

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

May 2, 1972

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND NC MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of the Young Socialist Alliance Constitution, as amended at the Eleventh National YSA Convention, December, 1971. Copies are available from the YSA National Office at a cost of 5 cents apiece.

Comradely,

*Louise Goodman*

Louise Goodman  
YSA National Office

# YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

## CONSTITUTION

(As Amended by the Eleventh National YSA Convention, December, 1971)

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA).

### ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

"The Young Socialist Alliance is a nationwide revolutionary socialist youth organization, uniting young workers and students around the banner of socialism and dedicated to the building of a revolutionary movement which can lead the working people to socialism. The YSA bases itself on the principles of Marxism as developed by Lenin and Trotsky, and on the traditions of the American people represented by such leaders as Sam Adams, Frederick Douglass, Wendell Phillips, and Eugene Debs. We believe that socialism can be initiated only as a result of struggle of the working class and its allies against the capitalist exploiters, which culminates in the creation of a new type of state, a workers' state. Socialism will mean that for the first time in history, man will control his own creation—society—rather than be controlled by it. The dynamic of socialism involves a continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life."

From the "Where We Stand" Declaration of the YSA adopted at the 1963 Convention.

### ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** Membership shall be open to anyone under the age of twenty-nine who accepts the program and agrees to follow the policies of the YSA and engage actively in its work.

**Section 2.** An applicant for membership shall be voted on by the local unit of the YSA in the area where she or he resides. In those areas where no unit exists, an applicant shall apply to the National Executive Committee (NEC) and if accepted shall become a member-at-large. A former member of the YSA shall apply to the NEC for readmission. The NEC has the authority to make exceptions in individual cases to the twenty-nine age limit.

**Section 3.** Every member shall belong to a local unit if such exists in the area. Exceptions to

this policy may be made only by the NEC. Members-at-large shall be directly responsible to the NEC.

**Section 4.** Each new member shall pay two dollars initiation fee which shall be forwarded to the National Office. Membership dues are a minimum of one dollar a month, all of which shall be sent to the National Office.

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

**Section 6.** A member desiring to leave one locality for another must apply to his or her local unit for permission. A National Committee (NC) member desiring to leave one locality for another must also apply to the NEC for permission. A letter of transfer must be sent to the local unit of the locality to which the member moves. If no local unit exists in the new locality, the member shall also apply to the NEC for member-at-large status. A member-at-large wishing to transfer must apply to the NEC.

### ARTICLE IV. LOCAL UNITS

**Section 1.** Five or more members in a locality, upon application, may be chartered by the NEC and become a local unit of the YSA.

**Section 2.** Each local unit shall elect an organizer and such other officers as are necessary to carry out the financial, secretarial, and educational functions of a local unit and to circulate the YSA press.

**Section 3.** Each local unit shall elect an executive committee to act with the full authority of the local unit between meetings, and undertake such other work as assigned by the local unit. The organizer of the local unit shall be a member of the executive.

### ARTICLE V. NATIONAL CONVENTION

**Section 1.** There shall be a delegated National Convention of the YSA at least once every two

years.

**Section 2.** The National Convention is the highest governing body of the YSA and its decisions shall be binding on the entire membership.

**Section 3.** The National Convention shall be called by the National Committee which shall provide for a pre-convention discussion period of at least 90 days.

**Section 4.** The National Executive Committee shall issue a call at the start of the pre-convention discussion period. The NEC shall also issue internal discussion bulletins containing resolutions and discussion material that are submitted by members and bodies of the YSA. The NEC may set a deadline for acceptance of such material.

**Section 5.** Local units have the responsibility to provide adequate time in meetings for discussion on resolutions submitted during the pre-convention discussion.

**Section 6.** The election of delegates to the National Convention shall be conducted by the local units. A member must have joined the YSA prior to the date specified in the convention call in order to vote. The ratio of delegates to membership shall be determined by the National Committee.

**Section 7.** In the event of a political division, delegates shall be elected on the basis of a proportional representation system as set by the NC in the convention call. A political division exists when there is a division of the vote on conflicting resolutions.

#### **ARTICLE VI. NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** The National Committee (NC) shall be the highest body of the YSA between conventions and shall have jurisdiction over all YSA bodies and publications. The NC shall be elected by the National Convention. The National Convention shall also elect alternates to fill vacancies in the NC in the order decided upon by the convention.

#### **ARTICLE VII. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** The NC shall elect from among its members a National Executive Committee (NEC). The NEC shall act on behalf of the NC between meetings of the NC and be responsible to the NC.

**Section 2.** Among the normal functions of the NEC shall be the supervision of the National Office, national publications, and the appointment and supervision of the national staff.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. NATIONAL OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The NC shall elect a National Chairperson, National Secretary, and such other national officers as it finds necessary.

**Section 2.** All national officers shall be directly responsible to the NEC.

#### **ARTICLE IX. DISCIPLINE**

**Section 1.** All decisions of the governing bodies of the YSA are binding upon the members and subordinate bodies of the YSA.

**Section 2.** Any member or body of the YSA may bring charges against any member for violation of the Constitution, program, or policies of the YSA.

**Section 3.** Written charges shall be presented to the accused member in advance of the trial. Charges shall be filed in the local unit where the accused is a member and shall be heard by a committee it sets up for this purpose. The trial committee shall submit a recommendation to be acted upon by the local.

**Section 4.** Charges brought against members of the NC or members-at-large shall be heard by a committee the NC or NEC sets up for this purpose.

**Section 5.** The NC or NEC may decide to act directly in a case in which event its intervention shall supercede any local proceedings.

**Section 6.** Any member subjected to disciplinary action has the right to submit a written appeal to the next higher body, up to and including the National Convention. This appeal must be filed with the NEC within fifteen days after the action being appealed. Pending action on the appeal, the decision of the disciplinary body remains in force.

#### **ARTICLE X. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**Section 1.** All decisions of the YSA shall be made by a majority vote.

**Section 2.** Amendments to this Constitution shall be made by majority vote at the National Convention.