

# young socialist the organizer

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## 15,000 New Militant Subscribers!

The Socialist Activists and Educational Conference and YSA Plenum outlined the development of the current radicalization and laid plans for a big expansion of YSA activity to take advantage of the burgeoning opportunities. An important part of this fall offensive will be supporting a massive drive for 15,000 new subscribers being launched by *The Militant*. The special subscription *The Militant* will be offering in this drive is 10 issues for \$1.00.

This leap forward in circulation of our chief political weapon will intensify and widen its impact, bringing the revolutionary socialist point of view to a broader section of the newly radicalizing sectors of society.

We want to use this drive to increase our contact and influence in the antiwar movement, the women's liberation movement, among high school students, Blacks, Chicanos, and other Third World peoples, and as part of our work in support of the Socialist Workers Party election campaigns.

We have an especially big opportunity this next year on campus. Students will be coming back to their colleges, universities, and high schools after having experienced the May upsurge, which both demonstrated the extent of the radicalization on campus and qualitatively deepened and widened that radicalization. At the same time, some 30 percent of the student body will be new students, also influenced by the general radicalization of young people, who will be searching for new answers and open to new ideas. We want to reach these people first, to quickly establish the presence of the YSA, and one of our key tools in doing this will be to get *The Militant* into the hands of as many students

on a regular basis as we can.

The sub drive will officially run from September 15 to November 15. This will give two weeks after the October 31 antiwar actions and one week after the elections to wind up the drive. But the whole key to the drive will be the first few days and weeks when the campuses open, before studies begin, before we and the students become deeply involved organizationally in the antiwar and other struggles which will explode in the fall. This will be the time to organize the major thrust of the subscription drive, through mobilizations of the YSA members in a massive blitz on the campuses, at registration lines, door-to-door in the dorms, at initial organizational meetings, etc. The idea is to make a massive effort right at the beginning of the drive.

To carry out this perspective, we must begin now, in each local to organize to carry out the sub campaign. Each local should appoint a director for the campaign and begin now to plan carefully to blitz the campuses as soon as they open.

While the major emphasis should be on the blitz when the campuses open, the subscription drive should begin immediately. Other areas of work than the campuses can provide immediate opportunities to sell subscriptions. By September 15, we should already have a big start on the drive. All subscriptions obtained after the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference will be credited to the quota, and all subscriptions from an area which come into *The Militant* directly will also be credited to that area.

The National Office urges every at-large member to accept a quota of at least 20 subs. (On most campuses this fall it should be possible to

sell 20 subscriptions simply by spending two or three evenings canvassing the dorms.) Subs sent in by at-large members will be included in the "general" category unless they write in to *The Militant* and ask to be included as a separate category on the scoreboard.

Part of the fall campaign to increase the circulation of our press will be the effort to expand the subscription base of the *International Socialist Review*. The proposal for how this is to be done is for each local and at-large area to get *ISR* subs equal to one-sixth of their *Militant* sub quota. In other words, if a local's *Militant* sub quota is 60, their *ISR* sub quota will be 10.

The bulk, if not all, of the *ISR* subs can be obtained in the course of getting the subs for *The Militant*, simply by asking all those who subscribe to *The Militant* if they would like to also get a three-month introductory sub to the *ISR* for an extra dollar. There is a box on *The Militant* sub blank for this purpose.

We will carry regular articles in *The Young Socialist Organizer* on the progress of the sub campaign. Locals and at-large members should be sure to send in articles on different ideas and projects they have tried out and found successful in getting subs.

**ANDY ROSE**  
YSA National Office

## Biggest Fund Drive Ever

One of the key decisions made at the YSA Plenum was the unanimous approval of a fall fund drive of \$36,000, lasting from September 15 to December 15. This fund drive will be one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken by the YSA and together with the recruitment and *Militant* subscription campaigns will be an integral part of the most challenging and far-reaching fall offensive in our entire history.

The quota of \$36,000 is a very substantial increase over our spring fund drive quota of \$27,850. Comrades should note that the quotas tentatively agreed to by the local organizers at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference total \$35,125. When local executive committees and locals as a whole discuss their fall fund drive quota, an effort should be made to increase the quota if possible, in order to get the national total back up to the necessary \$36,000.

The meeting of this fund drive will be a prerequisite to fulfilling our plans for the national expansion of the YSA which were laid out at the Plenum. Because of the success of the spring fund drive, the National Office was able to take several substantial steps forward. By increasing our staff, we can now better coordinate our na-

tional antiwar and Third World work. But as the YSA continues to grow, the demands placed on our national center will increase at an even faster pace.

In the fall, it will be necessary for us to begin more extensive consultation and coordination of our women's liberation work, regional expansion plans, and finances. We are also planning to increase the number of national field secretaries, to purchase another YSA bus, and to begin increasing the material available to the field from the National Office.

To meet these most basic projections of national expansion the quota of \$36,000 will be absolutely necessary. During this period of deepening radicalization we see the ever-increasing opportunities open to us on both a local and national scale. Finances are above all of crucial importance to us if we are to take the maximum advantage of the possibilities the youth revolt has opened to us. Every comrade should understand the importance of achieving this fund drive for the YSA and judge his or her own financial contributions to the movement in this light.

The YSA locals which had representatives present at the Oberlin Conference and the YSA Plen-

num have already been consulted on the proposed quotas. Every local, however, should discuss the proposal and plans for its implementation and return the quota acceptance form below to the National Office no later than September 15. If we do not receive the form by then, we will assume the local quota has been accepted.

One of the major lessons that we learned during the spring fund drive was that if locals began immediately sending in payments and planning additional fund-raising events, they were able to meet their quotas with few difficulties. When finances were haphazardly handled, however, meeting the fund drive pledge presented serious problems.

Finances must be a major part of the Tasks and Perspectives discussions that should proceed the opening of school. All comrades should be talked to about the possibilities of raising their sustainers, and other necessary fund-raising events to insure the making of the local quotas should be projected.

Every local should send in regular reports to the National Office on the development of the fund drive. Comrades should also be extremely conscious of sending in articles on the fund drive

## ... Fall Fund Drive

that can be used in *The YS Organizer* during the first weeks of the campaign, so that our whole movement will begin the fund drive on the right foot.

Many locals have found that their finances can be better organized around a weekly sustainer system and we hope locals will begin now in making weekly payments to the National Office for the fund drive. Regional organizers should also be sure to consult with all the locals and at-largers in the area concerning their different projections for meeting the quotas.

All at-large comrades should also return the fund drive coupon indicating what quota they will accept for the three-month drive. We hope that at-largers will pledge between \$5 and \$10 a month to the fund drive and send it in with their regular monthly dues. The at-large quota of \$1000 is an important part of our national finances and with the full participation of all at-large comrades we should be able to exceed the quota.

The spring fund drive showed us the unique ability of the YSA to regularly finance a strong center and at the same time be able to throw all our resources into the tremendous May upsurge. This fall we can only expect to further deepen our involvement and leadership in the various arenas and mass movements. The successful completion of the fall fund drive will be an essential victory in our movement's most powerful fall offensive yet.

### PROPOSED QUOTAS FALL 1970 NATIONAL FUND DRIVE September 15-December 15

LOCAL	QUOTA
Ann Arbor	\$200
Atlanta	1000
Austin	600
Berkeley	2000
Binghamton	250
Bloomington	150
Boston	2500
Boulder	125
Cheney-Spokane	125
Chicago	2900
Cleveland	2200
Columbus	150
DeKalb	200
Denver	200
Detroit	2200
El Paso	125
Flint	125
Ft. Wayne	125
Fullerton	125
Gainesville	125
Hayward	250
Houston	300
Kansas City	200
Kent	150
LaCrosse	125
Long Island	125
Los Angeles	2400
Madison	350
Mansfield	125
Milwaukee	300
Newark	300
New York	4000
Oberlin	150
Orlando	125
Oshkosh	125
Oxford	125
Paterson	150
Philadelphia	2000
Phoenix	150
Portland	250
Providence	350
Red Hook	150
Riverside	200
San Diego	300

San Francisco	2000
San Joaquin	125
Seattle	700
St. Louis	300
Tallahassee	125
Tampa	200
Twin Cities	1000
Washington D. C.	1000
Worcester	225
Yellow Springs	200
Ypsilanti	125
At-large	1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,125</b>

Local or At-Large Area  
Accepted quota  
Fund Drive Director  
Address

Phone

Return to: YSA, Box 471, Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. 10003, no later than September 15.

**RICH FINKEL**  
**Fund Drive Director**  
**YSA National Office**

## Organizational and Financial Report

*Editor's Note: On August 16 and 17, there was a plenum held in Cleveland, Ohio of the YSA National Committee, to which local organizers were invited. We are reprinting here the Organizational and Financial Report which was presented to the plenum by Lee Smith. Outlined in the report are the major campaigns which the YSA will be undertaking this fall. The figures which are referred to in the report were obtained from forms which the local organizers filled out prior to the plenum.*

What we have been doing at this plenum yesterday and today is outlining the tasks we want to set for the YSA in the coming months in light of the unprecedented opportunities confronting us as a result of the changes brought about by the mass student uprising of May.

We have decided that our key tasks from now until the YSA convention will be to: 1) build the mass antiwar actions slated for the end of October and use those actions to continue to build the Student Mobilization Committee and the National Peace Action Coalition; 2) support and build the election campaigns of the Socialist Workers Party through the formation of Young Socialist campaign supporter groups, and use those campaigns to further our intervention into the antiwar, Third World and women's liberation movements, particularly to use them in the antiwar movement as a means of opposing the bourgeois "peace" campaigns with a socialist antiwar perspective; 3) use the antiwar offensive and the SWP election campaigns, as well as campus struggles to step up and intensify our involvement in the Black, Chicano, and other Third World liberation struggles; 4) deepen and expand our role in the women's liberation move-

ment, bringing to this movement a strategy of mass action and a program of transitional demands which can transform it into a truly mass movement, and winning over the campus militants of the movement to such a strategy and program; 5) and finally, together with and through these tasks, to mount the biggest campaign in the YSA's history to build and strengthen the YSA — by recruiting to the YSA, by building campus fractions which make the YSA a central force in the political life of every major campus where the YSA exists, by developing a new pattern of regional collaboration and collective regional responsibility to consolidate and extend our geographical expansion, and by strengthening the YSA with the necessary financial resources to take maximum advantage of all the opportunities we face this fall.

These are the tasks we have set for ourselves. What we want to do with this report is to move toward the organizational implementation of these tasks in a more concrete form. At the same time, we want to review our activity since the convention from the same concrete, organizational angle, look at where we are right now and what this means in terms of the work we are projecting in the coming months.

## RECRUITMENT

The eventual aim of the YSA is to become a mass revolutionary socialist youth organization. This aim is not an end in itself but something which is centrally important to our task of building and aiding the revolutionary party which will lead the coming American socialist revolution.

We will not become a mass organization in the immediate period. But we recognize that the steady gains we began to make three years ago are moving us in that direction and preparing us for the time when we will reach that stage. In his report to the September 1967 plenum, Doug Jenness framed a cautiously optimistic projection, that the first signs of a new qualitative growth which had for the first time moved the YSA's membership figure above the 300 mark, might be the beginning of an upward trend. The membership and number of locals have more than tripled since then, justifying that optimistic projection.

Our experience since the YSA convention indicates that we are still riding upward on that accelerating curve. We have recruited 518 new YSAers since the convention, which includes the more than 100 at-large members we have recruited. The total number of locals now stand at 56. We can expect that number to shoot way up soon into the fall.

Before I give you the total current membership and some of the breakdowns, let me point out that these figures are not exact, because it is difficult to get exact figures during the summer, when a number of comrades are on leave or traveling around. The figures we have are a close approximation, and the actual figures are, if anything, a little higher than the ones I will give you.

The total number of members in the YSA is 1,222. 748 of these are men, and 474 are women. In addition, there are 24 candidates in the 10 locals which still have candidate programs, 20 of whom are men and 4 of whom are women.

To really understand the opportunities we face to step up recruitment in the fall, it is important to note that of the 418 new members recruited to the locals, 186—or nearly half—have been recruited since May. The impact of the May events on the consciousness of those students who will be coming onto the campuses in the fall means that the increased rate manifested in this figure during the last weeks of school in the spring will obtain again in September.

In assessing and evaluating the recruitment we have experienced since the convention, on the basis of Helen Meyer's and Nelson Blackstock's spring tours, Bill Yaffe's summer field trip, and Rich Finkel's field work, and discussions with comrades at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference in Oberlin during the past week, we think there are a couple of aspects to keep in mind as we enter the fall on a campaign footing in regard to this centrally important part of our work. The key to recruiting, integrating and holding new members is the efficient organization of the local's internal functioning combined with its work in the mass movements. YSAers recruited from areas of work, generally speaking, make the best YSAers. People who are recruited out of activity, activists who have consciously rejected ultraleftism and proven their seriousness when they join, are the best prospects. An efficient internal organization of the local's work which insures that every new comrade receives an assignment immediately and is drawn into the work is key to integrating and developing new members.

There is another aspect to recruitment which cannot be separated from the active, organized involvement of the local in the mass movements but which is important to consider at the same time. That is the kind of conscious attention to recruitment manifested in contact classes, contact mailings, contact dinners, etc.—and the attention and planning given to these things by the executive committee through the assignment of a contact director or a contact committee. Contact work and recruitment should be a conscious part of the work of every fraction and each comrade in all of the areas where we carry out work.

In taking account of the experience since the convention—and especially since May—and in assessing the potential for recruitment which we face this fall, the National Executive Committee is making a concrete proposal to the plenum of a recruitment campaign which will open in September and be concluded at the YSA convention. This campaign will be a public campaign with frequent articles in *The Militant* and a running series in *The Young Socialist Organizer*, giving examples of successes in recruitment in locals and new areas around the country. We want to set a figure of 600 new YSAers by the YSA convention as a kind of minimum goal of what the YSA can do this fall. The figure of 60, while it is part of the proposal we are making, should not be treated formalistically, as a "quota" in the way we look at fund drive or sub drive quotas—that is, we don't want comrades to take the attitude that we are "half-way" along if we recruit 300 new members by mid-October. The function of the number is to give the campaign a focus and indicate concretely what we judge to be a realistic *minimum* for recruitment this fall. This is how we should look at it, realizing that the possibility, or even the likelihood, is that we will surpass our minimum estimate of the possibilities.

## REGIONAL WORK

Another key aspect of recruitment since the YSA convention has been the continued recruitment of new at-large members and new locals, the continued geographic expansion of our movement to the point where there are only about one half dozen states where we don't have at least one at-large member.

The experience of Rich Finkel, who was national field secretary, on his tour this past spring, has convinced us that the value and importance of such work has increased in direct proportion to the growth of the organization and the intensification of the radicalization. In the coming period, we intend to expand this national field work by putting two teams on the road in the fall. The value of these tours, both in recruiting new locals and in consolidating locals which already exist, has more than paid for the investment we made in buying the bus and creating the assignment. I will have more to say on our plans in this area for the fall a little later on. Here I want to stress one aspect of what we have learned—from Rich's tour and from the tours made in the spring by Comrades Meyers and Blackstock, as well as from the summer field trip made by Bill Yaffe from New York and Ray Hamilton from DeKalb. All of these comrades, as well as comrades involved in regional work from locals around the country, reported that the key to the success of new locals has been direct, frequent and extended contact with experienced cadre from the established locals. Where there has been such contact, the locals have taken hold and developed. Where this has not happened, the new locals have tended to flounder.

Because of the importance of this kind of contact in consolidating our new growth and reaping the maximum gains from our geographical expansion, a series of extensive discussions in the National Office, in the NEC, with the national leadership of the Socialist Workers Party and with our own national leaders both before and during the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference, has led us to conclude that what is needed in the coming period is to take a new qualitative step beyond what we have been doing up until now.

The excellent work comrades have been doing up to this point and the phenomenal results of this work in our geographic growth make it obvious that we can only expect this growth to continue to increase. At some stage, as the number of locals multiplies, it will become impossible for the center to maintain a direct relation with all of the locals. At that stage—which is not way off in the distant future by any means—it will become necessary to implement some formal, structural changes in the YSA's method of organization with formal bodies serving as intermediaries between the center and the locals in a region.

While this trend is obvious, it is also in our judgment premature to propose taking a formal step at this time. What is necessary now in the current stage of the YSA's growth, is some intermediate means of regularizing regional functioning which can be implemented immediately by all of the locals without any formal changes in the organizational structure of the YSA.

The function of a region at this time should not be to in any way cut across the lines of authority and responsibility between the individual local unit and the center. On the contrary, its function should be viewed as one of helping all of the locals and at-large members within the region to fulfill their national responsibilities—to coordinate work on the election campaigns and in the mass movements, to cooperate in internal education and on public programs, to contribute experience in functioning within the locals according to the norms and traditions of our movement—in short, to form a real, working leadership team. We have a proposal which we think answers this need.

We propose that every defined region hold a meeting of elected representatives from all of the locals in the region, as well as the at-largers, early in the fall. We would suggest that at a minimum, the local's representatives should include the organizers and National Committee members, but as many comrades as possible should be included, particularly those comrades who will be leading this work in the locals.

One of the purposes of these meetings would be to collectively select a comrade to be organizer for the region. This assignment should be conceived of exactly as the name implies. Although his or her duties will vary from region to region because there is an unevenness in the size and number of locals in the regions, the organizer should in all of the regions be more than a regional traveler who works by himself or herself or with a few other comrades and whose main duties consist in trailblazing to new campuses. In some regions, the regional organizer will unavoidably be doing a certain amount of this work. The aim, however, should be for the organizer to devote his or her main energy to working with the at-largers and the locals in the region, to help them organize and carry out their work, including trailblazing, and to facilitate the coordination of statewide and region-wide work on election campaign, antiwar work, tours, women's liberation and Third World work. An important emphasis should be placed on the role the organizer can play in distributing the talents and resources of the YSA in the region by arranging educationals by more experienced YSAers in locals and areas where YSAers lack experience. He or she can perform an important service by doing a certain amount of this work. An aspect of education which should be stressed for new locals is the organizational principles and structures of the YSA. By choosing the regional organizer collectively, and by choosing the calibre of person whose leadership authority will compensate for his or her lack of formal authority—the kind of comrade we would consider assigning as organizer of a local or antiwar director—who will lead by his or her political authority and through consultation and collaboration, we think we can avoid the problem of confusing the lines of authority. The regional organizer's job will be to forge a regional leadership team which can help the local units perform at a maximum in fulfilling their national responsibilities.

The fall meeting should also work out a *collective* financial arrangement for this work, including the funds necessary to sustain the regional organizer full-time. The large center locals will have to continue to assume the main financial responsibility for this work. But the financial responsibility, as part of the political responsibility, should apply to every member and local unit of the YSA in a given region. The at-largers and new locals should share the financial burden with the center locals.

In line with the idea that the regional organizer will function with a regional leadership team, the locals in the region should all assign personnel to work with the organizer, and to carry out the traveling and trailblazing side of regional work themselves. It will be good in those areas where it is possible if the same group or a smaller group than that which meets in the early fall can get together to consult periodically after that—perhaps once or twice a month. But how often such a group meets is less important than the necessity for an adequate number of other comrades directly assigned to work with the regional organizer in the center local and all the locals. It will also be necessary for all comrades to make themselves available to help with regional work occasionally—to travel to another local to teach a class or give a forum, to sit at a literature table or sell *Militants*, to work with the regional organizer on helping a local set up a budget and books, bank account and library, etc.

The National Office, in addition to assigning an office staff member to work with and oversee these regional operations as his or her main assignment, will send a representative to each of these early fall gatherings at which the regional organizer is selected, finances set up, and arrangement gotten underway.

Finally, regional educational conferences around Thanksgiving, such as those held in the past as a means of recruitment and building for the YSA convention, should be projected again this year. While with these conferences, as with the entire set-up, the main center locals will again assume the major share of responsibility for organizing them, the regional team should strive to make these activities collective undertakings to the extent that it is possible to do so.

Now on what the regions are. In order to begin to implement the arrangement outlined in the proposal, it will be necessary for us to define the various regions in which the operations are to be set up. The definitions we decide upon and begin with will be subject to some shifting and alteration, but in order to begin, we need them. Roughly, the regions are these:

1. A NEW ENGLAND REGION centered in Boston.
2. A NEW YORK REGION centered in New York City.
3. A PENNSYLVANIA REGION centered in Philadelphia.
4. A MARYLAND-VIRGINIA REGION centered in Washington, D. C.
5. A GREAT SOUTHERN REGION centered in Atlanta.
6. AN EAST TEXAS-LOUISIANA REGION centered in Houston.
7. A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION centered in Los Angeles.
8. A NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION centered in the Bay Area.
9. A PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION centered in Seattle.
10. AN AZTLAN REGION centered in Denver.
11. AN UPPER MIDWEST REGION centered in Minneapolis.
12. A WISCONSIN REGION centered in Madison.
13. A MIDWEST REGION centered in Chicago.
14. AN OHIO-KENTUCKY REGION centered in Cleveland.
15. A MICHIGAN REGION centered in Detroit.

There has been some discussion on how much territory each of these regions will include, and we can have some more, but with whatever shifts we decide to make, these seem to be the logical regions for the present. They leave us with some unresolved areas—Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi. However, these areas do not present us with pressing problems yet anyway.

## DEFENSE

A corollary of the YSA's growth and expanding influence among this country's radicalized youth is the increased attention paid to the YSA by the forces, agencies and institutions maintained by the ruling class for the protection of its power and position. I want to read a quote to help illustrate this fact:

"... hard-core Communist elements are intensifying their own activities in the New Left movement.

"Foremost among these is the Young Socialist Alliance. It is the youth group of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party . . .

"Most important of all, the YSA controls a readymade channel through which to expand its influence and develop new recruits. It is the Student Mobilization Committee, one of the major organizing groups behind antiwar demonstrations. Every national office of the SMC is Communist-controlled by SWP-YSA members. There are regional SMC offices throughout the country with widespread representation on college campuses.

"In short, the followers of Leon Trotsky, in the United States feel they finally have an opportunity unparalleled in their historic existence and struggle in this country to make a significant gain as well as an impact on our social, political and economic policies in line with Communist objectives.

"In fact, they have already done so. . . ."

In case you have not already guessed it, the source for the quote is J. Edgar Hoover, testifying before the House subcommittee on appropriations. His testimony was reported in the *Port Chester Daily Item*, a Long Island newspaper, June 6.

In the recent period, we have been subjected to a whole range of attacks by ultrarightist terrorists and by the state and by university authorities. We can only expect these kinds of incidents to multiply as the YSA continues to advance toward becoming a mass organization and winning hegemony over the youth radicalization.

This projection makes it worthwhile to spend some time in this report going over our defense policies and practices, as well as discussing some of the policies we follow to avoid the unnecessary victimization of our membership and our organization by the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state.

The revolutionary movement has always recognized the tremendous importance of its ability to defend itself against attacks from any quarter. The experience the YSA has gained during the past seven months has contributed richly to the tradition of the Trotskyist movement on this score.

The success of our defense strategy flows naturally from the correctness of our politics in that we base our approach on a scientific understanding of the nature and direction of the period of radicalization we are in. We recognize that today the ruling class is in the worst possible position from its point of view to carry out any attempt at repression—and we are in the best possible position to meet and repel such attempts. Unlike the liberals who credit the courts and the Constitution as independent guarantors of democratic freedoms or the ultraleftists who despair over the fate of liberties they also see as gifts or tricks of the ruling class and which they fear will vanish any moment—we understand that it is the masses of the American people and their deeply ingrained sense of "fair play" that are responsible for civil liberties. And we know that as these masses radicalize and move into motion, the scope of such liberties can be broadened out by a conscious, revolutionary, defensively formulated approach to the question. This is what has already begun to happen.

We want to pay close attention to the opportunities presented to us for enlarging the sphere of democratic rights by leading the mass movements in the correct kind of defense campaigns, and we want to be prepared to carry out our responsibility to our own comrades and organization when cases of victimization arise in the months ahead. One step we will be taking in this direction is the publication of more material on the question of defense work. We will also be ready in the center to respond with help when victimization occurs anywhere in the country. There are a number of current and upcoming examples of how we want to conduct our defense efforts in places like Chicago, Los Angeles, Austin, Portland, Knoxville, Florida, and Carbondale. Rather than go into any of these at length in the report, I want to make a few general points about how we have proceeded and want to proceed.

First, the key to any defense we undertake, involving our political rights as an organization, is the political aspect of mobilizing broad support for the defense effort.

Usually—almost without exception—this will be done through a united front committee established clearly and precisely on the issue of the democratic rights involved. The form of such a committee will usually consist in two or several officers, such as a chairman, vice-chairman, co-chairmen, etc., who should be prominent individuals from outside our ranks, and a committee secretary who should be a comrade and whose job is the real work of the committee—obtaining sponsors, raising funds, and organizing publicity.

It is important that the committee keep books and careful financial records and that all money raised for the defense be used only for legitimate defense expenses.

Comrades should be conscious of how far it is possible to go in obtaining sponsors for civil liberties defense cases and should think big. The leading elected officials and candidates should be automatically approached for money and endorsement with the correct audacious approach. For example, the comrades in Portland intend to ask Wayne Morse to endorse the defense committee there.

The National Office should be contacted immediately when any attempt at victimization occurs, and comrades should continue to work closely with the center on all defense cases. In no area is centralization more important than in connection with the security and defense of our comrades and our movement.

In response to the student radicalization in general, and particularly in the wake of May, the ruling class and specifically school administrators will be experimenting and testing out different methods of cutting across what happened in the strike. In some places this will involve direct assaults on us, as in Portland and Austin. But there will be many other cases of this kind not directly involving the YSA. Wherever we can, we want to participate in these other cases and intervene to help organize the right kind of campaign to defend the gains of May.

Finally, comrades should be aware of the many valuable by-products of successful, public, political defense campaigns. Through such campaigns, we help to build a name for ourselves as people who can work with anybody on a given single issue. We make valuable contacts, enlarging our periphery and even recruiting to the YSA. We educate others in the movement and create a self-confidence which cuts across the defeatism and despair spread by our opponents.

I also want to spend some time on a couple of policies our movement adopts in order to prevent unnecessary legal and consequent social and political victimization of our comrades and our organization.

The first is the policy that YSAers do not use any illegal drugs. It is only by having such a policy and strictly adhering to it, having it known and followed, that we are able to protect ourselves from attempts to frame our comrades up and to win when a frame-up is tried. There can be no confusion or laxity on this question. It is essential to explain this policy to every new YSAer so that he or she understands it and so that every YSAer abides by this policy with no ifs, and's, or but's.

The reason for this policy has to do with the interaction of the drug laws and the social climate which makes it possible for the ruling class to enforce these laws. This means, in our case, that it would be possible—*except for our policy*—for the ruling class to use these laws to disrupt and destroy our ability to function.

This is a question of security of the YSA, and must be taken extremely seriously. It is not just something we say. It is a matter of policy and a matter of discipline.

Recently, with the rise of the radicalization and in particular influenced by the women's liberation movement, many homosexuals have begun to organize into groups to fight against the persecution and discrimination they suffer in this society. It is only with the rise of the gay liberation movement that many comrades have become aware of a policy of some ten years standing proscribing homosexuals from membership in the YSA. Because this policy was adopted by a decision in the National Executive Committee for security purposes after some concrete experiences which pointed up the need for such a policy, and, as such, never came up for any formal discussion in the organization outside of the NEC—and because many comrades only learned of the policy recently, and because of the increased frequency with which it has become a question—there is an understandable confusion among many comrades about the policy. The NEC has decided that because it has come up and we can expect it to come up some more, we have a responsibility to discuss and explain the policy to the plenum.

I am going to spend a little time to, first of all, clarify what our position and our policy is, and to explain the origin and motivate the reasons for the policy. If we are going to discuss the question here, and if we are going to be confronted with people attacking our organization and asking for a justification of the policy in the local areas, as we already are, it is crucial to place the discussion on the proper political axis.

In order to do that, it is necessary to abstract the discussion from any prejudices which may exist within the organization, or within the working class or any other sector of society. We know that sexual prejudice is perhaps the most deep-seated kind of prejudice internalized in members of this class society, as evidenced by the sweeping psychological repercussions of the women's liberation movement. But we do not adopt or discuss political policy on the basis of backward prejudice. As Marxists and revolutionaries, we support the personal freedom and privacy of every individual. From our standpoint, the efforts of the state to regulate and punish personal sexual behavior is absurd and reactionary. We are for the widest possible enlargement of human freedom, including the freedom of the individual to do whatever he or she chooses that does not injure or interfere with anyone else's freedom. Thus, we unconditionally oppose the oppression of homosexuals and support their fight to end that oppression. This is a separate question from the membership question. Our membership policy is a security policy.

The laws against homosexual behavior combined with the social climate which makes it possible for the ruling class to enforce those laws mean that allowing homosexuals to hold membership in our organization would subject us to victimization. It must be understood that were there no laws against it, or were the social climate such that enforcement were impossible, as say, the enforcement of the laws against fornication, then the policy would be changed. However, while these hypothetical conditions may obtain at some point in the future—at which time we would have to review the policy—they do not obtain now. This is the reason for the policy and while the reason remains, so does the policy.

The policy was not adopted on the basis of speculation. It was adopted simultaneously by the Socialist Workers Party and the YSA around ten years ago as a result of concrete experience. Up until then, our movement had never had any policy on the question. It was, as I said earlier, initiated by the National Offices of both the YSA and SWP.

While the policy is, as comrades can see, precisely the same kind of policy as the drug policy from the organization's point of view, it is, of course, quite different from the individual's point of view. A person can quit using drugs, but a person cannot give up one's sexuality. But while there is a cruel aspect to this from the individual's point of view and an unfortunate one for the movement, too, we must also keep in mind what it means to be allied with the combat party. In one sense, the policy also protects the individual as well as the movement. Someone who might never be troubled outside of the movement would be far more subject to persecution, blackmail, arrest, etc., as a member. The ruling class measures us against a different set of criteria than they use for the labor bureaucracy, or the social democracy, for example. Things they will be inclined to let go by with the others, in our case they will use to nail us. We cannot operate as we would—or will—in a workers state, existing, as we do today, under combat conditions as *the* revolutionary opposition to the ruling class.

## CAMPUS WORK

The total figure of members of the YSA who are students is 517. It breaks down this way: 48 graduate students, 382 undergraduates, 83 high school students, and 5 junior high school students.

The key weakness in the YSA intervention in the May events stemmed from an insufficient number of strong, functioning campus fractions. 36 locals reported that they played a leading role in the strike on one or more campuses in their area—which is very good. The YSA had a more significant role in the May events than any other organized radical tendency—the importance of our work throughout the whole past period contributed decisively to setting the stage and preparing the climate for May.

In the past several years, moreover, the YSA nationally has moved forward in a qualitative way in establishing itself on the campuses. What we need to do now is to step up our efforts to concentrate our strength on the campuses and move even faster than we have. May has made it clearer than ever—and comrades have heard and discussed this repeatedly throughout the past week in Oberlin—that the YSA will remain on the campuses until the revolution. Many of our new locals, of course, are campus-based locals, such as DeKalb, Binghamton, Oberlin, etc. With these locals, concentration on the campus is not a problem. Their task is to lead in action, recruit and gain hegemony in their situation. The problem confronts us in our large metropolitan locals where there are several important campuses. What we want to do in these areas is move ahead with the perspectives we have already begun to implement—that is, we want to build fractions on these campuses with real roots in the campus political life, fractions which are, as Nelson Blackstock said in the Organizational and *Young Socialist Report* to the last YSA convention, "right in the center of things."

We want to continue to move away from the kind of fractions which function out of the hall and visit the campus to set up a literature table, hold or intervene in a meeting. The campus must become the center of activity for the campus fraction. It should become an integral part of and play a central role in the day-to-day political life of the campus with regular meetings on the campus, an office or meeting place on the campus, regular *Militant* and *ISR* sales, literature tables, articles in the campus paper. We should use our program for the student revolt to initiate campus struggles where that is possible, and be prepared to intervene with our strategy in struggles that break out spontaneously. One example of the kind of approach we want to take is what the Chicago YSA did in establishing the fraction on the University of Illinois Circle Campus in Chicago. What such an approach involves is throwing other forces onto a campus where we have comrades who are students, to work with them in recruiting from the campus and establishing a solid student base there.

We want to project a campaign for the fall and beyond of qualitatively stepping up this campus orientation. We want regular reports from the locals on this campaign, and we will feature such articles in *The Young Socialist Organizer*.

One final thing to keep in mind in connection with this campaign is that as the locals grow larger, it is obvious that they are going to begin to face the problem already facing the larger locals of finding a political and organizational basis for division into more than one local. We do not want to present any worked-out proposals on this problem—the locals which have been the first to experience tremendous growth are already discussing approaches for the immediate period, and this is undoubtedly the best way to proceed until we have some initial experiences to judge from. But at least this much seems obvious: that the major campuses in big cities provide the kind of focal points for the YSA's activity which suggest a basis for future division as the YSA locals grow beyond the size that can be accommodated in a single local.

## HIGH SCHOOLS

Twenty percent of our recruitment since the convention has been from the high schools. The high school comrades face different problems from those faced on the college campus, and our approach cannot be exactly the same. One aspect which is the same is that a significant fraction concentrated in one school makes it easier to carry out high school work.

But the restrictive atmosphere of the high schools, combined with the pace and intensity of the radicalization there, makes the situation in these schools more explosive than even the situation on the college campuses. The strength we now have with something in the neighborhood of 100 high school comrades, contrasted to the relative weakness of our organized opponents in this area in most places around the country, means that our opportunities for leading significant actions and recruiting in the high schools are better than ever. Every action in a high school, of course, whether it is an antiwar action or an action around community control or around open admissions at a nearby college, automatically becomes as well a free speech and civil liberties action. This is only one of the features which makes high school work somewhat different from college campus work. Another is the relative lack of personal freedom high school students have because they live at home.

We want to begin devoting more attention and conscious direction to this vitally important arena of activity, and we encourage the locals to send in regular and extensive reports on this work for publication in *The YS Organizer* and for the information of the National Office.

## ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

One kind of activity which has proven successful in the past period both in the high schools and on the college campuses is YSA election campaigns for student government. Since the YSA convention, 18 locals have run one or more such election campaigns. In 3 locals, one or more comrades has won office. But most of the locals which ran campaigns considered the effort worthwhile regardless of the outcome. This fall there is an excellent opening for us to link up these campus election campaigns with the SWP election campaigns and with the Young Socialist campaigner groups we organize on the campuses. Finally, we want to remind the locals that prior to the announcement of a campaign, the proposed program and outline of the campaign must be submitted to the National Executive Committee for approval.

## WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Twenty-eight locals have women's liberation fractions and 13 of the locals which do not yet have functioning fractions have comrades assigned to women's liberation work. 124 comrades are active in women's liberation groups and 20 hold official positions in such groups.

We will be devoting increased attention to this vital area in the center, in terms of the necessary personnel for conscious direction and improved collaboration and coordination with the locals and in terms of soliciting and publishing more articles on our work in *The YS Organizer*. One of the important sources of material on this question and movement has been and will continue to be the *ISR*.

## THIRD WORLD WORK

A special aspect of the field work we are projecting for the fall is that one of the two teams we will put on the road will be a Third World team. This team can help coordinate work among the locals with the center, as well as doing trailblazing to Black colleges, in Aztlan, etc. The YSA now has, according to the organizers' forms 98 Third World members and 3 candidates. Of these 101 comrades, 70 are Black, 16 are Chicano, 10 are Puerto Rican, 4 are Asian-American and 1 is Native American.

I want to reemphasize the importance of every local having a Third World or Third World work fraction, whether there are presently any Third World comrades in the local or not. According to the forms, only three locals have Third World fractions and only 13 have Third World work fractions.

The involvement of our Third World cadre in the national self-determination struggles is reflected in the fact that 46 comrades play active roles in Third World organizations and 12 hold official positions in such organizations.

## EDUCATION

Our rapid growth has made education more important than ever.

Thirty-three locals hold at least weekly educationals and 23 have education committees. This is an improvement since the convention, but it should be every local on both counts. This is an area in which our new regional approach can make a big difference.

We took a qualitative step forward this summer with an unprecedented number of new YSAers moving into the larger locals for summer schools and with our successful collaboration with the SWP on the Oberlin conference which was attended by hundreds of new YSAers. One thing we should keep in mind in connection with regional work and its relation to education is continuing regional work during the summer in the future to aid those YSAers not able to come in for summer schools with their education.

We will devote an increasing amount of our resources in the center to developing aids to help locals with their education. Some of the aids already available which comrades should take advantage of are the national tape service, the document-style pamphlets mentioned earlier, and the articles in *The YS Organizer*.

## PRESS

We view *The Militant* as the newspaper of the YSA. One of the motions we are making with this report is a motion to approve the fall sub drive for 15,000 new subscriptions announced at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference. The sub drive will run from September 15 to November 15.

Another important part of our press is the *ISR*. The resources we devote to the publication of this new, expanded and improved theoretical magazine is an indication of the importance we attach to it. Now with the beefing up of the staff and the changes in the publication, there have been a series of promotional efforts directed from the center—an advertising campaign, tips on newsstands distribution in *The YS Organizer*, a brochure, etc. The point that comrades should make special note of is that the purpose of all of this advertising and promotion is to get the magazine widely known in order to improve the sales when the magazine is hawked. Without regular, organized street sales, sales on the campus, at demonstrations, etc., the effect of the promotion will be lost. These efforts are not designed to substitute for but to augment the sales when the magazine is hawked—the way the *YS* used to be.

I would also like to take this opportunity to stress briefly the importance and value of another publication of our movement which is too little read. *Intercontinental Press* sold nearly 100 subs at Oberlin which is a healthy trend, but according to the organizers forms only 245 YSA comrades regularly read *IP*. Every local should have a sub and all comrades should try to read it regularly.

## FINANCES

I was happy to see the importance attached to finances in the Tasks and Perspectives report presented to the Atlanta local and printed in *The YS Organizer*. To refresh the comrades' memory, I want to repeat part of what was said about finances in that report: "Corresponding to the growth and activity has been a growth in our financial situation. Finances, of course, are the key to increased political activity making it possible for us to take advantage of the opportunities that open up for us during the year. It should be noted that the parallel growth of the YSA politically and financially is not an accident or a coincidence. One could not have taken place without the other. And in the immediate future our political growth cannot proceed without a parallel growth financially."

What is true of the Atlanta local is true of every local and of the national YSA. Without conscious and careful attention and direction of finances, all of the work of the YSA will suffer. With the right kind of approach, the YSA's work will move ahead.

We recognize the increased importance of conscious direction on a national level, and we will be assigning a comrade in the office to be national financial director as his or her main assignment. This is absolutely essential as our national budget reaches the figure it is reaching now.

This kind of conscious direction is just as essential to the proper functioning on a local level. According to the organizers' forms, 42 locals have a treasurer or financial secretary. This should be every local. Moreover, this assignment is one of the most politically important in the local and should be filled by a highly competent and leading comrade. One of the key aspects of regional organizing must be the help given by established locals to the newer locals in setting up their finances in accord with the norms and traditions of our movement.

The importance of a bank account, bookkeeping, receipts, and regular financial reports to the executive committee and local must be understood and assimilated by the new locals. And each comrade not on full-time or on the campus should learn the importance of holding the best-paying job possible and putting a substantial amount of this income, along with his or her physical energy, to work for the movement. Consciousness on this question is at the basis of much of our ability to function as a revolutionary organization and to maximize the impact of the cadre we have. There have been a number of excellent articles published in both the *Party Builder* and *The YS Organizer* on the question of finances as part of the pre-Oberlin conference discussion. Comrades should refer to these in working out their local budgets for the fall.

The NEC has two concrete proposals to make in connection with this section of the report. We want to propose a fall fund drive of \$36,000 running from September 15 to December 15. This is an increase of \$8,000 over the spring fund drive quota, and is the largest fund drive in the history of the YSA.

The general lesson the YSA learned nationally with the last fund drive, partly through some mistakes and difficulties, was that with the correct conscious organization, the quotas were easily met and in some cases surpassed, and that they could have been met in the areas that had trouble if the drive had been approached consciously from the beginning.

In this connection, we want to make an additional proposal to the plenum. That is that those locals which can attempt to move toward using the regular sustainer system to pay their fund drives and to finance their own local work. These locals should figure their budgets on the basis of the two yearly fund drives along with the other projected expenses, and attempt to bring the regular, weekly, year-round sustainers in line with such a budget. There is an excellent article on this in *The YS Organizer* by Caroline Fowlkes to which comrades ought to refer in making their plans. The article points out the value of this system in easing the pressure on comrades, providing a larger and more regular income both for the local and for the national YSA.

## NATIONAL OFFICE

A number of shifts have occurred in the N. O. staff since the YSA convention which I will run through very briefly. David Thorstad, who had been in the office up until the convention, graduated at the convention and took an assignment on *The Militant* staff. Robin Maisel, who had been field secretary, transferred to Philadelphia where he has been doing work for the SWP. Helen Meyers was brought in from Philadelphia and recently was released to take an assignment in L. A. for the SWP. Nelson Blackstock, about the same time, was released to take an SWP assignment in Berkeley. Larry Seigle, Tony Thomas, and I were released after the convention to work on the ISR staff, and I was brought back in to the N. O. when Nelson and Helen were released. Andy Rose was brought in from Atlanta to work in the office after the convention and Rich Finkel was brought in from Cleveland to be the National Field Secretary. Since he finished his tour, he has taken an assignment on the N. O. staff. Carl Frank, who had been organizer of the New York local, was brought in. Recently, Norman Oliver was brought in from Detroit. Susan LaMont and Frank Boehm remained on the staff from before the convention.

There has been, in short, a lot of motion in terms of N. O. personnel in the past seven months. The net result of all the shifts has been a larger, more nearly adequate staff than the N. O. has ever had—seven people now—Susan, Carl, Frank, Rich, Andy, Norman and Lee. This enlarged staff has made possible an increased division of labor and more careful conscious direction of areas of work which were not adequately covered previously.

The staff is still not adequate, however, and the perspective is to bring in more people in the near future. The need for a strong center grows as the organization grows, something that will be more concretely clear when I run through some of the work and plans of the N. O.

One example of the increased work necessary in the center as we grow, is the increase in the number of inquiries—requests for information and requests to join—which come into the N. O. from *Militant* clip-outs, brochure clip-outs and just letters from people who have heard of the YSA. At the September 1966 plenum Mary-Alice Waters reported that in the last few months, the N. O. had received one inquiry a week! In September 1967 Doug Jenness reported receiving 100 since the convention, 10 of which had been requests to join. At the July 1968 plenum Carol Lipman reported 60 inquiries since the convention. From the last convention through August 3, we had received and answered 1,494 inquiries, approximately 400 of which were requests to join. The total for just three months—April, May, and June—was 668 (April-157; May-266; and June-245). During the two weeks following the first special issue of *The Militant* in May, we received an average of 20 inquiries a day! It is a full-time job—in terms of man-hours—for one person who does nothing but answer inquiries.

An added breakdown on just one set of clip-outs—from the Randy Furst ad in the *Guardian* we received 57 responses, 16 of which were requests to join. Of the 16, 6 did join!

Comrades will also be interested to know that it pays off to have a person assigned to follow up on the people who send in these inquiries when we mail the local a list of them. 36 locals do this work, and since the convention 43 YSA-ers have joined this way—19 of them since May.

With the increased number of locals, all of the correspondence we receive—not just inquiries—is up tremendously. On this subject, I would like to make a plug for *typed* minutes. Also, please address all correspondence for the N. O. to P. O. Box 471 Cooper Station.

## TRAVEL

Since the convention, we have organized several national tours. Two of them have been for our international allies—the tour Eric Corijn made in the spring which unexpectedly but happily coincided with the May events and this summer's tour by Jo O'Brien which we organized jointly with the SWP.

In addition to these two tours, there were the spring organizational tours by Nelson and Helen.

Besides the regular tours, there has been a whole series of special trips taken by N. O. personnel in connection with organizational work, antiwar work, Third World work and defense. The increased mobility of the National Office is a trend which will continue and is important to the strength of our organization.

Not only the National Office, but the entire membership has become more mobile in the recent period. Since the convention, 175 comrades have transferred from one local or at-large area to another local.

An important part of the N. O.'s mobility were the tours taken by Rich Finkel, Bill Yaffe and Ray Hamilton. This field work will be expanded in the fall. The summer tour this year confirmed what we tentatively concluded after Robin's tour last summer—that we need to carry out this work on a year-round basis. Summer field trips will take place from here on in.

## PUBLICATIONS

Publications is one area where the increased staff and division of labor will make possible more conscious direction to material coming out from the center. We have recently established the post of publications director, an assignment which will involve technical work on the pamphlets of the kind distributed by Pathfinder (e.g., *War and Revolution in Vietnam*) by a person on the staff who will also draw in the participation of non-office staff members of the NEC and leading comrades in the locals to write introductions, do political editing, etc. We have also organized a button and poster committee composed of comrades from the office staff, other NEC members and leading local comrades. In addition to an increased quantity of publications in these areas, the better organization of the work should improve the quality as well.

An example of the kind of problem this organization of work can help avoid is what happened with the hammer and sickle. That is, the YSA put out first a button with the French hammer and sickle design, then—without any conscious decision being made—the design crept into the YS, into *The YS Organizer*, onto the stationary until we began to notice that it was being picked up and used around the country on newsletters and leaflets. It was as if it were the official symbol of the YSA without a conscious decision ever having been made. At the point we recognized this, the N. O. did make a conscious decision and stopped putting out the button, discarded the stationary and stopped using it in *The YS Organizer*. We decided that the hammer and sickle was not the type of symbol we wanted for the YSA. In the future, such a series of unplanned steps will be less likely to occur.

In addition to the *War and Revolution* pamphlet, we have published since the convention the following document-style pamphlets—*Introduction to the YSA*, *Organizing the YSA*, and the proceeding of the convention. We have also come out with three international information bulletins since the convention. One of the top priorities when we get back to New York will be the preparation of a substantial amount of material for the fall offensive.



# young socialist the organizer

A BI-WEEKLY ACTION PUBLICATION OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE, A MULTINATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST YOUTH ORGANIZATION.

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SEPTEMBER 2, 1970

LOCAL OR AT-LARGE AREA

NUMBER OF COPIES

FOR YSA MEMBERS

FOR NON-MEMBERS

TOTAL BUNDLE

## INTERNATIONAL

I want to mention a few aspects of our work with our international co-thinkers. I have already briefly mentioned both the international information bulletins and *IP*. These things help comrades to develop a feel for our movement's work on a world scale, and they should be read by every comrade. Often, these documents or articles in *IP* provide an excellent basis for local educational sessions.

I already mentioned the tours of Eric and Jo, which took place last spring and this summer. Since the convention, a number of comrades from different locals have taken advantage of opportunities to travel abroad on their own and looked up our co-thinkers on their visits. Whenever comrades have such an opportunity, they should consult with the N. O. before departing.

At this plenum, we want to project two international campaigns. First is a stepped up campaign in defense of Hugo Blanco. Materials and more plans will be coming out of the center early in the fall on this. Second is an intensification of our work in defense of the Arab revolution. The SWP is planning an extensive propaganda tour this fall by Peter Buch, and we will also want to increase our publications and general activity in this arena, as the Middle East becomes an increasingly important factor in world politics.

## CONCLUSION

We are confident that the projections in the report and approved here at the plenum and carried out by our movement nationally this fall will mark a qualitative advance in the growth and development of the YSA. As we move onto the campuses and establish fractions which will lead in defending and extending the gains of May, as we build the October 31 actions and the coalitions, and the SMC, as we initiate and lead independent women's liberation groups and actions, as we form campaign supporter groups and use the electoral arena to reach new layers with the revolutionary socialist perspective, as we penetrate further into the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican struggles for self-determination, as we move out into regional functioning on a new, better, and sounder financial foundation—as we do all of these things, we will draw around us, recruit, integrate and develop hundreds of new revolutionary professionals, cadres who will help us move significantly closer in the year ahead to our goal of winning hegemony and becoming a mass revolutionary socialist youth organization.

LEE SMITH  
YSA National Office