

YSA Discussion Bulletin

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ORGANIZING REGIONAL WORK: PROFESSIONALISM AND FLEXIBILITY

By David Ellis, Detroit local

When organizing regional work, it is important to recognize the need for flexibility. In all regional centers it is not possible to have regional committees. In regions where there are only a handful of at-largers, or in smaller regions geographically, it may not even be necessary to have a regional coordinator if the regional organizer can keep on top of all regional developments.

In such areas the central task is trailblazing and acquiring the nuclei for locals throughout the region. In those areas where several locals exist, the assignment of regional coordinator is an important one. This is the comrade who insures that lines of communication are kept open while the regional organizer is on the road. This puts the center in a position to effectively deal with problems as they arise. The coordinator can play a leading role in organizing regional finances, putting together regional mailings, and keeping the center local posted of regional activities. This comrade can also brief the regional organizer when he/she returns to the center (which should be often) on what has transpired in his/her absence.

In Detroit, for example, the regional committee consists of three comrades: the regional organizer, the regional coordinator, and the local organizer. It is this committee, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, which constitutes the regional apparatus. The apparatus has direct contact with the region which is not readily available to the local as a whole. Thus, it is essential to have constant collaboration between the regional committee, and the campaign, antiracist fraction, and other departments, in order to fully integrate regional work into the local as a whole. The YSA organizer has a special role to play in this task. Such integration becomes extremely important whenever it is necessary to organize a regionwide campaign tour, a SCAR tour, or a regional educational conference.

A related point is the need for the centrality of the regional apparatus to regional work in general. Instilling regional consciousness is a delicate process, and the relationship between center and region is a sensitive one. The regional committee in Detroit, consequently, has established the practice that prior to any discussions or dealings with the region, all departments consult with one or more comrades from the committee. By centralizing as much as possible all contact with the region, the center avoids the debacle of six different comrades calling regional comrades six different times, giving them six different bits of information.

Whenever any comrades other than the regional organizer travel to the region, they should be briefed on the situation in each local and what they should or should not raise with these comrades. Even with the best intentions, a comrade can unknowingly upset the equilibrium in the region, or cut

across the perspective developed by the regional committee.

The regional organizer

The regional organizer is the main link between the region and the center. Continuity in this assignment is valuable (though not always possible) for frequent changes tend to be disruptive.

The regional organizer must be in the center as often as possible and on the road as often as necessary. In the Michigan/Indiana region this means being in the center every weekend for meetings with the EC, regional committee, and any other committees or fractions which relate to regional areas.

While it is desirable for the regional organizer to be on the road every week, it is sometimes more important for that comrade to be in the center for a week or more at a time to fully coordinate an educational conference, participation in a national march or conference, or the national convention. Again, it depends on the situation.

The role of the regional organizer is, in areas where several locals exist, to aid in consolidating these locals. This person must be able to help cut across the isolation often felt by comrades in the region. He or she must also help to instill confidence in new comrades and their ability to build the YSA.

In some regions, the regional organizer may spend a certain amount of time trailblazing, but for the most part his or her main task should be to assist comrades in dealing with their specific problems. A good rule of thumb for a regional organizer is to first consult comrades in each local about what ways he or she can best assist them in this fashion. After all, they know best what problems confront them in the day-to-day organization of the YSA locally.

Probably, the most important general rule we have found is to have no general, all inclusive rules for regional organization. We can't be schematic. Not all locals and at-largers have the same problems and the same strengths.

Regional team follow-up

The YSA regional teams have proved to be an invaluable asset to our movement. Organizing the team is the subject for a separate document, but I would like to touch on the team follow-up from the center. This must be done as soon as possible; newly recruited comrades need to see the regional organizer immediately and should know beforehand who the regional organizer is and what he/she does.

A brand new local may feel particularly overwhelmed by all of the activities the YSA is immersed in. When a new YSAer sees that they have Young Socialist and Militant sales and subscription goals, sustainer to raise, fund drive goals, SCAR chapters to help build, the Socialist Workers campaign to actively support, a PRDF suit to publicize, an educational series to organize, UFW support work to do, high school work, pre-convention discussion, and a host of other events in the center and nationally to attend, they can understandably feel a bit overwhelmed.

Regional organizers and committees should be sensitive to this feeling, explaining first of all the need to develop the institutions of the YSA: sales, finances, and educationals. From that point it is easier to explain the urgent need for recruitment and integration of newer comrades. We can then further explain how we integrate sales into our mass work, how we must also pay for leaflets we issue, papers and materials we order, etc.

We must also develop an understanding among newer comrades that our local priorities largely reflect the actual situation on any given campus. Not all locals will need an USLA chapter, a UFW fraction, or a CAIFI work director. What mass areas of work a local does concentrate on will, of course, vary. Even antiracist work which, as a national priority is high on all lists, will have a different character from place to place. It could focus on a major anticutbacks struggle, or a defense case in the Black or Chicano community. And in the absence of such developments, anti-racist work may have a purely educational or propagandistic character, laying the groundwork for issues as they do break. At any rate, regional organizers shouldn't be rigid and climb the walls if a regional local has a different approach than Detroit or Boston, or Chicago, or New York, etc.

Where problems do arise as a result of a misconception or the wrong orientation, the job is to educate and motivate a better perspective. Obviously, in this situation the experiences of the center can aid immensely. A patient approach is immeasurably more effective than a high-pressure offensive from the center.

The regional educational conference

The socialist educational conference organized once or twice a year is a valuable opportunity for regional comrades to see firsthand the functioning of the center.

This conference cannot be just a series of classes and a few questions. It must be, instead, a dynamic event. It provides the center local and the branch a chance to become familiarized with regional comrades and vice versa.

Preparing for the conference should include the region-

al committee making actual assignments of center comrades to regional comrades. Every regional comrade is a potential recruit to the center and should be viewed accordingly. Regional YSAers should be integrated into every aspect of the conference, from defense assignments to chairing and speaking at the sessions. The conference is a regional educational conference not a center educational conference and the sessions should be tailored not just to the needs of the center local but to recruitment and integration needs of the entire region. Again, we should organize recruitment to the center just as we organize any work of the YSA. The regional committee, in conjunction with the Executive Committee and recruitment committee has a special responsibility in this regard, especially seeing that assignments to regional comrades are taken seriously and carried out conscientiously.

An additional suggestion is to set aside the last day of the conference for a full regional meeting for area reports and to discuss future campaigns and regional events. Also, something we have found very successful has been a series of workshops which go over concretely how to organize finances, sales, antiracist work, fund-raising, and campaign youth support. Where particular locals have had success in an area they should help lead the workshops pertaining to that area.

By organizing the conference with these goals in mind, and being extremely conscious of regional comrades and their needs, they can leave the conference feeling very positive towards the regional center. This is a big step in the process of long-term recruitment to the center. Regional organizers should also be aware of any comrades who are contemplating a transfer to centers in order to get an early start in the necessary transition.

The socialist summer schools have been one way of attracting regional comrades to centers for an intensive period of education and integration. But we must also tap the SWP and the center local for regular educational series for the region. This exporting of educationals helps train future leaders of the YSA as well as winning new members to the Trotskyist movement.

Despite the many gains made and the lessons learned about organizing regional work it is clear that more discussion is needed on how to keep the YSA apace with the growing radicalization of American youth in the centers and in the region.

December 3, 1975

THE NEED FOR A STRONG CAMPUS BASE

By Tom Mindala, Bloomington local

The most important task facing the YSA in the next period, in light of the recent turn taken by the SWP at Oberlin, is the strengthening of our campus base. As the SWP orients more and more towards the working class it will become the responsibility of the YSA to orient towards and gain hegemony within the student movement. As the roles of the SWP and the YSA become more differentiated (in comparison to what they were during the antiwar movement) it will be essential that we in the YSA are clear on what will be needed to carry out our task. We must discuss at this convention and determine a national perspective which will enable us to more effectively carry out this task.

The most important task before the YSA, if we are to be successful in extending our influence in the student movement, is the establishment of a strong campus base. In Bloomington it's difficult to see the problems other areas have in building a campus base with our situation being that we function actually as a large campus fraction. We can draw important lessons from a situation like Bloomington where we've not only established a strong campus base but have gone a long way towards institutionalizing the YSA on the campus. The things we have learned here can be applied successfully elsewhere. To do so we should analyze the various aspects of what is needed to successfully establish a strong campus base for the YSA.

The first thing we have to be clear on is what we mean by a campus base. It is more than a mere presence on a particular campus. Rather it is the institutionalization of the YSA on the campus. This is what we've achieved in Bloomington, where the YSA is so established that in most people's minds it is becoming synonymous with socialism. When reporters want to write about socialism they interview the YSA or when someone wants the socialist perspective included on a panel discussion it's the YSA they call. This is what we want and have to achieve nationally if we're to be successful in gaining hegemony on the left in this country. A strong campus base is being recognized by students as a force within the student body on campus. There are a few key things which I think are important to building and strengthening our campus base in this next period.

In order to become a recognized force on the campus it is necessary that we be as visible as possible. This is important through all stages of building a campus base, but especially crucial during the beginning stage. All areas of our work on campus -- sales, campaign, forums, educational, etc. -- have to be approached with a perspective of establishing maximum visibility. In the initial stages sales of our press would be the main tool we should use in building our visibility. During this period a priority should be put on highly visible and consistent sales of our press at the central meeting places on campus. By doing this we

would get our politics out while immediately drawing a periphery of contacts around us which will become the basis of our further growth on campus. It's important to emphasize consistency here. We've found in Bloomington that by being consistent in your sales activities contacts begin to expect to see you at a certain place at a certain time of the week.

As we grow stronger and have an established readership of our press we want to begin expanding the visibility of our campus fraction through forums, campaign work, etc. When considering forums it's not only important that they be well publicized but also it's important that they are well thought out in terms of what issue is of interest on a particular campus at the time. By watching the campus paper an issue that's not so obvious may become a good topic for a forum which will draw more people around us.

Student election campaigns are another way in which we can get our politics out to a large number of people and increase our visibility at the same time. We've found that a well organized campaign will create new opportunities to reach a large number of students with our ideas by getting our candidates interviewed by the student paper and into as many classes as possible. Running student election campaigns also presents an opportunity to draw contacts closer to the YSA by involving them in all aspects of the campaign.

We also want to present an image of the YSA as an action organization that is ready to step into an issue facing students and work on an equal basis with other groups. We not only want students to see us as the organization that will lead a successful socialist revolution but as an organization which is concerned with immediate problems facing the student movement. The best example of this today is our work to help build the Student Coalition Against Racism. It doesn't have to be an issue of national concern in order to be of value for a campus fraction to get involved in. Here in Bloomington we are at this time playing a major role in organizing against an attempt by the I.U. administration to ban the use of posters on trees on campus to publicize events. This is an issue which concerns all student groups and one which shows that the YSA at I.U. is serious about defending students' rights. Through our involvement in struggles as the fight against racism or against poster bans students see the YSA as a serious organization that is determined to struggle to better society and not an organization that stands on the sidelines of the issues and calls for revolution to solve all evils. By taking this perspective we are doing nothing more than implementing our transitional program where we meet the masses where they are and through struggle raise their consciousness to where they see the necessity to overthrow capitalism.

Our goal should be to build a strong enough campus base

that will enable us to institutionalize the YSA on the campus which will then give us the basis to gain hegemony in the student movement. We will be able to do this if we are able to keep ourselves highly visible and consistent in all of our work.

This brings us to where this discussion actually begins. Whether we will be able to successfully do the things outlined earlier in this article will depend upon the number of comrades we have on the campuses. It's my opinion that this should be one of our major priorities in this next period. Only through building a strong campus base will we be able to build SCAR and win hegemony within the student movement. To do this we have to see as a priority getting comrades into school or back to school wherever it is possible. Every local should look at their roster and encourage

those comrades who can to go to school. If financial problems stand in the way we have to pool our resources and collectively find the solution -- in financial aid, grants, loans, etc.

The stage has been set by the present crisis of American capitalism for the YSA to play a historic role in the American socialist revolution. The establishment of a strong campus base, which will be essential in winning hegemony in the student movement, will be a determining factor in whether we will meet this challenge. To ensure this success we must begin at this convention and take the necessary steps to entrench ourselves on the campuses across the country.

December 3, 1975

IN RESPONSE TO A NOT-SO-MODEST PROPOSAL

by Joe Soares, Atlanta local

Elaine Hebel, Mallen Kear and Ron Yankey of Portland, "...feel that it is imperative to change the YSA organizationally." They claim that behind this feeling lies no hidden political disagreements with the YSA's program. Judging just from their article I'll agree to that. This discussion is not over the program of Bolshevism, but over its organizational concepts. To a relative extent these questions can be separated.

In their contribution, "A Modest Proposal," these comrades charge that "the form of democratic centralism practiced in Portland fosters passivity in the rank and file," and that "this situation arises as an effect of a problem inherent in our methods of organization." They claim that only the executive committee is creative and assertive and that the ranks are passive and un-thinking.

These statements are made in a very broad and unqualified manner. So I would like to narrow the discussion somewhat. I don't think that these comrades really believe that in all political work, only the EC is creative and assertive. Certainly with respect to areas of work such as coalition meetings, sales, general propaganda work, organizing the locals finances, etc., that is, where the bulk of real political activity is concerned, all comrades are creative and assertive, aren't we? A discussion of how our organizational norms effect how the YSA does political work is absent from these comrades' contribution. And since their proposals only concern the structure of the local meeting, I'll narrow the topic to just this question before going on to its broader implications.

The local meeting

Hebel, Kear and Yankey recommend 4 steps:

1. That the EC proposed local agenda be circulated to all members of the local in advance of the local meeting. There is nothing particularly earthshaking or wrong about this proposal.

2. That all reports on everything the local is doing be condensed into one report presented by one person.

I pity the person who would have to prepare this report only one tenth the amount that I pity the local that would have to stay awake during its delivery. And keeping awake would only be half the battle compared with the fight to remember all the different points raised. Discussion after such a report would be chaotic. People would be jumping back and forth from one point to another in a manner that would stupify ping-pong fans. The only way out of such a demoralizing situation would be to entertain motions to discuss different areas of work separately. Much time could be wasted in debating which area should be discussed first. (Imagine this process if there is a factional situation in the local!) Perhaps if someone generally respected could pro-

pose a slate of subjects, everyone would agree to it and get down to business. But then why not have an elected body of respected YSA leaders, like the EC, propose such an agenda for discussion. And if we're taking it this far, why not present the comments on a work area just before that area should be discussed? That is, why don't we continue conducting our meetings as we are already doing?

3. The contents of this single report should be limited to an analysis of what we did last week.

4. All political "proposals for future activity be initiated during discussion..."

These two suggestions are as unworkable as the last one. The reporter is to present an analysis that in no way points to the direction for future work. Just how this is to be done is beyond me. How can you analyze last week without including points on the openings or weaknesses in an area that imply the proposals for next week's work? And what makes proposals from the floor somehow superior and more democratic than proposals that come out of a report? How would this method increase participation of non-EC comrades in the discussion? Last, and most importantly, how would this improve the overall functioning of the YSA?

If this procedure is followed no one need kid themselves that proposals will not be thought out in advance; that instead they will be thought out in front of the local. This misconception papers over the fact that the comrades really responsible for one area of work will have a better feel for it than other comrades. Their proposals would be thought out in advance. And if that comrade was any sort of a leader they would discuss their ideas in advance with some comrades to get the benefit of their collaboration. If an EC was in existence and properly functioning it could, as the elected local leadership, balance and round out the thinking of a fraction head before the local. Without an elected body to serve this function, comrades would develop cliques around themselves to collaborate with. Then we could all witness the destructive effects of a self-appointed star leadership each with its own cheering section. Local meetings would provide the battle grounds for "independent thinkers" to demonstrate their sparkle. The participatory democracy of SDS would be almost completely revived.

If comrades think that this method will increase overall participation -- you've never seen it in practice. This sort of "spontaneous" leadership brings out the worst in competitive assertiveness among a few, mostly white males. Discussions are dominated and colored by the competing efforts of a few "independent thinkers." Most rank and filers are intimidated or exhausted by these stars. At SDS meetings where this method was practiced, if you weren't one of the self-appointed, you would usually find out the next day what the final decision was. This method

would harm the ability of the YSA to think out the best course of action. It would turn off new and potential comrades.

The EC as fountainhead

Does the EC really think out everything creative about an area of work? No, inside of the fractions and committees is where most of the brain storming goes on. It's the comrades involved in an area that generally come up with the proposals that are in a fraction head's report. Another important source of ideas is general collaboration between all comrades. Just because you're not on the EC or on a certain fraction doesn't mean you can't discuss that area with another comrade.

In an EC meeting the fraction heads present their reports and then the areas are discussed in order to give them the benefit of the collective thought of the local's recognized leadership. A Bolshevik organization is characterized by this type of collective, conscious, and democratically selected leadership. A good fraction head will utilize fraction members for filling out and motivating a report. This broadens the discussion in a positive manner. It is a modest proposal to the Portland comrades that they try this, if they haven't already.

Closed Meetings

Since the YSA is a combat organization we have a division of labor. Some comrades are assigned to anti-racist work and some to finances. The activities and assignments of all comrades are decided by the local. It is an "ABC" of Leninism that the organization controls and directs the political work of its members. We do not have free-lancers in the YSA. Comrades not responsible for an area have no business poking their nose into its fraction meetings. The local meeting is where everyone can have their say.

I know of no internal bodies of the YSA that have open meetings. Only anti-racist work-assigned comrades go to anti-racist work fractions. Is there anything devious about this? Why should it be any different for the EC meetings?

The EC does have a different type of responsibility than a fraction. It oversees the work of the entire local. But the EC is a different type of body. It is elected by general nomination and secret ballot. All other assignments are made by proposals. This is because the EC needs to be composed of the local's most respected leaders. It must be a team that enjoys the confidence of the majority of the local. And it needs to discuss things that shouldn't be kicked about in general discussion. The EC has to be concerned with facilitating comrades' development. No one is born a Bolshevik. What good purpose would it serve to have open discussions on this and similarly sensitive subjects? Is this any more devious than the fraction meetings we have before mass work meetings? Would it help our work to have public fractions and open EC meetings?

Passivity

Comrades Hebel, Kear and Yankey fear that as "a contagious feeling of loyalty works on us as a therapeutic release from our inactive, cynical, or politically impotent past, we begin to place too much faith in others..." They view negatively a YSA loyalty and leadership that instills in comrades confidence in other comrades. What sort of suspicions could justify such a view? The YSA is not a bourgeois organization. We are a voluntary political organization where common perspectives and common loyalties serve as the only bonds that hold us together. Having confidence in the work of others automatically leads one to deferring to their opinions at times. Consciously deferring to another is not a sign of passivity. What is wrong with giving extra weight to the opinions of a more experienced comrade or to the opinions of a comrade closer to an area of work? Part of being a good leader is knowing when to defer to the opinions of another comrade. If comrades didn't defer to each other while taking on a collective responsibility, we would be a federated group of radicals instead of being a centralized combat organization.

Why shouldn't the YSA put "heavy emphasis... on the belief that consistent political activity leads to leadership ability..." Human intelligence is not so uneven that those comrades most involved in politics wouldn't learn more about it.

Lastly, how do you explain these comrades' comment that our docile membership is incapable of making political decisions but that it "can be relied upon to nominate and elect those who will..." Either the ranks are stupified or they are not. You can't have it both ways.

Question of balance

On the first page of their contribution, comrades Hebel, Kear and Yankey dismiss as unimportant whether or not our current method produces correct and efficient results. To them the question is one of balance between democracy and centralism. This approach puts the cart before the horse.

Bolsheviks are only concerned with results. We need to get the most out of what is really available. Sterile abstractions are alien to a Leninist approach to politics. Democratic centralism is not a balanced concept in the formal sense of the word. Since we want results we have to be flexible about what formula will produce under what conditions. Democratic centralism can never be applied in a 50-50 manner. Certain formal democratic aspects of local meetings may seem insufficient to these comrades, but they should take a closer look at the real processes involved. A local meeting is not like a deceptively balanced bourgeois court room.

Leadership

The general implications of these "modest proposals" is to reverse the YSA organizationally to a pre-Leninist

level. It would mean junking the rich lessons we've learned about the importance of a collective professional leadership, and reverting to a bourgeois style of participatory democracy that apes the old SDS. Once leadership is thrown out the front door, it comes back in through the window. Only this time with all the petty-bourgeois characteristics of the reformists.

This proposal would mean asserting that the main crisis facing humanity is not leadership. How could this be true if this concept didn't apply to the organizations of the class as well? Leadership can't be humanity's major crisis if the problem dissolves once you get people together in a group. Cannon learned from Lenin and Trotsky that, "The leading cadre plays the same decisive role in relation to the party that the party plays in relation to the class." (From Speeches

to the Party, Cannon, p. 183).

For further discussion of this point, comrades should read the speech on "The Problem of Party Leadership," in Cannon's book The Socialist Workers Party in World War II.

Our organizational principles distinguish our movement from all others. Without a correct organizational approach, even the best political line would not save the YSA from disintegration. Our organizational character is based on the realities of class society. It is not based upon fantasies. We have proletarian organizational methods for implementing our proletarian program. We consciously defend our methods against the spontaneous influence of alien classes. Bolshevism provides the best of all possible organizational structures for a revolutionary movement.

December 3, 1975

BUILDING YOUTH SUPPORT FOR THE SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN -- THE SEATTLE EXPERIENCE

By Susie Berman, Seattle local

This fall the Seattle City Council elections provided a unique opportunity for the YSA and SWP here. The Socialist Workers party fielded five candidates for the five city council positions in a non-partisan primary held in October. Patricia Bethard was the SWP candidate for city council position no. 5 and was running against Sam Smith, (who was endorsed both by the Democratic and Republican parties) and a candidate of the U. S. Labor Party. After running an ambitious primary campaign, Bethard made it into the final run-off by polling 18 percent of the vote. This is the first time in the recent history of the SWP that a candidate was placed on the final ballot by receiving enough votes in a primary race. We saw this as providing a unique opportunity for reaching out to the people of Seattle with socialist ideas. So the YSA and SWP decided to make this our biggest campaign in Seattle's history.

There were two things, besides the vote that we received in the primaries, that made this campaign a little more interesting. First was our opponent for the city council race, Sam Smith. Smith was the only Black on the city council -- in fact, he had been president of the city council, and a well-established figure in Seattle politics. The other interesting twist in this campaign was the race of Chip Marshall for city council position no. 2. Marshall had been a leader of the ultra-left Seattle Liberation Front during the days of the antiwar movement. He was running for position no. 2 as the "progressive" candidate. Interestingly enough, Marshall's campaign was endorsed by the local Democratic party. His campaign was based on building a "new coalition" that would unite all of the progressive forces in the city who wanted to make Seattle a better place to live. Throughout his primary campaign Marshall had been able to build a real following in the radical community which was mostly centered around the University of Washington area.

When we launched this campaign we laid out four main goals for ourselves -- 1) To establish the YSA and SWP in the Black community; 2) To establish the YSA on the two campuses where we had campus fractions -- Seattle Central Community College and the University of Washington; 3) To break into the Chip Marshall milieu and continue a discussion with his supporters around the concept of independent politics and breaking with the Democratic party; 4) To use the sizeable vote total that we received in the primaries as an angle to get more media coverage for our final campaign.

Our first step in launching this campaign was to set up a storefront headquarters in the Black community. We had begun to find out about the Black community in the last year both through our election campaigns and our involvement in SCAR. But we felt that by physically placing ourselves in the

middle of the community we would more rapidly become known as part of community life. We found a small office in the central area (the heart of the Black community) and began organizing most of our campaign propaganda activities out of it -- sales, campaign literature distribution, subscription drives, etc.

At the same time we began mapping out a propaganda offensive that would direct itself to the issues facing Seattle-lites. There were three central issues we felt were most important in this campaign -- 1) Redlining -- this is a practice of the banks in Seattle to refuse to grant home improvement loans to areas they consider financially risky, in other words the Black community. Through this redlining practice many homes in the community were forced to deteriorate, and this has become a central issue in the antiracist fight here.

2) Initiative 314 -- this was a referendum being placed on the ballot which called for taxing corporations in order to fund schools. We felt that this referendum was a step in the right direction toward making corporate profits pay for social needs.

3) Initiative 316 -- this referendum called for mandatory death sentencing (by hanging) for anyone committing certain crimes, like killing a police officer. In addition to a campaign brochure which focused on these three issues, we put together separate position papers on each of these which we could mass distribute on Saturday sales and on our two campuses.

One of the problems in starting this campaign was that we had very little information on our opponent, Sam Smith. This was no fault of our own. Smith had put out next to no literature on his campaign positions. It was clear that he was running on the basis of his being a tradition in the Seattle political scene more than on the basis of his political positions on the issues facing Seattle. We decided that we would have to force Smith out on the issues through our confronting him at the various candidates meetings around town. It didn't take us very long to find out where Smith stood. At the second candidates meeting that we attended during the question and answer period someone from the audience got up and said, "Mr. Smith, Ms. Bethard has told us where she stands on the two initiatives. Where do you stand?" Just as we suspected, Smith came out for mandatory death sentencing and against taxing corporate profits. This laid the political basis for our waging a very effective campaign. In fact, our last, and best, piece of campaign literature was a balance sheet of the two candidates positions.

As soon as our campaign literature was out, we went on an aggressive campaign to gather names on volunteer cards

of people interested in working on the campaign.

Our first step was on the campuses. Both schools opened the first week in October, just as we were launching the campaign. For the first two weeks of school we set up daily campaign tables, concentrating on selling the Young Socialist and the Militant, passing out campaign materials, and getting people to sign up on volunteer cards.

By launching this volunteer card drive early in the campaign, we set a high pace for collecting names that lasted the duration of the campaign. We made sure that everyone who went out on sales on Saturdays was armed with campaign literature and volunteer cards. We found that in addition to getting about twenty new names on the campuses every week we also got anywhere from five to ten cards signed every Saturday sales day.

This provided us with a new campaign list which we immediately began to do follow-up work on. The campus names were called every week about campaign activities with the aim of getting these people involved in building the campaign on the campuses. We tried through this calling to get people other than YSAers to staff campaign tables on the campuses but at the beginning we weren't very successful. So we decided to try a new approach. We put out a leaflet announcing a campaign strategy meeting to be held at the University of Washington, and organized a special mailing and phone calling to those people who had already signed up on volunteer cards. Much to our amazement, three people attended our first meeting. After having an initial presentation on what the campaign was doing, we threw the floor open for discussion on how we could build support for the campaign on campus. We found that these people had all sorts of good ideas for publicizing the campaign. And, most importantly, they really viewed the campaign as their campaign.

Out of this meeting we were able, for the first time, to actively involve campaign supporters in literature distribution and staffing campaign tables. All of the supporters were genuinely excited about the opening of our second headquarters, and we involved them in the propaganda drives on Saturdays that were launched out of the central area storefront.

As the campaign progressed we began holding weekly campus campaign meetings to organize the distributions on campus, and through these were able to involve a number of supporters on a regular basis.

Our literature distributions in the Black community were very successful. In addition to our regular Saturday Black community sales, we began midweek campaign distributions in the Black community.

We decided rather than organizing a run-of-the-mill subscription drive that we were going to tie in our sub drive to the campaign, and use it to build support for our candidate. In the middle of the campaign we organized a subscription/campaign drive in the Black community. Rather than just going after subs we very conscientiously talked

to people about the campaign, and left the campaign literature at every house whether people were home or not. One thing that we discovered through this drive was that even though Sam Smith was the only Black candidate for City Council, the majority of the people that we talked to were totally fed up with him. They saw us as a positive alternative, and the only campaign that really spoke to the issues.

In addition to the distributions, we began holding forums in the Black community at the local YMCA. This was a new experience for us, and we had no idea how it would work out. The attendance at the first forum was fairly small. But we find that the more forums we hold there, the more people we begin to attract. The last forum held during the campaign was a special talk by Clifton DeBerry on Black liberation and socialism. We organized a two day tour for DeBerry at our two campuses. This tour was very important in drawing some of our Black supporters from the campuses closer to the YSA.

Our work at Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) is an integral part of our orientation to the Black community. SCCC has a large Black, Chicano, and Asian population. Many of the Black students live in the central area. Through the course of the campaign we found that many Black students signed up on volunteer cards and attended our campus meetings.

Midway through the campaign we went on a special mobilization footing of our entire movement. We decided that in order to make the most of this campaign that we were going to get the entire membership of the YSA and SWP involved in the campaign. We set a goal of getting out 25,000 pieces of literature in the last three weeks of the campaign. To facilitate this our membership was organized into propaganda teams which were assigned to either campus distributions, or community distributions, etc. As part of this mobilization, the campus fractions took on distribution goals every week. Through this special effort we distributed more than 12,000 leaflets on the campuses alone during that three week period. This was especially significant at SCCC, where, we figure, we probably got at least one leaflet into the hands of every single student there. This really helped establish the presence of the YSA on both campuses. The distribution campaign was a major success. Not only did we reach our goal of getting out 25,000 pieces of literature, but we surpassed it by 4,000.

As I mentioned before, one of our goals was to break into the milieu of Chip Marshall supporters. We had begun this campaign at the end of the primary campaign by organizing a debate between Marshall and Karl Bermann, SWP candidate for city council position number 2. The debate was focused around the question of independent politics and how to change society. The debate was attended by more than one hundred people, and we got the names of about ten people who were interested in finding out more about about our campaign.

Through our work at UW (University of Washington) we found that most young people saw no contradiction between supporting Bethard for city council position number 5, and Chip Marshall for position number 2. We took a very friendly approach toward them. We made it clear that we thought Marshall's approach of remaining around the Democratic party was a dead-end. But we urged everyone we met to actively support our campaign at the same time that they were supporting Marshall.

We also tried to attend Marshall meetings whenever possible, raise questions on the floor, and distribute campaign literature. This approach was very successful. Toward the end of the campaign we began to involve one of the more active Marshall supporters in our campaign, and carried out lengthy discussions with him on our approach to changing society. As you will see at the end of this contribution our approach toward the Marshall campaign really paid off.

The second to the last week of the campaign Peter Camejo came to tour Seattle. We used the Bethard campaign to publicize the Camejo tour, as well as using the Camejo tour to publicize the Bethard campaign. By this time we had collected well over one hundred new names on volunteer cards and had been able to involve between five and ten campaign supporters in activities on a consistent basis. These supporters were involved in building the Camejo tour on the campuses as well as the citywide rally. We had decided to hold the Camejo/Bethard rally in the Black community. The whole tour was a fantastic success. Seventy people attended the meeting at SCCC -- this is the largest size meeting that any group has been able to hold on campus the whole quarter.

Our citywide rally was attended by 140 people. People attended from both campuses as well as from the Black community. One of the most significant things is that our Marshall supporter was able to drag the coordinator of the Marshall campaign to the rally with him.

In addition to Camejo's public speaking engagements we organized a special get together with some of the campaign activists who had been working with us very closely. It was an informal meeting at someone's house and was attended by about nine people from both campuses as well as from our region. At this gathering supporters were given the opportunity to ask questions about our program and about the YSA. We found this type of meeting very helpful in drawing people closer to our movement and plan to organize similar activities in the future.

Through the Camejo tour we were able to get about forty new names on volunteer cards. One of the most important effects of the entire tour was that it consolidated a whole number of supporters and drew them closer to the YSA and SWP.

One thing that I haven't mentioned is our campaign around getting media coverage. Despite the fact that we polled 18 percent of the vote in the primary campaign, the newspapers continued to portray Bethard as an insignificant

candidate. This seemed to be a conscious attempt on their part to try to ice us out of the race. But we continued sending them press releases, and finally drafted a letter pointing out their discrimination in coverage of the campaign. When Camejo came to town, however, the media seemed to wake up. Not only did we get articles on Camejo in the newspaper but he was covered by every major television station. This was a real breakthrough for us. We had begun working on media for the Camejo tour at the end of September, and this consistent work brought very good results. Most of the coverage that Camejo received treated him as a serious candidate. One station even said that the Socialist Workers party is the third major party in the country. After this, the coverage of the Bethard campaign stepped up a bit and we were given articles in the two major newspapers.

The highlight of the Camejo tour was the developments with the UW student Marshall supporter that we had brought around our campaign. After tens of hours of discussions with us, and three doses of Peter Camejo, he knew that he had to make some decisions. He found that he agreed with everything that Camejo said about independent politics, and our campaign program and strategy. Right after the Camejo rally ended, the head of the Marshall campaign asked our supporter if he was going out canvassing for Marshall the next day. His response was, "Hell no. I'm joining the YSA." The next week he joined.

All in all our campaign was an outstanding success. In the final vote we received 38,000 votes, or about 26 percent. It was clear from the response on election day that more people than ever before knew about the Socialist alternative. As we campaigned on campus that day person after person would come up and say that they had just come back from voting for Bethard.

Through our campaign efforts the YSA has become known as the radical organization on both campuses. In addition, we have a list of over seventy people from the two campuses that we met during the course of the campaign. The YSA and SWP have gained a real respect on the campuses. And, there are a couple of people who are considering joining the YSA.

We've made a real impact on the Black community as well. During the course of the campaign the Muslims called up and asked to set up a meeting with the party because they felt it was clear that we had become "a real thread in the fabric of the community."

Most importantly, the whole local has really learned a lot about how to organize youth support work. From getting volunteer cards signed, to organizing follow-up calls, to figuring out new ways to involve supporters, like our campus campaign meetings. This has really laid the basis for organizing effective youth support work for the national and statewide campaigns coming up this spring.

And lastly, this campaign has laid the basis for a new development in the SWP in Seattle. Our temporary central

area storefront will open in January as the headquarters of a new Socialist Workers party neighborhood branch. This is going to provide a real opportunity to continue our work in the Black community and win more people

over to our Socialist perspective.

December 3, 1975

THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT TODAY AND THE YSA

By Holly Harkness, Twin Cities local

The purpose of this contribution is to give my impressions of what is happening within the women's liberation movement in this country and to offer some suggestions on how the YSA can take advantage of the potential that exists in that movement today. I hope that other comrades will contribute their ideas to this discussion since there are many points which I have not been able to cover.

The influence and ideas of the women's liberation movement are stronger than they have ever been before. Virtually every major college and university now has women's studies classes in their curriculum if not a women's studies department. According to a Harris poll conducted this year, 59 percent of Americans favor "most of the efforts to strengthen and change women's status in society today." The latest Virginia Slims Opinion Poll showed that 79 percent of all women think abortion should be a decision left up to a woman and her doctor. Despite its tokenism and the whole fiasco of the conference in Mexico City this summer, International Women's Year did lend prestige to the women's movement in some ways. It meant that even church groups and the most conservative male organizations, like the Jaycees, were holding public meetings or devoting issues of their newsletters to the concerns of women -- rape, affirmative action, child care, etc. In the electoral arena more and more women candidates are running for office each year and winning.

Thousands and thousands of women have found (at long last) some dignity in being female, and they want their daughters to grow up with that pride. Moreover, there is a restlessness among women, particularly younger, more radical women, whose spirits were never trampled by the feminine mystique era of the 1950s. These women will not settle for anything less than a forward march for women's rights and they have become infuriated over setbacks like Dr. Edelin's conviction and the defeats for the ERA. These women are studying feminism and women's history. They are ready and willing to jump into the struggle for their liberation at the word "go."

But those in the present leadership of the women's movement have not attempted to mobilize this great standing army of feminists, as we helped to do in the abortion struggle. The narrow interests of the reformists and the "socialist-feminists" have prevented victories for women's rights which should have been won -- like the ERA referenda in New York and New Jersey this fall. Worse, still, this gives the reactionary opposition, Phyllis Schlafly and her crew, as well as the fetus freaks, a free hand to maneuver. These right-wing forces are mobilized and well-financed (the Catholic Church is one of their biggest backers). They are the deadly enemies of women's liberation and must be stopped (obviously). So why hasn't the women's movement,

which now has public opinion on its side, been more vigilant, more militant?

To answer this it is important to talk about the two wings of the movement which currently hold the allegiance of most feminists: those who are actively involved in reformist politics (in or around the Democratic party); and those who are less active, but more radical, the socialist-feminists. Neither has put forward the strategy of mass action, independent of the capitalist parties, which is what is needed to counter the anti-female offensive, and win real gains for women, like the passage of the ERA.

The reformists are by far the larger of the two wings. They consist of the National Organization for Women, the National Women's Political Caucus, and various other lobbying groups. They urge women to go to the state legislature or Congress and invite "their" representative out to lunch to try to convince him of the importance of voting yes or no on a certain piece of legislation. Much time is spent campaigning for liberal Democrats who give lip service to the ideas of feminism. To this bankrupt strategy we would counterpose building a national movement of as many women as possible around concrete demands for women. But the idea of demonstrations which would show the real power of women, is frightening to those in the leadership of the reformist wing. They want to carve out a little niche for themselves under the current system. The rank-and-file membership of the reformist groups may not necessarily agree with this idea. But they rarely get a chance to challenge the leadership. Read Cindy Jaquith's article on the October NOW convention in Philadelphia (Militant 11/4/75). Participants there were itching to discuss the issues, but the bulk of the convention was spent electing officers. No calls to action in support of the ERA were proposed, no strategy for defending affirmative action in the face of layoffs. Comrades attending the convention said that most of the political discussion took place in the lobby of the convention hall.

Another example of NOW's attempts to put the lid on the independent mobilization of women was on October 29th. That day was designated by some California NOW chapters as Alice Doesn't Day (after the movie Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore). It was, in essence, to be a women's strike day. Women were urged not to cook, not to shop, not to clean and not to work on that day. The idea spread across the country. I don't know if it reached the East Coast, but when women here in Minneapolis heard about it, they were eager to participate. But the Twin Cities NOW chapter, for some unknown reason, abstained from Alice Doesn't Day, and there was no other feminist group in the Cities (including the socialist-feminists) which was willing to take the initiative and organize a local action. I work in a women's

counseling center where we got over fifty calls from women who wanted to know where the demonstration or march was going to be. I would tell them to plan something themselves and then call me back with the details, but, these women weren't experienced political activists. They were budding, enthusiastic feminists yearning to show their muscle, but lacking the direction that Twin Cities NOW should have provided, but didn't. When no one struck in Minneapolis on Alice Doesn't Day, the media here concluded that the women's movement ("like the student movement") was dead.

The default on the part of the reformist leadership has also meant more openings for our movement, especially our election campaigns. Here in Minneapolis, we easily won the endorsement of the Hennepin County Women's Political Caucus for Mary Hillery's mayoral campaign, and mine for school board. We were able to speak before several women's groups during the campaign and nowhere did we experience any red-baiting. This endorsement has given us a great deal of respect among feminists here.

Shortly after the elections we organized a tour for Evelyn Reed here. We used the tour, not only to promote the sales of Woman's Evolution, but to follow up on the contacts we'd made in the women's groups. We didn't hide the fact that Evelyn was a member of the SWP, neither did she. Often the discussions after her speech would center around socialist ideas.

To top off our fall political work, we invited Linda Jenness to speak on Socialism and Feminism at our Educational Conference. Although we haven't yet recruited any women from the feminist movement here, I feel we've laid the basis for a more direct intervention into the women's movement this spring.

But there is another wing of the women's liberation movement, which is not as familiar to a lot of comrades; that is the socialist-feminists. This radical wing of the movement tended to isolate itself from women in the first few years of the second wave, because it demanded more of its adherents. For example, there was much emphasis placed on the individual lifestyles of feminists. Organizationally these groups were very loose and never organized nationally. They talked a lot about "community-organizing" and tended to avoid the college campuses. These often evolved into something called a "women's union" which required no programmatic agreement for membership, only a small financial commitment.

Recently this wing has begun to grow again, due to the radicalization of the working class as a whole and the increasing disillusionment of women with capitalist party politics. As it stands today, however, this radical wing is no more capable of giving direction to the women's movement than the leaders of NOW.

The main problem of the socialist-feminists is that they are entangled in their desire, on the one hand "to build a revolutionary women's culture" and at the same time hope to abolish capitalism and replace it with social-

ism. For example, every grouping in this milieu is agonizing over the question of structure. They say, "We as feminists, can and must do everything differently from the way men do it. So we must try to find a structure for our organization which is not patriarchal." This continual preoccupation with the search for "non-oppressive" organizational forms has been one of the millstones around the necks of many radical feminists since the beginning of the second wave of the movement. They fail to realize that once the concrete tasks of the group are agreed upon, the structure will flow from the very nature of those tasks. By arguing the question of structure first, these women have become bogged down in the abstractness of their whole discussion. This leads to the inevitable demoralization and frustration of some of the members, because the group never gets around to participating in any of the important struggles for women's rights. (For example, the local socialist-feminists of the Twin Cities Women's Union did not participate in the July 14 JoAnne Little picket line because they had scheduled a Criticism/Self-Criticism Session for the exact same time.)

As far as I can tell, the term "socialist-feminist" first appeared in a document put out by the Chicago Women's Liberation Union in 1972. This document addressed itself to the question of structure and put forward a three point program:

- "1) To win real concrete reforms that meet women's needs;
- "2) To give women a sense of their own power;
- "3) To alter the relations of power."

It should be pointed out to the socialist-feminists that both the abortion struggle as well as a nationally coordinated fight for the ratification of the ERA are good examples of this program being put into action. A militant struggle which is able to win "real concrete reforms that meet women's needs" will mean mobilizing thousands of women. This in turn will "give women a sense of their own power." It will also be a tremendous victory for the entire working class, thus strengthening the power of the working class.

Unfortunately the socialist-feminists are slow to learn the lessons of history. They are bent on starting from scratch, and they tend to get left behind.

The socialist-feminists did take an important step forward in July when they called a national conference at Antioch College. It was the first time women in this country had the opportunity to get together and discuss the relationship between socialism and feminism.

The conference was organized by a national steering committee made up of representatives from various women's unions around the country. However most of the 1,500 women who attended were independents. Unfortunately the organizers of the conference were not equal to the task that they undertook.

First of all they underestimated the number of women

who would want to attend by a couple thousand. The first round of publicity estimated 300 to 600. A month before the conference they had close to 3000 registration forms from women all over the country. Antioch College simply couldn't hold that many. So they spent hundreds of dollars depublishing the conference, to cut down the attendance. This caused many hard feelings at the very outset.

Secondly, the conference was undemocratic. No agenda was voted on, no resolutions were passed, and the steering committee held closed meetings. This enabled the organizers to arbitrarily exclude members of the Spartacus Youth League as well as YSA comrades from the conference. The steering committee saw the conference not as an open forum, but as their baby. They knew that the YSA's clear cut strategy for the women's movement would attract many of the independents at the conference, especially in the face of their lack of strategy. So they just told us to get out. (Indeed, when we were finally allowed to set up a literature table, we sold all our NSCAR-Free JoAnne Little buttons and easily got rid of 3,000 copies of an open letter which SWP candidate Willie Mae Reid had written to the conference participants.)

In short the conference was a frustrating experience for most of the women who attended. They had been attracted

by the word socialism and by the long list of workshops on such things as child care, the Edelin case, JoAnne Little, etc. Yet the conference failed to give these women any kind of direction or education on how to fight for women's rights, much less on how to fight for socialism.

Conclusion

In the months ahead the YSA will have many opportunities to reach out to women's liberation groups and to intervene in the fight for women's rights. It is possible that national demonstrations will be called in support of the ERA. We will want to jump into this kind of activity. Our unconditional support to women's liberation will certainly draw women away from the socialist-feminist groups and the reformists.

More and more women are beginning to realize that the demands of women's liberation cannot be implemented under the capitalist system. We will want to show them, through our support to the SWP election campaigns, our public forums, our press, but most of all through our activity in women's struggles, that the Young Socialist Alliance is prepared to take the fight for socialism and feminism to their inevitable conclusions -- a socialist revolution which would put the working class, the majority, in power.

December 4, 1975

LETTER TO THE INTERNAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN

By the Amherst local

Being a local in an area where there are several private colleges, we feel that the role of private colleges in the developing crisis of higher education in America is an important question that the YSA must confront. We think that the draft resolution of the National Executive Committee fails to do so sufficiently and we urge the National Convention to further improve upon the resolution in this regard. The question is of particular importance with regard to the emerging student movement against cutbacks and tuition hikes. The Carnegie Commission is in fact quite explicit in explaining that these measures are means to preserve the competitive advantage of upper-class private colleges. Since the YSA wants to build a strong and unified student movement against these measures, it must necessarily con-

front the question of how to involve private college students in this movement. This requires that we relate to their specific circumstances and advance specific demands that will contribute to their radicalization.

Furthermore, we think that the demands advanced in Section III of the draft resolution are not explicit enough in their rejection of the private school system. They should also include the demands for: (a) objective standards for admission to all schools (i.e. anyone may go to any school he/she objectively qualifies for); and (b) an equal per capita financial input to all schools (i.e. equal quality of education).

December 4, 1975

LETTER TO THE INTERNAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN

By John Patrick, Amherst local

The kind of united front approach that is elaborated by the National Executive Committee in the draft political resolution submitted to the Fifteenth National Convention is, we believe, based upon an incorrect analysis of the process of radicalization among youth, as well as other radicalizing layers, in the developing crisis of capitalism. It implies a political line that will hinder the revolutionary movement from developing fully and will also hinder the YSA from taking on the dominant vanguard role which it today has the potential to do.

This approach is based upon a series of principles: (a) that there may be no programmatic alliances with groups that do not accept the entire program of the YSA; (b) that the actions of a united front cannot go beyond the specific issues originally agreed upon and ought not label itself (e.g. anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist); and (c) that the demands of the united front must be as broad and thus as low key as possible (i.e. "democratic demands"). The reason for these principles is that the united front would otherwise alienate many of those who may be attracted by it and that the most important aspect of the united front is to build as broad a mass-movement as possible. We do not disagree with these objectives as such, but the mass-movement must not be conceived of as an end in and of itself: it must have the purpose of radicalizing and giving confidence to those who are active within the movement so that it can advance towards a socialist perspective. In the National Executive Committee's view, there are only two stages in the process of radicalization: either you work on predefined specific issues only or you join the YSA. Yet, this is an incredibly simplistic view which contradicts the National Executive Committee's own assertion that "most people radicalize gradually and in an uneven way" (p. 13). It implies both sectarianism and tail-ending of the movement.

There exists today a vanguard of radicalized youth (Women's Collectives, Third World groups, Action Coali-

tions, etc.) and to say that elements of this vanguard join other organizations of the left rather than the YSA "simply because they ran into them first" (p. 12) is only a way to avoid facing the fact that we have so far failed to gain the confidence of this vanguard. As long as we cannot gain the confidence of and provide the leadership for this vanguard, we will not be able to build any lasting mass-movement.

We must relate to this vanguard and help further its radicalization. This must be done by progressively increasing the political character of united fronts and their actions (only up to a certain point of course) and by convincingly showing our willingness to work with other organizations of the left. We must not refuse minimum programs for united fronts -- as long as they do not contradict our program -- or "exemplary actions", because it is a natural development that the radicalized vanguard will seek these (before being ready to join the YSA) and unless we choose to take the leadership of the emerging movement, we will be by-passed by it. In other words, we must help make the united front a vehicle by which people can become radical activists. This is beneficial for us even if they do not immediately join the YSA. To argue, as certain comrades do, that in doing so we run the risk of having united fronts "taken over" by other organizations of the left would imply that we are not confident in the superiority of our program. It would be equally preposterous, however, to argue that our program will attract either the vanguard or the masses without us proving its superiority in practice, i.e., within the context of united front actions.

We are not proposing an ultra-leftist tactic concerned only with this vanguard, but the point is that this vanguard constitutes a natural stage in the process of radicalization for most people. We must consistently work to broaden this vanguard and to extend our influence within as well as beyond it.

December 4, 1975

THE YSA'S WORK WITH GIs AND VETERANS -- THREE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION

By Jude Coren, Brooklyn, New York local

Following the printing of the NEC draft political resolution, two contributions were submitted to the discussion relating to the section entitled, "Full Rights for GIs and Vets." In my opinion, several of the points raised in these two articles are good.

The first contribution, which is printed below, was submitted by the Wisconsin Veterans Union and was printed in the Vietnam Vet. The other was submitted by comrades Sidebottom and Thomas of the Milwaukee YSA and appears in YSA Discussion Bulletin Vol. XIX, No. 5.

Educational benefits

Both of the contributions propose an amendment to the resolution in support of the demand for a "new GI Bill at least equal in educational benefits to the WWII GI Bill."

In light of President Ford's recommendation to Congress to abolish the already limited educational benefits received by veterans under the present GI Bill, this point becomes even more urgent.

I do not, however, agree with the formulation used in the proposal. While the WWII GI Bill did grant veterans some well-needed benefits in the area of education, its scope was limited. The benefits offered in that bill would in no way begin to meet the real needs of veterans today. These benefits must be extended.

One suggestion put forward by the Wisconsin Veterans Union is for a cost-of-living escalator clause. This proposal is a good one.

I would propose the following amendment: "The YSA opposes all attempts by the government to cut back on the educational benefits received by veterans. We support the demand for a new GI Bill, which would provide full educational benefits, including the cost of tuition, books, and living expenses with a cost-of-living escalator clause, as protection against rising inflation. We support the demand for quality medical care for all veterans, and we support the demand that veterans should be able to go to any hospital they choose at government expense."

Universal unconditional amnesty

Another part of the draft resolution reads, "The YSA demands unconditional amnesty for all Vietnam war resisters now in exile or in prison."

The Wisconsin Veterans Union points out in their contribution to the discussion that while this demand is correct, it is limited in scope and does not take into account hundreds of thousands of people who are also in need of amnesty. It must be made clear that the YSA's support of

amnesty is not just for those who are presently in exile or in prison, but for the thousands who refused the draft, many of whom have not yet been prosecuted, and the some 700,000 veterans who received less-than-honorable discharges.

The proposed amendment by comrades Sidebottom and Thomas is clearer and more explicit on the question of amnesty than the formulation in the draft political resolution. They propose that the section on amnesty be changed to read: "The YSA supports the demand for Universal Unconditional Amnesty for all military and draft resisters. We demand that all less-than-honorable discharges be upgraded to honorable and support the demand for a single-type discharge."

GIs and veterans

A third point that is raised by the Wisconsin Veterans Union is that while there is a similarity in outlook between GIs and vets, they face different problems in this society, and their struggles are on different planes.

This is a valid point and one that should be taken note of in the resolution. I would propose that the resolution be amended to include a paragraph which would read as follows: "While there is a similarity in outlook between GIs and veterans, each faces different problems in this society. The struggles of GIs flow from the denial of their most basic democratic rights -- the right to assemble, free speech, freedom of the press, etc. Veterans, on the other hand, already have these basic rights. Their struggles are to extend these rights to win better benefits -- health, education, etc."

* * *

It would not be possible to draft a political resolution which would cover all of the struggles and demands of any section of the population. Rather, the purpose of the NEC draft political resolution is to provide a general framework, both in program and action, for the YSA's work in the next year. I do agree, however, with the authors of the two other contributions to this discussion that the inclusion of the above points would serve to make the resolution clearer and better prepare the YSA in our support for the struggles of GIs and veterans.

December 5, 1975

The article printed at the bottom of this page was taken from a document entitled, "THE CRISIS CONFRONTING YOUTH: A Strategy To Fight Back and Win." The document was printed in the November, 1975 issue of The Young Socialist, the newspaper put out by the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA).

The document itself was written as a contribution for consideration at the YSA National Convention to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at UW-Milwaukee from December 28, 1975 to January 1, 1976.

It should be emphasized that this particular section of the entire document is NOT the official position of the YSA at this time. Such a decision won't be made until the convention.

Normally the Wisconsin Veterans Union does not engage in discussions of this type, so a word of explanation is in order.

We feel that the YSA is made up of people who are honestly trying to change a very messed up world. We also feel that the YSA reflects the type of organizational and political groups we can work with. But, in order for them to be able to work with us (and we feel veterans in general) it is first necessary that they take a correct position vis-a-vis the problems which face veterans.

We are not endorsing the YSA as the perfect organization, or even the only organization veterans should work with, we are saying however, that we are sufficiently impressed with their dedication and honesty to take out time to correct what we feel is a document that has many serious errors in it.

We ask veterans to read their document, and our critique, and to tell WVU what you think about both. We also encourage veterans to seek out YSA people and talk to them about veteran related problems.

Introduction

The problems we have with the document are three in number:

- 1) It lumps veterans and G. I. s together in one general grouping.
- 2) Some of the demands put forth are so general as to not be demands at all.
- 3) Some of the demands are just plain incorrect.

G. I. s are not vets

The document is entitled, "Full rights for GIs and vets!" Thus, the YSA commits an error which is often committed. It lumps veterans and GIs into the same bag.

We will be the last to suggest that there is not a great similarity in outlook and perception between veterans

and GIs. After all, every vet was a GI, and every GI will be a vet. Yet, it is very wrong to lump the two categories together.

The problems that face GIs stem from the fact that they are in the military. This by itself restricts their ability to both organize and to struggle for the things they want. In order for GIs to even begin to make serious gains, they will have to overcome two obstacles: The military itself, and their own lack of organization. The fight inside the military is basically a fight for basic democratic rights! And, it is that fight which overshadows everything else. Any gains GIs may want to make run head on into the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), which denies GIs most of the basic rights we all take for granted: right to assemble, free speech, and freedom of the press. The document points that out in a general way, but it still seems to lump the need to fight for democratic rights inside the military along with the need of veterans to defend the material gains veterans have made and need to extend.

GIs are certainly interested in what goes on inside the veterans community; after all, they too will one day become part of that community. But, the interest is on almost an academic plane when contrasted with the many and varied problems GIs face inside of the military! GIs are interested in being able to wear any length hair they want; GIs are interested in being able to print and distribute newsletters; GIs are interested in being able to do away with Article 15s; GIs are interested in keeping their COs and First Sergeants from being able to go through a GI's personal possessions any time they want to; and, GIs are interested in being able to question orders they feel are either wrong or ridiculous.

Veterans, on the other hand, already have the basic democratic rights which GIs lack. What veterans have to do is to turn these democratic rights into a power tool to win a better GI Bill, to improve VA hospitals, and to make sure they have jobs.

In short, GIs need to win democratic rights while veterans need to expand upon them. The general goals and orientation are very different, and to lump the two groups into one general classification will only mean that neither will be understood.

Vagueness

Most of the demands that are put forth in the document are much too vague.

If this document is to be a real program (and not just a statement of general principles) then the demands must be clear cut.

One section states: We demand full educational, vocational and health benefits for all veterans. The YSA supports

the struggles of veterans on campus for higher financial grants, better medical treatment, and special vocational counseling. It sounds nice, but what does it all mean?

First, it calls for better education and medical treatment for veterans in school. Unless the YSA is calling for better treatment for veterans in school than on the street, this section seems to be redundant.

What the YSA should call for is:

1. An educational package at least equal to that which veterans of WW 2 got.
2. The massive upgrading of all V. A. hospitals, or allowing veterans to go to the hospital of their choice at government expense.
3. The establishment of a VA Vet Rep for at least every 500 to 750 veterans in a school.
4. The establishment of a cost-of-living escalator clause onto the G. I. Bill.
5. The establishment of an independent commission consisting of Vietnam-era veterans who will have the power to oversee the VA, and to make policy changes if it so desires.

Such a program as we have outlined above would speak to the concrete and real needs veterans in this country have. They would serve as a starting point for veterans to be able to get what they need to live a decent life.

Amnesty

The YSA document calls for: The YSA demands unconditional amnesty for all Vietnam war resisters now in exile or prison.

It is disheartening to see an otherwise solid organization fall into a classical error in regards to amnesty. Not only does the general demand fall far short of reality, it leaves out some huge categories of people who are in need of amnesty!

The demand is for unconditional amnesty while the objective need is for universal, unconditional amnesty. The inclusion of the word universal takes in all of the people who have been messed over by the government as a result of their contact with the military.

The way the present document is written, it leaves out the following categories:

- 1.) The almost 700,000 veterans who have less-than-honorable-discharges.
- 2.) The over 200,000 men who evaded the draft but were never prosecuted, but still have that threat hanging over them.
- 3.) The over 60,000 military and draft resisters living underground inside the United States.

We are afraid we must call into question a demand which leaves out almost 1 million people!

What the YSA should call for is:

- 1) Universal, unconditional amnesty for all draft and military resisters.
- 2) The upgrading of all less-than-honorable-discharges to honorable.

3) The establishment of a single-type-discharge system within the military to see to it that no other veteran ever gets a bad paper discharge again.

Such demands speak to the real issues of amnesty, and provide the framework by which such demands can be won.

Conclusion

We realize that this short article can not even begin to cover all of the questions raised. However, we look upon it as a working paper to be used as a guide to arrive at positions which are closer to reality and much more concrete.

We hope the YSA will take this article and the criticisms raised herein in the spirit in which it was written. We realize that it is very hard to come up with a good position the first shot out of the box, we hope this small contribution to the discussion will help to clarify and reorient the YSA in a better direction.

In the meantime, we again urge all veterans to study both of these articles and to draw their own conclusions. We also would like to hear from veterans both inside and outside of the YSA as to what they think.

Also, if any veteran would like to attend the YSA convention here in Milwaukee, we would like you to get in touch with WVU at The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Box 75, 2200 E. Kenwood Ave., Milwaukee, Wis. 53202.

By Frank Lord, Denver local

Over 500 students heard Peter Camejo during his October 16-20 tour of Colorado and tens of thousands more had the opportunity to hear about the SWP candidate for president through the publicity the tour generated.

From the four campus speeches and a banquet at the Militant Bookstore in Denver, seven people joined the YSA and over \$1,700 was raised to build the SWP campaign in the coming months. Articles and/or paid advertisements appeared in the campus papers at C.U. Boulder, C.S.U. Ft. Collins, and U.N.C. Greeley, the state's three largest campuses. In addition, YSAers were able to get radio time in Greeley and TV time in Boulder to build the tour.

There were interviews on two off-campus radios, and an article on the tour appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, Denver's second-largest daily paper. After the tour, articles about the Camejo speech continued to appear in the campus papers. In Ft. Collins, an editor of the campus paper charged that Camejo's statements -- including that the standard of living was going down -- were not true. This attack was answered by a student who had heard Camejo but who had not been previously involved in campaign work. Other articles in defense of Camejo kept the discussion of the Socialist Workers campaign going for several weeks.

The Denver YSA began the fall with the understanding that our active support for the Socialist Workers campaign was one of the best ways to build the YSA on the campuses, and to involve people who are not yet members in doing this.

We recognized that no matter whether an individual expresses interest in our ideas as a result of attending a forum, participating in the fight against racism in education, or through hearing Peter Camejo -- that person was a potential campaign supporter who could be actively involved in building the Socialist Workers campaign.

We wanted to make it possible for campaign supporters to contribute to building the campaign and to learn more about our movement at the same time. We made every effort to avoid giving the impression that it was necessary to join the YSA in order to build the Camejo tour. Everyone who participated in campaign work was informed about other YSA activities, encouraged to participate in the Student Coalition Against Racism, and asked to join the YSA as the best means to continue their efforts to see a socialist United States.

Because most of our recruitment comes from our campaign support work, the YSA youth support committee was given the responsibility previously allotted to a recruitment director. That is, the youth support committee was responsible for not only building the Socialist Workers campaign on campuses, but organizing activities such as informal

dinners that would facilitate having political discussions with campaign supporters which could result in recruitment.

Our campaign support activity, then, was organized to be most conducive to involving students who were new to our movement and socialism in general.

At C.U. Boulder, we held weekly support meetings which were open to students, to organize campaign work on campus.

The best vehicle for involving people however, was through the "Introduction to Socialism" classes the YSA sponsored on each of the campuses. Students who came to these classes to learn about socialism were enthusiastic about building the Camejo tour during the week between classes.

With our emphasis on involving campaign supporters, all the activity of building the tour was tailored to be able to be maintained by the Denver YSA as regular campaign activity after the tour was over.

Mobilizing off-campus supporters

Prior to Camejo's arrival, the Socialist Workers Denver campaign committee projected several Saturday mobilizations of campaign supporters to build the tour and distribute the "Bill of Rights for Working People."

The numbers of people we might involve was not the most important thing; our goal was to project regular campaign activity that was appealing to off-campus supporters: people who were just learning about socialism, and who probably felt they had very little time to contribute (at first).

A few comrades from the Denver branch and YSA campaign committees would be assigned to participate with non-members in these mobilizations.

Other comrades would participate in regular Saturday sales of the Militant and Young Socialist.

The first such effort was built by a mailing to all campaign supporters, pulled in six people, and was quite successful in getting out hundreds of pieces of campaign literature.

Following the tour, the focus of these efforts shifted from distributing the "Bill of Rights for Working People" to passing out the Student Coalition Against Racism leaflets building the anti-racist demonstration on November 22 in Denver.

Campaign literature tables would be used, including on them a statement by our local candidate in support of busing and the November 22 demonstration, but the focus of the activity would be distributing the SCAR leaflets for the demonstration.

By involving campaign supporters in building the demonstration, not only did more people learn about the dem-

onstration, but an important point was made to the supporters about how the Socialist Workers campaign is different than all others: it builds mass actions.

Key to this success in mobilizing campaign supporters was involving them in planning and thinking out such activities. Off-campus supporters were encouraged to attend the Socialist Workers campaign committee meetings.

Publicity for the tour

The success of the tour followed both from an aggressive approach to involving people who were not (at that time) members of the YSA or SWP, and from the advance planning given to it.

In the weeks prior to Camejo's arrival, teams of campaign supporters went regularly to Denver high schools; to night schools; and literature tables were set up during the days at the campuses where Camejo was to speak.

Huge banners urging students to hear the socialist candidate for president were hung at the different campuses prior to and on the day of the Camejo speech.

Leaflets were ready for distribution three weeks prior to Camejo's arrival. The leaflets were mimeographed in two colors, and some were mounted on construction paper and hung as posters all over the campuses.

At the bottom of each leaflet was the following:

"HELP BUILD CAMEJO'S COLORADO TOUR! Stop by UMC Room 175, or call 492-7679. Or, come to the Young Socialist Alliance's 'Introduction to Socialism' classes and discussion, every Tuesday at 7 pm in UMC 157B, where campaign literature will be available for distribution."

In this manner, the Introduction to Socialism classes, which were held at CSU, UNC as well as CU Boulder, would become campaign-building meetings, following discussion after the class.

Several students on each campus would regularly take the Camejo leaflets to distribute around the campus.

Volunteer cards

The volunteer card let people interested in the campaign know that the best way to "endorse" the campaign was to become personally involved in building the socialist alternative. Because the volunteer card projects the need and importance of active support, we found it an effective tool in involving campaign supporters.

All cards received from the national campaign office immediately had the Socialist Workers local campaign address and phone number mimeographed on the back. The Denver local used these cards except in the case of the C.U. Boulder campus fraction. Because of the distance from Denver -- a 30-minute drive -- the cards used on that campus had the campus YSA office address on the back.

In general, we tried to make sure all national literature was stamped with the Denver address.

The YSA youth support committee used the volunteer

cards as a recruitment tool. That is, anyone interested in our ideas from any area of political activity would be spoken to about the campaign and encouraged to fill out a card.

Campaign supporters were then contacted not only about regular campaign activity, but were invited to participate in the YSA's "Introduction to Socialism" classes, the Student Coalition Against Racism meetings and activities, and were invited to attend YSA meetings.

At Camejo's speeches we passed around a clip board with a sign-up sheet, rather than attempting to get the names by using volunteer cards. The clip board was faster and simpler in that type of situation, although volunteer cards were always a regular part of literature tables.

The mailings that went out later to people who signed up at the Camejo speeches always included a volunteer card (we decided not to include return postage...). Special efforts were made to contact and involve those who sent in cards from this mailing.

Recruitment

We found that after hearing Camejo, students were quite enthusiastic and could be aggressively approached about the YSA.

For example, students who were approached after the talk with the question: "Have you got a subscription to the Young Socialist yet?" would frequently put up their \$1 for a sub right then.

At CU Boulder, we drew up a list of people who had expressed interest in the YSA earlier, and these were approached immediately after Camejo finished and asked to join the YSA. Two joined immediately, and others joined later in the week.

Two people joined the YSA after hearing Camejo at the banquet in Denver; one each after the talks at Metropolitan State College in Denver, UNC Greeley, and CSU Ft. Collins.

The excitement and enthusiasm generated by Camejo was quite contagious. The student who joined in Greeley was in high school, and brought a friend from the same school to the next YSA class who also asked to join.

The day after the end of the tour, a mailing went out to 149 people who signed mailing lists at the different campuses. The mailing included a volunteer card, subscription blanks, and a letter from the SWP Denver candidate for U.S. House encouraging campaign supporters to attend the Student Coalition Against Racism state-wide conference the next week, and to attend the YSA educational conference two weeks later.

Bourgeois and radical opponent work

We also sought to use our support for the Socialist Workers campaign in opponent work. At CU Boulder there is a formation called the "Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Committee," composed of assorted unaffiliated ultra-left sectar-

ians. The AISC is characterized by a fierce hatred of the YSA, and by a complete abstention from campus struggles, including the fight against racism.

Nevertheless, the AISC has been a certain pole of attraction for radicalizing students, and has sought to use its influence to wreck activities of SCAR.

The YSA asked the AISC to "endorse and help build the campus meeting of the only anti-imperialist candidate for president." They refused.

While we were still thinking out a response that would build the tour of Camejo and interest students in the campaign, the AISC held a public meeting on the theme "Can we unite?" This was built as a forum with speakers who supported the AISC from different groups including the Black Student Alliance and the Indian student organization.

It was to be the first public project of the AISC in one year.

We intervened with an open letter printed on the back of the Camejo leaflet and distributed at the door. Entitled "Support the Socialist Campaign!" the letter described the socialist candidates as activists in the fight against racism, and quoted from the "Bill of Rights for Working People."

The letter invited all students to attend the Camejo meeting, which was scheduled for the following Monday in the same room. The letter concluded, "Unfortunately, the Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Committee refused a recent request by the YSA to endorse and help build Camejo's public talk this coming Monday. We hope that the Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Committee will reconsider this posi-

tion, and plan to help build and attend this important meeting. COME HEAR PETER CAMEJO! SUPPORT THE SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN!"

The AISC "forum" drew about 40 people, many of whom were turned off by the sectarian politics expressed there. Camejo brought 115 people to the same room.

We had hoped to challenge student supporters of either Democratic or Republican parties, and use this as a means of building for the Camejo speech. But no such organization surfaced.

We are still looking for anyone who wants to support one of the bourgeois candidates in a debate against us.

Regular campaign activity

We are anticipating an exciting campaign for Priscilla Schenk, SWP candidate for the seat now occupied in Congress by Pat Schroeder.

Our on-going support work is tied to making campaign activity an integral part of all YSA work. For example, we decided to set up one table on the campuses, with Pathfinder, campaign and YSA buttons and literature, rather than one "campaign" and one "YSA" table. We sought to pace the Camejo tour-building activity with the work of the local as a whole, to avoid mobilizations of the entire YSA membership in last-ditch publicity efforts, to project a level of activity that could continue after the tour.

In continuing this success, we want to continue the aggressive involvement of campaign supporters, which was so important to the gains won through the Camejo tour.

December 5, 1975

RECRUITMENT AND YSA MEMBERSHIP

By Joe Soares, Atlanta local

This year's political resolution projects a new upsurge in the student movement. This upsurge will be caused by the avalanches of massive changes that affect millions of students. A radical response from thousands of these students will not be occurring somewhere far off in the distant future. Tomorrow's battles are taking shape yesterday. We can expect surprises.

One thing that must not surprise us is the willingness of young people to join the best socialist youth organization going. A rethinking of the way we do contact work and integrate new members is on the agenda.

Recruitment

YSA'ers should expect people to be willing to join us upon first contact. Our approach needs to be the same as the traveling YSA teams. Anyone who comes by a table should be asked to join on the spot. Political activists we work with should be told why they need to join the YSA. Everyone's name, address, and phone must be obtained to provide for consistent contact.

One thing Atlanta's had tremendous success with is tailor-made discussion groups. Informal, regular discussion groups on socialism provide people interested in us with an opportunity to ask and discuss their questions. These groups should be very open and flexible. The participants should feel that this is their discussion group where a real exchange of ideas is possible. In our Atlanta University discussion group we encouraged the group to pick its own topics and discussion leaders. The discussion leader would prepare some kick-off comments to start the ball rolling. Participants built each new discussion by word of mouth and sometimes with leaflets. Our Atlanta University group recruited three Black students and the Georgia State group recruited two students in less than a month.

When comrades discuss our politics with people results are best when two things are kept in mind. First, speak directly to the person's points. Many an interested person is lost when the entire Revolution Betrayed is recited to them because they asked one question about the Soviet Union. Speak with people, not at them. Secondly, build carefully upon whatever points of agreement we may have. Don't slam away at a person's rough spots as though it were a principle. Develop a clear understanding on our common points. All of our positions are united by a powerful internal logic. Conscious agreement on one full area easily slides into general agreement.

Membership

With the development of today's crisis it will become easier and easier for young people to carry out political work. The shift in the objective conditions not only allows

for the spread of radical views, it also facilitates the integration of radical action into every facet of bourgeois society. Whereas in the recent past radical activity began generally, after 5 p.m., today political work can take place mainly in the classroom or on the job. However this doesn't mean that new sorts of integration problems will not arise. Many new good comrades will not be the headquarter hermits of yesteryear.

One key question will be our internal atmosphere. Will people feel morally uncomfortable unless they are constantly exhausted? Or will the leadership make everyone feel their contribution is needed and appreciated?

All too often in the past there has been the unwritten tradition that a person who doesn't devote all of their possible spare time to the movement is a part-timer, Sunday social democrat. Since the movement is a great devourer of comrades, let's submit all new comrades to the oven. We'll either get out a porcelain-hard Bolshevik, or a burnt up Menshevik. Of course this is an exaggeration, but I want to make a point about an undercurrent -- a tone.

Leninism

The point of discussion is what are our membership norms? What distinguishes the "hard" membership of a Leninist organization from the "soft" membership of a social democratic group?

Are all members of a Leninist organization cadre elements and most members of a social democratic group just rank and filers? I think not.

The character of a Leninist organization is primarily defined by its program. A revolutionary program for a proletarian revolution necessarily dictates a certain organizational form. A combat organization with a democratic-centralist action character flows from this perspective. If an organization's actual work is rooted in the class struggle, its composition will reflect this and both of these processes will reinforce the revolutionary character of the organization's program.

In addition to programs and methods of struggle, the main difference between a Leninist and a reformist organization is the character of its leadership. The type of leadership an organization has is the key to its character and development.

Victor Serge in his book, Year One of the Russian Revolution, wrote, "Within the party, the relationship which holds between the mass of militants and the leadership may be compared to that obtaining between the working masses and the party itself." (page 60) Lenin and Cannon are both excellent teachers on this point. The professional revolutionary leadership of a proletarian organization that characterizes a Leninist party is unique in the workers move-

ment. A Leninist organization cannot withstand a Sunday-socialist unplanned or clique leadership.

Toward a mass socialist youth organization

However in getting back to the membership question, I think that a lot of our tone regarding leadership is applied too rigorously to everyone. Until recently our size and composition (student activist during an economically prosperous time) has lent itself to provide very little distinction between the leadership and the ranks. As we begin to experience general growth this will change.

Under today's conditions we will experience the development of a large rank and file. We will be recruiting young people who will be committed to socialism, but who will have very real time pressures. Many of these comrades will only have a few hours per week to do political work.

And this time can't be spent in nothing but meetings.

It will be the leadership's task to integrate and utilize these comrades in a balanced manner. For these comrades a rounded identification with the YSA will be more possible than rounded YSA activism. None of this is to say that the conscious development of all new recruits will be forgotten once a "rank and file" category is placed on someone.

Comrades should still be developed as rapidly as possible. Deciding what is possible is the leadership's task. No comrades should be left to themselves.

These developments will not threaten the purity or effectiveness of the YSA. However, this prospect will put to the test the team cadre leadership inside the YSA. The strategic problem will be the transformation of a cadre organization into a mass young socialist alliance.

December 5, 1975

ON STUDENT GOVERNMENT WORK

By Dan Rosenheim and Mark Satinoff, Pittsburgh local

Last January, a comrade from the Pittsburgh local of the YSA was elected to the seven-person student government at the University of Pittsburgh. As a result, the Pittsburgh local has had the opportunity to gain a certain amount of experience in this area. Since many locals do not have this type of experience, we feel it would be useful to discuss various aspects of the approach we've taken to student government work.

The University of Pittsburgh is a state-supported school with a student body of around 30,000. It is the main campus in Pittsburgh, and it's a central location for much of the YSA's political activity. As a result of this, our student government work has had a big impact on nearly all of the local's activity.

Although the student government elections at Pitt took place during the end of January, we started preparing our material and choosing our candidates nearly two months before the elections officially opened. In working out our election platform, we were careful to link up the key points of our over-all program with the major political issues on campus: tuition hikes, Black studies, sex discrimination, faculty unionization, and credit for ROTC courses. This was an improvement over our platform of the previous year which had tended to be a more abstract exposition of our general program -- and had failed to link up with specific issues on the Pitt campus. In addition to the platform, we had five position papers, two huge banners, posters, and three different buttons.

What really gave our campaign a lot of steam, though, was the attempt by the Student Government Elections Committee to ban our slate. With the campaign in full swing, and with all of our literature printed up, the Elections Committee decided that the name of our slate was a violation of the elections code. They argued that calling ourselves the "Young Socialist slate" constituted a political party, and that such parties were illegal in the elections. The next day, the Pitt News came out with the headline: "Young Socialists Banned From Elections."

The decision to try to ban our slate was an attempt to keep political issues out of the election in general, and to keep the YSA out of the election in particular. As comrades may recall from the February issue of the YS, however, we were able to turn this situation to our advantage. We built broad support to our right to run: getting signatures on a letter to the Pitt News from the three other candidates for student government president, the Black Action Society, the Undergraduate Women's Union and professors -- and immediately distributing 5,000 copies of a leaflet protesting our exclusion. Letters started coming into the Pitt News from people we'd never heard of protesting the banning of the Young Socialists. And we re-ran

all of our campaign literature with the word "censored" over the name of our slate. As a result of all this, we not only succeeded in winning our appeal to the Student Judicial Board and getting the name of our slate reinstated, but, in addition, the Young Socialist Campaign became the center of the entire student government race.

As a result, this was one of the most political campaigns at Pitt in recent years. The other candidates were forced to take positions on credit for ROTC, sexism, racism -- all of the issues we were raising. And it's clear that as the economic crisis in this country continues to deepen, we're going to be seeing increasingly politicized student government campaigns; the platforms of the young socialist candidates will have greater immediacy in the eyes of more and more students. Among other things this year, we found that our campaign was taken seriously and given a hearing even by traditionally conservative layers on campus, such as the fraternities and the engineering students' council.

In the vote totals, out of roughly 2,500 votes cast, we received about 15 percent of the vote, and one of our candidates, Mark Satinoff, was elected to the seven-person student government. In addition, shortly after the election, the Elections Committee decided that in the future there would be no restrictions on the types of political formations which could run in the elections; this was a direct result of the struggle with the YSA.

Since the election, we have essentially seen having a comrade on student government as a continuation of the campaign we ran. There have been some difficulties since the seven-person student government represents all 13,000 day-time undergraduate students, and this means a lot of pressure for our comrade to get bogged down in bureaucracy and red tape. For the most part, however, we've been able to avoid these problems by seeing student government work as another tool for our propaganda work -- a vehicle through which we propagate our ideas. We approach this work in a serious, professional way; we analyze the power relationships which exist on campus; but we steer clear of the wheeling and dealing of the petty student bureaucrats and win support on the basis of our political positions.

As a result of this student government work, we have substantially increased the political presence of the YSA at Pitt. One example of this was reflected in an incident which occurred shortly after the election. The Committee on Student Organizations announced that it was withdrawing the recognition of any group having less than twenty-five members. At the time, our fraction was significantly smaller than twenty-five, but the immediate reaction of most people on campus was that the YSA was the only campus organization which could easily meet the twenty-five-member guideline. This is a reflection of the way the

YSA is seen at Pitt. And because of the struggle we carried out, these membership guidelines were eventually withdrawn.

One of the obvious advantages of having a student government member is the increased campus press coverage. The YSA has been in the pages of nearly every issue of the Pitt News since January. The Pitt News sends a reporter to every student government meeting, and as a result they consistently carry the positions we present.

We want to use the student government to build the struggles taking place on campus. For example, when it became clear last spring that the Pitt administration was going to slap a substantial tuition hike on the student body, the student government organized a response. This consisted of a massive letter-writing and lobbying effort directed at the state legislature.

We pointed out that this was not enough, and proposed a strategy of mass action. The six other members of the student government opposed our strategy and went ahead with their original plans. This campaign was a failure; over the summer, tuition went up 15 percent. Yet, although their energies were misdirected, the fact that students wrote over 2,500 letters in three days time was a reflection of their willingness to move around this question.

This fall, the student government president publicly admitted the inadequacy of his strategy and asked our comrade to head up the fight against tuition hikes and budget cuts. This appointment was immediately endorsed by the Pitt News. One step we were able to take right away was to get student government support (both political and financial) for the November 19th anticutbacks march in Washington, D.C.

At Pitt, we've been able to popularize our response to the administration's claim that it has to hike tuition because it's broke. Both the student government and the Pitt News have picked up on our demand to "Open the Books;" they're on record in favor of this. In fact, as a result of our proposal, the student government wrote a letter to the administration demanding that the books be opened to public inspection. The administration has refused to do so -- contending that their financial records are "too complex" for students to understand -- but that response has only served to fuel student support for this demand.

Through student government we were able to set up a debate over the question of credits for ROTC. This debate played a key role in the defeat of a resolution before the faculty senate to restore ROTC credits.

Another example, among many, took place when Ron Ziegler was invited to come on campus, and we succeeded in putting student government on record as opposed to paying Ziegler a \$2,500 honorarium. In addition, the YSA put out a call for a mass picket line. We did not attack Ziegler's right to speak, but we opposed giving honoraria to one of Nixon's criminal henchmen. In addition to the student government, a majority of students supported this position.

(At about this time, one student sent a letter to the Pitt News saying that the YSA was hopelessly utopian, that Ziegler would never cancel his contract to appear. The same day this letter appeared, Ziegler's agent called up the school and cancelled.)

Over and above everything else, though, we've been able to use our student government work to help build SCAR. We got the student government not only to endorse national actions and give some money for buses, but also to make Mark Satinoff its official representative to SCAR, and we were able to take advantage of this in building SCAR. Mark was in a position to call up student governments and Black student organizations on other campuses as a representative not only of SCAR, but also of the Pitt student government -- and this opened a lot of doors. As a result of Mark's position on the student government, we were able to set up SCAR meetings with new groups and on new campuses for our movement. We were able to use our student government base to convince a sluggish NAACP into working with SCAR on May 17th. And we were able to raise money. In the last ten days before May 17th, Pittsburgh SCAR raised around \$2,500.

In order to accomplish this, SCAR essentially took over the student government office; SCAR activists were in there from 9:00 a.m. to midnight raising money on the phone. This was a concrete application of our "red university" strategy. SCAR began with one drawer in a desk of the student government office and expanded to take over the rest of the desk, the room, and finally the entire five-room student government suite. Every student who walked into the student government office that week saw the entire place filled with SCAR activists -- and what they were also seeing was a concrete demonstration of the YSA's approach to student government work.

This work also impressed the other members of the student government. We took two of them, including the president, with us to Boston for May 17th, and they were enormously impressed by every aspect of the action. This fall, we repeated this same basic pattern in successfully building for the October student conference.

As a result of our student government work, the YSA has gone from a relatively peripheral campus group to a central force in day-to-day campus life at Pitt. Perhaps most important, we've been able to do consistent propaganda work around all aspects of our program and around all of the issues which come up on campus. Everyone knows who we are and what we stand for. We have all kinds of people around us -- many who don't want to join the YSA now, but who know us, who are glad we're on campus, and who generally support what we're doing. People consult with us; they want to know what we think of different events, they want our opinions of various problems.

Because student government work is a relatively new area for the YSA, and because all types of unusual problems tend to come up, we've found it important to try to involve the

entire local in thinking out our projections for this area. Of course, we want to do this in any area of work; but particularly in student government, where much is new, we've found it useful to separate out reports on student government from the rest of the campus fraction report. This gives the comrade on student government the benefit of the local's collective thinking and helps to ensure that comrades in other areas are aware of ways in which student government work can be used to help those areas of work.

One final example of the YSA's increased weight on campus has been in allocations. Last year, we requested

\$800 in regular allocations for a regional conference. We received none of it and were told that the Allocations Committee "seriously doubted the ability of a group like the YSA to put on an \$800 program."

This year, we were allocated over \$2,200 in honoraria and over \$500 in office supplies. This is simply a reflection of the changed image and impact of the YSA at Pitt, and our student government work has been a big factor in this.

December 5, 1975

SUGGESTIONS ON STEPPED-UP MID-EAST WORK

By Bill Rayson, Boston local

The following is part of a document written last year to be part of the 1974 preconvention discussion. It was not printed because it was submitted too late. While it was written under slightly different political circumstances, I feel the excerpts submitted here are quite relevant to our present discussion.

* * *

Nowhere is the failure of the detente more clear than in the Mid-East, where a direct military showdown between the U. S. and the Soviet Union is an increasingly real possibility. In the event that direct U. S. involvement does occur, we must be prepared to put the skills we learned in the antiwar movement to use by mobilizing the broadest possible numbers to demand: No Vietnams in the Mid-East! Bring All the Troops Home Now!

But we can not afford to wait until the troops are sent before stepping up our work in defense of the Arab Revolution. We see the war danger approaching. Now is the time to step up our Mid-East defense work all over the country to lay the groundwork for the future actions we will surely work for should the troops be sent. Racist, anti-Arab hysteria is being consciously whipped up by the ruling class to prepare the American people for military intervention in the Mid-East. A massive educational campaign is needed to counter this racist propaganda with the truth, and we must take the initiative.

A nationally-organized Mid-East defense campaign will have several components. We can be sure that one of the main issues of our 1976 election campaigns will be the danger of a U. S. invasion of the Arab East. The Militant has led the way in this campaign through excellent coverage which has increased continuously over the months since the "energy crisis." We need to reprint our pamphlets on the Mid-East in updated form, possibly including new documents, like the entire text of Arafat's speech to the U. N. The special ISR issue on the Mid-East is a good example of the innovative thinking necessary to distribute this literature more widely than ever, especially among movement activists and foreign students. Organizations sympathetic to the Palestinian and Arab Revolutions should be encouraged to also distribute and sell our literature on the Mid-East, as it is the best available by far, as well as our button that says "Self-Determination for Palestine." Every local should have some on hand, and comrades should wear it. That simple slogan says a lot about our politics. And Arab students are very attracted by the button and can easily be persuaded to help distribute it.

Over and above this work, we should launch a new national tour or series of tours of speakers on the Middle East,

working with Arab students and other groups to build broadly-sponsored forums, teach-ins, or debates on campus. If, through working with the Arab students we can win the student movement over to support for Palestinian self-determination, we will be able to use the campus as a base to educate the entire population. These activities should be organized in every area, using local YSA leaders to speak when no national speaker is available.

One area which will become increasingly important as the war danger approaches is that of "direct action." Most YSA locals have a very limited experience in organizing protest rallies, picket lines, and demonstrations in defense of the Arab Revolution. Most of these have been picket lines where leading Zionists have spoken, like Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan. It is not necessary for us to wait for Moshe Dayan to come to town in order to organize these type of actions, however. Imagination and initiative are required. Perhaps a picket line the next time Marine recruiters come on campus, or a counter-demonstration to a Zionist mobilization. And these actions don't have to be all that small, either. The Austin YSA organized with other groups an Arab support rally at the University of Texas of 250 during the 1973 war. At all times such actions remain educational in nature. The key to their success is the active involvement of the Arab students themselves. In working with Arab students, we can point out that the political isolation they sense can only be broken with a bold approach toward educating the masses on this question. The importance of this work requires the careful attention of every local executive committee. Leading YSAers must be assigned to go to the Arab students with concrete, well-thought-out proposals. Again, we must take the initiative.

The other important aspect of our Mid-East defense work is the education of our own cadre. Comrades can learn much on the Middle East through reading, attending teach-ins, and learning from the Arab students we are working with. But we need a membership which stands rock-hard against Zionism and all who would apologize for it, a membership with a thorough understanding of the issues in the Mid-East and how to explain them to people. This requires a serious program of reading and internal educationals, with leading YSAers assigned to head up this work in each local.

A full understanding of the situation in the Mid-East requires a grasp of many of the most important theories and principles on which revolutionary socialism is based; such as the permanent revolution, the right of oppressed nations to self-determination, and the need for mass revolutionary workers parties to lead the revolution. We want to explain these fundamental concepts not only to our own membership, but also to the Arab and other international students we are working with.

Our consistent work in defense of the Arab Revolution has resulted in a process whereby Arab students are beginning to distinguish the YSA as their most active supporters on the American left, and they are being attracted to our revolutionary socialist program in increasing numbers. A

bold national campaign to step up this support work will accelerate this differentiation process and help to lay the base for the mass revolutionary parties that will lead the struggle to final victory.

December 5, 1975

THE CHICANO LIBERATION STRUGGLE TODAY

By Olga Rodriguez, Upper West Side, New York local

The following contribution to the discussion is not intended to be a detailed history of the Chicano movement. Nor is it meant to be a balance sheet of this movement as it has developed since the 1960s. Several materials are available to comrades that go over the roots of Chicano nationalism and the current movement for Chicano liberation. Among these are the pamphlets The Struggle for Chicano Liberation, a resolution the Socialist Workers party adopted at its 1971 convention; and Chicano Liberation and Revolutionary Youth, by Mirta Vidal, which is a pamphlet based on a report Vidal gave to the 1970 YSA convention. Both of these pamphlets are available from Pathfinder Press. They outline the Trotskyist movement's basic approach to the Chicano liberation struggle.

The purpose of this contribution is to provide an initial assessment of where the various organizations of the Chicano people stand today, what issues are affecting the Chicano people, and the experience the YSA has had in the last year in our work in support of the Chicano liberation struggle.

* * *

I. Impact of the economic crisis

The national oppression of the Chicano people is one of the fundamental props of capitalist rule. The second largest oppressed nationality within the United States, the Chicano people suffer oppression as great, if not greater, than the Black population in the Southwest, where the Chicano population is most heavily concentrated.

While the effects of racism have traditionally resulted in high unemployment, unequal education, inadequate social services, housing, and medical care, and unequal application of "justice" for the Chicano people, the current economic crisis is whittling away even the few gains won as a result of struggles in the 1960s and 1970s.

Unemployment in East Los Angeles, the nation's largest Chicano barrio, is as high as 45 percent, according to an August 8, 1975 article appearing in the Wall Street Journal. For young Chicanos in East Los Angeles between the ages of sixteen and nineteen, joblessness is estimated to be as high as 60 percent.

For the nearly one-half million Chicanos and mexicanos living in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, unemployment ranges as high as 19 percent.

Incomes for the population in this area are very depressed. U. S. Department of Commerce figures place the average incomes for Brownsville, McAllen, and Laredo at under \$3,000 per year.

Recent articles in the L. A. Times and Newsweek have pointed to the desperate poverty of the Chicanos and mexicanos in the "magic" valley, as the Anglo ranchers and politicians call the Rio Grande Valley. "In Hidalgo County," says Newsweek's Peter Greenberg, "where the Spanish-speaking population totals nearly 80 percent, 74 percent of the adults have not completed more than the seventh grade."

The L. A. Times article called Chicanos in the area "victims of the worst poverty in the United States." They pointed to the conditions of the colonias (Chicano settlements) in Hidalgo County. No sanitary sewage system exists for the over 47,000 people in the area. Infant mortality rates are 125 percent higher than the national rate, and the incidence of tuberculosis is 250 percent higher.

The economic crisis has meant even more unemployment and fewer social services available to the Chicano communities as cutbacks are instituted as part of the "austerity" programs of the federal, state, and municipal governments.

The attacks on the right to an equal education, particularly on desegregation and bilingual education, have had their impact on the Chicano population.

One of the most vicious aspects of the mounting racist attacks on the Chicano people is the xenophobic campaign by the U. S. government to deport Mexicans, Dominicans, other Latin Americans, and West Indians in the country without proper immigration papers. The "illegal alien" scare is part and parcel of the capitalists' strategy to divide the working class and make it bear the burden of the economic crisis.

II. The Chicano movement today

The upsurge of nationalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s was spurred by major economic and social changes that occurred within the Chicano population following World War II. These were a significant shift in the Chicano population from the rural areas to the major urban centers of the Southwest and Midwest, and the immigration of large numbers of Mexican workers to provide a cheap source of labor for the expanding agribusiness of the Southwest.

This rise in a new nationalist consciousness among the Chicano masses was influenced by the successes of the Black civil rights movement and the rise in Black nationalist consciousness, the advances of the colonial revolution -- particularly the Cuban Revolution, and the radicalization of students. This new militancy was later fueled by growing opposition to Washington's war in Vietnam and the disproportionately high casualty rates for Chicanos forced to fight in that war. This antiwar sentiment burst into the streets with

Chicano antiwar actions, the most significant of which was the National Chicano Moratorium in August, 1970.

Farm workers

The struggle of the campesinos that began in the mid-1960s influenced the initial stages and subsequent development of Chicano nationalism. The struggle of the United Farm Workers movement to unionize the rich California fields remains one of the most important fights Chicanos are involved in.

The initial organizing drives of the UFW under the leadership of Cesar Chavez went beyond the fight for better wages, conditions, and hours. Unlike similar drives that failed, the UFW took up many different aspects of the racism and oppression that affects the campesinos. The UFW was and is seen by the Chicanos and mexicanos who make up the bulk of the Southwest's farm labor as la causa -- their voice in the fields for justice and dignity. It was this appeal to the nationalist sentiments of these campesinos, the tenacity of the UFW organizers, and the impact of the international grape boycott that initially brought the racist growers to terms in 1970.

But the battle is far from over. In 1973 when the union's contracts expired with grape growers in California, sweetheart contracts were signed with the corrupt bureaucrats of the United Brotherhood of Teamsters. This all but wiped out the important gains made by the UFW -- which was the aim of the growers and their Teamster allies.

Against immeasurable odds, the UFW has waged a battle for its very life in the California fields.

A new stage in the farm workers' struggle opened with the enactment this summer of a farm labor bill in California. Although there are many antilabor features to the new law, it does provide for secret-ballot union representation elections.

Since the law was passed, the UFW has piled up impressive votes in these elections, despite the use of every dirty trick in the book by growers and Teamsters to cheat the union of its support in the fields. The use of armed vigilantes to stop UFW organizers from entering the fields to talk to the workers, illegal arrests of UFW organizers and supporters, deportations of mexicano farm workers supporting the UFW in the elections, violence and intimidation at the polls of farm workers known to be sympathetic to the UFW, and inaction by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board set up to "monitor" the elections -- all this has failed to stop the UFW.

Initial results confirm without a doubt that the UFW is the authentic voice of California's farm workers.

When the California farm-labor bill became law, Governor Edmund Brown, its chief architect, proclaimed that the new legislation would bring "peace" to California's embattled fields. Thus far his prediction has not been borne out.

The law itself was supported by the Teamster officialdom and the growers -- the enemies of the farm workers. It

contains major provisions limiting the secondary boycott, one of the union's most effective weapons. But so far, the union and its leadership has not bent to the pressure to call off the boycott of scab grapes, lettuce, and Gallo wines. Instead, the UFW has called upon its supporters to renew efforts in the boycott until the growers sign strong contracts. An article in the November 27 issue of El Chicano reports on a march from Delano to L. A. -- called the "March on L. A." This activity is to begin December 14 and end up with a mass rally on December 20 in Salazar Park in the Chicano community of East Los Angeles.

This refusal on the part of the UFW to call off its boycott undoubtedly has Brown and the growers upset.

A recent Harris poll showed that seventeen million Americans have stopped buying scab grapes. Fifteen million are not buying lettuce, and eleven million people continue to boycott Gallo wine.

This poll indicates the deep-going sentiment and support the UFW has won. The impact of the boycott, together with the continued militancy of farm workers in the fields who refused to bow to the union-busting efforts of the growers and their Teamster allies, is in large measure responsible for the passage of the farm-labor law in California.

While the elections themselves are clear proof of the UFW's support in the fields among the campesinos, the Harris poll indicates that 45 percent of those polled support the UFW, compared to 7 percent who support the Teamsters. Closer to the struggle -- the West -- the UFW got 55 percent of public support, compared to the Teamster's 11 percent.

While these figures are impressive and gratifying, it is important to note that an additional 35 percent of the population are not yet sure who to support. The figure is significant, as it is an indicator of the huge reservoir of support that has yet to be tapped by the UFW. It shows the potential for building a massive boycott, which assumes greater importance now. While the UFW has polled twice the votes the Teamsters have in the union representation elections, contracts have yet to be signed. A strong boycott will help force the growers to sign such contracts.

The millions who are already boycotting scab lettuce, grapes, and Gallo wines can be involved in activities to mobilize the tens of millions more who are already sympathetic and win over those who have yet to make up their minds.

This task would be greatly aided if the powerful AFL-CIO, which is officially on record in support of the union, would throw its considerable resources behind the UFW's efforts in the fields and in the boycott. This powerful trade union federation has miserably defaulted in mobilizing the massive power of the union movement behind the UFW. If the AFL-CIO decided to do this, it could provide major, if not decisive, support for la causa.

The impressive victories the UFW has chalked up in the California elections, and the sheer staying power of a social movement that has fought the agribusiness giants for justice in the fields, has inspired other organizing attempts by campesinos from the Rio Grande Valley of Texas,

to the Midwest and the East Coast.

In the past, the UFW has held several different positions on the question of undocumented mexicano workers. Until recently, the union's leaders held a position favoring the deportation of these workers. This caused deep divisions within the union's ranks, and among their supporters, especially their Chicano supporters.

Beginning in 1973, these undocumented workers were widely used as strike-breakers by the growers in their campaign to smash the UFW. But the UFW leadership's position favoring deportations only served to pit "legal" workers against "illegals," thus dividing the workers in the fields. It served to strengthen the growers' hand.

But the California elections, together with pressure from the ranks of the union and their supporters, led the leadership to rethink its position. At its second national convention, the erroneous line of the UFW favoring the deportations was reversed.

The elections themselves confirmed the correctness of this change. Just to win the majority in the fields, the UFW found it necessary and possible to organize these undocumented workers.

This change in the UFW's position on this important question in the Chicano movement will serve the union in good stead. The Chicano community can be more united in its support and can be mobilized in powerful participation in the boycott, a task that still confronts the UFW.

The YSA can play an important role in building support for the UFW boycott, particularly on the campuses. It is there that the UFW has won some of its most active and dedicated supporters.

The boycott is picking up steam around the country -- particularly in California, the scene of the struggle. In November, the UFW supporters in Chicago held a demonstration of 300 to demand the removal of scab grapes, lettuce, and Gallo wines from the Jewel supermarket chain -- one of Chicago's biggest. Similar activities took place this fall in Boston and other cities.

In California, YSA chapters in San Jose, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego have been active in building UFW campus support groups, which have begun to attract new student activists to them.

In Texas, the YSA not only works with the local UFW boycott group on the University of Houston campus, but has helped to build support there and on the University of Texas campus in Austin for the current organizing drive by farm workers in the Rio Grande Valley.

These campesinos have been able to win broad support, particularly among Chicano students, for a drive to unionize the valley fields. Many of these Chicanos remember the initial efforts by the UFW to build the union in this area in 1966-67. This effort was brutally crushed by the notorious Texas Rangers, who have historically victimized Chicanos in Texas.

Comrades in Ohio and Michigan have worked with the Toledo-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which is

attempting to unionize the fields in that area of the country.

Although the UFW has given little or no support to these and other organizing efforts, and has tended to counterpose the activities in California to them, the UFW's continued existence in the face of powerful attempts to crush the union, and the character of the UFW as a social movement, have been the basic inspiration and impulses of these organizing efforts.

The YSA understands the need to bring farm workers into one massive union that can fight on a national scale for farm workers from California, to Texas, to Ohio, to Florida.

However, our desire to see one strong, united union is not a precondition for our support to the struggles of other farm worker's groups that are not part of the UFW.

We think that each of these groups should also support the UFW, and each other. This would be a big step toward a united union that represents all farm workers.

The YSA will continue to participate, wherever we can, in building strong campus boycott groups. The potential for building a massive boycott is there. The impact of these campus support groups on the boycott as a whole cannot be underestimated.

The leadership of the UFW has had a policy of supporting Democratic party politicians. They campaigned for Brown in the California gubernatorial elections, and probably still consider themselves to be his supporters.

However, the union continues to refuse to call off the boycott, and they have made demands on Brown and the Agricultural Labor Relations Board which Brown set up to administer the new law. They have demanded that the general counsel of the board be fired because of his inaction in documented case after case of violations of the growers in the elections.

The degree to which the UFW refuses to subordinate their struggle to Brown and the party and class he serves, and the ALRB, the government's institution in these elections, will determine the success of the UFW in the fields and will affect the boycott.

Raza Unida parties

Independence from the two capitalist parties is a prerequisite for the victory of not only the farm workers, but all other struggles of the Chicano people for their liberation. One of the most developed expressions of independent political action on the part of the Chicano people has been the formation of the Raza Unida parties in some areas of the Southwest and Midwest. In this regard, the Chicano movement has moved ahead of the Black movement. The Raza Unida parties, while they have weaknesses, represent some of the most advanced initiatives yet made in the direction of working class independence from the Democratic and Republican parties.

The significance of these parties, and the basis of our support to them, lies in their continued independence from the capitalist parties, and not in the particular points in their

platforms.

This independence was put to the test in 1972. Although some leaders of Raza Unida parties toyed with the idea of subordinating the RUPs to the Democratic and Republican parties, the overwhelming majority of activists voted to keep the Raza Unida parties independent from both capitalist parties at a national conference in 1972.

The development of these parties has been limited and very uneven, in spite of the proven potential for the development of a massive Raza Unida party movement.

The California parties, for example, are either very small groupings or no longer exist in some places where they were established.

In the Los Angeles Basin, where over one million Chicanos live, the various Raza Unida party groupings are small and disunited. In several local campaigns run by the RUPs in this area in the last several years, significant support was registered. But leadership capable of organizing that support and consolidating even the nucleus of a viable independent Chicano party has not yet emerged.

By far the most active Raza Unida parties are in Texas, where the potential for independent political action has begun to be shown. The Texas RUP has experienced growth in organizational and political influence over the last several years.

The survival of the Texas party and its progress is testimony to the viability of the concept of an independent Chicano political party. The successes of these Raza Unida parties remain an important example to the Black and labor movements to follow.

We can be sure that the Raza Unida parties will be again put through the big tests in the period ahead, particularly with the upcoming 1976 presidential election.

Our campaign

The Socialist Workers party's presidential ticket remains the only alternative for the Chicano people to date. Our campaign is an example we want to make known to those Chicano activists who support independent political action, and who are fed up with the promises of the Democrats and Republicans. We want to reach them with our program and win them to the campaign and our movement.

Already, through the tours of the candidates -- Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid -- valuable contacts have been made for our movement among Chicano activists. Our candidates have been able to speak to activists involved in the Texas and Ohio farm workers organizing drives, to activists in the antideportation movement in San Antonio, and to Chicano student organizations in California and Texas. They have helped to win new Chicano members to the YSA.

In addition, local Socialist Workers campaigns can be a vehicle to reach out to Chicano students, and community groups with our program. The campaign of Pedro Vasquez, SWP candidate for mayor of Houston this fall, was able to involve some Chicano activists in campaign building activities. This was primarily due to his vigorous campaigning

in the Chicano community and among Chicano students.

Antideportation movement

In times of economic crisis, as exists today, the capitalists and their government try to whip up chauvinist sentiment against those who are living and working in the country without proper immigration papers. They focus national attention on "illegal aliens" as displacers of American labor. This is what happened during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and during an economic downturn in the 1950s.

Various governmental agencies estimate the numbers of these undocumented workers at between six and eight million. Of these 90 percent are Mexicans.

In December last year, then-Attorney-General William Saxbe called for additional allocations of \$50 million to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for the purpose of insuring the deportation of one million "illegal aliens." According to an article in the October 1975 issue of Sin Fronteras, (a newspaper published in Los Angeles by the anti-deportation organization, CASA), more than 500,000 undocumented immigrants have been deported this year.

Congress is currently considering a bill introduced by Rep. Peter Rodino that would fine employers who "knowingly" hire "illegals." The proposed legislation also stipulates that employees of the Health, Education, and Welfare Department must turn over the names and addresses of undocumented workers receiving public assistance.

While the legislation purports to protect these workers and "legal" workers from the employer, nothing could be further from the truth.

The legislation would empower the attorney general to issue citizenship identification papers for employers' use. Chicano activists and community leaders have correctly condemned the bill as a step toward the introduction of internal passports for Latinos. It would require every person who is brown to carry papers proving citizenship.

Among the most frenzied supporters of the Rodino bill and the government's campaign to blame undocumented workers for the economic problems in the country are the bankrupt bureaucrats of the labor movement. Some trade unions have stepped back from the scandalous positions of the AFL-CIO -- like the International Longshoremens' and Warehousemen's Union and the hospital workers union -- but they remain a small exception.

These labor misleaders' jingoistic demands on the government to do its "duty" and deport mexicanos and others without papers are in reality a coverup for their treacherous refusal to defend the jobs and living standards of even the ranks of the unions they lead. And their voices get shriller as it becomes clearer to their ranks that the class collaborationist policies of these labor fakers do not protect the existing jobs and aid the capitalists in their drive against the living standards of all working people in this country.

It was the government's drive against this superexploited section of the working population that led to the formation of

CASA (Centro de Acción Social Autónoma -- Center for Autonomous Social Action) in the early 1970s in Los Angeles. Since then, CASA's have been set up in Santa Ana, California; Chicago; San Antonio; and Greeley, Colorado.

CASA's membership came primarily from the very people it was fighting for -- mexicanos without papers. It organized some significant actions in which these "illegals" and their supporters demonstrated for their rights and to stop the racist deportations. Through these actions, the most important of which was held in August 1974, CASA justifiably gained the respect and support of Chicano activists and others who were inspired by the fighting spirit of this super-exploited and vulnerable layer of workers.

Following the August 31, 1974 mass demonstrations CASA in Los Angeles and in some other areas took a step back from its orientation of building massive support through big public actions.

However, the explosive nature of this issue in the Chicano community -- where Chicanos themselves are often the victims of the racist migra and their dragnet raids, and where Chicanos have relatives and friends threatened with deportation -- emphasizes the need for an organization that can mobilize as many people as possible in united defense against these attacks.

CASA in Los Angeles recently announced a campaign against the Rodino Bill. They issued a call to "all progressive union, latin organizations, social clubs and others" to join with CASA in building a coalition against the bill.

At the end of November, the coalition and CASA held a demonstration and rally in Los Angeles against the Rodino bill. Between 400-600 participated in the action. Most of the participants were Chicano students from campuses in the Los Angeles area and San Diego.

CASA has unfortunately taken some steps to exclude the SWP and YSA from this coalition, as it has in some activities in the past. Only a movement designed to draw in the maximum numbers of supporters of the rights of the undocumented workers can put a stop to these racist deportations. The demonstration this November gives an indication of the profound sentiment that exists among Chicanos against the deportations. And it shows the potential for building a mass movement to respond to the government's attacks. The YSA will continue to participate where possible in such activities.

Crusade for Justice

The Crusade for Justice, based in Denver, Colorado, began as an urban civil rights and cultural movement in the mid-1960s. Its influence has been widely felt in the Chicano movement from the time of the upsurge in Chicano nationalism. Its principal leader, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, is a recognized national leader of the Chicano movement.

In 1969, 1970, and 1971, the Crusade hosted the Chicano Liberation Youth Conferences, which were important national gatherings of Chicano youth. It was at the 1970 conference that the question of independent Chicano

political action was discussed and debated for the first time on a national scale. It was also at this conference that the August 1970 National Chicano Moratorium was called.

In March 1973 the Crusade and its school, Escuela Tlatelolco, underwent a massive physical assault by the Denver police. One Chicano youth was killed, another -- a young leader of the Crusade -- was shot in the back. Scores of Chicanos were arrested while the police carried out this armed attack on the Crusade's headquarters.

Since that attack, the Crusade has been systematically victimized by the police, and the courts. They have had a to fight dozens of cases in court in the last three years -- from minor traffic violations resulting from cop harassment to bombing charges. In 1974 six Chicano students were killed in two separate bombing incidents. These students were activists in the Crusade and the Colorado Raza Unida party. The Denver press went on a vicious campaign to blame the Crusade for these bombings.

In September, a founding member of the Crusade, Juan Haro, and a young Crusade activist, Anthony Quintana, were charged by Denver police with possession of explosives for the purpose of bombing a police headquarters.

The Chicano Liberation Defense Committee, which the Crusade leads, has called for a national defense of Haro and Quintana, charging that the arrests are the result of a frameup and one more example of the government's campaign to smash the Crusade and the Chicano movement in Denver.

This governmental campaign has forced the Crusade to expend its energies and resources fighting court frameups. The aim of the Denver police and politicians is to wear down the organization.

We want to help defend the Crusade and its activists whenever these attacks occur. A broad, all-inclusive defense could not only defend those activists like Haro and Quintana who have been framed up, but would help to mobilize the Chicano community against these types of police attacks.

Unfortunately, the Crusade has yet to mobilize this potential support. Their tendency is to take an ultraleft position in these defense cases, in general. In the recent defense work they did around the case of Gary Garrison -- a Crusade activist charged with carrying out bombings -- they refused the support of any bourgeois politicians. And, while they asked for support from all of the radical groups, they refused support from some Chicanos who have expressed differences with the Crusade in the past.

This ultraleft tendency evidenced in their defense efforts has been reflected in other activities the Crusade has carried out in the last couple of years, and has been further promoted by the Crusade leadership's uncritical support of guerrillism, and ultraleft activities in this country.

They were able, however, to mobilize 2,500 people to participate in the September 16 Mexican Independence/Chicano Liberation Day activities. This year, as in similar activities in the past, many of the participants were Chicano high school students, who boycotted classes to

participate.

In addition, the Crusade raised the \$200,000 bail required to get Haro and Quintana out of jail. This was no small feat, and indicates the potential that exists to mobilize an effective defense for the two.

Despite the problems the Crusade has faced over the last year and a half, it remains one of the most important Chicano groups to emerge in the Chicano movement and continues to exert influence on newly radicalizing Chicano youth.

* * *

The Crusade, like the Raza Unida parties, CASA, the UFW, and the various other organizations that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s form what can be looked at as a broad radical current in the Chicano liberation struggle. These are the organizations which we have worked with most. They will be put to new tests, and it is not possible for us to predict how they will respond to the challenges posed as the crisis of capitalism unfolds. To do that would not be useful, and in fact, could cut across any role that our movement can play in helping to aid in the outcome of these developments.

Chicano student movement

It was the actions of Chicano students around racist education -- the lack of Chicano studies programs, the lack of bilingual and bicultural education in the public schools, and the paucity of Chicano teachers and professors in the schools -- that spurred on the Chicano movement in the late 1960s.

In the preceding two years, much of the activity of Chicano students was centered off of the campus. Chicano students played a major role in building the antideportation movement, helping in the various campaigns the Raza Unida parties ran, participating in the UFW boycott, and they were involved in fights against police brutality in the Chicano community.

With increasing attacks on education through cutbacks in financial aid and tutorial programs, axing of funds for Chicano studies programs, and the general racist offensive against the rights of Chicanos, Blacks, and Puerto Rican youth to an equal education through attacks on busing and bilingual and bicultural education, there has been a modest increase of Chicano student activism on the campuses.

In the spring of this year, Chicano students at the University of California at Los Angeles helped to lead student protests against threatened cuts in the Chicano and other ethnic studies programs. Chicano students at Cal State Los Angeles were in the leadership of a struggle against attempts to raise tuition and to cut financial aid programs.

Chicano students at the San Jose State University campus have been in the forefront of the fight to remove Coors beer from the campus pub. Coors products have been boycotted since 1966, when the Colorado GI Forum launched a boycott to force the Colorado-based company to change its

discriminatory hiring practices against Blacks and Chicanos, and women. The boycott has not been well publicized or organized in the last few years, but knowledge of the boycott is widespread, particularly among Chicanos.

The YSA in San Jose plays an important role in the coalition that has started to remove the beer from the campus pub. Our work there has won us the respect of the Chicano students who also work in the coalition.

Chicano students are also becoming more active in the boycott of scab grapes, lettuce, and Gallo wines. This is particularly true for Chicano high school students.

The boycott committee at the San Jose State campus, for example, is organized and led by Chicano students. This committee has been successful in keeping scab products out of the campus cafeterias, and is a mainstay of the citywide boycott.

Chicano students at San Diego State University have been faced with attacks on financial aid because the administration sent back a large amount of the Economic Opportunity Program funds, claiming that no one had applied for them. This amounts to cutbacks because allocations for EOP funds in the spring are based on how much monies were used in the fall.

The administration at the University of Houston recently unveiled a program that they plan to institute soon to move toward expanding graduate studies at the university. The program, called the Mission Self-Study Project, is being promoted as a big advance in the academic life of the campus. It calls for placing a ceiling on undergraduate enrollment, and suggested figures that would amount to cutting back on the present enrollment. The new program doesn't say a single word about the recruitment of oppressed minority students to the university. The levels of Black and Chicano student enrollment at the University of Houston are already woefully low.

The YSA at the University of Houston is attempting to work with the Chicano and Black student organizations on the campus because they, too, see this move by the administration as cutbacks, albeit cloaked in a slick public relations talk of "improved academic quality."

In Denver, the YSA and the Student Coalition Against Racism are working with Chicano Students in the MECHA at Metropolitan State College, as well as with the All-African Student Union, and other student organizations to reverse a bureaucratic decision by the administration to deny funds to all campus organizations. The administration proposes that student fees should be used to finance such items as athletics and travel expenses for athletic teams, rather than using tuition for these items.

Chicano students at the University of Colorado at Denver have been working with SCAR and are helping to get SCAR recognized on the campus.

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One of the central demands of the Chicano struggle has

been for the right to use Spanish -- their own language -- in the schools, on the job, at the polls, and in all aspects of life.

Carmen Delgado of the National Urban League estimates that 7.7 million students -- mostly Chicano and Puerto Rican -- are in need of bilingual education programs. Less than 5 percent of those Latino students with minimal or no knowledge of English receive any kind of bilingual education.

It has been this situation that has, in essence, segregated Chicano and other Spanish-speaking students into inferior education, and has resulted in a push-out and drop-out rate of 55 percent for this section of the U. S. student population.

We have witnessed a general rightwing and racist drive against the rights of Black, Chicano, and other students of the oppressed minorities in Boston, Dallas, Pasadena, Houston, New York, Louisville, and a score of other cities across the country. This attack is on the right of these students to attend schools with better facilities and teachers, which have heretofore been reserved "for whites only." This anti-busing drive is an attack on all students who have been forced into the worst schools because of racism.

Side by side with the virulent antibusing drive has been a major attack on gains made by the Chicano and Puerto Rican communities in the area of bilingual education.

The same forces that have joined the racist chorus denouncing busing to achieve desegregation of schools are howling about bilingual and bicultural education.

In July, the Community Association of Neighborhood Schools (CANS) opened fire on Denver's bilingual/bicultural programs -- inadequate though these programs are. CANS, the principal antibusing organization in Denver and an affiliate of national ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights), opened up a second front in its anti-Black, anti-Chicano campaign when the Colorado General Assembly voted to allocate \$2.4 million to implement bilingual education in the state.

CANS also lashed out against the use of a textbook called "Personal Values," which attempted to portray the history of the Chicano people in the Southwest in an honest way. Naomi Bradford, one of the central leaders of this racist outfit, promised her bigoted supporters that she would "work until my dying breath," to remove this disputed book, and others like it, from the Denver schools. Bradford is a member of the Denver school board.

Republican State Rep. Sam Zachem told CANS supporters this summer: "We are Americans first, last, and foremost. English is our language... Are your children going to be forced to study Spanish, a foreign language, in their own country?"

These racists, like their counterparts in Boston, are working to reverse the court-ordered desegregation of Denver's schools. The court order handed down also stipulates that bilingual education must be immediately implemented in the Denver school system, and that an affirmative action program for the hiring of Black and Chicano teachers and staff be instituted.

The Denver Student Coalition Against Racism was able to initiate, along with individuals in the Chicano community, activity in response to the attacks by CANS on the busing and bilingual education provisions of the court order.

Through the work of reaching out to various organizations and individuals in the Chicano community and on the campuses, SCAR became known and respected as a fighter for the rights of Chicanos for bilingual education and the right of all oppressed nationalities to an equal education. SCAR was able to do this in Denver because it searched out these people and organizations to see if something could be done to respond to the attacks. As a result of this work, and the work of a Chicano professor, a coalition of forces in the Black and the Chicano communities emerged -- the Concerned Citizens for Equal Education -- which has as its aim the defense of the entire court order. In addition, Denver SCAR has been able to involve a number of Chicano students in this important fight.

The situation in Denver is an example of the explosive character of the question of equal education in the Chicano community. It has always been a volatile issue for Chicanos, just as it has been historically for the Black population. For it is the inferior education that Chicanos, Blacks, and other oppressed minorities receive that is the main way in which the capitalist class attempts to keep these oppressed minorities in their "place."

While SCAR's primary campaign is around the question of desegregation, it can and has taken up other issues involving racism. Chicano youth in the Southwest will become involved in SCAR and its activities to the extent that there are issues of concern to the Chicano community and motion around these issues that SCAR can relate to.

There are, of course, instances where court-ordered busing will affect the Chicano community -- particularly where such orders are handed down in the Southwest. In many major cities of the Southwest, Chicanos represent the largest oppressed nationality, and any orders to desegregate will affect such communities, whether or not Chicano students are actually bused.

This is the case in Dallas, where a major battle is brewing over the refusal on the part of the local school officials to institute a plan to desegregate the schools. Activists in the Chicano community who favor busing spoke at the statewide rally that was called by Texas SCAR, the Dallas NAACP, and others on November 22 to protest the delaying tactics of the racist school board. El Sol de Tejas, a Spanish-language publication in Dallas read by large numbers of Chicanos in the state, carried a favorable article on the most prominent place on its front page on the November 22 desegregation action in Dallas.

In Tucson, Arizona, the NAACP filed a suit against the segregated education system in that city. At the same time, Chicanos have been involved in a fight for Chicano control of the schools in Tucson's School District One. Some Chicano leaders have recognized the importance of both fights and support the desegregation efforts of the NAACP.

The YSA and SCAR in Tucson have been working with the Chicanos active in the community control fight and have begun to make contacts with the NAACP.

The key point here about our antiracist work as it relates to the Chicano community is flexibility.

It is difficult for us to predict the form which struggles around issues of concern to the Chicano community will take. SCAR can't just pull an issue out of the air, even though there are many issues affecting Chicanos now. But we can encourage SCAR to begin the process of reaching out and getting to know the various Chicano organizations and try to involve them in the things that SCAR is working on now.

And, as in the development of the desegregation movement, we should be open to any and all organizations in the Chicano community. Many of the long-standing social action organizations, mutual aid societies, and Chicano civil rights organizations that were established before and after World War II have been affected to one degree or another by the rise of nationalist consciousness among Chicanos. Some of the organizations are the GI Forum, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA).

There are other organizations, like the Congress of Hispanic Educators (CHE), which arose out of the radicalization of the 1960s that have played a similar role to these civil rights organizations. CHE, for example, was one of the plaintiffs in the original suits that resulted in the provisions in the court-ordered desegregation for bilingual education and affirmative action in teacher hiring in Denver. Recently, they held a conference of nearly 1,000 people -- mostly Chicano educators -- in Colorado to discuss implementation of bilingual education in the schools. They have participated in some of the activities of the Concerned Citizens for Equal Education and Denver SCAR.

This is a different period. All of these organizations -- just like the radical groups that we have had the most contact with in the past -- will be put to new tests. We want to reach out to these groups, and we should encourage SCAR chapters we work with to try to involve these Chicano civil rights-type groups in their activities.

The NAACP is a good example of what could happen in some of these organizations. Some NAACP leaders found that action was necessary in order to have some of its legal suits for desegregation win. They called the May 17 march on Boston to protest the racist violence against busing. In addition, the NAACP is one of the few national organizations on record in opposition to discriminatory layoffs of Blacks, Chicanos, other oppressed minorities, and women.

The YSA will follow the activities of all of the organizations in the Chicano community, no matter if they have been considered moderate in the past, and support any initiatives they may take to fight against the attacks on the Chicano people.

III. New openings for the YSA

On a recent organizational tour I made for the YSA National Office to our locals in the Southwest, it became clear from the work the YSA is already doing with Chicano student and community activists, that there are new openings and opportunities for us that were not present at this time last year. There is new potential for winning Chicano youth to our movement.

We are involved in a host of activities -- from defense of the farm workers, to fights on the campuses against threatened cutbacks and tuition hikes. One very important concept of our Chicano work that is developing is that our work is not simply our Chicano comrades responding to things that happen in the Chicano community, but our entire movement's initiatives to take our campaigns into the Chicano community. Through sales of our press to Chicano students on the college and high school campuses, taking our socialist election campaigns into the Chicano community and to Chicano students, building defense of Latin American political prisoners through our work with the U. S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, campaigns against right-wing and government harassment of our movement and others fighting for social change -- new opportunities and tasks for our work with Chicano activists are presented to us.

IV. Chicanas

The whole development of Chicana feminism is something that should be treated in a whole other contribution. Just as we have noted the increased activity in the women's liberation movement as a whole, the YSA should take note of the continued growth of Chicana feminism and stepped-up activity among Chicanas.

Chicanas in Los Angeles have been participating in the fight against forced sterilization in that city, and Chicana feminist organizations participated in and helped to build the demonstration of 4,000 women on the "Alice Doesn't Day" in Los Angeles.

Delegations of Chicanas from across the Southwest attended the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City and issued a statement condemning the lack of discussion on the special oppression of Chicanas and other nationally oppressed women at the conference. Chicanas at the University of Houston, organized into a group called Mujeres Unidas (Women United), held a statewide Chicana conference this November in which more than 100 Chicanas participated.

The YSA will want to work with these Chicana feminist groups in our work around the ERA, fights on the campuses against cutbacks in women's studies departments, our activities in defense of the right to safe and legal abortions, and other women's liberation activities we carry out.

V. Growing international solidarity

The Chicano movement has been marked by its internationalism. Its support to the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U. S. imperialism and the actions Chicanos carried out for withdrawal of U. S. troops were the most significant expressions of this. In recent years, there has been more contact between the Mexican student and workers movements and Chicano activists. Comrades in Houston have found it useful in our work with Chicano activists interested in Mexico, as well as those who prefer reading Spanish, to circulate the press of our Mexican co-thinkers.

This is something other locals may find helpful.

In addition to the growing interest among Chicanos in political developments in Mexico, there is a developing discussion and debate within the Chicano movement and among young Chicano activists around the relationship of the fight for Chicano liberation and the need to establish socialism to wipe out all vestiges of racist and national oppression of the Chicano people. This is an important debate and one that we must become part of. We have something to say about this discussion, and a point of view that is uniquely suited for this debate. Our positions on this question differ from virtually every organization on the left which poses as the continuators of Marxism and Leninism. We have no reason to be shy in the discussion that is unfolding in the Chicano movement.

An example of the kinds of activities that YSA locals can consider doing is an educational weekend that was built by the Los Angeles YSA and SWP around the issue of Chicano

liberation and Marxism. This activity, which included a class by Marianna Hernández on the roots of Chicano nationalism and two classes by Miguel Pendas on Marxism and the Chicano liberation movement, drew a number of Chicano activists interested in the discussion. One Chicano who attended told a comrade after the series that it was like a breath of fresh air -- that he had always been uncomfortable with the way in which the subject matter had been presented by the Maoists or the Communist party -- both of which are antinationalist to the core. A professor from East Los Angeles City College, which is predominantly Chicano, taped Miguel's classes and played them to his Chicano studies classes.

We want to be very flexible on how we participate in this discussion -- some of the Chicano youth interested in Marxism may want to attend classes or "study groups" on Marxism and Leninism. Who better than us can provide that kind of education?

In conclusion, the YSA is doing more work with Chicano activists than we have for some time. As a result, we are recruiting Chicano youth to our ranks -- in Texas, San Jose, Fresno, Southern California, and the Bay Area. If we view the campaigns we are working on as important to the fight for Chicano liberation and aggressively take these campaigns to the Chicano students we work with and to the Chicano community, we will not only learn more about the Chicano community today, but we will win the best activists to our movement.

December 6, 1975