



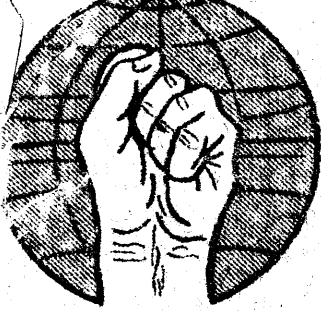
# YOUNG SOCIALIST FORUM

P.O. BOX 471  
COOPER STA.  
NEW YORK 3, N.Y.

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WHERE WE STAND AND THE  
YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE  
CONSTITUTION

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WHERE WE STAND AND THE  
YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE  
CONSTITUTION

## WHERE WE STAND

### Founding Declaration of The "Young Socialist Alliance"

1. The "Young Socialist Alliance is founded in response to the need for a nation-wide youth organization capable of bringing revolutionary socialist ideas to a new generation. This is necessary for building a revolutionary movement which can lead the working class to socialism. The YSA bases itself on the traditions of marxian socialism as developed by Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht. We Believe that socialism can be initiated only as the result of struggle, international in scope, of the working class against the capitalist class and its allies -- the struggle culminating in the creation of a new type of state, a workers' state. Socialism means that for the first time in history man will control his own creation -- society-- rather than be controlled by it. The dynamic of socialism is of a continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life.

2. In December, 1958, the National Conference of Young Socialist Supporters, which is now superseded by the "Young Socialist Alliance", issued an eight point political statement:

- (1) For a labor party by the union movement. As an immediate goal, for independent political action through united and independent socialist electoral opposition to the two capitalist parties.
- (2) Unconditional backing of the fight for full equality by the Negro people and other minorities.
- (3) Militant opposition to the entire witchhunt with special focus on the witchhunt on the campus and the political screening of youth in connection with military service.
- (4) Support to the colonial peoples' struggles for freedom and independence. For the withdrawal of all imperialist troops from foreign soil.
- (5) Advocacy of workers power as the only progressive alternative to the capitalist drive toward military dictatorship and fascism, a drive recently illustrated by General deGaulle's placement in power in France.
- (6) Support to struggles for workers' democracy in the Soviet Union and Peoples Republics such as the Polish and Hungarian workers' revolutions. Opposition to attempts of imperialism to reestablish domination over this section of the world.
- (7) Against further nuclear tests and the build-up of the U.S. war machine, the success of the struggle against the capitalist war danger and for world peace depends upon the success of the struggle for international socialism.
- (8) For the regroupment of revolutionary socialist youth into an independent, broad and militant national youth organization based on the editorial policy of the YOUNG SOCIALIST.

This earlier statement, which is based upon the principles outlined in this declaration, illustrates the general political views upon which the

Young Socialist Alliance is founded. In other resolutions at this conference and at later conferences a fuller political program will be elaborated.

### ORIGIN OF YSA

3. The "Young Socialist Alliance" is the result of a political process which began in 1956 with a crisis which rocked the then existing radical youth groups. A left wing was formed in the Young Socialist League in opposition to the dissolution of that organization and its entrance into the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation on the basis of the reformist views of the SP-SDF. Under the impact of the crisis of Stalinism the Communist Party was forced to dissolve its youth organization, the Labor Youth League. Some young people from the LYL and other organizations peripheral to the CP joined with the YSL left wing, young members of the Socialist Workers Party and independents to publish the YOUNG SOCIALIST. In December, 1958, in Detroit, the Young Socialist Supporters organized themselves into the National Committee of Young Socialist Supporters as a step toward the formation of a national "Young Socialist Alliance". Since that time the YS Supporters have grown in strength to the point where they can accomplish the national organization of a revolutionary youth movement.

4. The present policies of the Young People's Socialist League, youth affiliate of the SP-SDF, and the Communist Party youth flow historically from the rejection by their parent movements internationally of a socialist perspective. Since 1914 the parties of the Second International have become allies and defenders of the capitalist system. In theory they have rejected the concept of socialist revolution and put in its place the improvement of capitalism by social reform. In practice the Social-Democrats have consistently taken government posts to aid the capitalists in surviving revolutionary upheavals. After the first World War the Social-Democratic parties were the main props under the collapsing capitalist system and after the Second World War performed the same function with the aid of the Communist parties.

Similarly the Communist International since the rise of Stalin has abandoned its heritage of revolutionary socialism. Under the theory of "Socialism in One Country", the Communist parties everywhere were transformed into servile tools of the Russian bureaucracy. In practice the Stalinists have played a role fundamentally identical to that of the Social-Democracy. On orders from the Kremlin Stalinist parties in country after country have helped to stave off revolution, to help capitalism to survive.

5. The Social Democracy and the Communist International support in one fashion or another the continued existence of the capitalist system and fear a frontal conflict between the contending class forces. We, as revolutionary socialists, reject completely the concept that socialism can be brought into existence piece-meal. Socialism can only come through the complete overturn of the present capitalist states and their replacement with a workers' state. Such a revolutionary development is the end result of an irrepressible struggle between the capitalist class and the working class. We give our full support to the working class in this struggle.

6. The Young Peoples Socialist League is not a Marxian socialist organization. It and its parent affiliate are not only incapable of leading a socialist transformation of society, they are not even capable of promoting basic socialist education. Today, for example, they favor working within the capitalist Democratic Party rather than supporting independent socialist political action. The leadership of the SP-SDF lines up with the Amer-

ican State Department and the YPSL refuses to disavow this policy. Searching for "respectability" the YPSL has forfeited any claim to represent Socialism before American youth.

#### CP YOUTH INCAPABLE

7. The young supporters of the Communist Party (as yet not nationally organized) are likewise incapable of bringing a revolutionary program to American youth. They, even more than the YPSL, are engaged in the class collaborationist policies of support to the Democratic Party. The Communist Party youth are apologists for the bureaucratic dictatorship that rules the USSR and other Soviet bloc countries and as such are compromised before inquiring youth.

8. In addition to the Communist Party youth, the YPSL and the YSA, there exists a numerically significant grouping of young socialists who have no national affiliation. Any number of these belong to campus socialist clubs and carry on organized socialist activity on a local basis. Politically, these people may be new to socialism, having not yet made up their minds as to which of the national youth groups they support, or they may be sympathetic in one way or another with one of these three national bodies. While these campus groups are important and should be supported as a way of reaching larger numbers of youth with socialist ideas they can be no substitute for national organization. It is only through national organization that it is possible to publish a paper, send out speakers on tour, really educate socialist youth through organizational responsibility and participation in working out the political views of a national group, and carry out concerted national activity for socialism. In fact, one of the functions of a nationwide youth organization is to aid in the establishment, stabilization and extension of broad socialist campus clubs.

9. The revolutionary socialist youth are well aware that by themselves youth cannot lead the working class to power. That is the historic task of a working class revolutionary party. The revolutionary youth played a very active role in the regroupment process in the hope that a regrouped and enlarged revolutionary party with which the YS could establish close relationship would emerge. The YS participated in the American Forum-for Socialist Education, local forum groups, and the Independent-Socialist Party in New York State.

#### REGROUPMENT TALLY

10. The regroupment process did not result in the formation of a new united revolutionary party. On the contrary, older political formations such as the Independent Socialist League and its youth organization, the Young Socialist League, and the American Socialist magazine disappeared. Most of the individuals who supported the CP left politics rather than try to discover a new but difficult path.

The right-wing socialist groups, the SP, SDF and ISL, conducted their own regroupment into the SP-SDF, with its reformist, pro-State Department, anti-class struggle views. The Communist Party suffered a precipitous decline through the regroupment process. Having lost all its influence in working class politics it remains simply an apologist for the Kremlin. The Socialist Labor Party simply ignored the regroupment process and was ignored by it. The Socialist Workers Party conducted a campaign for a regroupment of revolutionary socialists, attracting to itself from all groupings individuals who still wished to struggle for revolutionary socialism.

11. The Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party are the only revolutionary socialist groups in the United States today. The YSA recognizes that only the SWP of all existing political parties is capable of providing the working class with political leadership on class struggle principles. As a result of its three year development the supporters of the YOUNG SOCIALIST have come into basic political solidarity, on the principles of revolutionary socialism, with the SWP.

12. The Young Socialist Alliance is an independent organization which elects its own officers and works out its own political views. The YSA bases itself on the principles of the organizational independence of the revolutionary youth organization and opens its doors to all young people--regardless of other affiliation--who agree with its socialist principles and accept its program.

13. The Young Socialist Alliance will, to the best of its ability, bring Marxian socialism to American youth. But this is not enough. The only socialism which deserves the name is international socialism. The YSA declares its political solidarity with revolutionary youth in all countries. The present Social-Democratic "International Union of Socialist Youth" and the non-socialist successor to the Young Communist International, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, are travesties on the concept of socialist internationalism. The YSA will work with others toward the creation of a new revolutionary socialist youth international which will represent organizationally the political solidarity of socialist youth.

CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCEArticle I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE; hereafter referred to as the YSA.

Article II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

"The Young Socialist Alliance is founded in response to the need for a nation-wide youth organization capable of bringing revolutionary socialist ideas to a new generation. This is necessary for building a revolutionary movement which can lead the working class to socialism. The YSA bases itself on the traditions of Marxian socialism as developed by Lenin, Trorsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht. We believe that socialism can be initiated only as the result of struggle, international in scope, of the working class against the capitalist class and its allies - the struggle culminating in the creation of a new type of state, a workers' state. Socialism means that for the first time in history man will control his own creation - society - rather than be controlled by it. The dynamic of socialism is of a continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life."

from the Founding Declaration of the YSA

Article III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in the YSA is open to those young people who agree with the Statement of Purpose and who accept the program and policies of the YSA, regardless of membership or non-membership in any adult socialist party.

Section 2. Applicants for membership shall be voted on by the local unit in their locale. In those areas where no unit exists, applicants shall be passed on by the National Executive Committee (NEC) and if accepted, be given the status of member-at-large.

Section 3. Every Member shall belong to a local unit if such exists in the area. Exceptions to this policy may be made only by the NEC. Members-at-large shall be directly responsible to the NEC for the conduct of their political work.

Section 4. Each new member shall pay one dollar initiation fee which shall be forwarded to the National Office. Membership dues are a minimum of fifty cents a month and all of this minimum amount shall be forwarded to the National Office.

Section 5. Any member more than one month in arrears in dues ceases to be in good standing. Only members in good standing may vote or hold office in the YSA. Any member more than three months in arrears in dues shall be dropped from YSA membership after notification.

Section 6. Members shall be guided in their political work by the program and policies of the YSA. In pursuing their work they may not take action which is in contradiction with YSA program or policies.

Section 7. YSA program and policies in all areas, institutions and organizations shall be carried out by the members in that situation acting as an organized body and subject to the decisions of higher bodies of the YSA.

#### Article IV. NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Section 1. The YSA shall meet annually in a delegated National Conference. The National Conference is the highest body of the YSA.

Section 2. The National Conference shall be called by the National Committee (NC) which shall provide for a pre-conference discussion period of at least ninety days in issuing the conference call. The ninety day period shall begin only when the principle majority resolutions have been published.

Section 3. The pre-conference discussion shall include the publication by the NEC of national membership bulletins containing all resolutions and discussion material submitted by members and bodies of the YSA. Local units have the responsibility of providing adequate time in meetings for discussion on all material submitted for conference decision.

Section 4. In the event a special, emergency National Conference is called, the length of the pre-conference discussion period may be reduced.

Section 5. The election of conference delegates shall take place in local units. The ratio of delegates to members shall be set by the NC in the conference call. Only those who were YSA members before the conference call and who are in good standing at the time of delegates' election may vote for or run as delegates. Units may elect alternate delegates.

Section 6. Where there is a political division in electing delegates, election shall take place on the basis of a proportional representation system as set by the NC in the conference call. A political division shall be considered established and defined by the presentation for vote of a written document as the basis for representation.

Section 7. NC members and alternates not elected as conference delegates shall be fraternal delegates with voice but only a consultative vote.

#### Article V. NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Section 1. The National Committee shall be the highest body of the YSA between National Conferences. The NC shall have final authority between National Conferences over all YSA publications, public or internal, local or national, and over all YSA bodies, local, district, regional and national.

Section 2. The NC shall consist in size of such members and numbered alternates as is set by the National Conference. In electing the NC, if political divisions are present, the National Conference shall use a proportional system with the limitation that a conference majority is entitled to a minimum of three fifths of the NC seats.

Section 3. The NC may co-opt members to itself in the event its list of alternates is exhausted, or if it is so required in order to maintain the proportional political representation established at the preceding National Conference, or in order to maintain the size of the NEC.

Section 4. During its annual regular term of office, the NC shall meet at least three times, including immediately after and before National Conferences.

#### Article VI. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The NC shall elect from among its members a National Executive



Committee to serve as its resident executive committee.

Section 2. The NEC shall act on behalf of the NC between its deliberations and shall be responsible for such work as is delegated to it by the NC. The NC has the right of review of all NEC actions and decisions. Among the normal functions of the NEC will be the supervision of the National Office and national publications, and the appointment of the national staff.

Section 3. Minority tendencies shall be entitled to the same proportion of seats on the NEC as on the NC.

Section 4. The NEC shall meet at least twice monthly and shall send minutes of its meetings to all members and alternates of the NC.

#### Article VII. NATIONAL OFFICERS

Section 1. The National Officers of the YSA shall be directly responsible for their work to the NEC and shall be elected by the NC from among its members on the NEC. The NC shall elect a National Chairman, National Secretary and such other National Officers as it deems necessary.

Section 2. The National Chairman shall be the political spokesman of the YSA and shall be the convener of the NEC.

Section 3. The National Secretary shall be responsible for the administration of the National Office.

#### Article VIII. LOCAL, DISTRICT AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Five or more members in a locality upon application to the NEC may be chartered and known as a local unit. The maximum size of a local shall be fifty members.

Section 2. A local unit shall be administered in a regular fashion. Each local shall elect a chairman and such other officers and working committees as are required to carry out the local's responsibilities including financial, secretarial and educational functions and the circulation of the YSA press. Normally a unit will elect an executive committee to act on the local's behalf between the latter's meetings and undertake such other work as assigned by the local. Local elections shall take place no less often than twice a year.

Section 3. Where more than one unit exists in a locale or where a single unit has grown unwieldy, a district organization may be set up, subject to the approval of the NEC. A district organization shall include a district executive committee, elected by the entire district membership meeting in conference, and such officers as the district executive committee may select. Between district conferences, the district executive committee shall be the highest body within the district organization. District conferences shall take place no less often than once a year.

Section 4. In geographically larger areas regional committees may be set up, subject to the approval of the NEC. Between delegated regional conferences, the regional committee shall be the highest body within the regional organization. Regional conferences shall take place no less often than annually.

Article IX. TRIAL PROCEDURE

Section 1. Any member or body of the YSA may bring charges against any member for violation of the constitutional articles, program or policies of the YSA. The charges must be initially presented in writing to the highest body of which the accused is a member. That body may constitute itself as the trial committee or may refer the charges to a lower body of which the accused is a member. Charges may be dismissed at any time by the body having jurisdiction at that time.

Section 2. No body shall meet as a trial committee unless all members have been informed in advance of the business at hand. The accused must be given notice of the trial date and a copy of the charges at least 15 days preceeding the trial. Failure to appear or to send a letter of defense in the absense of excuse for such failure shall be grounds for conducting the trial in absentia.

Section 3. The disciplinary measures which are available in the event the accused is found guilty are, in increasing order of severity: censure, private or public, suspension and expulsion. These measures may be applied only as a result of the trial procedureds outlined in this article. To censure or suspend a simple majority vote is needed, to expell a two thirds vote majority is required.

Section 4. The accused or accuser may appeal the decision (dismissal of charges, guilt or innocence, or the severity of discipline) of any body to the next higher one, up to and including the National Conference whose decision shall be final. An appeal must be filed within 15 days after the action being appealed.

Article X. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 1. Amendments to this constitution may be made only by the National Conference. All members of the YSA shall be provided with a copy of the constitution.

Section 2. All decisions in the YSA shall be by simple majority vote except when otherwise specified by this constitution. No second shall be required for motions in any body of the YSA. The chairman of all meetings and committees has a right to voice and vote. The nay vote shall be taken first in calling the question.

Section 3. At all meetings of the YSA Roberts' Rules of Order (Revised) shall govern the proceedings, except where they are in conflict with this constitution.

Section 4. Members of a higher body of the YSA shall have the right to attend and speak at all meetings of lower bodies within the jurisdiction of the higher body.

Section 5. Local units and other bodies may adopt such bye-laws supplemental to this constitution as they deem desirable, providing such bye-laws are not in conflict with this constitution or the decisions of higher bodies.

adopted by Founding Conference  
April 17, 1960