we could not continue in this manner, as the club was tending to take on a crackpot character; as witness the name which was originally adopted - The High Brow Intellectual Tennis and Discussion Society. At present, through the effort of ourselves and the more stable element in the group, the name has been changed to Vanguard. A magazine is being planned for local circulation in the fall. The club is based on the common agreement of its members on academic freedom and civil rights. There is also a strong sympathy for Anvil and its program. We have several friends in this club who are in SLID also. This club was founded with the idea that it would not compete with SLID, but would be broader in scope than SLID and carry out activities in those areas where SLID was failing to do anything. If SLID would hold meetings, Vanguard would not compete, but on the contrary, cooperate with them.

Our future policy with regard to this club, depends in large part on what happens with SLID. The club has been successful in activizing several people who were not active before, providing us with a larger periphery and in increasing the circulation of Anvil.

Aside from campus activity there is very little that we can do. For example, there was no Spanish Consulate which we could picket.

Anvil - The bulk of our Anvil sale is on campus, with occasional sales at public meetings of different groups. We sold 200 copies of the winter issue and 250 of the spring issue. We should be able to do better in the fall, provided that the Churchman article is printed.

Labor Action - For a time we sold Labor Action at a bi-weekly union forum in conjunction with the ISL. Sales averaged from 6 to 9 per meeting, with an attendance of about 30. We distributed Labor Actions at the UAW convention in Cleveland, several comrades going there for that purpose. We do not have mass distributions either on campus or at the plants for they have never given results in the past.

Ann Arbor - We have one comrade who went to school at Ann Arbor for the past year. He was severely limited in the time that he could spend in political work due to family obligations. However, in this short time he was able to get one person to join the SYL and to attract political students around him. The new comrade drifted away in a short time, in large part due to the inability of our comrade to keep in close touch with him. We are attempting to maintain close contact with Ann Arbor, sending up speakers and youth comrades to talk and discuss with the contacts that have been made. However, it is very difficult to arrange such meetings, let alone organize anything, without the assistance of someone who is on campus and who has the time to devote to organizational responsibilities. This is our big problem. Ann Arbor is a promising field of work for the SYL. We feel that one full time student, who could devote himself to political work, would result in an SYL unit at the U. of M. in a short time. Ann Arbor should certainly be given the most serious consideration in terms of colonization.

Relationship with ISL - Six members of the SYL are active in the ISL. Some of the other youth comrades attend ISL meetings when there are interesting educationals, and for pre-convention discussion. ISL comrades speak for us at forums and informal discussions. At times we co-sponsor public meetings and socials. The SYL serves to stimulate and provide a certain field of activity for the ISL. It is primarily the SYL which brings new faces to meetings and socials. We in turn draw upon the ISL for much of our political education. The relationship can be termed a healthy one.

Perspectives - If we can continue to grow at our present rate, replacing whatever losses we have as a result of the draft, comrades devoting time to ISL work, and the usual turnover, we will be satisfied. On campus we should become more of a force in the coming year given a more definite and clearly defined campus policy. We have no serious internal problems or difficulties to hinder our growth. We are looking forward to the coming year as one in which we will raise our own political level, increase the number of our sympathizers and continue to grow in numbers and influence. We are looking forward to the national convention of the SYL, where we hope to contribute our share toward the organization of a healthy and solid Socialist Youth League, capable of playing a major role on the American campus.

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REPORT FROM THE CORVALLIS SYL

The activity of the Corvallis fraction is concentrated on two campuses, namely, Oregon State College in Corvallis and Reed College in Portland, about 85 miles away. OSC is a state agricultural and technical school of about 5000 students in a town of 15,000. Due to the fact that the liberal arts campus of the State University is forty miles distant, and because of the purely vocational nature of this campus, there is almost a complete absence of the idle rich, who would form the active base for anti-socialist sentiment on campus. This fact, coupled with an appalling apathy on the part of even the politicals, the militant tradition of the Northwest, and a general passive opposition to the Korean war, makes for a situation in which there is almost no political opposition. The organizer has had a regular column in the campus Daily for five months now, and only three letters to the editor about the column have come in from a conservative point of view.

There are a large number of Stalinists, Stalinoids and Sweezyites on and around the campus, but they have been affected by the political apathy as much as anyone else, and are practically silent. The only symptom of their existence is an occasional letter to the paper protesting that Russia is socialist. They do, however, act as a major obstacle to recruitment, as they have already either captured or demoralized some of the best elements. It must also be noted, however, that the presence of an SYL spokesman on campus has brought their activity to a complete standstill.

There are no lesser evilists here. A student is either opposed to the war, a Stalinist, or so apathetic as not to care. There are outright pro-U.S. elements, but they are never heard from politically.

Reed college is even more fantastic in terms of political sentiment. It is a small private college (about 600 students) in the midst of the second most exclusive residential area in Portland. It is a liberal arts college, specializing, among other things, in turning out personnel for the State Department. Here the apathy is as deep as at Corvallis, but the great majority of students are "more or less socialists," and "more or less opposed to the war." The most vocal group is made up of Sweezyites, who are the leading element in Focus, a former YP chapter, which has become an anti-war discussion group including elements who are about as close to us as others are to the Stalinists. There is a high degree of political consciousness (the NI in the school library is well thumbed each month) on the part of the student body as a whole. The faculty includes Stalinists, Social Democrats and quasi-Trotskyists.

Activity at OSC up to this time has consisted almost exclusively of propaganda work in the newspaper, distributions and contacting. It was as a result of these activities that the present fraction was built up. Certain incidental activities merely contributed to these activities (such as the raising of a small amount for the FOUN and UPA in competition with the Freedom Pledge). Other than these propaganda functions, there has been little outlet for activity. Organizations in which to work are almost non-existent. YP and SDA folded this year, there is no NAACP, or other broad liberal organization on campus, and we do not feel it worth while to build one now in order to capture ourselves. Anvil is too highbrow for the campus; we have been disposing of 10 copies.

The fraction became of significant size only in April so there is little time to start an extensive activity program. Since 2 of the comrades will be leaving this area in June, by far the most important activity now is education. The educational program is just now getting under way.

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The Reed College situation is extremely difficult. We had a meeting for Shachtman there and recruited one person who, within two weeks, was talked out of it by the Focus crowd. This and other experiences convince me that activity there is organizationally fruitless without a resident fraction. We are on good terms with Focus, however, and they have agreed to push Anvil at Reed.

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CHICAGO UNIT REPORT

This report will necessarily have to repeat some of the things we said in our report for the Midwest Conference. In that report we noted that political interest on the Chicago campuses has markedly declined since the outbreak of the Korean war. There is no patriotic sentiment to speak of but merely a kind of apathy toward political questions. Even the MacArthur firing had virtually no effect on the campuses. This apathy about politics is reflected in smaller attendance at political meetings and decreased activity on the part of political organizations.

AVC, largely inert for the past year, folded up in the fall quarter by merging with a nearby community chapter. The SDA, after a very slight effort in connection with the local congressional election, has subsequently confined its efforts to running student government where its ever more conservative outlook has been manifested. Other organizations like UWF, NAACP, and CORE carry on virtually no activity whatever. Probably hardest hit have been the Stalinists. While there is little reason to suspect a gross decline in absolute membership, their public support and periphery has shown a considerable drop, and as a result, their front organizations can carry on less activity as compared with previous years. The Fabians, the avowedly right wing Socialist Party group, confines itself to monthly public discussions with attendance considerably less than at our public meetings. An effort on the part of some pacifists to set up an organization to oppose ROTC came to naught.

In this general setting of political apathy and decline it is encouraging to report that the SYL presents the appearance of some vigor. The Chicago unit of the SYL is stronger than ever before in its history. The unit has recruited a number of new members since last summer. More than one half our members attend the University of Chicago and Roosevelt College. Since last summer the unit has lost five members: 2 left town, one resigned and 2 were dropped. But considerably more comrades have been recruited and transferred in from other units since last summer. However, these figures do not reflect the strengthening that has occurred in the unit. What is important is that the members who left were largely dead wood and that those who were added have proved active and able comrades.

This new strength has shown itself in various ways. Unlike last year when there wasn't a stable executive committee, we now have an excellent, well functioning exec. Whereas formerly the organizer was overburdened with work and to a certain extent carried the unit on his back, we now have a genuine collective leadership of serious, responsible people. The division of labor is so well set-up that the organizer complains that there is nothing for him to do. Another promising factor is that there are several new members on the executive committee and there is a considerable group of active rank and filers in the unit available for duty on future executive committees. In fact, one of the most encouraging factors about the unit has been the rapid development of some of our newer members.

The main activity of the unit is on the campus of the University of Chicago. On this campus the SYL is a recognized organization and carries on activities in its own name. Our main activity is our weekly public meeting. We have been fortunate in being able to obtain a number of prominent and attractive speakers, professors and others who are known at least on campus. Among those have been Bert Hoselitz, Murray Wax, St. Clair Drake, Jerzy Glikzman and Hans Garth. These meetings have, on the whole, drawn as well as they have in former years. Several of them have drawn over fifty people which is as good or better than other campus organizations have done. Shachtman and Draper also spoke for



us, each drawing about thirty-five people. In addition, we sponsored two speakers from other radical organizations, the IWW and the Proletarian Party. These meetings were small but successful in that they were educational for our members and demonstrated to our periphery our non-sectarian approach. The local branch of the ISL occasionally supplies speakers.

Another important function of the unit is the education of our own members. As an organization we have perhaps been somewhat negligent on this matter. However, it is pleasant to report that many of the members on their own initiative have supplied what the unit has failed to provide. Nevertheless, in addition to a considerable amount of reading and discussing on an individual level, we have had some more formal educational activity. During the winter we held a basic pamphlet reading class led by a member of the ISL. It was not entirely successful due to the fact that it often conflicted with other activities. Nevertheless many comrades reported that they got a lot out of the sessions that were held. At present we are conducting a "seminar" in political problems such as the role of the party, the transitional program, and the national question. So far this has been very successful both from the point of view of attendance and of the discussions. These sessions are led by members of the SYL.

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We have at least introduced the questions involved in a proletarian orientation by having several of our Sunday meetings devoted to trade union topics. We generally hold three public meetings a month and one full length business meeting primarily for members. At the business meetings we often feature an educational on some aspect of the labor movement. We had a report on the CIO convention, a discussion on the history of and situation in the ICGWU, a report on the UAW convention, and we plan to hold a discussion on how a socialist functions in the shop in the near future.

Our most spectacular activity of the year was, of course, the picketing of the Spanish Consulate. Since this was reported in Labor Action in some detail a few brief remarks will suffice here. The most important thing to mention is that the picket line was almost entirely the product of the SYL. The contributions of the other organizations, including the ISL, were very valuable but the picketing was predominantly an SYL activity. It was initiated by the SYL, almost all of the preparatory activity was done by the SYL including the painting of signs, and approximately 3/5 of the pickets were brought down by the SYL.

In addition to direct SYL activity many of our comrades are engaged in activity in connection with anvil, the Politics Club at the U. of C. and the Socialist Club at Roosevelt College. The situation at Roosevelt College has improved greatly over previous years. The club is larger and more active than ever before in its history. However, a lot of the members are not interested in politics as such. What they seem to be interested in is that type of organization which the AYD pretended to be, a social group with progressive inclinations. They are very enthusiastic when it comes to participating in a picket line or organizing a social but their interest drops off when it comes to real political discussion. There is one Cannonite in the club and two Cannonites on the U of C campus. This seems to be part of an SWP policy to concentrate on the campus. They are, however, isolated on both campuses in Chicago.

A word is in order on the Libertarian Socialist League at this point.

They have 2 people at the U. of C.; and they don't do anything, and are not members of the Politics Club. They have several people in the Socialist Club at Roosevelt, but they are not too active there. They cooperated with us on the Spanish picket line. After this successful affair, they sent us a letter asking for a permanent committee to plan future joint activities. We sent a reply signifying our desire for joint work in the future.

The club at Roosevelt has had some very good meetings and SYL'ers have spoken there several times. While we should not have any illusions as to the enduring attachment of many of the members, they provide a friendly, spontaneous atmosphere and qualities of youth which we have sometimes lacked.

The greatest failure of the SYL has been in respect to its contacting and thereby recruiting activities. The membership has not been recruitment conscious. The leadership has not systematically followed up contacts. There has been a sad lack in the personal cultivation of contacts, in spending time with contacts on the social and individual level. This has not had the bad effects that it would ordinarily have because contacts have been coming around on their own and joining the SYL with little attention from SYL'ers.

A report on the activities of the unit in connection with literature is attached. Two more aspects of the work of the unit deserve mention. The first is From the Left, a mimeographed publication which we circulate at the U. of C. It serves the double purpose of getting our point of view to many students whom we cannot reach through our meetings or with Labor Action and of giving some experience in writing and editing a periodical. From the Left is now an 8 page job which appears once a month. It carries articles on all subjects from the campus to the international scene. While the technical standards have not been up to our usual, the articles have been uniformly good. This is especially noteworthy when one considers that they have largely been written by comrades new to the movement. The technical side of the paper has also shown improvement of late. The second aspect we should mention is finances. In this respect the Chicago unit is somewhat more fortunate than some others. The university permits student organizations to show movies on campus to raise money to finance their activities. Some comrades from out of town seem to have an exaggerated idea of the amount of money raised in this manner; actually, it does not come to a great deal. However, it is just the few dollars which we raise in this way which enables us to undertake political and organizational tasks at opportune moments without being immediately confronted with financial bankruptcy. In the Fund Drive we had an extremely high quota, \$350. We have raised \$400. This money was raised in addition to large amounts contributed by the dual members to the local ISL quota. Dual members gave only one fourth of their pledge to the SYL.

Our activities in connection with our of town units have been largely directed toward Madison. One comrade accompanied Draper on his trip there and one comrade has gone up since. Both of these reported very successful trips and we intend to continue sending people up there from time to time in the future. The report from the Madison unit will undoubtedly give more details on this matter. Another comrade is planning to travel to Lawrence, Kansas in May. In addition we elected two members to the Midwest Coordinating Committee which has had two very fruitful meetings so far.

On the whole the Chicago unit is strong and healthy. This is attested to by its large and growing membership. The membership is growing in the sense that the deadwood drops out and is constantly being replaced by new comrades who are definitely superior in activity and political interest. The unit is growing also in the additional sense that the members are showing a real interest in political problems and make efforts to strengthen their theoretical knowledge. In other

respects also we are stronger than ever before. Notable in this respect is the social life. The unit socials have been successes in the real sense of the word, that is, a convivial atmosphere has prevailed and people have enjoyed themselves.

The picture at the moment is very bright but the picture for the future is uncertain. Our recruitment possibilities are not numerous at this point, 2 or 3 at the most. Four of our best comrades on the U. of C. campus will probably not be on the campus next year and four comrades may leave the city. Two of our Roosevelt comrades will probably not be at school next year. At least two additional comrades face the prospect of being drafted. At this point it looks as though our activities on campus next year will have to be considerably curtailed. However, our secondary leadership is very promising and if the draft does not affect too many of our younger comrades we should not be hurt too badly. One encouraging factor is that at least two of our comrades are planning to go into the labor movement so that our activity in that connection may be increased. In any case, we are sure that the unit will continue strong and active even if the activity is somewhat diminished and the unit is slightly smaller in absolute size.

#### LITERATURE REPORT

In the literature department, the unit is doing fairly well. Our record on the Labor Action subscription drive was not good; our quota was 50 and only 35 were sold; however, this did represent some real effort on the part of some members, notably the Roosevelt comrades.

We recently ordered some new stock of literature from the NO, which amounted to \$28. This bill has been completely paid. The variety of our literature table enables us to sell from \$3 to \$5 of pamphlets at almost every good sized public meeting. At such meetings, the Labor Action bundle also sells rapidly; the NI's have a slower sale, mainly because our old stand-bys have subscribed. Our LA and NI bill by the end of May will amount to about \$30, and we have good reason to hope that this can be completely paid off by then. All in all, the literature department is lax in seizing outside opportunities for distributions and sales (such being rare and energy being used elsewhere) but in the routine work within the unit and at its meetings, is doing all right.

FACTORS PRESENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

1. The co-ops have been in the past and are likely to be in the future the basis for any "liberal" or "radical" enterprise on the campus. Leadership and most important ideological influence: Liberals who have read Marx carefully and have read Elton Mayo and the human-relationist group of Harvard even more carefully. Voted for Wallace in the last major election; attempt to work now within the Democratic Party, in a liberal direction but distinct from ADA. Main emphasis on co-ops; generally "reformist." Do not consider thinking in terms of the class struggle useful, believe that labor and management can and should be reconciled. ("a management aware of the need of the employees.") On foreign policy critical support of U.S.; at the same time Wallaceite conception of Russia, but here too growing disorientation. ("avoid a war so Russia doesn't feel threatened, can develop freely and can become liberal internally.") Frederick L. Schuman is a popular author. "Splinter groups of the Left" are thought of unkindly: doctrinaire, sectarian, out of touch with reality, etc. That goes even for SP socialists, but especially for "Trotskyites." Nobody in this group will join anything. The general membership is largely apolitical. Has all the right sentiments and will support most liberal measures in which it can be interested. Generally more receptive and curious than rest of the student body. The co-ops have 160 members. Out of these 20 might be considered political in one way or another, 60 potentially political, with a lot of hard work. So far political consciousness in the co-ops has centered in the two reviews, unstream and the Dove, who have also attracted "marginal people" outside the co-ops. For many, literary outlets have not been adequate, and frustration for lack of action is common.

2. The Socialist Study Club. Mostly SP (7 out of 8 members). "Co-operative" ideology (see above) dominant: "back door socialization" (the monopolies are gradually taken over by the state which thereby becomes socialist.) With one or two exceptions, strong anti-war position, on pacifist more than on socialist grounds. Holds public meetings with speakers once every week, on such topics as "Was Marx right", "Class Structure of the U.S.", "Monopoly Capitalism Leads to War." The speakers usually find that Marx was wrong but usually, a lively discussion develops nevertheless. Anti-stalinist position; since the group as a whole has little theoretical foundation there is little more than an emotional foundation for this attitude and the thesis of Bureaucratic Collectivism does not meet 2nd Internationalist opposition. Anti-imperialist, somewhat; probably not prepared to draw all the consequences involved. Might transfer membership to ISL-SYL if prejudices and hesitations removed.

3. The Negroes. No serious attempt has yet been made to organize the Negroes for political action; there are several fields in which such action would be necessary (discriminatory practices in restaurants, housing, theaters on the local level.) A CORE group is inactive and could be revived.

4. Ex-Stalinists. Two of them, one of which has never been a member of the CP. Joined CP "because there was nothing further left at the time." Still influenced by Stalinist thinking, and must be further disinfected. Good contacts with workers and minority groups (esp. Mexicans) downtown. Might join ISL-SYL out of need for security and action.

5. One anarchist. Does not participate in political action. Valuable in co-ops, which he attempts to influence structurally towards democratic, anti-bureaucratic directions. Will not join and is unlikely to cooperate to any significant extent.

6. Stalinists. Probably three or four of them, one of whom is in the co-ops. Weak and ineffectual as far as promoting Stalinism is concerned; also handicapped by external circumstances. Limited intellectual resources and generally no threat to anybody.

7. The Campus. Is, with the exception of the co-ops and the "marginal people" associated with the co-ops, overwhelmingly immature. Fraternities have so far prevailed, but in student politics the fraternity party was put out of office several weeks ago by a Greek-independent party concerned with real issues (student wages, for instance). Anti-war sentiment relatively strong, but not crystallized. Possibility of creating moderate interest for socialism as answer to world situation more urgently needed. Can be done best by Socialist Club, and sales of Anvil. No political life on campus besides Socialist Club, Young Republicans, and Young Democrats. A few SDA members in Young Democrats, but not active as a chapter.

8. The town. Three major plants (paper mill, wheat mill, cannery). Unions weak; most construction jobs organized by AFL. Cannery is being investigated at the moment for possibilities of organizing, which would involve reviving an inactive CIO local. Labor largely Mexican and underpaid. Negro labor is discriminated against. Housing situation for minority groups very difficult. (slum sections with shacks of corrugated tin, cardboard, odd boards, old cans, etc.) Stalinist propaganda moderately active at the time when the ex-Stalinist was still active in the CP, but effect more toward generally radicalizing rather than stalinizing. One democratic organization (Lawrence League for Practice of Democracy, LLPD) active for FEFC and similar measures. Co-ops active in LLPD.

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OBERLIN SYL REPORT

The Oberlin SYL, an off campus unit, is the outgrowth of a discussion group, organized by two comrades several years ago. We had functioned as a discussion group, composed largely of ex-Stalinists (YPAers), and a few independents, until this February. As a result of a visit by Comrade Falk in February an off-campus unit of SYL was formed. One of the members has since left the area. In addition, we have a number of contacts, although in varying stages of political development. Our activities have been somewhat limited by the number of members and the newness of the unit. However, we meet regularly on an informal basis, and irregularly on a formal basis, for self-education, and discussion. In addition, we keep in contact with the Cleveland ISL comrades, often meeting at Oberlin or in Cleveland.

Through the initiative of ourselves and several other students and several other students a Socialist Discussion Group was organized, which is in the process of being recognized as an official campus organization. The group is a loose organization containing "liberals", critical intellectuals, social-democrats, pacifists, and ourselves. However, so far the driving force has been the members of the SYL unit.

The activities of the SDG were publicized and aided by the visit of Comrade Draper in the middle of April, which occurred the day before the first meeting of the SDG. There were sixty-five students present to hear Comrade Draper's talk on "The Liberals and U.S. Foreign Policy". The talk was very well received, and there was a very good discussion period. Since then we have had the opportunity to talk to many of the people who had been present, and they were significantly impressed with Draper's analysis.

The first open meeting of the SDG was held the next day. (There had been a couple of small preliminary meetings, consisting of about ten or twelve people.) At this first meeting, attended by about twenty five students, organizational plans were discussed, and some discussion of the principles of "socialism" followed.

The second meeting of the SDG was held the following week. At this meeting, one of our comrades offered a stimulating discussion of the history of socialism from the earliest beginnings to the turn of the century. Some twenty five students were in attendance.

The third open meeting heard one of our comrades discuss the history of socialism from the turn of the century to the present. We had an excellent discussion after the talk. Some fifteen people were present.

There has been one business meeting held since then, at which about twelve students were present. At this time a reading list was distributed (prepared by one of our members) and a report was given on the status of the procedure of being recognized as a campus organization was given. Due to the fact that we are in the pre-final exam period we have suspended operations for the semester. However, a degree of permanence has been achieved and there are people responsible for getting the organization under way in the fall.

A word about the civil liberties scene on campus. In general, it is good--no loyalty oaths, free student press, and the right of free assembly on college property for all student groups. We have the free use of the college mimeograph machine, and receive stencils and paper at a nominal charge.

However, there is the unofficial attack on civil liberties--the growing fear of students, apathy, quietism. The FBI is constantly in Oberlin, investigating

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students--pacifists, Stalinists, radicals--and this is a known fact. The FBI has clamped down on a number of individual students and one foreign student, whose parents are missionaries in China and have stayed there, has been ordered to leave this country. However, the college acting through the President has worked to get him a fair hearing on the charges.

The college is trying to maintain its tradition of civil liberties and even hired one professor, who had left the University of California in protest against the loyalty oath. However, there is talk among Alumni organizations that loyalty oaths should be instituted, and there is no guaranteeing the continuance of the present favorable situation. A chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union has been formed, and one of our comrades is on the Steering Committee of the chapter. Although somewhat conservatively orientated, it nevertheless may prove to be a valuable organization in times of crisis in the civil liberties field.

At the end of this year, the Oberlin SYL will lose several of its members to the University of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin. However, we will have other SYLers here and a number of active contacts, and the Socialist Discussion Group. Consequently there is every possibility of the continuance of the organization, and an active Third Camp position in Oberlin.

The Oberlin SYL would like to raise the following questions for discussion at the time of the convention. The SYL convention can only be of any significance for its members and for the advancement of socialism if there is free and open discussion of the problems which are raised. The very existence of the movement--for the SYL is the coming core of this ISL--let alone its advancement, depends on complete, free, and rational discussion of the vital theoretical and practical questions raised by the imminency of the Third World War.

A. THE SYL AND INDUSTRY: What is the function of the SYL member in industry? What can he say? How do you break the capitalist control of the worker's mind and personality? Perhaps these are obvious questions for the perpetual SYL'ers but not to the "youngsters" in this youth movement.

B. THE SYL AND THE CAMPUS: This is a subject which is more apparent but should be thoroughly discussed, considering the fact that the student and intellectual is the greatest potential for the SYL today. The intellectual is tired of hitting his head against the wall. He has no decision making powers and he finds himself alienated from bourgeois society. The intellectual can be won to the SYL, instead of to Gertrude Stein's poetry, dadaism, and be-bop, if a program suited to the needs of the situation is worked out.

C. It seems to some of us that the Third World War which is practically upon us and will not be avoided, will bring Fascism to the United States, with all that Fascism implied in Germany -- a bloodbath of Negroes, Jews and political dissenters. Is this immanency of Fascism a workable theory? If it is a workable theory then the SYL must develop a practical revolutionary theory and plan of action. The questions to be asked in this connection are: "How to operate if we are denied our rights?" "How to create a revolutionary program?". If Fascism is with us then we cannot work through the labor movement in the garrison state. Revolutionary plans must be made, members must be trained in revolutionary tactics and procedures. This is not Blanquism or Jacobinism, it would seem, but a realistic attempt to find a Leninist solution to the problem.

D. However, if Fascism will not come with war, then the question arises, is the Third Camp position valid. Should not anti-Stalinist socialists join in, wholeheartedly, in the anti-Stalinist war? Is there not a choice, however poor between a non-Fascist (this is the assumption of this section of the discussion) democratic capitalism in the period of the garrison state and totalitarian Stalinism? If Fascism, there certainly is no choice between Moscow or Washington. If Fascism is not to come, then there is a choice, it would seem.

e. Not all pacifists are pacifists on absolute moral grounds. There are individuals who are political pacifists without any referenda to a religious creed. These political pacifists can point to the example of Debs and ask why we do not take the same stand. But some of us who are sympathetic to this Debsian approach have been criticized for it. We think that the convention should discuss the question of political pacifism on the basis of its Third Camp position.

These are some of the questions which the Oberlin SYL would like to bring to the attention of those who are to attend the SYL convention, and to all ISLers and SYLers. We request that those questions in some suitable form be placed on the agenda and they they be fully discussed at the convention.



## REPORT FROM THE LOS ANGELES SYL UNIT

The Los Angeles unit is the newest unit in the SYL. It was organized several months ago and has grown steadily. The LA unit has a sizeable group of members plus other non-members who can be expected to join the organization in a short time. The mailing list is a large one.

The majority of comrades in the unit are students located on four campuses including the City College of Los Angeles, University of Cal. of L.A., University of Southern California and Pomona College. The latter is a small college about forty miles out of town. The largest fraction is at Los Angeles City College. LACC has a great potential for recruitment and this campus is our main concentration. Over 10,000 students attend day and evening sessions as LACC and State College which is located on the same campus. Most of our recruitment has taken place among evening session students who have a working class student-composition.

The SYL received a great deal of publicity in the Los Angeles press including the banner headline in one major local paper following a "riot" at a street corner meeting held outside the Campus at LACC. The unit intends to follow up on the street meeting with a public meeting in a hall near the campus on the question of free speech. The details of the street meetings which brought such notoriety were discussed in detail in a recent issue of Labor Action. The SYLers at LACC are attempting to put some life into the long dormant Wilshire Club on that campus.

At USC there is the possibility of organizing a socialist study group and we hope to recruit additional members to the SYL from this campus.

The SYL cooperates closely with the Young People's Socialist League and the Libertarian Socialist League. The former organization is a left-wing group with strong pacifist tendencies. The three socialist Youth organizations have held two socialist youth conferences to date. The second one was held late in April and is reported in detail in a recent issue of Labor Action.

We are part of the Southern California Federation Against War. Two of our comrades are delegates to the Federation.

The SYL schedules public forums a month in advance and they are publicized through leaflet distributions. The Los Angeles SYL will continue to function over the summer period. Summer sessions are packed with students and we expect most of our comrades to be in town during the vacation period.

At least three comrades are expected to travel in for the SYL national convention.

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NEW YORK CITY SYL REPORT

The New York report will be divided into three sections. The first will deal with the facts concerning the unit proper, the second will be a series of reports from campus fractions and the third part will be an evaluation of the problems and prospects of the SYL.

I. The Unit

a. Meetings:

The main activity of the unit, aside from campus work, is its regular Friday night meeting. We do not have the same difficulties as other units with regard to obtaining speakers. The ISL in New York has been extremely cooperative and helpful in this respect and the ISL Political Committee is an excellent source of speakers. The unit holds an average of one business meeting every six meetings, with the evening usually devoted to campus reports, executive committee report, discussion, and voting. These business meetings have suffered in the past from two related factors: they are poorly planned by the executive committee and the membership doesn't participate sufficiently in discussing the proposals made to it or the problems of the unit. In the past six months however, membership participation in business meetings has improved considerably.

The attendance at forums varies considerably, between 20 and 50, with the norm closer to the lower figure. Some of the better attended meetings in the past few months have been lectures on the "Underground Behind the Iron Curtain", "The Twentieth Century Political Novel", and a symposium on Britain with an SYLer and a member of the Libertarian Socialist League speaking. The level of discussion at meetings varies as much as the attendance, at times it is stimulating and, as often, it is desultory. Many of the comrades in New York, it must be remembered, are politically developed, experienced people, and it is more important for the newer comrades to express themselves in discussions than is actually the case.

b. Executive Committee and Membership

The executive committee is large, consisting of an organizer plus six other comrades. It meets regularly and the plans it makes are theoretically adequate for the needs of the local SYL. However, it does not make itself felt as a real leadership should; it has been signally unsuccessful in carrying out many of its own decisions and has failed to sufficiently stimulate the membership to accept and carry out a member's responsibilities. But not all the blame for a reticent membership should be placed on the executive committee; no executive committee can force members to be responsible and devoted comrades. That is a matter of the political education and personal-psychological disposition of the individual member as well as a matter of efficient functioning of the leading unit committee. The membership has the responsibility of discussing executive committee proposals and carrying out membership decisions made at unit meetings. The executive committee, in turn, must learn to carry out the routine tasks of the SYL in a more efficient and serious manner.

The failure of the membership to participate fully in the policy making of the unit has led to a partial "bureaucracy by default" on the part of the executive committee.

The policy of the unit towards lax members has been a "soft" one. The reasons for this are the special conditions which exist in New York as described in Section III of this report. In the past weeks, however, the comrades have decided in favor of reviewing the membership of several comrades who have not been functioning at all in the organization.

The New York membership is smaller today than it was a year ago. The main reason for this is that a number of comrades, including some of our best members, have left for Chicago and Detroit, and several others have been transferred to the ISL. We have recruited approximately the same number that we have dropped from membership.

### Literature Distributions

There have been distributions of Labor Action at Columbia, City College and Brooklyn College, during the past semester. The most consistent distributions have taken place at Brooklyn College. While we have a number of youth subscriptions from members and friends, the total is not nearly as great as it should be. In Brooklyn College, for example, we could have many more subscribers than is actually the case, if our comrades there pushed subscriptions a little more consistently.

The unit has put out one issue of a local SYL magazine called "Student Socialist", (not to be confused with "Student Socialist" put out in Berkeley) The second issue is being prepared now. The unit voted to publish future issues on the basis of a workshop pending the publication of a National SYL paper: a number of comrades getting together, deciding on contents and collaborating with each other on the writing. The publication is to be put out in quantities of three or four hundreds. Comrades in the workshop will also participate in preparation of campus leaflets and writing for Labor Action.

### Summer Classes:

The New York SYL has always been successful in the organization of summer classes. Last summer we ran classes, some of whose sessions were attended by as many as 60 students. Classes are now being planned for the coming summer period, on Russian history, the Far East and European history between the two world wars. We expect these classes to be well attended by members and friends. The classes will not only have an important educational value but should help to bring some of our contacts into the SYL.

### Relations with other Socialist Youth Organizations:

The SYL works very closely with the comrades of the Libertarian Socialist League on campus and a number of their members attend our meetings regularly. There is no feeling of competition and our relations are harmonious and comradely. The Young Peoples Socialist League is almost completely inactive in New York. The active membership of YPSL could be counted on ones fingers, though, of course, they make the usual meaningless claims to a large book membership - and even this claim is of dubious accuracy. The few active YPSLs on campus are on friendly terms with SYLers and members of both organizations are in the same college clubs.

The bulk of SYL activity is on the campus, which brings us to the next part of our report.

II. Campus Work

## BROOKLYN COLLEGE REPORT

Brooklyn College is one of the more politicalized schools in the country. Although there has been a noticeable decline in political interest and activity in the past several years B.C. still provides a wide arena for the functioning of a socialist club.

The SYL functions in the Debs Society which over a period of years has enjoyed the reputation of being the recognized socialist club and spokesman on the campus. And in the last years it has become the only socialist group functioning. At the time of the 1948 presidential campaign, a Students for Thomas group was formed which had a membership of over 150 with an active core of about ten people. After the presidential elections a Socialist Club and an Independent Socialist Club formed out of the leadership of the Students for Thomas, the Socialist Club consisting primarily of SPers and SLID people, and the ISC recruiting those students more sympathetic to the Debs Society. After two years, the Socialist Club has disappeared, the ISC membership went into Debs, and SLID has become totally inactive. Former members of the Socialist Club and SLID who are still on the campus have joined Debs or else have withdrawn from campus politics.

The present Debs membership also contains members of Habonim (Social Democratic Zionist Youth group) who, in number, constitute the majority of the club. However, although the Habonim is active, internally the great majority of their members do not play an active role in Debs other than attending meetings, for the Habonim does not have the same orientation as the SYL toward functioning in recognized campus political groups. This partially stems from their Zionist orientation and their lack of emotional ties to the American political scene. Officially, the Habonim has a pro-American point of view. However, a strong Third Camp minority does exist centering about some of the members at BC. We have constantly attempted to convince them of the necessity of American Jewish socialists to participate in the struggle for socialism in the U.S., where the achievement of socialism would have decisive political effects in the world. If they could be convinced of the validity of our anti-Zionist arguments, there is no doubt that a number of them would join the SYL.

An indication of this relative decline of general political activity can be seen in the number of political groups now functioning. In fact, outside of the Debs Society and the Stalinists (YPA) there is no other political group functioning. The Young Republicans and Young Democrats, as usual, do next to nothing outside of the intrigue of Student Council politics. The Young Liberals have folded up along with SLID, and SDA is still suspended as a result of its participation in the fight against Gideonse last semester. A Peace group was recently formed by some Stalinoids in which the YPers and EYLers have no part, but today they have done nothing. An Ethical Culture club has been fairly active holding a series of meetings on brotherhood, ethics and peace but they have created next to no interest. The Stalinists have held several meetings predominately on Jim Crow issues, but they have never attracted more than their immediate Stalinoid circle.

The Debs Society has held a number of highly successful meetings. The first was with Max Shachtman in coordination with the Debs Society's library exhibit on the life of Eugene V. Debs and it attracted one hundred students. Then there was a debate between Hal Draper and representative of the Yugoslav U.N. delegation on "Is Yugoslavia Building Socialism" which also attracted one hundred. Other meetings were a debate on "Is England Building Socialism"

(60 attending) and a meeting on the "Underground in Russia" (35 attending). There were plans for other meetings which didn't materialize. The only other organization that rivaled the Debs meetings in attendance were those held by the Bureau of Historical Research with a number of faculty members speaking.

While there has been an interest in meetings of a political character and even the formation of two additional political clubs, the overwhelming majority of students abstain from campus political life. The average politically interested student may come down to the meeting, but he is unwilling to join a club. There are predominately two reasons for this: the general inability of a student to believe that he is able to do anything to build a Third Camp, and the fear of job security if it become known that he belongs to a radical group. Thus students who might otherwise join the club remain on the periphery...

A class in socialism was planned in order to prepare some of the less active people to take on leadership of the club. But outside of this consideration, it would have been worthwhile to have been able to give the class. However, we were unable to obtain an instructor and it had to be postponed. The present plans are to have a class during the summer vacation when the members will have more time.

\* \* \*

The relations between Debs Society and the various liberal tendencies is better than it has been in several years. Two years ago the Debs were fairly isolated from united fronts on popular issues. The liberals, with the former Socialist Club and SLID, had formed a campus coordinating committee from which Debs was excluded. Today the liberals look to Debs Society for the leadership in the fight against the Gideonse administration and on broader civil liberties issues.

The breaking out of this isolation began two years ago with the Conference on Democracy in Education where the Federation and SDA played a leading role in organizing the anti-Stalinist tendencies to prevent the Stalinists from using the Conference as a front. Despite the differences of points of view that developed programatically and on the question of seating Stalinist delegates, the united front was preserved and the Conference achieved a limited success. This laid the groundwork for the Brooklyn College united front that was formed, the Campus Coalition Committee, to fight against President Gideonse's suspension of the school's paper, Vanguard. In this fight and in the publication of the Coalition Committee's paper Campus News, the Debs Society played the leading role, with a Debs member being chairman of the Committee. If it were not for the presence of the Debs Society, the leadership would have been seized by the Stalinists and the entire opposition to Gideonse would have been discredited among the student body as a "Communist" inspired opposition to the school. It is an indication of the liberal's misunderstanding of Stalinism that many of them wanted to include the Stalinists in the Committee, and it was the Debs Society which was able to point out the political reasons why the Stalinists should be excluded.

The reactionary role of the Gideonse administration has been publicized in several Anvil articles. Gideonse's record includes suspending the student newspaper and setting up another one under ~~an~~ editorship that is more subject to his pressures; suspension of SDA for publishing Campus News; and just recently he has abolished the formal equality of faculty and students on the faculty-student committees. This term Gideonse through his stooges, has tried to introduce a policy that would severely restrict or perhaps prevent the functioning of campus political clubs; and the administration has set up the machinery for \*suspension of the LYL because of the Korean War;

revoking the charter of Stalinist clubs and other clubs that are "otherwise subversive of the college and nation."

A number of these last mentioned actions can be directly traced to the influence of the military on the campus. For quite some time Gideonse was trying to get an Air Force ROTC unit on the campus but the "radical" reputation of BC was considered a handicap. However, with the mounting Gideonse offensive against academic freedom and student rights, it has been announced that an ROTC unit will start functioning next semester.

At the present time the Gideonse administration has been unable to curtail the activities of all political groups. A meeting of the political clubs and their faculty advisors with the administration spokesman revealed that even the faculty members are vigorously opposed to the administration scheme to restrict political activity. Next term the Debs Society might take the initiative and push for the calling of another "Conference on Democracy in Education" on a city-wide basis in protest against the infringements on academic freedom and civil liberties.

\* \* \*

During the past year the Debs Society has sold Anvil at the entrance to BC. There has been a drop in sales compared to previous issues. The Anvil issue with the article on Gideonse was not pushed in the classrooms for fear of retaliation by the administration since its appearance coincided with the beginning of the fight over the suspension of Vanguard and the publication of Campus News. The last issue was not as enthusiastically received as previous ones, and sales appeared to have dropped to the core of politically interested students. But it should be pointed out that the Debs Society members themselves fell down, and failed to push the magazine with the previous vigor.

The anti-war character of Anvil makes it difficult for Debs to utilize it as a means to present the socialist point of view. There is actually a confusion over what Anvil really is: some people think it is a pacifist magazine, while others knowing that Debs sells it believe it to be a socialist magazine in disguise, and others look at it merely as a front. The club members do not look on Anvil as an organ to help in the growth of the club and this is one reason why pushing the magazine is slow. While a certain part of this is due to a lack of organizational drive and push on the campus level, the fact remains that the present character of the magazine does not correspond to the needs of the Debs Society as a socialist club. On the other hand, it would be out of the question to propose the dissolution of the Debs Society and the formation of an anti-war club.

In addition to selling Anvil, the Club sold the India-printed pamphlet on the Shachtman-Browder debate which was held under the auspices of the Debs Society.

\* \* \*

The SYL fraction at BC has made several large scale distributions of Labor Action on the campus and the paper is known among the politicalized students. Also, there have been a number of leaflet distributions announcing SYL meetings. Most of the SYLers on campus are known as SYLers and present the Independent Socialist point of view among their contacts. However, we have not consistently tried to get these contacts to attend SYL meetings. We must become more recruitment conscious on this campus for the sake of the SYL in general and for Brooklyn College in particular

The bulk of SYL activity at Columbia has been as active members of the Socialist Club. The Socialist Club of Columbia has a membership of approximately fifteen of whom about six are dependable activists. At the beginning of the spring semester it was decided not to hold regular weekly meetings but to plan and publicize such attractive meetings as could be arranged, having a meeting at least every two or three weeks. The planned minimum of meetings were held and were publicized through leaflets, posters, and notices in the school daily. In addition to several business meetings, usually poorly attended, the Socialist Club has held five forums this semester, four on political subjects and one on a cultural topic. The average attendance was 20, which is a fair average for this transient-like university.

The Socialist Club also sold Anvils on a number of occasions and the SYL members several times distributed leaflets advertizing the SYL forums.

One type of activity engaged in which is expected to be of particular importance for the future work of our comrades on the Columbia campus was the establishment of relationships both organizationally and personally with the SLID, NAACP, Pacifist Club and to a lesser degree with the SDA. Several members of the Socialist Club are also active and responsible members of the SLID and the NAACP. The Pacifist club is an entirely shakey outfit which was just formed this semester. Feeling a fraternal sympathy for the members of this anti-war group several socialists aided them in the formation of their club. The perspectives and possibilities of this group are not entirely known but there is some possibility of its affiliating with the N.Y. Student Federation Against War.

The SDA is probably the most publicized anti-Stalinist political club at Columbia and its leadership has been very friendly to the club. SDAers and members of the Socialist Club have worked together closely in the NAACP. They seem to have correctly generalized this need for coordinated activity by the non Stalinist left in opposition to the Stalinists and other reactionaries. Some efforts were made toward formalizing this coordination acting through the establishment of a standing committee of delegates from the previously mentioned clubs plus a few more which exist. This project was not consummated this year but is high on the agenda of a number of the people who will be involved in Columbia's political life next year.

Perhaps a main reason why there is a considerable need for coordinated effort at Columbia is the same reason that the Socialist Club has such modest perspectives and in fact finds it very difficult to do much. There is a formidable apathy. It is due, at least in some degree, first, to a partly real "adulthood" and "sophistication" in the Columbia student and second to a marked lack of community feeling at Columbia. It is regrettable to note that some of our ISL comrades at Columbia are among those who are too "adult" and too "sophisticated" to participate in routing student activity: distributions, selling, literature, etc. The preponderant weight of adult education and graduate study in the Columbia scheme makes the age level of the students significantly higher than that of probably any other university. This greater age level of Columbia students makes for an involvement in outside activities which preclude student activities.

That this greater age level has the unfortunate psychological correlate of a "looking down the nose attitude" toward student political struggles is often remarked upon and hardly to be denied either.

Finally it should be noted that while next year several of our activists of this year will be missing it is expected that there will be some if not complete replacement for the lost personnel. All in all, while we did not succeed strikingly this year, the year's work was not a failure. The indications are that we will start the next year in a better position than we did the last.

### City College Day Session

The main activity of the small SYL fraction at City College Day Session has been in the Socialist Discussion Club. This club which had been active two years ago had gradually fallen into an inactive state. The reason for this decline was not merely because of the personal failures of members of the club or of SYLers on campus. City College suprisingly enough is one of the least political schools in the city. Each of the numerous political clubs on campus revolve around two or three active people with the exception of the Stalinists. The latter are also weak but they have a larger active core than the anti-Stalinist organizations. Two new political clubs were organized on campus this semester, both of them peace organizations, one of which is an avowedly pacifist group. Several members of the Socialist Club are active in the pacifist organization and the two organizations are mutually cooperative. The pacifist was approached on the question of joining the federation but refused for fear of antagonizing some of its more conservative members.

This term the Socialist Discussion Club had a limited but encouraging revival. Approximately 20 students were signed up in the club, a large percentage attending the first two business meetings of the semester. A mistake was made, however, in not organizing forums early in the term. Instead, a series of business meetings plus internal discussions were held and the attendance of club members droppod considerably. However, in the latter part of the semester four forums were held plus a fifth jointly sponsored with the pacifist club. The attendance at two of the forums were successful by City College standards, 15 at one and 25 at the club's largest meeting. Another reason for small attendance at political meetings is that all campus clubs must meet during the same hours on the same day. Thus five or six political meetings can be going on simultaneously.

The club has been singularly unsuccessful in selling anvils. City College Day Session was always a weak spot in Anvil sales but this term it has been particularly difficult. But with the return to at least a minimal political activity this semester, the Socialist Discussion Club may be in a position to carry out organized sales of Anvil in the Fall; if necessary such sales should be carried on with the aid of students from other schools.

Several contacts were made for the SYL during the term at least one of whom may be recruited shortly.

### City College (Evening Session)

The main activities of the SYL in City College Evening Sessions have been as active members of the Student's Union to Resist War, a recognized college club affiliated to the NY Student Federation Against War.

This semester the club held four forums the most successful being



a lecture on "The Validity of Marxism" attended by sixty students. (Comrade Shachtman was the speaker.) Other meetings were on the Korean War, Civil Liberties, and a lecture and film review of Labor and the UAW. Attendance varied at these forums from 15-35 students. It must be remembered that club meetings at Evening session begin at 10:30 P.M. Comrade Shachtman's meeting lasted until 1:00 A.M.

In addition to forums, the Student Union to Resist War distributes large quantities of clever and beautifully mimeographed leaflets to the students.

The membership of the SURW is by and large politically close to the SYL. These members and other students who attend meetings are in agreement with us beyond the anti-war program of the SURW. The ideology of these students contains a rejection of both war camps and a generally socialist outlook.

A serious effort is being made by SYLers on campus to recruit to the SYL. Numbers of each issue of Labor Action are distributed to contacts and interested students.

The club's relations with the school administration are in general good. As yet there has been no serious attempt to restrict academic freedom on this campus except for the banning of the Labor Youth League. Unfortunately, this banning went virtually unnoticed on the campus, not even the Stalinists made an issue of it outside of student council.

During this semester the sale of anvils has lagged, it must be admitted, due to the lack of organized selling. Anvils have been sold on a personal basis only this term but we plan to organize outdoor table selling.

Our relations with other campus groups is limited to friendly relations with SLID. Meetings are occasionally co-sponsored with SLID and representatives of both clubs to Student Council work together.

### The New York Student Federation

In the two years of the existence of the Federation, it has failed to develop into a significant force on the New York campus, or to become as well known as the member affiliates. The one big opportunity, after the Conference on Democracy in Education, was not used to press forth the name of the Federation in a series of activities.

There is a lack of leadership in the Federation. The members who could have been able to play an active role were busy with local campus functions. To the extent that activity could have been carried out, there was the failure to rise to the occasion.

The Federation did hold two meetings of a cultural nature and a united front meeting with SDA and SLID against the McCarran Law. No meeting of a specifically anti-war character was held. This to a large extent, reflects the inability of well-known speakers to be attracted to speak for the Federation. This was especially true after the outbreak of the Korean War when a meeting was held. The support of the war given by the intellectuals and the personal timidity of other possible speakers has made the task of the Federation extremely difficult.

## THE NEW YORK PROBLEM

It is difficult to adequately report and assess the New York SYL as there are so many complicating personal and political factors in this city which do not exist, at least not to the same degree, in other localities. New York is the most cosmopolitan and sophisticated city in the United States. In a period of intense class struggle activity this will be - and has been - a tremendous advantage in building a socialist movement in this city. But in the present period of relative economic prosperity, a docile labor movement, the New York sophistication is of dubious value, and its limitations have had an observable, harmful effect on the SYL here.

In "better days" an alive working class and a militant student body, nationally, could always look to New York as a political-intellectual center. The student and intellectual socialist movement, in particular, witnessed in the Thirties, a happy fusion of political and cultural interests. Politics was not regarded with the cynicism that characterizes the intellectuals and pretended intellectuals of today. Political rebelliousness, intellectual curiosity and cultural movements were inter-related in thought and action during the Thirties. Today the sophistication of New York is having just the opposite effect on many of our contacts, and some of our members, precisely because radical politics appears to be remote and is not as successful as in the earlier period. Among the student-intellectuals, (the term "intellectuals" is used mainly for convenience, not accuracy, for most of the SYL student periphery could only be described as "intellectuals" through the loosest use of language) - politics is too frustrating and their attention is centered on intellectual activities to a near exclusion of political ideas and an absolute exclusion of political activity. Sometimes they attempt a political rationalization for their political deadness but the simple fact remains that they have neither the fortitude for the idealism to make even the minimal contributions to the socialist movement.

The above analysis is relevant in that it explains in part why the New York SYL has not grown in numbers though it has increased in influence and prestige. The SYL is well known among all political students and is properly respected. Comrades who read this report should not conclude that the organization here is surrounded by decadence and dilatoriness. If we have discussed the problem sharply it is only to impress its importance on comrades and to make them understand a serious obstacle in our path.

A youth organization in New York must be in a position to provide the social atmosphere which many of its members and friends normally seek. The SYL has attempted to do this through socials and social-discussions but has not been successful. The unit still lacks the necessary integrated social life and too many of the members justifiably feel that they are personally isolated in the unit. This personal isolation has been the main factor for the turnover in the SYL. Had we been successful in resolving the problem, the New York SYL would be a much larger and more stable organization. One of the main tasks for the SYL executive committee and membership is to seriously plan and carry out social activities during the summer period, has been discussed.

One difficulty in providing a social life for the unit rests in the fact that geographically the members live in different parts of the city distant from each other; also the members on campus are spread over five colleges. This is a political as well as a social disadvantage for the New York SYL when compared to the Detroit and Chicago units where the majority of SYLers are active on one campus and/or live in one small section of the city.

It must be repeated that in this report we have emphasized, perhaps overemphasized, some of the failures and problems existing in the NY unit and its activity on and off the campus. But it must be borne in mind that New York remains a political center; despite all of its disadvantages for youth work, it offers an efficient organization and enormous possibilities for growth. This "efficiency" can be achieved despite the limitations we have described. Within the general limitations inherent in New York there are still large numbers of individual youth who will listen to our ideas and who can be recruited to an organization of young socialist activists. Our program must and can be brought to these potential members.

## CALL FOR WEST COAST SYL CONFERENCE

To All West Coast SYL Units and Fractions:

Call for a Post-Semester Conference of the West Coast Socialist Youth League — by the SYL caucus at the Los Angeles Tri-group Socialist Youth Conference and by the Berkeley SYL.

Dear Comrades:

The Socialist Youth League on the West Coast has reached a stage of growth and activity which makes mandatory a broader and more integrated perspective and operation if it is to capitalize on its past work and realize its present opportunities.

Merely enumerating the campuses on which it has working fractions or individual members and/or close friends shows the growth which it has achieved in the space of a year. The list of schools where it exists or has influence includes the U. of Washington, Oregon State, Reed, UC, Mills, Stanford, Fresno State, LACC, UCLA, USC and Pomona to name only a partial list.

Especially has the SYL become known on campuses in Los Angeles, Berkeley and Corvallis as a major, if not the, outstanding representative of radicalism among youth. The pressure which it has exerted on the California Socialist Party and its youth movement has forced the SP-YPSL steadily to the left and has opened up the possibility of achieving unity with this group of Third Camp socialists of not inconsiderable numbers.

This is only one side of the coin, however, for our movement is faced with many weaknesses and difficulties which have, in the main, arisen out of our rapid expansion without consolidation. The West Coast is 1500 miles long and within this vast length our comrades, many of them new to the socialist movement, exist under isolation and a multitude of alien pressures. It is not surprising, then, that we face problems of localism, lack of coordination and, worst of all, the danger of the deterioration of our newly acquired strength through the summer months.

For these reasons the SYL caucus of the April tri-group socialist youth conference and the Berkeley SYL are issuing a call for a West Coast SYL Conference.

The Berkeley Socialist Youth League proposes and/or urges —

- a) that the conference be held in Berkeley on June 19 and 20. This choice of date and place is made because (1) the date falls after the closing of the school semester and just before the conventions in New York. This gives maximum opportunity of attending to those comrades who will either go to the N.Y. conventions, work for the summer, or attend summer session; (2) the place, Berkeley, is well situated as a stopping-over point for those comrades going to the convention and is well placed near the center of the coast for those who will return home directly.
- b) that this be a conference of delegates empowered to make decisions on behalf of local units and fractions because many important decisions and recommendations must be made immediately and there will be no chance for full local decision after the conference until the fall semester has already opened.
- c) that delegates be elected on the basis of one per two members (or major fraction — i.e. one) of each local fraction to insure the widest possible represent-

ation. And that all other comrades attend as alternates or fraternal delegates.

d) the greatest possible attendance as the surest way of holding a successful conference and of achieving the basic conference objective - that of educating and integrating the newer comrades into the movement.

e) the enclosed tentative agenda as a point of departure for working out the final conference agenda.

f) that comrades and friends from out-of-town will be housed and fed at no cost other than a \$2 registration fee.

g) immediate correspondence and discussion from all comrades concerned on any aspect of the conference and urges utmost haste in view of the nearness of its convocation.

### Other Matters

The Los Angeles Tri-group Socialist Youth Conference - The outcome of this conference will have appeared in Labor Action by the time this letter is received so there is no need to cover it in this letter.

Next Student Socialist - The final SS of the school year will be out June 1 and promises to be a magnificent job technically through utilization of new processes and equipment. This issue of the SS will appear as a West Coast regional organ and will contain material of exceptional interest. Due to increased cost of publication it will be necessary to charge local groups 2¢ per copy on bundle orders (payable in 3¢ stamps). This cost can be recouped in the various localities, however, as the SS will carry a 5¢ price and can be sold or given away as the comrades see fit.

Fraternally,  
L. Thompson  
for the Berkeley SYL

### TENTATIVE AGENDA

#### West Coast Socialist Youth League Conference

June 19-20

- I Opening of Conference; Roll Call of Delegates; Election of Presiding Committee; Acceptance of Agenda
- II Campus and Local Reports  
University of Washington (Seattle), Oregon State (Corvallis), Reed (Portland), UC (Berkeley), Mills (Oakland), Stanford (Palo Alto), Fresno State (Fresno), UCLA (LA), USC (LA), Pomona (Claremont), and possible SF State (San Francisco), and San Diego State (San Diego).
- III West Coast and General Political and Organizational Reports  
suggested topics: West Coast as a Regional Entity  
ISL-SYL Relationship  
Campus Functioning  
West Coast Fascist Movement  
Draft and Industrialization  
California SP and YPSL

- IV West Coast Organization
  - Overall Perspective for Fall
  - Student Socialist
    - Operation as a full regional organ
    - National Buro support
    - Local article contribution
    - Local circulation
    - Local financial support
  - West Coast Integration other than Student Socialist
    - Communication
    - Regional decision-making body
    - Full-time West Coast Youth Organizer
- V. SYL National Founding Convention (part V an open session)
  - Proposals from this conference to convention
  - Consideration of convention documents

## REPORTS OF DRAPER AND SHACHTMAN TOURS

Draper Tour.

1. St. Louis. The comrades in St. Louis were instrumental in organizing an off-campus Politics Club of Washington U. This club sponsored a meeting for Draper which was attended by 40 people. The topic was "Liberals and U.S. Foreign Policy." The meeting was very successful from the point of view of attendance and reception. The following evening an informal meeting of members and sympathizers was held. A fourth member in St. Louis joined and a comrade from Kansas U. joined. Several people joined the Politics Club and a number of subscriptions to Labor Action were secured.

2. Madison. There were three members of the SYL on this campus. Draper had a discussion with our members, sympathizers and Amvill supporters and it was agreed that these left-wingers should attempt to put some life in the heretofore all but defunct Socialist Club rather than organizing a rival club that would be based on the Amvill program.

Draper had a public meeting under the auspices of SDA. The topic was "What Is Wrong With American Foreign Policy?" The lecture was attended by 40 students and others were turned away from the small meeting hall.

3. Chicago.

a) Roosevelt College had a very poor meeting. The meeting was poorly organized and only about 10 students attended, under the auspices of the Socialist Club.

b) U. of Chicago's Politics Club had originally planned a symposium on Revolt in Stalinland but this plan fell through. Draper lectured on the subject instead. The attendance was relatively small, about 35 students, but the discussion was good.

c) SYL. A public meeting for Draper was organized on the U. of C. campus by the SYL. About 40 people attended a lecture on "Liberalism."

Though all the meetings in Chicago were relatively small, only the Roosevelt College meeting was a failure. Draper reported that one reason for small attendance was the bunching up of activity in a one week period: Draper visit, Shachtman meetings and preparations for anti-Franco picket line.

4. Detroit. A meeting had been planned for Draper under the auspices of the Philosophy Club of Wayne U. on "The Philosophy of the Russian Revolution." This club is led by members of the United Labor Party (ULP). At the last minute the meeting was called off. Whether this was due to sloppy organization by the ULP or out of maliciousness has not been determined.

Draper held a number of discussions with the executive committee and members of the SYL. The only public meeting organized during his 3 day stay was a meeting under the auspices of the SYL and ISL. The meeting was well attended and lively.

5. Ann Arbor. As this was vacation time at the U. of Michigan a public meeting was out of the question. However, a very excellently organized discussion was held with a number of contacts and sympathizers.

6. Oberlin. At Oberlin, Draper had a meeting that had to be organized almost overnight. The attendance was very large given the haste with which the meeting was organized after the vacation period and the small size of the school. At least 65 people attended a lecture on liberalism that was very well received. A number of these students joined the Socialist Discussion Club in which SYL comrades participate.

Shachtman Tour

Conrado Shachtman's tour was not a youth tour, but a number of his meetings were held on campus or under SYL auspices. Only these meetings are reported here.

1. Chicago. Shachtman had a meeting at the U. of Chicago campus shortly after Draper spoke there. Attendance was 35. Subject: Korea and American Foreign Policy.
2. Seattle. Debate with a faculty member on "U.N. Policy in Korea" was attended by 35 at the YMCA just off the University of Washington campus.
3. Berkeley. Lively meeting on Spain held just off the campus and attended by 60-70.
4. Reed College. (Portland) Reed College is a small school of 500 students where we now have sympathizers. Shachtman spoke at a campus meeting attended by 90 students. Topic was American Foreign Policy. Following the meeting an informal discussion was held at a student's home and was attended by 20-25.



PROPOSED CONSTITUTION FOR THE SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE

ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the Socialist Youth League, hereinafter referred to as the SYL.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of the SYL is to bring the politics and program of socialism and Marxist education to young workers and students; to make them conscious of the need for organization directed toward the abolition of capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism (Stalinian) and their replacement by a democratic socialist society.

ARTICLE III - AFFILIATION

The SYL is an organizationally autonomous affiliate of the Independent Socialist League. The program and aims of the SYL shall be in accord with the program and aims of the Independent Socialist League. Political disputes of SYL units with branches of the Independent Socialist League shall be reviewed by the National Bureau of the SYL and final decision rests with the National Committee of the Independent Socialist League.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Youth between the ages of 14 and 25 are eligible for membership. Exceptions to this rule are to be made only with the approval of the National Bureau.

Section 2. The minimum political requirement for membership is agreement with the aim of building a socialist society.

Section 3. Every member must belong to a unit in his locale and where no such unit exists he shall be given the status of membership-at-large until such a unit has been formed.

Section 4. Applicants for membership-at-large status shall be voted on by the National Bureau.

Section 5. Applicants for membership where a unit exists shall be voted on by the unit in their locale.

Section 6. Members with at least two years of membership, upon reaching the age of 21 shall be encouraged to join the ISL.

ARTICLE V - DISTRICT, UNIT AND REGION ORGANIZATION

Section 1. In any locale five or more members of the SYL upon application to the National Bureau shall be chartered and known as a "unit."

Section 2. A district organization may be set up in any one locale where more than one unit exists, subject to the approval of the National Bureau. The executive committee of a district organization must be elected by the membership of the component units and will be the highest governing body for that area.

Section 2. In geographically larger areas regional committees may be set up subject to the approval of the Buro. Between regional conventions it is the highest governing body for that area.

#### ARTICLE VI - NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The highest governing body of the SYL is the national convention.

Section 2. Between national conventions and subject to its decisions there shall be a national committee which has vested in it the authority of the national convention by which it is elected.

Section 3. The national committee shall consist of \_\_\_\_ (number) members, and \_\_\_\_ (number) of alternates to fill vacancies on the national committee in an order decided upon by the national convention. The national convention shall elect all members and alternates to the national committee.

Section 4. Members of the national committee can be suspended from the national committee and/or SYL membership by a two thirds vote of the national committee, pending final decision by the national convention. A member of the national committee can be expelled from the SYL only by the national convention.

Section 5. The national committee shall meet at least twice between conventions.

Section 6. The national convention shall be held at least once every two years, preferably following the ISL convention.

Section 7. Between conventions a decision of the national committee can be overruled by a national membership referendum.

Section 8. The National Buro shall consist of national committee members residing in the locale of the national office and shall be elected by the national committee. A representative from the Independent Socialist League shall be recognized as a regular member of the National Buro.

Section 9. A National Buro member shall be elected by the national committee to the post of national secretary.

Section 10. The National Buro shall conduct national political and organizational affairs of the SYL between conventions subject to the approval of the national committee.

Section 11. The national secretary shall be in charge of affairs relating to the functioning of the national office and subject to the approval of the National Buro.

Section 12. The national committee shall elect a representative to the ISL National Committee.

#### ARTICLE VII - NATIONAL CONVENTION

Section 1. The convention call including agenda and rules of the convention and proposals of national committee must be sent out three months before the date of the conventions.

Section 2. A special convention may be called by a majority of the national committee or by 2/5 of the units with at least 1/3 of the membership.

Section 3. Only members in good standing have the right to vote for delegates. Voting is to take place on a unit basis.

Section 4. Each unit will elect one delegate for a given number of members in good standing or major fraction thereof. The number is to be specified by the national committee in the convention call. Units may elect alternates to the convention.

Section 5. Members and alternates of the national committee shall be fraternal delegates at the national convention with voice but no vote.

Section 6. In a unit which is entitled to one delegate, the delegate shall be the one with the highest vote or a majority. In a unit with two delegates a minority faction candidate receiving one third of the vote shall be a delegate and the majority faction shall have one delegate; in a unit entitled to three delegates a minority faction candidate receiving one fourth of the vote shall have one delegate; where a unit is entitled to four delegates a minority faction receiving one fifth of the vote shall receive one delegate and two-fifths of the vote shall entitle the minority to two delegates.

Section 7. All rules governing a convention not defined in the constitution shall be established by the national committee in its convention call.

#### ARTICLE VIII - REFERENDUM AND RECALL

Section 1. Initiative for referendum can be made by one-third of the membership or two-fifths of the SYL units. Referendum shall be decided by majority vote.

Section 2. Initiative toward recall of any officer can be made by one-third of the membership or two-fifths of the membership of the area which elected him. All officers can be recalled by majority vote of the membership of the area which elected him.

#### ARTICLE IX - DEMOCRACY AND DISCIPLINE

Section 1. The SYL shall be based upon the fullest internal democracy combined with loyal unity of action to effectively carry out decisions adopted by authorized bodies of the SYL.

Section 2. The national committee is to provide for a year round discussion bulletin in which divergent political and organizational views of members can receive full expression.

Section 3. A unit is to provide members with opportunities to present their views on organizational and political problems before its membership. The exact frequency of such discussion meetings is left to the discretion of units.

Section 4. The national committee is to provide for a special three month pre-convention discussion period.

Section 5. Members whose dues are three months in arrears are automatically suspended from the SYL; those who are six months in arrears are automatically dropped from membership in the SYL.

Section 6. Charges of violations of discipline or activity harmful to the socialist cause made against an individual or member must be made in writing. The individual charges is entitled to a trial before a trial committee composed of members of his unit, elected by the unit, which will then bring in a recommendation to the unit. A two-thirds vote is necessary for expulsion; a majority vote is necessary for suspension or censure.

Section 7. All members have the right to appeal to higher bodies of the SYL up to and including the national convention. A majority decision of any higher body is necessary to sustain or overrule the decision of a lower body. The decision of the convention shall be final.

Section 8. A member of a committee elected by the national, regional or district convention can be tried by the committee of which he is a member, or by the membership of the units in the area which elected him. Charges brought by any aforementioned committee against a non-committee member must be presented to the unit to which the individual belongs. A higher body has the right to try a member of the SYL belonging to a lower body under its jurisdiction.

ARTICLE X - FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Section 1. New members are to pay a twenty-five cent initiation fee which is to be forwarded to the National Office.

Section 2. Each member is to pay a minimum of \_\_\_\_ a week dues. The policy of each unit shall be to review each member's financial status and to establish a pledge system above the minimum dues system. Members are to be exempted from dues payment only by approval of the unit executive committee.

Section 3. Financial obligations of the SYL units to the national office shall be determined on an individual basis between the unit and the national office.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS

Amendments may be made to the constitution by the national convention or in referendum vote.

ARTICLE XII - PRESS

All official publications of the SYL are subject to the direction of the SYL and the national committee.

ARTICLE XIII - PARLIAMENTARY RULES

At all meetings and conventions of the SYL, Roberts Rules of Order shall govern procedure except that all decisions are to be made by majority vote unless otherwise specified in this constitution and the chairman is to have the right to vote and voice at all times.

## SYL NATIONAL BUREAU RESOLUTION ON YOUTH AND WAR

The imminence of a third world war poses a new type of struggle between great world powers. The first two world wars were fundamentally capitalist imperialist struggles. The nature of Stalinism did not, during World War II, determine the character of the conflict. The threatening third world war is of a more profound nature. It is based on the inherent incompatibility of two different social systems: bureaucratic collectivism and capitalism.

Capitalism, although engaged in a social struggle with stalinism has been able to stave off Stalinism only on a military level. The fight against Stalinism, however, is more than a military problem. It must be combatted as an ideological force which has strong mass appeal. To the millions of people in the world who are disillusioned with existing society capitalism can make no successful appeal against the dynamic Stalinist movement. Capitalism can make no effective struggle on a programmatic level and it is only on the basis of program that stalinism can be progressively and definitively eliminated. The political battle against stalinism will be won when the masses are won over to a genuine socialist program. The inability of capitalism to offer the masses of the world a perspective of a genuine improvement in their social conditions disqualifies it from leadership in the ideological struggle against Stalinism.

Washington's open espousal of reactionary allies such as Franco, Bao-Dai and Syngman Rhee is damning evidence of the inability of capitalist imperialism to win against Stalinism in the mass arena. The nature of Washington's conflict with Stalinism is becoming politically more reactionary and dominantly military.

This increasingly reactionary trend in Washington's foreign policy has its related parallel in the wave of reaction which is sweeping the United States, threatening to inundate many of the democratic rights of parties, unions and individuals.

During World War II, because there was no organized opposition to the war, the American political structure remained relatively unchanged. Today the existence of a Stalinist opposition at home and the depth of the struggle between capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism has produced an organized, sometimes hysterical, attack by Washington against the democratic rights of its opponents, real and imaginary. Although the Stalinists are the most sought after victims of the government's witch hunt, the drive has a momentum of its own, and socialists, union militants and even non-political individuals are victimized. The McCarran Act and other measures against alleged "subversives" are only a prelude to the intensified blows against political democracy which will come with the advent of war. The outbreak of war will mean an impulsion toward the development of a garrison state in America. It will still not be the nightmare of Stalinist totalitarianism but this is no compensation for our more than gradual loss of civil rights at home.

The developments toward a garrison state in America cannot be minimized but it would be blind sectarianism to conclude that there will be no political differences between the U.S. and Stalinist Russia. However it would be fatal to socialism and democracy if the socialist movement today were to abandon the concept of the Third Camp in order to support or endorse American imperialism, critically or otherwise, in its struggle with Russian imperialism, on the grounds that capitalist democracy is the "lesser evil" to Stalinist totalitarianism. To abandon the Third Camp today means to surrender the fight for socialism at a time when it is most urgent. It means to abdicate from the fight for democratic socialism and against stalinism, in favor of supporting tottering bourgeois society which has proven itself incapable of either preserving democracy or successfully combatting Stalinism on a progressive basis. To abandon the Third Camp means also to abandon the colonial masses in revolt; to drive them into the arms of Stalinism for they will certainly not follow the

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advice of pro-war "socialists" to postpone their battle for full freedom and independence in the interests of American, Dutch, French or British imperialism.

The fundamental basis of our opposition to support of America is based on our conception of the validity of the third camp perspective. Despite the fact that no socialist revolution occurred during the second world war and that the socialist movement is today at one of its lowest ebbs in history, we believe that given existing conditions the possibility of the development of a third camp is a real one.

In order to analyze future events we cannot base ourselves on existing conditions alone. If this were the case then the socialist movement in previous periods of reaction would have given up the struggle. We must look at those factors which determine events and base our analysis on them.

The possibility of socialism has always been based on the existence of the class struggle. The class struggle does not depend on socialists for its existence; it stems from the exploitative relations of society. The existence of the class struggle today is an indisputable fact. The perspective in the U.S. for the class struggle are better than existed during the second world war. The lack of any reserves of unemployment plus the inflationary spiral which will accompany a switch from consumer to war production will mean a decline in the standard of living. Even during world war II, when the standard of living rose, opposition to Washington inside the labor movement existed.

It took the form among more militant unionists of campaigning around slogans of abandoning the no-strike pledge and getting off the War Labor Board. During the Third World War the decline in the standard of living will mean a sharpening of the class struggle.

The task of socialists in reference to the labor movement is to channelize the economic struggle into political directions. The connection between profiteering the war aims of the capitalist government must be exposed. The role of the government and employers in attacking union militants under the guise of the anti-subversive drive must be connected with the general question of civil liberties for the whole population. Struggles with war labor boards over wages, conditions of work etc., should be used as a sounding board to show the fundamental class nature of both parties. Our most important agitation should center around the formation of an independent labor party with a progressive foreign policy.

The fear and hatred of atomic war together with a distrust of capitalism militates against the ability of America to obtain secure alliances against Russia. The necessity for the development of an international program is even stronger abroad among those groups which are attempting to achieve some manner of independence from both war camps. Tendencies toward a third camp are reflected in the split in the BLP and in Nehru's criticisms of America. These tendencies if they are to achieve any success must adopt an international program which recognizes the fundamental hatred which the masses under Stalinist domination bear toward their rulers. A national war against Stalinism will minimize the hatred of the Russians themselves for their leaders and will tend to unify the Russian people with their oppressors as was shown in the second world war. The adoption of a political and ideological perspective on the part of those groups who are attempting independence of the two great powers will open up the possibility of their success.

The youth movement of today has little organic or political connection with the youth movement of the radical thirties. The "locked out generation" focused its struggle around the issues of unemployment, academic rights and war.

With the patriotism of Stalinist politics during the "People's Front" period came the beginnings of the decline of student radicalism.

The fervent support of the government by the Stalinists, the lack of opposition to the war and the elimination of unemployment all but swept politics from the campus during World War II. This did not mean an active pro-war sentiment on campus. The student reaction was much the same as that of the rest of the population. It was manifested by a passive support of the war marked by little enthusiasm. The campus was affected by the war but student interest was usually centered about what was going to happen to him as an individual.

The post-war period brought a small revival in campus politics. The brief success of the Wallace movement indicated a social dissatisfaction among strata of young people. However the general tenor of college life has been unaffected by student political activities. This does not mean that politics does not affect the student, or, more important, that he is not aware of the proximity of politics to his own life. In a sense there is more social awareness today than 15 years ago. The student picks up a newspaper knowing that what he reads may change the course of his life. His reaction, however, does not take the form of either organized social protest or approval; and when there is resentment, it is expressed on a personal level. His lack of enthusiasm for the war does not manifest itself in joining an anti-war movement but in trying to avoid draft induction. His fear about job security is not reflected in any ideological conclusions but in an attitude of careerism and finding a safe niche for himself. This depoliticalization occurs when the need for political action is greater than ever before. This is the general reaction among young people to the crisis in world events and to the catastrophe which threatens their lives. The desire to avoid atomic war is widespread but the fear of its outbreak, strengthened by the Korean events is so deep that only "immediate solutions" can receive wide acceptance. Actually this fear militates against a movement such as ours which promised little immediate success in effecting its program.

Mass reactions are, however, never uniform. The fact that the majority of young people will not be influenced today by our program is not to deny that there are significant numbers of students, interested in political questions, who can be won over to the militant socialist point of view. This is strengthened by the growing disparity between the government and its liberal adherents. The imminence of war together with the bankruptcy of programs alternative to ours place our views in a sharp and logical relief to those of other organizations. If we cannot make our voice heard in vast areas it is nevertheless true that the audience for our politics is wider than before. On campus in particular, where an interest in ideas is stronger than among the rest of the population there are many individuals who are potential SYL members. It is from among these students, the more idealistic and the more intellectual, that the socialist leadership of the future will be strengthened.

The government looks to the colleges in terms of its plans for gearing the American nation to a permanent state of war. The perspective of a pre-war and war period of long duration is reflected in the recently announced deferment program for college students. The government intends to train technicians, professionals, and propagandists as part of an elite in a permanent war economy. This is open

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class legislation since college students come dominantly from the middle and upper classes. In this case being born into the working class may very well become a matter of life and death. American imperialism must make up for its lack of manpower superiority over Russian imperialism by a constantly increasing technology. The direct need which the government has for these specialists in its war preparations will be reflected in increasing military intervention on the campus. Together with the growing number of schools which are introducing ROTC we are witnessing a slow stream of military men and politicians into the ranks of "educators". One of the important aspects of our program must be opposition to the militarization of the campus and the subordination of academic life and academic rights to its demands.

The restriction of academic freedom is the campus counterpart of the national anti-"subversive" drive which began with the cold war. During the last war the lack of any serious opposition to the government was reflected in the virtual unimpairment of America's minimal democratic structure. Today as a third world war appears to be only a question of time, the "anti-red" drive is gaining in momentum. With the growing integration of the colleges into war preparations, student rights will be victimized beyond the civil rights of the rest of the population. We know from experience that although the anti-Stalinist drive is aimed primarily against the Stalinists it is very often directed against socialists and liberals. The drive against student rights is a direct consequence of the war program of the administration. Although we have no sympathy for Stalinism we are in open opposition to suppressing the rights of any student organization including affiliated and fronts of the Communist Party. Reaction against the Stalinists although it is very often supported by students is spearheaded usually by the college administration. It takes the form of decree from above, of bureaucratic orders, of legal incrimination. The absence of a student youth movement in defense of its rights will leave the field open for administrative repression.

The major significant effect which war preparations have had on college political life is centered around the issue of academic freedom. Given the absence of a large anti-war movement this will be the major political question for student youth. It is essential that we do not limit our role in these struggles to participation or even organizational leadership. We must attempt to educate other political tendencies to the connection between the attacks on academic freedom and the war drives of American imperialism. Very often liberals become disoriented from their experience with or revolving around civil rights for CPers. Only political clarification can prevent this. Our approach to the problem of the defense of the rights of Stalinist organizations must be based on a recognition of the necessity in general of excluding them from that struggle. The tendency among liberals is usually to vacillate from one extreme to another on this question. At one point they are for inviting them into the united front, at another for excluding them from the campus entirely. An education toward an understanding of the nature of Stalinism and also the nature of government opposition to it is a fundamental contribution which we can make to the student movement.

In addition to offering our political analysis of Stalinism we must attempt to enlarge the ideological scope of the struggle for student rights. The attacks on academic freedom by the government must be connected with its reactionary foreign policy, its war aims and with the nature of capitalism. Since the government includes the campus in its war plans the defense of student freedom is objectively anti-war. The development of students who are willing to fight for democracy on the campus to a comprehension of the necessity for socialism is the main task of socialists on campus.

An integral part of our propaganda is an emphasis on the fundamental inadequacy of the isolated student movement. In order to realize its aims the youth move-



ment must connect itself with the only socially effective and progressive class in society, the working class through the organized trade union movement.

Among small numbers of young people the pacifist attitude has taken root. We are speaking only of those sincere pacifists who believe this is the only way to fight war.

We reject pacifist absolute morality because we believe it would leave individuals and minorities, victims of fascist and reactionary terror, helpless in their own defense. As socialists we believe that war is a social and economic problem. It can be eliminated only by the mass acceptance of a socialist program. We work for the adoption of that program and seek to surround ourselves with as large a number of youth as possible in order to advance our socialist ideas. Consistent pacifism guarantees isolation from the population and is therefore of little effect. We therefore reject absolute pacifism in favor of a struggle against war on the basis of our socialist program.

Because of the nature of college life which gives a more dominant status to ideas, campus political movements and radical groups have greater prominence than in political life proper. The lives which students lead, their greater abundance of leisure, the classroom itself, all facilitate the relatively greater amount of political life and activity on campus. The prominent status which campus political groups often receive is usually far out of proportion to their actual strength and influence. A small group of students can receive renown comparable to a mass movement in public life. This is one factor which makes campus activity such an excellent arena for us and serves to negate to a great extent the effect of our small numbers and political isolation.

Other political groups such as SDA, SLID, Young Liberals and the Stalinist fronts also receive prominence which is far out of proportion to their actual strength. The political "respectability" of some of these groups, strengthened by the prestige of their parent organizations, lend them additional status. The Stalinists have been hard hit by the anti-subversive drive and have, in addition, succeeded in alienating, by demonstration of their corrupt, political methods and program, many liberals from them. The liberal and right wing socialist groups exist in very small number with a predominantly book membership. None of these groups have any roots among high school or working class youth.

The isolation of the radical youth movement from the neighborhoods and shops is an indication of its peripheral, intellectual character. The mainstream of American youth are found outside the campus. A political movement which could organize them and educate them would leave its impress on the political future of America. The student orientation is for us at this stage perfectly valid but our goal of reaching working class youth in the future should never be forgotten.

The young worker will be affected by the permanent war economy in much the same way as his older fellow-worker. Increased exploitation will emerge from war production, without any reserves of unemployed. His real wages will be cut in an inflationary spiral set in motion by a declining consumer goods production. Inside the labor movement an opposition to the government wage program, stronger than existed during World War II will involve many young workers in its struggle. Our propaganda toward the young worker will be centered primarily around his economic problems, his union activity. We will attempt to educate him toward an understanding of the class nature of the government, the necessity for independent political action and the struggle for socialism.

All of our political and organizational work, our campaigns for democratic rights, our efforts to build an anti-war movement must be kept in the perspective of our socialist goal. They are of course organically connected but it is important to remember that our socialist program must never be forgotten. Socialism is the only solution to war and our task in educating young people to its neces-

## TASKS OF THE SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE.

The SYL, as the only American youth organization that speaks out against both American and Russian imperialism and for the Third Camp of peace and socialism, can look forward to a period of growth and development. Although there is little prospect of a mass radicalization of American youth the SYL, nevertheless, can increase its size and influence, among those youth who become increasingly aware of the dilemma that capitalism and Stalinism have brought to the entire world.

The main task of the SYL is to fully exploit the growing opportunity to extend its influence. Today's thin strata of advanced, politically conscious youth will penetrate deeper and deeper into the fabric of American life tomorrow. It is among the younger people that the SYL must concentrate its appeal.

Our generation is growing up under the deadly threat of a Third World War. It can be said that in the past two generations youth have known nothing else but war or the threat of war. The preparation for war is seeping into every pore of American life and its consequences are of daily occurrence.

The prosperity of the five years since the end of World War II is still with us, but now it has become the Permanent War Economy. It is still easy to get jobs when schooling is over, the take home pay is high compared to other countries, but there is an existing and threatened price to pay for this "prosperity." - the draft, Universal Military Training and the constant threat of atomic war. However, the forces of war and reaction have not yet come into full play and American youth is only beginning to become aware of its future under capitalism. The economic prosperity of the richest and most powerful capitalist country in the world strengthens the traditional lack of widespread interest in radical politics or even in politics in general.

The problems which confront the socialist movement today are more complex and difficult than those of the thirties. Then the primary problems were unemployment and war; the solution was socialism and it was not too difficult to convince young people of it. Because of past failures, the task for the socialist movement and the socialist youth is that much greater. Where the interest in politics does come forth, it is often in search for the quick and easy solutions that elusive magic formula that will provide for a peaceful co-existence of the rival imperialisms. Then, there is the other school of thought which favors "dropping the bomb on them before they drop it on us."

It is the task of the SYL to convince young people of the futility of such "solutions" to their problems. It is to teach them to go to the root of the matter, to convince them that radical politics are realistic politics in a world threatened with destruction and barbarism. It is to instill in them a feeling of self-reliance, an understanding that the way out of the present impasse lies only through their activity, understanding and organizations -and ultimately in their devotion to the fight for socialism. There is the need for the idealism of youth, an awareness that the socialist reorganization of society is the only realistic hope, creating a democratic society through its accomplishment, and the realization that in the labor movement lies the strongest force to accomplish this goal. It is necessary to point out that there must be a consistent and continued fight for the preservation and extension of our democratic rights and against compromising these rights in the interests of the fight against "communism". And, at the same time, it is important to clearly differentiate ourselves from Stalinists and Stalinism.

To facilitate reaching these objectives the SYL must grow into an organization that can take the leadership among young people. The devotion and loyalty to the fight for socialism and to the SYL are prerequisites for our developing into an organization with recognized leadership among radical youth. It is necessary to develop a leadership within the SYL and to stimulate maximum membership participation in the internal life of the SYL: no organization can function in a truly democratic manner without the full participation by the rank and file in its life and activity. A democratic structure can only lay the necessary foundation, but it is the responsibility of the membership as a whole to give this democracy an organic character through their participation. The SYL today is in a position to carry the program of Independent Socialism to a greater number of young people than ever before in its existence. But to be able to carry on in the most effective way, it is necessary to develop politically stable cadres, devoted to the socialist movement.

It is to these tasks that the founding convention of the SYL is dedicated.

### The Orientation of the SYL.

1. The main orientation of the SYL remains that of campus work. The success of the past few years indicates the validity of this approach. It has been on the campus that the SYL has been able to grow and stabilize its membership in many areas. It is doubtful whether comparable results could have been achieved by any other orientation. It is easier for students to become integrated into the life of a propaganda group than it would have been for young workers for whom we are unable to offer meaningful trade union direction.

2. It does not appear likely that in the next period that the base of our campus work will disappear. Although the draft and possibly UMT will make greater inroads into the life of American youth, the indications are that the campus, at this time, will not be depleted as it was in the Second World War. Already the government is planning to offer what is almost equivalent to a blanket deferment to college students in order to train the technical and bureaucratic personnel necessary to maintain the American war machine. This in itself is a clear example of class bias since it is obvious that it is mainly the middle class and the rich who are able to send their sons to college. The continuation of this policy will depend on the actual developments in the imperialist rivalry where the U.S. is in a tighter manpower situation than in the last war. Therefore, while there may be a decline in college enrollment, the campus will still remain a fruitful arena of SYL activity.

4. While the general student orientation must continue, it is important to remember that building a Student SYL movement is not an end in itself. The SYL can become a significant, viable youth movement only if it develops a proletarian base. It is the present task of the SYL to develop and educate sufficient competent members to provide a cadre for a working class youth movement. It is easier to recruit this cadre on campus than in the factory.

5. It is necessary to prepare for the time when the SYLer leaves school by encouraging individual and group preparation for an industrial occupation. This will at the same time aid the ISL in its trade union industrial concentration and prepare for the time when the SYL is able to participate in the life of the working class youth. This does not mean that the SYL should abandon its campus work and prepare to enter the shop, but rather that industrial training should be engaged in simultaneously, and be supplemented by summer in a shop where possible. Also, the non-student SYLer should be encouraged to learn an industrial skill and seek employment in a union shop.

## Newspapers and Publications

1. The SYL should establish a national magazine. It would be of great help in strengthening SYL on a national scale to have a publication oriented to the specific problems of young people. It would contribute to the education and politicalization of our membership to be able to write in its own publication. One of the needs of the SYL is to establish itself as a youth organization in the sense that the daily problems of young people become our concern.

2. There should be a more extensive utilization of Labor Action and the NI for general contacting work. The propaganda and educational role of both the ISL and SYL depends on the extent to which the press is effectively used to bring the program of Independent Socialism to wider groups of youth. In this sense the national magazine can be a supplement to the ISL press.

## Campus Work

1. It should be the goal of every comrade on the campus to start a socialist or politics club. Political work on campus is easier than in the factory for even one or two students can usually initiate a club where they can present the socialist point of view as well as participate in the daily campus life. Unfortunately no such possibilities exist for factory work.

2. Often, one of the prerequisites for the stable functioning of a campus club is the organization of a SYL unit. There need be no conflict between the organization of a broader campus group such as a socialist club or a politics club and the formation of an SYL unit. The broader campus group can provide a fruitful arena of activity among students who are not ready or willing to commit themselves to any one organization. It is often through participation in a broader group for a period of time that we are able to recruit. In general, there should be no weakening of the off-campus SYL unit in order to benefit a campus group, for recruitment to the SYL remains our first task.

3. The type of campus organization that is organized has to be determined by the particular situation. On a campus where there is free political atmosphere, a socialist club can be organized where we can openly present our socialist ideas. However, where there is a more restricted campus, it may be necessary to organize and participate in broader groups such as a political discussion club. It should not be a policy to attempt to bring the SYL unit on to the campus as a recognized club where names would have to be submitted to the administration, thus endangering the security of the members.

4. The main emphasis in our political work on the campus centers around the anti-war and academic freedom campaigns. It is not a question of the emphasis of one to the exclusion of the other for there is an organic connection between the two; the attack on academic freedom, though not always carried out by governmental agencies is part of the preparations for a Third World War. Whether both of these campaigns can be carried on with equal vigor depends on the nature of the campus where our comrades are active. The individual SYLer, in general, should be known as a Third Camp socialist and constantly present his point of view in the club and on the campus.

5. One of the aims of our campus work is to break out of isolation and to join in united front activities with liberal and socialist tendencies, primarily on academic and civil liberties issues. While we clearly differentiate ourselves from all pro-war tendencies there are nevertheless wide areas where we can cooperate on specific issues with liberals and right-wing socialists.

This can and often does serve as a means whereby we can make personal contact with many liberals and right wing socialists and press forth our Third Camp position, in addition to achieving the immediate objective of the united front.

The circumstances where we can effectuate united fronts are dependent on the specific situation. It may be over the rights of a suspended teacher, a civil rights issue, a segregation case or many other issues, even an anti-ROTC campaign in which our socialist anti-war position need not be directly involved. Through these united fronts we can prove that we are the most consistent and militant champions of civil liberties and thus create a larger periphery on campus which will look to the SY<sup>4</sup>ers for leadership. In turn we will attempt to force the liberals to fight a consistent struggle for their point of view. We must attempt to convince them that the fight for civil liberties is part of the fight against the militarization program of the government.

It is not out of the question to enter into electoral blocs with liberals as one of the united front activities where such election campaigns are centered about local campus issues. However, the fact that we are in a united front does not mean that we are dropping our anti-war point of view.

## Proposed Program of the Socialist Youth League

The Socialist Youth League, youth affiliate of the Independent Socialist League, is devoted to the struggle for building a democratic socialist world. Inhering in this struggle for socialism is our fundamental opposition to capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism (Stalinism).

Capitalism is a system of economic inequality and social injustice; it is a market economy based upon the profit motive, the exploitation of the working class; and it is forced to resort to imperialism and war in the attempt to solve its economic and political problems.

Stalinist totalitarianism is the most extreme and widespread form of political terror in the world. In Stalinist countries economic and political power is fused in and controlled by a despotic state which rules from above subjugating the needs and interests of the people to its own imperialist ambitions.

Neither Stalinism nor the basic evils of capitalism can be reformed. We advocate the abolition of both systems and their replacement by a society in which the people can democratically own and control the economy and thereby determine the political and social policies of their nation. In this society, a socialist society, democratic, conscious planning can successfully eliminate class distinctions.

The present conflict between Stalinist and capitalist imperialism is the greatest threat to world peace. No socialist worthy of that designation can give any aid or solace to either imperialism in this irreconcilable conflict. Instead, all the energies of the socialist movement must be devoted to building a militant socialist Third Camp opposed to both war camps.

The Socialist Youth League as an organization of young people will fight for the following immediate objectives for youth and show how the struggle for and the victory of socialism is the only realistic means of guaranteeing their permanent achievement.

1. Academic Freedom. We are opposed to all efforts of the politicians and the school administrations to gag student opinion or stifle the faculty. We defend the rights of all students to organize political clubs on the campus and to hear speakers of their choosing. Although we regard Stalinists as a reactionary force we nevertheless defend their right to organize on campus. At the same time we oppose all efforts by legislators or "educators" to intimidate or fire faculty members because of their political views or affiliations.

2. The Right To Vote At 18. American youth of 19 are drafted and those who are 18 are allowed to volunteer for the armed forces. If youth of eighteen are old enough to fight and die, then they are certainly old enough to have the right to influence their destinies through the ballot.

3. Right To A Free Education. We believe that all youth are entitled to a free higher education, with the cost of tuition and

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living expenses paid by the government.

4. Against Segregation. We are in favor of a federal law which will outlaw any effort by any institution, educational, military, etc., to segregate people according to race, color or creed. We support all efforts which genuinely seek to eliminate Jim Crow, anti-semitism or other form of discrimination.

5. Against Militarization of the Youth. We are opposed to any form of militarism on campus as being against the best educational interests of students. ROTC is not only an evil in itself but it has been proven by experience to be a reliable arm of reaction on the camp and a training ground for bigotry and militarism. We are opposed to Universal Military Training as being a step toward the militarization of the United States, an invasion of the democratic rights of young people and a major step in the direction of a garrison state and war.

6. Equal Pay for Working Youth. Working youth are among the most underpaid sections of the working class. Young workers are entitled to the same wages as provided for older workers in the same category of skill and occupation.

7. Unemployment Insurance. Youth are among the hardest hit by unemployment and depression. We regard it to be the responsibility of the government to provide adequate unemployment insurance for young people seeking employment in their fields and skills but unable to find such work for reasons not of their own making.

8. Youth and Labor. The Socialist Youth League recognizes the working class as the only force which is capable of successfully leading the struggle for socialism. We support the labor movement in all its struggles to better the conditions of the worker and to maintain the independence of the trade union movement. We look to the formation of an independent labor party as an immediate need for the labor movement and a basic step forward toward the emancipation of youth and labor.

IN FAVOR OF PRESSING FOR A SOCIALIST ANVIL AND A SOCIALIST FEDERATION OF CLUBS

One year after the outbreak of war in Korea, there has not developed that type of anti-war sentiment on the campus capable of being mobilized into a militant anti-war movement. The war in Korea is by no means popular, but the reaction to it does not take on a political character. Instead there is the tendency to a personalized escape from the consequences of the war.

In face of this development during the two years of the existence of Anvil and Student Partisan and the N.Y. Federation it is necessary to reevaluate some of the premises that were previously held. The SYL advocated the formation of a broad anti-war federation in the belief that the increasing tensions of the cold war would develop an anti-war sentiment capable of being organized into a militant and expanding anti-war student movement. It was believed, and correctly so, that in face of this expected radicalization, a socialist program would be too narrow and exclusive to enable the full development of the situation. Therefore, a broader anti-war program was advocated.

However, the anti-war sentiment that does exist is not of a kind that would enable the building of a political movement. It is rather a fear of the war as manifested in all sorts of psychological escapes. The students who are attracted are the more serious type who are looking for the political way out of the war. We can reach those students who are not merely anti-war but developing "politics

Without the immediate prospect of an anti-war movement, the SYL should advocate the utilization of Anvil as a socialist magazine with the corresponding programmatic changes. Anvil can be an effective means of presenting the Third Camp Socialist alternative to capitalism and Stalinism. It can overcome the present weakness of the magazine of not presenting a positive programmatic alternative to the war, which would be justified if there were the prospect of an anti-war movement so as to appeal to the broadest strata of non-socialist anti-war students. Without this perspective, Anvil would become a pointless activity since we would be participating in the publication of a mass magazine that will not grow into what it is intended to do, and it will continue to suffer the disadvantage of not presenting a socialist point of view.

A socialist basis to the magazine would not cease to attract those students who have already expressed interest in Anvil. It would serve as a better educational weapon by bringing an attractive socialist magazine on the campus. The "discussion" policy of Anvil would remain, enabling other points of view to be counterposed to the programmatic socialist position. The pacifists who might be alienated is not a factor of sufficient weight to counter-balance the advantages of publishing a socialist magazine; and the pacifist elements would not form the backbone of a future movement. Moreover, a socialist magazine could invite contributions from pacifist authors.

A programmatic change in the Federation and Anvil will not automatically solve our problems. There can be no substitute for more organized political work on the campus, and there can be no doubt that part of the failure to grow is due to the failure of the clubs to follow up the initial impact of Anvil's success.

Many comrades believe that there could be a growth in the non-socialist anti-war federation based on socialist clubs. But this contradiction between the NY Student Federation set up and Anvil and its participating organizations has hindered more than facilitated the growth of the Federation and Anvil. It is difficult to ask someone who merely states agreement with the Anvil program to join a socialist club without at the same time convincing him to become a socialist. Thus it has been difficult to use Anvil as an active aid in recruiting to the clubs.



It was understandable at the time of the outbreak of the Korean war to propose changing the campus clubs to anti-war clubs in the expectation of a rising wave of militant anti-war sentiment, but to propose it at this time would mean the serious risk of devitalizing the clubs as they now exist without the prospect for growth on a broad basis.

The change to a socialist magazine and a socialist Federation can be of help in the stabilization of the socialist clubs and give them a magazine that can be more effectively used in an organizational sense. The need is to form socialist clubs on the campus today so that we will be in a better position to meet the requirements of a broader student movement at a later time.

Sam Folkins

ON BUILDING A NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In this article we wish to motivate and argue for a plan to remove our national headquarters from New York, and locate it in Chicago. Lest anyone jump to hasty conclusions, we assure them at the beginning that this proposal is not made on the basis of local chauvinism, but from considerations of how best to improve the functioning of our national center, and hence facilitate the growth of our local units.

In his article distributed at the Mid-West Conference, comrade Magnus outlined some of the reasons why the establishment of a capable, functioning and collective leadership on a national level is an imperative necessity. We believe that the direction and emphasis of comrade Magnus is correct as against those who hold that, in our present stage of development, it is of no consequence what kind of leadership the SYL has nationally. These people argue that the coming period will see little more accomplished than what is within the capacity of the separate, local units. They think that we can only look forward to the slow accretion of the last period, in which our growth has been largely on the basis of previously existing units recruiting new members, and occasionally the formation of a new unit by a member going to a new locality. From this they conclude that there is little reason to believe that the quality and character of our central leadership makes any difference to our functioning or growth.

In our opinion the most important task which the coming SYL convention could accomplish would be to decide on ways to establish a strong national leadership which would aid in consolidating our organization and directing its further growth. If this is not done, we will consider the convention to have been a failure. For together with Magnus, we hold that a national leadership would play a vital, and indeed decisive role, in facilitating the growth of the ISL youth organization.

Up to now the growth of the SYL has been largely, though not exclusively, on the basis of stimulation by local ISL branches. They have supplied the original personnel, the bulk of the educational and organizational direction, and occasionally even the finances for the local SYL units. Today the four big units have reached the stage of semi-independence from ISL help, though in some degree still dependent on it for political and material aid. In the future, we may still expect some aid in building units in places like Cleveland, Los Angeles, Buffalo and Seattle, but because of the limited number of ISL branches, and the lack of youth in several of these, it must be considered mainly our responsibility to found new units and extend our size. We cannot depend on anyone but ourselves to do this.

We have already had limited success in building units where no ISL branch exists. The West Coast area is the best example, where due largely to the efforts of the Berkeley SYL, we now have contacts and prospective units in more than one place. Madison, Oberlin, Ann Arbor are places where we have some kind of unit or group which has grown up entirely as the result of efforts we have made. We think that these results can be duplicated elsewhere, and that our existing contacts can be developed to the point where they become youth units. It was with this in mind that the idea of a Mid-West organizer was suggested, and the Coordinating Committee established. The necessity of having one person devote a considerable amount of time to this kind of activity was thus recognized.

The midwest organizer project arose because our present arrangements have not proved adequate to the problems of several of our units or potential units -- namely those in the midwest region. An annual tour by our national secretary, a summer camp, and one regional conference were clearly not sufficient. We have listed this area as only one of the several in which adequate national leadership has been lacking in the last period. Let us merely briefly mention a couple of the others.

We have failed to maintain a youth and student column in Labor Action with any regularity. This failure has largely negated the value of the ISL press for youth and student work. The collection of material and writing of youth articles is primarily a function of a youth center, indeed it cannot be accomplished by any other means. For Labor Action to have a "Youth Committee" separate from the SYL buro is absolutely impossible.

There has been conspicuous absence of the distribution of information about local activities of the various youth units. This has led to unnecessary misunderstandings, lack of a true picture of the youth as a whole, and general isolation of each unit from another. Only recently have buro minutes, sent out to the units, begun to be at all adequate, and even now they lack the completeness of full reports.

The present buro has not been capable of publishing any kind of regular bulletin on political or organizational problems. Its one or two bulletins on the YPSL and related questions were excellent, but isolated examples of what can be done. But when Berkeley suggested the founding of a national magazine, which may or may not have been practical, the buro could only react by referring the suggestion back to the unit originating it.

Examples of organizational shortcomings have been frequent. The most glaring example was last year's camp, which in all respects was again the responsibility of the Chicago unit alone, and as a result, lacked a truly national character.

In regard to each of the above points, we certainly do not wish to impute any deficiencies or personal shortcomings to the present buro. The reasons for its failures are obvious and clear. Several people have left the buro in the past period to strengthen other units outside of New York, but at the same time weakening the forces in New York. This has left an enormous burden on the remaining comrades. In addition to strictly youth work, our leading comrades have been involved in numerous other activities. Thus we understand that there is considerable overlapping between the SYL buro, the SYL New York Executive Committee, the Labor Action staff, Anvil editorial board, and several student clubs. With personnel spread over such wide areas, it is no wonder that the buro suffers as a result. Another source of weakness is undoubtedly the fact that few of the buro members are familiar with the situation and personnel of other units than New York, i.e., as presently constituted, the buro is unrepresentative.

Remedying the weaknesses of our present buro would obviously demand a new arrangement whereby a new buro would consist of persons concerned primarily, if not exclusively, with the problems of national leadership of the SYL. Its members should be relatively free from other duties so as to permit them to carry on correspondence, write articles for Labor Action, a youth bulletin, etc. make tours and undertake other necessary duties. An additional virtue would be that they be collectively familiar with the nature and problems of most of the units.

Keeping in mind these requirements, it is obvious that there are only two ways of creating such a national leadership. The first is to select an adequate number of people from local units, and have them move to our present national headquarters in New York. Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago and Berkeley could each be expected to supply one such person. This is one solution, and the only one in our opinion should the alternative which we suggest be rejected.

From the practical point of view, we believe there is an easier and less disruptive way. That is to move our national headquarters to Chicago, and transfer the buro to that city. Let us list some of the considerations favoring this alternative, and then discuss its drawbacks.

1. At the present time there exists in Chicago a core of people around whom a buro could be constructed. Three present NC members plus a fourth member of the NC are available, and fully capable of handling this assignment. With the addition of a national secretary and/or a Berkeley comrade, such a buro would not only be large enough, but broadly representative of the entire country. Two of the four persons mentioned above originally come from New York, and a third from St. Louis. As a result of these differing backgrounds, a collective leadership would be really possible.

2. Due to its location, Chicago is capable of being the site of expanded buro meetings far more easily than New York. Thus it is easier to include Detroit, Madison, Cleveland, St. Louis and other unit representatives in expanded buro meetings which -- while they would not be the equivalent of NC meetings, would certainly be desirable as a substitute.

3. At the present time, and so far as can be foreseen, in the future also, Chicago has sufficient secondary leadership to be able to more or less free the necessary personnel for national work. This is probably not a situation found elsewhere in the country. If anything, at the present time Chicago suffers from a plethora of leaders -- i.e., highly trained, politically and organizationally capable personnel.

4. Chicago's location, in addition to allowing easier access to outlying units, also permits freer access to the buro. It is far easier for a national tour to cover the mid-west from Chicago than from New York. Of course, it leaves the east coast at somewhat of a disadvantage, but our organizational opportunities do not appear to be concentrated there. In other words, Chicago is now the center of SYL growth, and the location of the buro there would facilitate our continued expansion in the mid-west. The SYL national secretary would then play the role originally scheduled for the mid-west organizer who, it is becoming plain, is unlikely to materialize for lack of funds.

5. The national business office of Anvil is now located in Chicago, and while there exists no formal connection, nevertheless, it would be easier for the SYL to aid the expansion of this anti-war magazine, if it were in close contact with the latter's business manager. SYL representatives could better know what causes needed Anvil and where the magazine was already established so that efforts were not as necessary.

There are, of course, a number of drawbacks to this scheme, but we do not think they outweigh its advantages. We do not believe that Chicago's geographical location is any particular advantage, except at this present time and for very specific reasons. Theoretically, New York is undoubtedly a superior location, and we would not propose Chicago as more than a temporary location. We certainly do not propose the move because of any "bias" against New York, and we would definitively dissociate ourselves from all persons and arguments which base themselves on prejudices of this kind. More often than not

these arguments have a reactionary character and an "anti-intellectual" tendency. It is primarily because, due to certain historical and personal accidents, Chicago at the present time appears better able to create a bureau which will be capable of carrying out the necessary tasks free from other assignments.

There are, however, a number of real objections. The most obvious is the separation which will occur between the national leaderships of the SYL and ISL. In New York, the leading committees of the two can exchange representatives. Located in Chicago a somewhat more devious arrangement would prevail. The difficulties are not, however, insuperable. If the two committees were separated, it would be necessary for a national committee member of the Youth to be represented on the ISL political committee in New York, and remain in close contact with the bureau through correspondence. Similarly, an NC member of the party could function on the youth bureau in Chicago. This might actually be superior to past arrangements, where the ISL representative seldom attended meetings of the Youth bureau.

Another objection would be that moving the bureau would weaken our New York unit. This might be so, but on the other hand, it would free some people for youth activity on a local scale. Also, we must recognize that New York is in a better position than other units, insofar as it can draw on the resources of the New York ISL and the national office for its speakers and educators. The harm done to New York would be more than counter-balanced by the strengthening which the mid-west units would receive. Thus we hope that no one will interpret our proposal as a "slight" or aspersion upon our New York unit.

Finally, we wish to stress that this proposal cannot be taken as any cure-all for our organizational problems. Above all, it cannot be separated from all other measures necessary to strengthen our national structure. These must include at the very minimum, plans for some kind of national organ, a regular dues system, the creation of a system of responsible correspondence, etc. We hope that the proposal to move our national headquarters will be considered together with these proposals, and other necessary measures for building a national organization.

- Don Harris -

## A PROPOSED SYSTEM OF NATIONAL DUES

One of the first things any organization needs is a dues system. Up to now we have not had a regular, organized system of dues payment to our national organization. This has led to inequities, low standards of payment, and other bad results. Hence, the establishment of a dues system is one of the tasks of the convention which will help to transform us into a real organization.

We are going to suggest a standard of payment which may appear somewhat high to some comrades who place local unit needs above those of our national office. However, these comrades should keep in mind that many of our past shortcomings have been due in part to the lack of finances for carrying out projects by the buro. A pamphlet, bulletins, a magazine, correspondence, tours, conferences, National Committee meetings, national camps, Conventions, etc., all require money for their accomplishment. The system under which we have been operating let most of these costs fall on the shoulders of local units, and in a generally unrepresentative fashion. Thus Berkeley has had the expense of numerous long trips to outlying places, and Chicago has paid the deficit for two national camps, trips to Detroit and Madison, etc. In these and other cases, the burden for what is essentially national activity should be borne by all units equally. Therefore, we are suggesting a high level of payments to the national office.

1. As a minimum level of dues, we suggest twenty-five cents per week for students and those working part-time or summer only. For members working full time, minimum dues should be one dollar per week.

2. In order that dues payment not be a deterrent to joining, we suggest the additional category of "provisional" or "probationary member," such status to carry with it only the right to pay minimum dues of ten cents per week, but no accompanied by lack of right to vote, or any other penalties.

3. All minimum dues to be forwarded to the youth national office. All pledges over minimum dues to be retained by the unit for local use.

4. Two fifths of all money received by the N.O. to be set aside for purposes of building local units. Where a regional committee exists (such as the Mid-West Coordinating Committee) this money be turned over directly to it for allocation. Otherwise, it may be given as subsidies to local units devoted to special projects for which a unit needs funds (such as a local organ) used to pay for tours to outlying units, etc. The other three fifths of total money collected to be available for national office purposes of more immediate concern to it, such as salaries, publication losses, etc.

Let us stress again, that payments of this kind to our national office are the prerequisite of maintaining and improving our functioning on a national level. Everyone will agree that a full time secretary is essential, but maintaining one costs a minimum of five hundred dollars a year (we cannot expect him to live on nothing, since that takes years of practice as a functionary). Everyone will agree also that we need organizational and political tours, but that takes additional sums of money. We need a national magazine, and that loses money. For all these things, it is easy to see that our national office needs a total income of twelve or fifteen hundred dollars a year. Dividing that by our present membership makes it clear why I propose the sum of twenty-five cents per week per member.

Some may raise objections to this scale on the grounds that a weak unit will not be able to make payments of this sort and have any money left over for local purposes. In such cases it may be advisable to work out an arrangement whereby a portion of national office funds be retained by the unit as a national office subsidy, but this should not be considered a regular procedure, nor one available to any but the weakest and newest of our local organizations. And the only place where it can be decided which units are most in need of financial aid, compared with others is the buro, which is more or less familiar with the comparative needs of the different units.

- Don Harris -