

YSA

DISCUSSION BULLETIN

Vol. 9 No. 2
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Draft Resolution on the Antiwar Movement
(Passed by the NEC January 23, 1966)

25 cents

YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

YSA, BOX 471, COOPER STATION, N.Y. 3, N.Y.

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Since last January when the Students for a Democratic Society first issued their call for the April 17 March on Washington the YSA has participated in the antiwar movement. We have engaged in numerous debates, acquired new experiences, and can now more precisely assess the current situation in the antiwar movement and what our tasks must be.

I. Objective Situation

The administration has announced that it will continue to step up its aggression in Vietnam. By the end of this year, they aim to have as many troops deployed as there were during the Korean War. Despite the "peace offensive" the U.S. government tends toward widening the war even further - perhaps into a land war embracing all of Southeast Asia. All of this is part of a calculated test of how far it can go before there is a major military intervention by the Soviet Union and China. Unlike the early fifties when the Korean War occurred, the Sino-Soviet dispute raises the question about Russian military support to China in the event of an American invasion. This makes the U.S. more willing to risk a war with China now than it was in the early fifties.

As the war widens, the antiwar sentiment within the United States continues to grow deeper. Sentiment against the Korean War developed only after the conflict had gone on for some time. The protest against the Vietnam war however developed from the very beginning. The Korean intervention had the support of the United Nations and most of the U.S.'s allies - a support which provided a convenient cover for U.S. aggression. In the Vietnam war, however, the administration has been on the defensive internationally as well as at home in trying to justify its intervention and this has helped stimulate the antiwar protest. All this has occurred against the background of a freer political climate within the United States than existed during the Korean War period.

In addition, sharp differences within the ruling class itself continue to be manifested as the grass roots sentiment from the population brings more and more pressure to bear on the capitalist politicians. The major divisions within the ruling class and among its politicians are:

- 1) Those who favor continued escalation of the war until a military victory is achieved even at the risk of war with China. Some politicians within this group advocate immediate bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong and less reliance on ground troops, whereas others favor a careful and calculated escalation.

2) Those "liberals" like Robert Kennedy who state complete support for the administration's war aims but feel that the crude public-relations job of the administration helps to arm opponents of the war. The spokesmen for this position call for more "debate" in Congress, more legal fronts, and more "overtures" toward negotiations.

3) Those who think that the U.S. has already become too involved in the war and that military victory is definitely not worth the risk of war with China or the Soviet Union, at this time. The proponents of this view- The New York Times, Senator Gruening, and others -advocate a negotiated settlement which will bring an end to the hostilities but will keep Vietnam divided and most of South Vietnam safely aligned with a pro-U.S. government.

These disagreements give criticism of the war "legitimacy" making it difficult for the administration to clamp down on the anti-war movement.

II. Character of the Movement

Although the movement continually attracts more and more people from different layers of society, students make up the most important sector of it. For the most part, the anti-war activists have acquired what political training they have from the civil rights and student movements. They have never seen the working class in motion, and consequently have no experience with working class traditions and politics.

Due to the middle-class character of the anti-war movement and its rise during a period of quiescence of the working class, the anti-war activists tend to vacillate back and forth between pessimism and optimism. They are affected by government pressure as their involvement in the movement increases, and their day to day activity reflects a tendency toward adventurism on one hand and opportunism on the other.

III. The Politics of the Anti-war Movement

The primitive political level of the majority of anti-war activists means that the political basis of most disputes is often muddled and unclear. This means that we must be diligent in ferreting out the political foundations of every debate and explaining it as precisely as possible.

The war is based on the aim of the American ruling class to maintain South Vietnam as a link in a chain of strategic bases from which it can reverse the Chinese Revolution, halt the growing colonial revolution, and pave the way to crush the U.S.S.R. Opposition to the Vietnam war has brought thousands of activists into conflict with this aim of American imperialism--an aim

which constitutes the bedrock of the bipartisan foreign policy. Consequently, the initial impulse of the anti-war movement has run counter to liberalism and reformist politics. It is the contradiction between the objectively anti-imperialist and independent thrust of the movement and the pressures toward liberal and reformist politics which is at the base of all the major disputes within the anti-war movement.

Objective and subjective factors have combined to place great pressure on the movement and to threaten its independence from capitalist politics. The objective pressure flows from the inherent weaknesses of a middle-class protest movement which cannot develop any permanent independent political posture of its own and is consequently dependent for its politics on either the capitalist class or the working class. The absence of a mass working-class party, or even the beginnings of a mass radicalization of the workers, from which the movement could acquire working-class politics, tends to make the movement susceptible to attempts to divert it into capitalist political channels.

The subjective factor is the intervention of politically conscious leaders who through one measure or another attempt to turn the movement toward liberal capitalist politics. This is the role played by the various reformist strains of the socialist movement.

The dispute which has been at the heart of every controversy in the socialist movement for over one hundred years, is also at the center of the major political fights in the antiwar movement. This is the struggle between two perspectives for changing American society - reform or revolution. The reformists - Stalinists, social-democrats, and all varieties of "progressives" - attempt to convert the antiwar movement into a left "pressure" group by seeking a coalition between the movement and the liberal or "progressive" wing of the capitalist class. Their programs for the movement are watered down to meet the requirements of capitalist politics which means raising no demands that they believe cannot be granted at least by some wing of the capitalist class. There is no sharpening of the movement into a weapon with which to wage effective battle with the administration but rather the conversion of the movement into a "respectable," if very critical, advisor of the administration.

IV. Multi-Issue and Single Issue

One of the questions raised by those who want to turn the antiwar movement into reformist channels has been that of "multi-issue" vs. "single issue." The posing of this question in such a way that multi-issue and single issue approaches are mutually exclusive and antagonistic to each other is incorrect. It attempts to suggest that the YSA

and other members of the C'sEWV who advocate a single issue approach for the antiwar committees also advocate it in general. This is untrue. We not only advocate a multi-issue approach to solve the country's social and economic problems, including war, but we are trying to build an organization to help carry out this program. Our multi-issue program flows from our revolutionary-socialist principles.

We try to demonstrate the relationship between the Vietnam war and other social and political issues and show how they point to the need for a revolutionary-socialist program. However, at this time, for us or anybody else, to make their particular multi-issue approach a condition for joining the C'sEWV is sectarian and hurts the antiwar movement.

The C'sEWV and actions which have mobilized people on the single goal of ending the war have demonstrated that they are capable of bringing thousands of people into conflict with the administration regardless of agreement or disagreement on other issues. The adoption of multi-issue programs by these committees can only serve to make them more exclusive and therefore less effective.

V. Peace Candidates

Another important development in the political evolution of the movement is the question of support to "peace candidates." Due to the divisions within the ruling class on how to conduct the Vietnam war, a number of capitalist politicians both inside and outside the Democratic Party have spoken out against the war. They see an opportunity to capitalize on the widespread sentiment against the war by running election campaigns around this issue.

Many of these "peace candidates" are members of the Democratic Party or run in Democratic Party primaries. Others, however, call themselves "independent" and run separately from the Democratic and Republican parties with the perspective of eventually rejoining them. There also exist "Committees for Independent Political Action" which claim that running candidates in the Democratic primaries is a tactical question and not a principled one. Consequently, this question has given rise to much confusion among antiwar activists and it is very important that we are clear on it ourselves.

Our ultimate aim is a political party of the working class with a socialist program. The program and class composition of each new party or candidacy must be judged by us according to whether it is a step towards this ultimate goal. The Progressive Party experience teaches us that it is not enough to work outside the framework of the Democratic and Republican parties, but that it is necessary to be independent of capitalist programs, parties and candidates.

The problem with the "peace" candidates who run "independent" of the Democratic and Republican parties is that they do not campaign on programs that signify a break with capitalist politics. For example, during the early 1960's when there was widespread sentiment for banning nuclear testing, several "independent" peace candidates campaigned around this demand. However, this demand was also accepted by Democratic Party politicians and was eventually carried out by President Kennedy when he signed the no-testing agreement with the Soviet Union. It was a demand easily accepted and granted by the central spokesman for American imperialism.

VI. Immediate Withdrawal Vs. Negotiations

The only way to halt the aggression in Vietnam is by withdrawing the U.S. troops. The other slogans that have been put forward - negotiations, return to the Geneva agreements, stop the bombing, cease fire, etc. - are all slogans which leave the door open for the government to absorb the movement by appearing to fulfill its demands without recognizing the right of Vietnam to self-determination.

For socialists, the principle of self-determination is very important, especially within the context of the world struggle between socialism and capitalism. The U.S. is intervening in many areas of the world to put down popular revolutions which it fears will become socialist. For this the government needs an acceptance of the chauvinistic idea that it is permissible for the United States to police the world and to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

A movement based clearly on the right of self-determination brings its participants into direct conflict with U.S. imperialism and educates them as to the real character of American "democracy."

VII. Draft

Following the October 15 and 16 Days of Protest, the antiwar movement was given a real chance to determine what approach it should have toward the draft when May 2nd, SDS, and the pacifists in collaboration with considerable newspaper coverage attempted to put the movement on an antidraft axis. These groups tried to capture the strong sentiment that exists among young people against the increased draft and channel it away from propaganda and actions directly opposing U.S. aggression in Vietnam into opposition against one facet of the war, the draft.

Although there are still some antidraft projects here and there, most of the committees refused to be sucked into this orientation. The SDS membership repudiated, in a referendum, the antidraft program of their leaders, the May 2nd antidraft unions never got off the drawing board,

and the furor over the draft card burnings has for the most part subsided. It was clear at the Thanksgiving convention that the antidraft orientation for building a large antiwar movement was a dead issue.

There are some activities related to the draft that we should definitely support and urge the C'sEWV and readers of the Bring The Troops Home Now Newsletter to back. First is the legal defense of those who have violated the draft laws and are testing them in the courts. Second is the defense of antiwar activists who have been reclassified from II-S to I-A because of their antiwar activities. These are clear-cut civil-liberties cases, and though we and others may not agree with their views on how to fight the draft, we have a responsibility to defend them from government attack.

VIII. Organizational and Political Evolution of the Movement

The first period in the history of the antiwar movement was marked by the February bombings of North Vietnam, the organization of the SDS March on Washington, and the campus teach-ins. This stage reflected a fresh rebelliousness on the part of the hundreds of new activists who entered the fight against the Vietnam war.

The March on Washington last April was highlighted by a political conflict between the radical wing of SDS, backed by YSA and a few other groups on one side, and the old peace establishment, social-democrats, and the coalitionist wing of SDS on the other. Although the roots of this conflict were not clear to the new antiwar fighters, the results represented a giant leap forward. First, exclusion of radicals from participating in the organization of antiwar activities and ad hoc formations was rejected. Second, the thrust of the movement was, from its inception, directed squarely against the U.S. government, and contrary to all forms of third campism. The coalitionists were put on the defensive, opening the way for leadership and participation by radicals.

Despite this strong anti-administration stance, however, the basic programmatic formula for the movement was very loose. The most common theme was "End the War in Vietnam Now" which was broad enough to include both coalitionists and the new radicals. This inevitably led to a programmatic dispute within the movement on how to end the war and what the movement is trying to end.

Development of the Committees to End the War in Vietnam

Out of the ad hoc formations that appeared after the bombing of North Vietnam and during the preparations for the SDS March on Washington, the first Committees to End the War in Vietnam were born. A genuine product of the

new anti-Vietnam war movement, they:

- 1) Sprang up almost simultaneously, and on local initiative, all over the country;
- 2) Are organized around the single issue of ending the war in Vietnam;
- 3) Militantly placed the blame for the war squarely on U.S. aggression;
- 4) Maintained independence from all the existing radical and peace organizations while remaining non-exclusive;
- 5) Completely by-passed old peace groups like Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), and Student Peace Union (SPU).

Point one is a very important fact about the organizational evolution of the movement and has played a determinant role in the consciousness of the antiwar activists. For example, almost a fetish has been made of the question of local autonomy and local initiative, and still today many problems of the movement flow from the failure to have a dynamic national center.

Nevertheless, the simultaneous growth of the committees with the same fundamental characteristics all over the country naturally led to attempts to have some form of national coordination among these committees. The first attempt to do this was at the Assembly of Unrepresented People in August when leaders and activists from Committees to End the War in Vietnam throughout the country gathered in a workshop to discuss future plans. There was strong sentiment, especially among YSAers and leading independents, to create some form of national coordination for the committees. This gave rise to the National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam. This was conceived of as a "temporary" coordinating committee until a convention could meet and decide what kind of national organization would be best.

Unfortunately, the new body was set up in such a way that it could not demonstrate the positive features of a dynamic national center based on the C'sEWV. First, the administrative control of the Madison office was placed in the hands of Frank Emspak opening the door to Stalinist and progressive dominance of the NCC.

Second, "leading" individuals and representatives from national organizations who did not represent C'sEWV were placed on the steering committee. Although this is not necessarily a weakness in itself, it set the precedent for the Emspak leadership to stack the steering committee. It also left unclear in the minds of many activists whether the NCC was to be a clearing house for all the various antiwar organizations or to coordinate the C'sEWV.

These drawbacks led to an NCC not based on and responsible to the C'sEWV but to a peace center based on progressive circles and Stalinist organizations.

Summer Period

Between the April March on Washington and the August Assembly of Unrepresented People, despite summer vacation, many of the antiwar committees maintained themselves and new committees were organized.

It was clear that, unlike the YSA, other youth groups such as the DuBois Club, SDS, and the May 2nd Movement looked at the Committees to End the War in Vietnam as competitors. They all tried to develop their own national antiwar projects in order to capture for their organizations as many of the activists and as much prestige as possible. As a result they viewed a strong national organization based on the single aim of ending the war in Vietnam as a threat. The Stalinists, especially, saw it not only as a threat to their organizations, but to their whole reformist political perspective. This organizational dispute came to a head at the Thanksgiving convention in Washington, D.C. where it was possible to begin clarifying the political character of the conflict.

Our prediction that the campus would continue to be the main base of the antiwar movement and that C'sEWV could be built on campuses across the entire country was confirmed. The period between the opening of school and the Thanksgiving convention saw the growth of hundreds of new campus committees.

Until the October 15 and 16 Days of Protest we were unquestionably the most active, and in many areas the only organized political force in the C'sEWV. Both the DuBois Clubs and SDS had taken deliberate steps to cut back on antiwork during the summer and early fall. Furthermore, most of their activity was outside the framework of the C'sEWV. Therefore there were no major political confrontations with these tendencies, and the central issues were not brought to the fore. Our major orientation during this period was to help build Committees to End the War in Vietnam and to convince activists to come to the Thanksgiving Convention prepared to form a national organization based on and responsible to the Committees.

October 15 and 16

The size of the October 15 and 16 protest finally pounded into the heads of these other tendencies the tremendous potential for the antiwar movement and they began to furiously step up their activities. The problem for them was that we were already active in the C'sEWV and they were not.

It was at this point that the fight between us and our opponents went into high gear. We were publicly and privately attacked by nearly every tendency in the movement while the Communist Party and the DuBois Clubs got

to work setting up phony committees. Because our major drive and push was for a national organization of the committees it was this that our opponents sought to attack. An organizational attack, which accused us of trying to "take over the NCC," also helped to mask the real political issues lurking beneath the surface.

Thanksgiving Convention

The Thanksgiving Convention marked a qualitative change in the evolution of the antiwar movement. It brought to the fore one of the key political issues facing the movement - immediate withdrawal vs. negotiations, and began a process of political clarification that is still continuing. Despite their organizational control of the convention, the CP and other reformists were unable to prevent political lines from being drawn.

Before the convention they set up new paper committees, reactivated old "peace" groups and stacked meetings of C'sEWV when elections were held for delegates. They were able to stack the convention from the credentials and steering committees to the plenary sessions. The major conflict at the convention arose around the question of what kind of national organization should be formed because the Stalinists were opposed to letting the C'sEWV control the NCC or form their own organization. This organizational issue reflected a basic political dispute between those who want a militant antiwar movement supporting immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops and those that want a peace movement handcuffed to coalition politics. It was up to us to put this dispute on a political plane. By the end of the convention this was accomplished through the formation of a caucus which emphasized the importance of building a movement based on immediate withdrawal of troops from Vietnam.

Individuals like Dave Dellinger and Staughton Lynd, having no organized weight of their own, were caught in the middle of the political battle at the Washington convention, and when the chips were down, blocked with the CP against us. The bloc, of course, was temporary and after the convention they continued their maneuvering and balancing acts between the organized forces.

Unfortunately, many other important issues were not clarified at the convention. With all other tendencies blocked against us it was difficult to explain why the dispute between the CP and us rested on the issue of coalition politics. At the Milwaukee Standing Committee meeting of the NCC in January, however, this question became clearer as the Stalinists and other coalitionists spent the entire first session advocating support to coalition politics and "peace candidates" and urging that this line become the central focus of the movement. They

also made explicit their position that withdrawal of troops should not be the slogan of the antiwar movement. Their admissions on these two key points, coupled with the fact that they controlled the meeting with proxy and weighted votes, made clear to many independents there that the Stalinists and the NCC leadership were opposed to demanding immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops because this approach threatened their reformist and pro-Democratic Party political orientation.

The political clarification that began at the Thanksgiving convention was evidenced at the Milwaukee meeting by the fact that leading independents, who had blocked with the Stalinists against us in Washington, sided with us on every major question in Milwaukee, including immediate withdrawal.

One of the significant results of the fight at the Washington convention has been the elevation of the political level of the antiwar movement as a whole. Debates and discussions in the Committees to End the War in Vietnam since the convention have demonstrated that it is not only a question of being in favor of ending the war in Vietnam, but a question of how to build an effective and principled movement to accomplish this end.

Drawing the political lines sharply between those who support immediate withdrawal and those who support negotiations or some hazy all-encompassing formulation has put the reformists on the defensive, because of the widespread sentiment within the movement for withdrawal. It also is putting pressure on the memberships of organizations like the DuBois Clubs and the Socialist Party that have public positions for negotiations. Unlike the YSA, that came out of the Washington convention full of confidence, pride, and a real feeling of national and political unity within our ranks, the DuBois Club is having an internal fight on the question of withdrawal vs. negotiations. Likewise the Socialist Party is divided, conducting a full-blown discussion and holding a referendum on this question.

Supporters of the Newsletter

The most tangible gain for the antiwar movement that emerged from the Thanksgiving convention is an organized expression for immediate withdrawal based in the C'sEWV. The caucus, since changed to supporters of the Bring the Troops Home Now Newsletter, represents an important political step in the entire development of the movement.

The extent of the sentiment for immediate withdrawal is very wide in the movement and is reflected by the fact that before the convention several committees were on record in support of it. Since the Thanksgiving convention

even more committees have endorsed this line including the Berkeley Vietnam Day Committee. Despite the wide support for immediate withdrawal there is considerable confusion on this position. Supporters of the Newsletter have helped to bring more clarity on this question by initiating debates and discussions in addition to selling the Newsletter itself. By its very existence the Newsletter has served to raise the political consciousness of the movement.

Furthermore it marks a defeat for the reformists who try to divert the movement into the old peace establishment and liberal politics. The Newsletter is a rallying point for the committees, and individuals that want to build a national movement demanding that the troops be brought home now.

One of the primary tasks of the antiwar movement is to convince more people to be against the war in Vietnam. Supporters of the Newsletter will play an important propaganda role in distributing factual material on the war and by explaining why the U.S. should get its troops out. They will continue to reach out to new areas organizing C'sEWV and helping to build national actions demanding immediate withdrawal.

As more and more committees and individuals look to the Newsletter for leadership the nucleus for a national organization will begin to emerge.

IX. Role of Organized Labor and the Civil Rights Movement

There have been very few signs of organized expression against the Vietnam war in the trade-union movement. Here and there a local union takes a stand against the war but this is the exception rather than the rule. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the widespread sentiment against the war within the population does not extend to the union ranks. The labor bureaucrats who, in return for a few crumbs, actively support the dirty war in Vietnam do not accurately express the feelings of the rank-and-file workers.

The workers will not be moved to resistance, however, until the war affects them directly. Probably the most significant effect now is the shipment of husbands, sons and friends to Vietnam. The continued escalation of the war will inevitably have economic repercussions also. These may take the form of wage freezes, cutbacks on poverty programs, and inflation, as the workers are asked to make "sacrifices" for the war effort.

Most civil-rights leaders have refused to attack the war. These leaders do not want to overturn their carefully cultivated coalition with the Democratic Party. The sentiment against the war among the Negro people, however,

is more widespread and more acute than among white workers. This is reflected by the fact that even Martin Luther King has guardedly attacked the war and called for negotiations. SNCC is the only civil-rights organization that has publicly attacked the war and placed the blame squarely on the U.S. This is a very important development and will produce considerable discussion and debate within the civil-rights movement. It may stimulate more united actions between civil rights organizations and the antiwar movement.

Although there is little organized expression against the war in the big city ghettos, every indication points to strong sentiment against it. Malcolm X, who more than any other Negro leader, reflected the sentiments of the Negro ghetto dwellers, was opposed to the war long before the new antiwar movement emerged.

The most important way the middle-class antiwar movement can reach out and affect the organized workers and Negroes is to build the existing antiwar movement into a broad, active propaganda force which by its very existence and size will affect the consciousness of the working class and the Negro people.

X. The Antiwar Movement and the Role of the Organized Political Groups

SDS

The SDS leadership has never come close to repeating the positive role it played when it called and organized the April 17 March on Washington. Since then, almost without exception, they have made the wrong decision at every important juncture. Instead of taking advantage of the support and enthusiasm generated by the Washington March to wage a full-scale campaign against the Vietnam war, they cut back on their antiwar work. Instead of supporting the C'sEWV that emerged from the March preparations, they viewed them as competitors. They failed to take any initiative at the Washington Assembly of Unrepresented People and by default played no leadership role in the NCC. They played only a small role in the preparations for the October 15 and 16 Days of Protest. SDS spoke against further national mobilizations in general and the March 25 and 26 events in particular. This position has since been adopted as official policy by the December national convention of SDS.

Since April, the record of SDS nationally has been one of shying away from initiating confrontations with the administration in opposition to the war. The national leaders have preferred to concentrate on other issues involving less head-on conflict with the administration. SDS's record on a national level should not be equated with

that of individual SDSers and SDS units, many of which have grown up around the Vietnam issue. There is strong sentiment within the ranks of SDS for the position of immediate withdrawal.

DuBois Clubs

In most areas the DuBois Clubs have not participated in the C'sEWV on the same level and to the same extent that we have. Like SDS, they concentrated on forming "community" programs among the poor during the summer. In a few places they were active in C'sEWV during the early fall, but this certainly was not the norm.

They worked closely with the CP prior to the Thanksgiving convention, at the NCC convention in Washington, and at the Standing Committee meeting in Milwaukee. Their orientation has been defensive, geared to preventing the development of a militant and effective anti-Vietnam war movement.

As a result of the political fight at the convention there is now an important division in the DuBois Club on the question of negotiations vs. withdrawal. This is significant not only because it reflects the sentiment for withdrawal in the movement as a whole, but it gives us an opportunity to open a dialogue with members of the DuBois Clubs.

May 2nd Movement

The May 2nd Movement originally organized as an anti-Vietnam war protest organization, was by-passed by the development of the independent C'sEWV. Instead of embracing this new phenomenon and helping to build a broad militant antiwar movement, they chose to compete with the C'sEWV. The M2M, however, is numerically and geographically too weak to compete on a national scale with them.

After the October 15 and 16 protest, they tried to capture the antidraft sentiment and organize it into anti-draft "unions". This project failed, however, and at the Thanksgiving convention it was clear they were unable to play a significant role in the proceedings. Since the convention they have indicated that they are planning to participate in the C'sEWV.

The most important thing to remember about the May 2nd Movement is that they are a front group for the Progressive Labor Party. In the antiwar movement they have consciously formed opportunist blocs with coalitionists in SDS against the YSA in order to advance their own organizational aims.

Social-Democrats

The social-democrats, such as Harrington, Howe, etc., have played a very conservative role vis-a-vis the new movement, attacking its nonexclusion policy and its refusal to blame both the American government and the NLF for the war. The American Socialist Organizing Committee - what remains of the left wing of YPSL - exists in a few places but is too small and sectarian to play a significant role.

Youth Against War and Fascism

Youth Against War and Fascism, located almost exclusively in New York and Buffalo where the Workers World Party has its two branches, has centered most of its activity in the last months on antiwar demonstrations called in their own name.

These demonstrations sometimes draw several hundred people and consequently YAWF has brought around it a few contacts and done a little recruiting. They recruit, however, on a very primitive political level.

Their extreme sectarianism is manifested by their non-participation in the C'sEWV which they view as more moderate formations competing with their own organization. Although they are advocates of immediate withdrawal their sectarianism prevents them from participating in the arenas where they can best influence antiwar activists with this line.

XI. Role of the YSA

The movement against the Vietnam war has the potential to grow into a mass movement embracing hundreds of thousands of Americans. Such a development could be a crucial factor in preventing the escalation of the war and perhaps bringing it to an end.

The creation of a movement with these dimensions depends not only on the proper objective conditions which affect the consciousness of Americans, but also on the subjective role played by the leaders of the movement. In this respect we have a responsibility to do everything within our means to help lead the movement along the most effective route.

We should never underestimate the role that the YSA has played in the movement. Our intervention at crucial junctures has been extremely important and in some instances has been decisive in determining the direction of the movement.

We strengthened the radical wing of SDS against the coalitionists when the latter tried to get SDS to open up the sponsorship of the April March to the old peace groups. In many areas we initiated the ad hoc formations that later became C'sEWV, and after the March we helped initiate new C'sEWV.

On the West Coast our comrades played an active role in building the Berkeley Vietnam Day on May 21-22. The Berkeley Vietnam Day Committee that emerged from this event has become a spectacular prototype of the independent antiwar committees.

It was our campaign to build the C'sEWV and form a national organization based on these committees at the Thanksgiving convention which set the organizational context for the major political fights of the movement.

We were also active, and in many areas decisive, in the organization and success of the October 15 and 16 Days of Protest. These demonstrations represented the largest protest against the war up to this point and were a powerful example of what the antiwar movement can do.

Most important are not these organizational contributions, although they are very significant, but the political clarification that we have strived to inject into the movement. Our fight for, and success in creating, an organized expression of the sentiment for self-determination for Vietnam has driven a sharp wedge between those who want to suck the movement into capitalist politics and those who do not.

The various sectarian groups that support self-determination but refuse to work through the C'sEWV could not have carried out this fight. Only those who were integrated into the major organizations of the movement and armed with a political understanding of what was at stake, could have carried out this fight and raised the consciousness of the entire movement.

Thousands of people, especially youth, have been thrust into an anti-imperialist struggle and many of these young people are drawing conclusions about American "democracy," capitalist politics, and imperialism. This antiwar movement is the most fertile ground in the country today for us to propagandize our ideas and recruit to the YSA.

XIII. Tasks of the YSA

1) To continue to articulate and explain why the antiwar movement should base itself on Vietnam's right to self-determination and immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops; to

expose and fight against all formulations and approaches that settle for less than this;

- 2) To continue working in and creating new C'sEWV;
- 3) To continue to support, and to help build supporter groups for the Bring The Troops Home Now Newsletter;
- 4) To continue to support the policy of non-exclusion in the C'sEWV and other broad antiwar formations like the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee in New York;
- 5) To continue our general propaganda against reformism and coalition politics;
- 6) To continue to carry out our socialist propaganda while making contacts and recruiting to the YSA from the antiwar movement.