

YSA

DISCUSSION BULLETIN

Vol. 9 No. 6
February 1966

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1. Political Resolution (NEC Draft, submitted February 17, 1966)
2. Political Resolution (Passed by YSA National Convention; January 1965)
3. Tasks and Perspectives Document (Passed by YSA National Convention, September 1963)

40 cents

YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

YSA, BOX 471, COOPER STATION, N.Y., N.Y. 10003

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We are reprinting the major political resolutions passed at the last two YSA conventions for the information of the newer comrades. The 1966 resolution should not be seen as a substitute for these past resolutions, but as an extension of them in the light of the changes in the political situation since they were passed. Also, some things which are implicit in the current draft political resolution were dealt with in more detail in our earlier resolutions.

YSA National Office
February 17, 1966

POLITICAL RESOLUTION

(NEC Draft)

Since our last convention American political life has been dominated by the war in Vietnam. The student movement, in response to the war, has reached a new high point in terms of 1) the numbers involved, 2) the fresh forces drawn into political activity, and 3) the depth and radical character of their opposition to administration policies. This political radicalization took place despite continued economic prosperity and a relative lull in the Negro movement.

Our last YSA convention early in 1965 occurred during a period of relative quiescence in radical activity and we did not project a campaign around any one specific issue. A few weeks following the convention the call for the March on Washington and the first teach-ins ushered in the antiwar movement.

The socialist youth organizations all were tested by their ability to 1) shoulder the responsibility of a campaign against the largest imperialist aggression since Korea, and to 2) respond to the opportunities for education, influence, broader political leadership, and recruitment provided by the rapid rise of the antiwar movement.

We intervened in the antiwar movement from the beginning and were major builders and initiators in it. The previous period of organizational consolidation and political education had prepared us to intervene as a national formation. Our strength and the political level of the antiwar movement made it possible for YSAers to play leadership roles - not simply "make the record." We have been able to raise the political consciousness of the entire movement by supporting and organizing around the theme, "Bring the Troops Home Now!" This new experience gave rise to our first national experience in combat with our major opponents, the stalinists.

I. General Historical Setting

The character of the student radicalization of the late 1950's and the 1960's has been marked by:

- 1) the unevenness between the development of the world revolution and the social and political development of the United States, and
- 2) the contradictory legacy of the radicalization of the 1930's.

A. The Colonial Revolution

The world revolution as a whole has been on an upswing since the close of World War II. Although there have been retreats as well as advances, the colonial workers and poor peasants have been in unending struggle against imperialism and have wrested political independence for a whole series of new nations.

With the overturn of capitalist property relations in Eastern Europe and the victory and consolidation of the Chinese Revolution,

the imperialists faced a wholly new and unfavorable relationship of world forces. A revolution in consciousness has affected hundreds of millions as the struggle for land reform and national independence continually breaks out in new places. The victory of the Cuban socialist revolution in our own hemisphere drove this point home.

In contradiction to the struggle of the Vietnamese people, the colonial revolution and the struggle for world socialism has suffered a series of defeats which began before our last convention and have continued since then. In Latin America the brutal repression of the Dominican revolution, the militarist takeover in Brazil, and the electoral victory of Frei in Chile all served notice that the Latin American revolution is to be a long and difficult affair.

The African revolution was set back by Boumedienne's seizure of power, and the bloody defeat of the Congolese by Western imperialism. The Asian revolution suffered an even greater setback in the military coup and subsequent witchhunt and massacre in Indonesia. The Indonesian Communist Party was the largest outside the workers' states and was rooted in a country undergoing a deep social crisis. But it was so paralyzed by its years of popular frontism that it could not mobilize its millions of supporters to defend itself, let alone turn back the military.

All these events have underscored the deepening role of U.S. imperialism as gendarme for world imperialism, and the importance of antiwar and anti-imperialist organization in the U.S. The antiwar movement takes place in spite of these recent defeats, but they contribute to the tendency of the student movement toward moods of pessimism.

B. The Historical Setting Within the United States

While the colonial revolution was rising in the post World War II period, the imperialist countries as a whole experienced a long economic cycle of prosperity, now well into its second decade, and the U.S. consolidated its position as the dominant economic and military power of imperialism. The cold war, McCarthyism and reaction, and a relatively quiescent labor movement were the American counterparts to the new rise of the world revolution.

The student movement began as a militant humanistic response to the Negro struggle. As it grew the young radicals began responding to the rise of the colonial revolution and their radicalism deepened and broadened.

The new radicalism developed more and more under the shadow of the contradictory legacy handed down to the new radicals from the radicalization of the 1930's.

The great step forward of labor in the 1930's was the organization of millions of industrial workers into the CIO. By the end of World War II, more than six million workers were organized in the CIO, a movement that had not existed ten years earlier. But

the political radicalization that went along with the growth of the CIO was derailed. Under the influence of the Communist and Socialist parties and of the class collaborationist labor bureaucrats at its head, the CIO remained tied to the Democratic Party. The revolutionary party, the Socialist Workers Party, remained small and with little mass influence, and the traditions of the American socialist and radical movements were warped or destroyed by the stalinist influence.

As the current radicalization deepens, the young radicals thus continue to develop under the contradictions that face:

- 1) a radical movement in the midst of a politically quiescent working class,
- 2) a movement of political opposition in a capitalist country which has no mass labor party, and
- 3) a vanguard which considers itself revolutionary in a country in which the revolutionary party has little social weight or mass influence.

II. The Negro Struggle

The period following the last convention was marked by a retreat in the intensity and development of the Negro struggle. The biggest single blow was the assassination of Malcolm X a month and a half after the convention. It meant the loss of the central revolutionary spokesman for black nationalism and the only anti-capitalist mass leader in the United States.

The explosion in Watts reemphasized the power and strength of black discontent in the ghettos, and the roots of nationalism. It put respectable Negro leaders on the spot and underlined the deep crisis of revolutionary leadership in the Negro struggle today.

The government continues to wage a conscious campaign to buy off black leadership through the various war on poverty programs. This includes not only the James Farmers, but the young militants as well.

The decline of the Freedom Now Party and most nationalist organizations, along with the almost unanimous support given by the Negro people to Johnson in 1964 strengthened coalitionism. But the concept of all black political action and organization continues to be a major question. In the South where ever growing numbers of Negroes are winning the franchise, a debate has begun. Some leaders of SNCC and southern CORE have spoken out in favor of all black independent political slates in the South and have drawn the fire of more conservative leaders. The experience of the Freedom Democratic Party and the existence of a growing black electorate tend to impel this question to the fore. The appearance of the Black Panther Party is another indication of motion toward independent black political action.

There is very little support for the government's war in Vietnam in the ghetto. But thus far there has been little organized protest by Negro groups. The SNCC statement and the Bond campaign are very important first steps toward further par-

ticipation by civil rights activists and Negroes in the struggle against the war.

III The New Radicals

With the rise of organized opposition to the war in Vietnam the radicalism of American student youth has reached a high point both in terms of the numbers involved and the extent and depth of political discussion and debate within the movement.

The "New Left" has become a national topic of analysis and discussion for everyone from the New York Times to Playboy.

A great deal of confusion has been generated. Some has been intentional as the daily press, the CP, SP, National Guardian, etc., "analyze" the "New Left" to fit their own needs. Some has been unintentional, flowing from the confusions and ambiguities of the movement itself.

What is called the "New Left" is more accurately a new radicalization. It is the emergence of a new generation of radicals, influenced by the civil rights movement, the colonial revolution and Cuba, and most important, the war in Vietnam. Many do not consider themselves "New Left" or anything else except against the war and the hypocrisy of our society.

Characteristic of the new radicals is disgust with the racism, false values, cold war lies, and dirty wars waged by the United States. They want to see a new and better world of brotherhood and honesty. They begin as radical democrats, not socialists.

While they are responding with new types of organizations and protests to national and international factors that are new, their actions link them directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, to the major tendencies and programs of the world labor movement. As the radicalization continues, the student activists find themselves forced to make a transition from conscious moral revulsion and unconscious politics to conscious politics.

In a period preceding any labor radicalization the contradictions inherent in a middle class radicalization are coming more sharply to the surface. The search of the new radicals for a force to change society, a base to operate from, and a strategy that can win, is in large part a search for a substitute for a non-existent radicalized working class and labor party. This involves many contradictory and rapidly changing ideas and formulations. In their rejection of the evils of capitalist society, they look for a "radical constituency," try to build "counter communities," immerse themselves in the "society of the poor," and hope to establish "parallel structures" and a real "participatory democracy."

IV. Students for a Democratic Society

As a result of the antiwar upsurge, the increase in growth of SDS has brought more of the newly radicalized youth under its influence than under that of any other multi-issue radical group. Many activists look upon it as the "New Left." SDS is a heterogeneous organization made up of unorganized or loosely organized political cliques and groupings, as well as many newcomers to the political scene who have no clear political outlook. SDS locals vary greatly from area to area, and often have little communication with each other or with the national office.

SDS activity is characterized by great stress on a radical humanist approach to community organizing, campus reform projects, and research and educational projects. The April 17 March on Washington was a big step forward for SDS. By raising the question of self-determination for Vietnam, and by coming into conflict with the Socialist Party coalitionists, it moved SDS in a left, and more politically conscious direction. But since the April March on Washington when the leadership of the antiwar movement was temporarily placed in their hands, SDS has pulled back from the Vietnam issue into the safety of other less inherently radical projects.

SDS has received enormous publicity-much of it in connection with the March on Washington and the recent abortive antidraft campaign. This has helped to attract many antiwar protesters to its ranks despite the fact of its withdrawal on a national level from leadership of the antiwar movement. At their last national convention held in December 1966 there was not even a point on Vietnam protest on the agenda. Many SDSers are unhappy with the lack of SDS participation in the Vietnam movement, but as yet have been unable to affect the national policy of their organization.

Its most conscious and well organized section is a coalitionist wing centered in New York, which ties community work into the political perspective of coalition politics. It is heavily influenced by the Harrington-Kahn-Rustin wing of the League for Industrial Democracy (LID)-Socialist Party (SP).

This well organized social democratic formation has a weight in SDS disproportionate to its relatively small size. The left wing is less organized and less articulate than the coalitionist wing, and has no clear ideology or revolutionary socialist perspective. No formal provision is made in SDS's structure for electing leaderships and conducting discussions on the basis of written political positions.

"Participatory democracy" as practiced in SDS has led to disorganization and bureaucratic decision making. It has often meant the putting off of decisions seriously affecting the ability of SDS to take effective action. These problems have caused resentment on the part of many SDSers, but they do not know how to go about correcting them. The organizational

counterpart to SDS's formless political ideology is a heterogeneous and decentralized character.

The invitations of the bourgeois educational foundations, the labor bureaucracy, and the federal government, to join them in social work or research projects has been tempting bait for the "New Lefters." An important element of the War on Poverty has been the conscious bribing of young radicals to turn their energies to "constructive" channels. Although the Johnson administration has dealt mainly with the students' radicalization by holding out the carrot, the students also feel the pressure that comes from the fear of possible victimization.

The development and struggles of the antiwar movement have made the "New Lefters" more receptive to political issues and to the ideas of the organized left. It has resulted both in an attraction to the ideas and solutions offered by socialists and a shying away from them as their implications become clear.

Only a real understanding of the need for opposition to the government, and the capitalist system, can help these young people to overcome these pressures. The alternative for SDSers is gradual demoralization and "retirement," or absorption into a revived social democratic youth formation.

V. Opponents

The campus-bred student movement is the focal arena of the competition between the contending socialist programs and organizations. In the battle for political leadership and influence in the antiwar movement and in the competition for recruits, the supposedly irrelevant ideological battles of the 1930's are being refought.

The rise of the student movement, through its various ups and downs, has always had a particular character. It has developed around single issues (Woolworth pickets, Peace, Free Speech, Cuba, Vietnam) which have been its central focus at any given moment and around which the ideological battle between the socialist tendencies has taken place.

The movement also has a general character in that many of the same youth are involved in the different particular phases, involvement in one preparing them for the next. General criticisms about society, and strategies for changing it are generated by debates centering around a particular question facing the movement. This has been strikingly true in the antiwar movement.

The debate on tactics and strategy that began around the Vietnam question has tended to become generalized. Divisions have taken place along the traditional lines of independence from or dependence on the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie.

The weight and activity of the established radical parties and the youth groups who are their ideological co-thinkers have increased and many of the myths and mystiques of the "New Left" have been called into question.

The attempt of the new radicals to ignore and bypass the "old" left is unsuccessful, a fact they are more than ever conscious of since the Washington antiwar conference. First of all, while they may want to ignore and bypass the "old" left, the "old" left has no intention of ignoring or bypassing them. Secondly, a factor they are much less conscious of, their political course, while zig-zagging and confused, eventually leads each of them toward either social-democracy or stalinism, or revolutionary socialism.

The pace of this process is slowed down and muted by two factors previously noted:

- 1) The quiescence and conservatism of the working class, especially its powerful organized sector, puts a brake on the conscious acceptance of Marxism. The concept of the class struggle approach to social change-including the social democratic and stalinist caricatures seems utopian. This is accentuated by the absence of the class tradition which would be embodied in even a right-reformist mass labor party.
- 2) The numerical smallness of the organized parties embodying these currents (SP-LID, CP-PLP, SWP) makes it appear as if the existing socialist tendencies and parties can be bypassed. This slows down recruitment, and gives added life, brief and unstable though it may be, to centrist and ad hoc formations.

The myth that the "New Left" could bypass and avoid the "old" organizations and old "irrelevant" ideological divisions of the 1930's was dealt the biggest of what will be a series of blows by the clashes at the Washington antiwar convention.

The basic conflict was not between the arbitrary categories of new and old, but among the conflicting socialist tendencies - and their perspectives for the antiwar movements. Old battles took place in new forms.

The antiwar movement has had a major effect upon our opponents and our relations to them. The major tests of all the socialist youth groups has been their response to the organizational and political challenges generated by the development of the anti-war movement.

A. The W.E.B. DuBois Clubs

The DuBois Clubs (DBC) are the strongest and largest opponent we have. Restricted primarily to the West Coast at the time of their founding conference in June, 1964, they have spread to the Midwest and East Coast where they now have functioning units in several major cities.

In the period immediately following the April March on

Washington, the DuBois Clubs concentrated few of their forces in the antiwar movement. Viewing their own organization as a major "peace group" they treated the single issue Committees to End the War in Vietnam as competitors, concentrated on community work, and were outspoken partisans of the negotiations position.

But the success of the October Days of Protest and the approach of the Washington antiwar convention forced them into the Committees to End the War in Vietnam and they began to turn to more campus work.

At Washington, they officially opposed the line of immediate withdrawal. But the pressure of the Vietnamese revolution itself and our campaign on withdrawal has opened up a political fissure within their organization that reaches into the top leadership. The negotiations position tends to get stuck in the throats of even stalinist youth who are active in the antiwar movement.

The political vulnerability of the DBC must be viewed in the framework of the announced decision of the Communist Party to come more into the open, to hold public "debate" on their draft program, and to penetrate the "New Left."

In their attempt to differentiate their brand of reformist activism from that of SDS, the DBC leaders have been stressing their "socialist oriented" character and have increased their identification with their adult cothinkers of the CP. For the first time on a national scale we have the strength and opportunity to force the stalinist movement to a more open confrontation on political program.

The DuBois Club publishes a bimonthly magazine called Insurgent, has started a theoretical public discussion bulletin, Dimensions, and puts out Spur, an organizational newsletter. YSAers should be familiar with all of these.

B. The May 2nd Movement

In the period since our convention the May 2nd Movement (M-2-M) has suffered a relative decline. Considering themselves the organization against the war in Vietnam, they tended to counterpose antiwar activity through the M-2-M to participation in the single issue Committees to End the War in Vietnam. Their verbal support to the position of immediate withdrawal was vitiated by their refusal to campaign to win individuals to this position within the antiwar committees. They concentrated on support to the NLF and tried to identify themselves as the American counterpart to the colonial revolution.

The Progressive Labor Party (PLP), which dominated the leadership and political direction of M-2-M, reaped the fruits of their former super-activism as their membership and activity dwindled. The conviction and trial of Bill Epton with no meaningful national defense, and the blows to Peking's version of stalinism on the international scene further discredited

them. This decline of PLP weakened M-2 M's ability to attract radical youth.

M-2-M remained restricted, except for a few isolated campus followers, to New York, Boston, and the Bay Area. They did not establish a functioning national organization. They published six issues of the Free Student at irregular intervals.

On the weekend of January 30-31, M-2 M held a national conference at which a decision to dissolve M-2-M was made. Introduced by members of PLP, the decision was opposed by some of the non-PLP members. The perspective outlined was to enter the Committees to End the War in Vietnam where they exist, and SDS locals where independent antiwar committees either do not exist or are led by the YSA.

It remains to be seen whether the non-PLP members of M-2-M will go along with the decision, whether they will continue to publish Free Student in any manner, or whether the PLP will attempt to intervene in the student movement solely under their own name and activities. But it is clear that a blow has been dealt to PLP's attempt to build a viable youth movement.

C. The Ultra-Lefts

In the absence of an organized third camp youth group, the Spartacist-American Committee for the Fourth International organizations have had a modest growth, but have not established a national organization.

Their rejection of the single issue committees and their ultra-left criticisms of the "conservative" immediate withdrawal demand, put them on the fringes of the antiwar movement. In this situation their radical verbiage serves as a convenient cover for the policy of sectarian abstentionism. By insisting on immediately "linking up" the various social struggles with the antiwar movement, they play right into the hands of the right wing SDS and social democrats.

D. The Social-Democratic Youth

One of the noteworthy features of the current upsurge in student radicalism is the absence of a nationally organized social democratic youth organization. As the entire political axis of the student movement has shifted to the left, the YPSL has been unable to reconstitute itself and the small Schactmanite splinters have neither maintained their publications nor made any meaningful organizational progress. This provides a vacuum which SDS, the DBC, and to some degree the ultra-lefts fill.

Some of the leading social democratic spokesmen, like Tom Kahn and Michael Harrington, the most active and open advocates of Bayard Rustin's coalitionism, are attempting to attract some youth around them as they attempt to rebuild the discredited social democracy. Through a liason between LID and Dissent magazine they try to present themselves as the theoreticians

for the "radical" but "anti-Communist" peace movement pressing for a cease fire and negotiations.

The combination of a student radicalization, and a ruling class that consciously seeks to channel this radicalism into safe channels and large sources of funds for social welfare and educational projects makes the eventual emergence of a social democratic youth organization possible. Large layers of SDS are potential material for a formation of this type.

E. Summary

While our opponents are not our main area of recruitment the pressures and debates of the antiwar movement have given us important openings. Our dominant national role in the antiwar work further impels our opponents to attempt to come to grips with the threat of our ideas. The DBC is especially vulnerable as the stalinist movement puts on the face of non-sectarian participation in the student movement and tries to combat our campaign for immediate withdrawal.

It is important not to identify the ranks of our opponents with the leadership or write them off flippantly as hopeless, second generation radicals. The DBC ranks are not all Stalinists or even politically educated. Quite the contrary, our head-on competition with these opponents for the radical youth is helped by forcing them to deal with our pressure and debate our ideas. By doing this we weaken our opponents even when we do little direct recruiting from them. Their inability to counter our ideas and answer our criticisms was a factor in the decline of both YPSL and M-2-M.

VI. Independent Political Action

The frictions which began around the preparations for the first March on Washington developed into full scale debate on liberal coalitionism's effect on the fight against the war in Vietnam. This raised the central question of "independent political action," and the key political divisions in the antiwar movement have been subsumed within this question. The debate over various experiments and experiences with political action will increase. Already, "peace" candidates have made their appearance and have sought support from sections of the antiwar movement. As the antiwar sentiment increases so will the politicians and candidates who try to corral that sentiment.

The antiwar movement has threatened the cohesion of the coalition that swept Johnson into office in 1964. The rejection by many of the new radicals of third campism and the negotiations approach brings the value of the liberal coalition sharply into question. Thus the central issue of American politics - the political dependence of social protest movements on bourgeois parties - reasserts itself. The debate of the 1930's and 1940's over dependence and a perspective of reform versus independence and a perspective of the American revolution reasserts its relevancy.

The same groping after a substitute for a radical working class that shows itself in the search for "counter-communities" is also revealed in the political arena as the new radicals reject the political institutions of the ruling class and begin seeking an alternative to the Democratic Party. A progressive party, a peace party, a "movement" party, no party, a committee for independent political action - all these are considered and none are rejected out of hand.

The stalinists, liberal politicians, and respectable civil rights leaders try to submerge the true character of coalitionism under a mountain of myths designed to win rebels over to the "realistic" character of coalitionism.

When the mass of workers and Negroes are included in the term "Democratic Party coalition," what is being referred to is not party membership or control, but party votes - electoral weight. The average worker or Negro who once every four years votes Democratic, is a voter, not a party member. He plays no role, he takes no regular part in, and knows little about the Democratic Party.

The party's policy is not determined by who pulls the lever for its candidates every four years, and it does not serve the interests of most who pull the lever. The party is defined and determined by the program it puts forth, by the policies and strategy it follows at home and abroad, by the class it serves.

The class the party serves, not the class that votes for the party, is what determines the nature of any party. By this criterion the Democratic Party has always been and remains now a bourgeois party, a party whose basic program reflects the interests and needs of the American ruling class.

Thus the phrase Negro-labor-liberal coalition refers to a coalition between the owners of American industry and finance and the professional ward heelers who keep the party machinery oiled and the various trade union bureaucrats and leaders of protest movements, whose job it is to bring out the ranks of the voting bloc on election day to guarantee the continued rule of the Democratic Party. The only time the Democratic Party is in the "mainstream" is on election day.

Once we have separated the electoral bloc from the coalition, and the coalition from the Democratic Party, we can answer a much more important question and that is - who needs this coalition? A small minority who through this coalition manages to maintain its rule and run this country is the sole beneficiary. Coalitionists insist that the Negro people need allies, or that the antiwar students need allies. But those who really need allies, those who are desperate for allies, are the members of the ruling class themselves. If they alone voted for themselves, they would be a tiny minority, unable to put anyone in office. If they lost the voting bloc they command every election day they would have to find a new way of ruling or step from the scene.

Just as the central question of the 1930's was whether or not the working class would build their own political arm, so the major concern and task for the politicians who serve the minority class is to prevent such a development from occurring, to prevent the majority class from organizing itself as a political force and destroying the coalition.

Thus the rejection of coalitionism is the beginning of political wisdom. But it is only the beginning. The term independent political action is algebraic and open to widely divergent interpretations. Even the Communist Party states that it is for "independent political action."

A revolutionist's approach to independent politics is not limited to the electoral arena, but is part of our propaganda and action against the cement of the coalition, the Meanys and Reuthers, Rustins, Kings, Harringtons, Gus Halls, and peace politicians.

We judge independent political action according to the degree of its break from bourgeois parties and programs and its direction toward political action by or in the interests of labor or the Negro people. This flows from our understanding of the class character of society and our support to the right of self-determination.

Electoral action involves taking positions on many different issues and automatically raises the basic question of "who should run things in this country." Since the only alternative to the present rule of the capitalist class is the mobilization of the workers to take the war making power from their hands, we support those actions in the political arean which objectively help split up the Democratic Party coalition and mobilize the masses of workers and Negroes politically and those political campaigns which propagandize for this.

There is no immediate prospect of independent political action by organized labor. Thus our immediate conjunctural task cannot be agitation for a labor party based on the trade unions. Our main task is to understand, analyze, and explain our position in the face of peace candidates, some of whom may run independently of formal Democratic party endorsement.

1) We insist that any candidate who claims to be independent must have broken from capitalist politics. If he does not he is not independent of the politics of war. This must be reflected in his program and not be a pretense of "independence" which is in reality a maneuver to gain strength for future Democratic Party primary battles.

2) We oppose the antiwar movement being sucked into peace politics and its independent and militant direction diverted and atomized. Concentration on "peace" campaigns is the surest path to the paralysis of the antiwar committees.

3) We counterpose a socialist program to any "peace" campaign based on a capitalist program.'

A party formed by the labor movement or the Negro movement is in its very composition a step away from ruling class politics. However, we cannot simply call on the antiwar movement to establish a party based on itself. In its social composition the antiwar movement is petty bourgeois, and as such is dependent on one of the basic classes for its politics. Thus, the question of program becomes dominant, for there is no such thing as non-class "movement" politics. Whose interests it would be serving would be determined totally by its program.

The coalitionists are especially desirous of "broadening" the antiwar movement, of linking up the war question with other questions. This is not because they have some abstract dislike for a single-issue, but because the antiwar movement and its militant thrust have raced ahead of the movement as a whole and threaten to clash head-on with the Democratic Party, the liberal-labor-Negro coalition.

With the appearance of large labor forces on the scene, we would become the loudest advocates of a "multi-issue" labor party to run candidates opposed to the war in Vietnam. Today, however, the demand by the "progressives" to turn the antiwar movement into a multi-issue political movement is an attempt to head it back into the "mainstream," i.e., Democratic Party politics and "fighting" for negotiations. At the best it is an attempt at reviving a Henry Wallace third capitalist peace party adventure or finding a way around open socialist electoral work.

To many antiwar activists, "peace politics" may at first seem merely an extension of the fight against American aggression in Vietnam, an additional propaganda platform.

The young radicals have a hard time understanding the role of class criteria for judging the independence of political action. This is true not only because of their middle class background, but because the quiescence of American labor hides its latent power. They do not see these forces and thus are liable to accept a counterfeit substitute.

We reject as sectarian and exclusionary the attempt to turn the antiwar committees into electoral committees for phony peace candidates. But at the same time we must understand that many of the individual activists will go through the experience of throwing energies behind some peace fakers and some committees may end up endorsing them.

To coalitionism, we counterpose socialist political action and a break from the parties of war. In answer to bourgeois peace candidacies and ventures we explain the lessons of the Henry Wallace campaign and the need to organize and educate for a revolutionary socialist party and labor's break from capital.

The stalinists and social democrats criticize the new radicals' "romantic" or "nationalist" tendency to withdraw from "mainstream" politics. We applaud every rejection of

capitalist politics and urge its completion in a socialist direction.

It is not correct to reject beforehand the possibility of genuine independent candidates opposed to the war in Vietnam. We apply our political criteria to each case, and to the degree that the character of the campaign is not decided, try to influence it in an anti-capitalist direction.

It is important to be sensitive to the possibilities of independent Negro political action. The debate over all black political parties in the South and the political instability of the Northern ghettos mean that truly independent campaigns could develop. These would also be important lessons for the antiwar activists looking for a new political path.

It is also extremely important that we support and campaign for all genuinely independent socialist candidates especially when they are counterposed to liberal politicians or peace candidacies.

VII. Tasks

1. The general character of the period and our tasks as outlined at the last two conventions remain valid.

Our fundamental task remains the recruitment and education of new fresh forces in the theory, program, strategy and tactics of Marxism, and the traditions and principles of the revolutionary working class movement.

Our work remains basically propagandistic and the focus of our attention is the campus where we strive to establish viable campus fractions in all locals.

American labor remains relatively quiescent and a large working class political party does not exist. American imperialism, politically unchallenged by American labor, stands more and more astride the world revolution as counterrevolutionary cop. It is within this context that we understand the importance of the antiwar student movement, as well as its weaknesses.

2. The Vietnam war is the most unpopular war in the history of American imperialism. Already it has triggered the deepest going radicalization of the last two decades - a radicalization which will go beyond the student youth who are now the activists in the opposition.

Our immediate task is to continue our campaign against the war and to strive to build a large scale movement for the withdrawal of American troops.

Our participation and leadership role in a national campaign represents a new experience and the YSA's most important test. We have entered the antiwar movement not to "make the record," but to fight for the line of immediate withdrawal of American imperialism as the cornerstone on which the movement is built,

to fight for political leadership and respect from the militants, and to compete with our opponents for the recruitment of the radicalizing forces.

3. The major source of recruitment remains fresh youth from the student movement to whom we orient the bulk of our basic propaganda and attention. But the deepening competition with our opponents and the ideological battles in the antiwar movement give us new openings that we must be sensitive to. Each new member recruited from our opponents is not only an increase in our forces but a decrease in theirs.

Both locally in our work and nationally in our propaganda we counterpose three basic concepts to the stalinist and social democratic lines:

- a) the responsibility of socialists to respect the right of self-determination for the Vietnamese, fight for the unconditional withdrawal of American troops, and break with the self-defeating line of pressure on the liberals to negotiate;
- b) the rejection of the subordination of any social protest movement to the Democratic party or capitalist politics, the rejection of support to the capitalist war parties, and the necessity of supporting genuine independent socialist political action and every move of the new radicals away from dependence on coalitionism;
- c) the necessity for a perspective of, and a transitional program for, the American revolution, opposed to reformism of all kinds.

Neither the ranks of our opponents nor the wave of second generation radicals that make up much of the "New Left" can be equated with politically hardened stalinists or social democrats. This is one of our opponents' major weaknesses and one we must take advantage of when there are realistic openings.

4. The Young Socialist and the Militant constitute our biggest propaganda advantage over our opponents. The expansion and improvement of the YS, and the beginning of a selection of basic pamphlets has been a major step forward. The regular appearance and sale of our press gives us a national voice stronger than we have ever had before.

The Militant is the weekly paper of revolutionary socialism and is our best single recruiter and educator. It is a simple rule that the person who becomes a regular Militant reader has taken a big step toward recruitment to the YSA.

The YS and the Militant are political complements and the propaganda organizers of our work. The increase in our activity and participation in the antiwar movement should be matched by increased subscriptions to the YS and Militant. It must be second nature to YSAers to establish a growing number of regular subscribers in the areas in which we are working.

5. The defense of our Bloomington comrades has entered its fourth year. While the pace of the case has slowed down as we fight in the federal court system, the possibility of further

appeals and even a trial remains. The facts of the case and the record of our fight and initial victories should be reviewed and made available especially to the young comrades who have joined since the case began.

6. The turn to greater activity in the movement must be matched by a continuation of concentration on the education of our own cadre. The strength of the YSA flows from its program and disciplined character. This depends on the absorption and reabsorption of the traditions and lessons of American Trotskyism and the continued development of politically educated self-critical revolutionists.

Submitted February 17, 1966

Political Resolution

NEC Draft

The nature of the period we are in has not changed significantly since the last convention. The main outline of our document on "Tasks and Perspectives" (Vol. 7, No. 2) that was passed at that convention is still applicable. The present resolution is not a substitute for, but an extension and amplification of that document.

Our fundamental task in this period is still to recruit and educate new fresh forces in the theory, program, strategy, and tactics of Marxism in preparation for the next wave of radicalization. The propaganda character of our work is dictated by the general conservatism of the period.

The Campus

The main orientation of the YSA is still toward the campus. It has been our experience that locals with functioning campus fractions have proven to be the most viable. The minds of many young people are being opened to our politics and goals by the growing inability of the ruling class to solve the crisis facing it in the colonial lands, the repeated exposures of this society's hypocrisy and corruption, and most important, by the continued struggles of the Negro masses against the state.

Unlike the past period when the bulk of the radicalized students were attracted to national single-issue organizations such as Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC) or Student Peace Union (SPU), today they tend to join ad-hoc locally based committees or are recruited directly to one of the organized socialist youth tendencies. There is no single organization that is the central pole of attraction for radical students.

Independent campus socialist groupings which appear are small and their "independent" life is short as the members tend to join one of the organized socialist tendencies or drop out of politics.

Organizations such as FPCC and SPU tended to be multi-tendency regardless of the leadership. They were often our best arenas of recruitment. We could join them, work for agreed-upon goals, and present our program to the members, the majority of whom were not yet affiliated to an organized socialist tendency. Despite the attempts of the leaders of SPU to bureaucratically dominate it, the very fact that a "pro-peace" attitude was the only requirement for membership meant that it attracted youth of all tendencies as well as those not affiliated to any tendency. On many campuses civil rights organizations have this same characteristic.

We cannot predict when, if, or around what question another national single-issue organization will become the dominant po¹

of attraction for radical students. Whatever the organizational forms may be, work in or around campus groups is geared to getting to know, work with, and be in a position to recruit whatever radicalized students are there. As the "Tasks and Perspectives" document pointed out:

"The most important change on the campus is in the ideological atmosphere which opens the door to serious consideration of our socialist ideas. This makes it objectively possible at all times, regardless of the ups and downs of student organizations and activities, to systematically seek out and recruit, through close and personal contact work, by ones and twos, radicals on the campus."

The Politicalization of the Struggle

Newly radicalized young people continue to engage in protest actions that are of an essentially political character. That is, the demands raised in these actions (unlike those of workers directed to an employer) are addressed to the government -- local, state and national. Even the demonstration-demands for increased employment of Negroes have been aimed, directly or indirectly, at the government. This has given these "direct actions" the essential character of political actions of a limited nature.

The leaders of various protest and civil rights movements -- even some of the more militant -- refuse to see direct action and electoral action as different aspects of the same political struggle. Under the pretense that their organizations are not political (meaning that they don't run candidates) many end up supporting candidates of the Democratic Party under some "lesser evil" rationalization. This results in the election of capitalist representatives who on the morrow confront them as opponents, holding the line against the most modest demands for reforms.

Even when direct actions result in partial gains they cannot serve to bring about any fundamental solution to the basic social problems involved. This can, and often does, lead to frustration and demoralization of those involved in the struggle.

It is only through a political organization which has broken with the policy of subordination to capitalist politics that direct action and electoral action can be tied together in order both to win immediate gains and lay the groundwork for a fundamental social change. This in turn revolves around political consciousness. When a significant section of leadership of the working class, black or white, is convinced of the need for an organization that will generalize the struggle, take on the ruling powers everywhere from the streets to the ballot box, and offer a class alternative to the Republican and Democratic monopoly of

political power; the next big step in the struggle for human rights, peace and economic security will take place. This we tirelessly point out in our propoganda, especially to the participants in various struggles.

The 1964 Elections

The 1964 elections offer us the best immediate opportunity to propogandize for socialism to American youth. They enable us to expose, to any wavering members of the ranks of our opponents the class collaborationist character of Stalinism and Social Democracy. The election campaign will heighten interest in the colonial revolution, the Negro struggle, and the meaning of Goldwaterism.

Our central efforts for the duration of the election campaign must be to build Students for DeBerry and Shaw and committees for independent political action. Through them we can hammer home the lesson that the various partial crises facing the American people from Vietnam to Harlem are part of a general crisis of the system of capitalism. We can point out that the next step toward resolving these crises is the formation of a political party which offers an alternative to capitalist rule.

The existence of the Freedom Now Party and independent Negro candidates gives us extra openings for our propoganda. So does the criticism of the two parties by such people as Malcolm X. The very existence of the Freedom Now Party and the SWP on the ballot takes the question of independent political action out of the realm of an abstract suggestion to one of concrete example for support and emulation.

Propaganda

Our central task ^{is propagandizing} for socialism. We explain that a revolutionary program and organization is needed for its attainment. We are trying to get many ideas across to the very small layer of American youth who are rebelling against this society.

The great need among both the campus youth and the Negro youth involved in struggle is the development of socialist consciousness, that is, understanding the forces they are opposed to and how to defeat them. Many are angry; they are fighting; they are open-minded -- but they tend to adopt the level of understanding of current leaderships.

We are not a civil rights, civil liberties, or peace organization, although we support all these struggles, participate in them, and try to learn from them. We are a socialist political organization which generalizes and ties together in its propoganda all those partial struggles which, objectively, are aimed against the ruling class.

It is socialist politics that we have to offer students and young activists who are willing to listen to us. Our success in this period depends on our ability to convince young people to join us and dedicate themselves to socialist politics which are indispensable to the successful struggle for a decent world.

The YSA can operate effectively under its own name. We can establish ourselves as the socialists, by defending and explaining the colonial revolution and the Freedom Now struggle, and opposing the drift to the right in American politics.

In this work we should keep in mind several major advantages we have relative to our opponents.

1. We are a national socialist youth organization with many viable locals. This is our major accomplishment and puts us far ahead of our opponents who have come nowhere close to building a viable and effective national organization. This was best reflected in our ability to wage a victorious national campaign in defense of our Bloomington comrades. We have a national voice, The Young Socialist.

2. In The Militant we have a weekly propaganda newspaper which is more attractive to radical youth than the press of our opponents. The regular distribution of The Militant gets our ideas to a broad layer of youth. This includes those we are not in immediate contact with, for instance, southern youth. The simple rule has been that a person who becomes a regular Militant reader can be recruited to the YSA.

3. We are the heirs of the traditions and lessons drawn from the maintenance and enrichment of socialist thought and action by the American Trotskyist movement. Books and pamphlets embodying this tradition are powerful weapons in the education and recruitment of the rebels of our generation. One of the best examples of that is the reception we get to the Trotskyist analysis of the Freedom Now struggle and black nationalism. The publication of the first Marxist history of the rise of the CIO by Art Preis, the first inexpensive anthology of Trotsky's writings, The Age of Permanent Revolution, and W.F. Wardes Logic of Marxism, are valuable weapons. The Marxist program **is the most important asset we have.**

Our Opponents

To understand our opponents clearly we must place them in the context of the recent history of the American left. The post WW II decline and break-up of American Stalinism left a vacuum among radicals, but did so in the context, not of a mass upsurge and shake-up, but of a deadening conservatism and quiescence of the labor movement. The new formations that developed, except the

were marked by the heritage of revisionism that they received from either Stalinism or the Social Democratic left.

Unlike Bolshevism's development in struggle against the Bernstein revision of Marxism or the Left Opposition's development in struggle against the Stalinist revision of Leninism, the recent American offspring of the decay of Stalinism and Social Democracy did not hammer out a revolutionary critique and program and defend it before a large radical working class membership.

We have seen off-shoots and splits from the CP USA that remain Stalinist; we have seen off-shoots and splits from the SP and Shachtmanite ISL that remain Social Democratic. Our current opponents, the Young Peoples Socialist League (YPSL), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), W.E.B. DuBois Club (WEED) and the Progressive Labor Movement (PLM), are heirs of this programmatic poverty. The youth recruited by them do not understand that it is only around the correct program that a revolutionary cadre capable of leading the overturn of capitalism can be built.

Reformist Activism

All of our opponents on the youth arena have been built by the recruitment of student youth. With no experience in the mass movement they embody all the weaknesses of the middle class. Under the pressures of imperialism they are susceptible to reformist traps and liberal prejudices. As they come to socialism they usually adopt the consciousness of well known reformist leaders. They tend to see the day to day work for reforms as ends in themselves. Unlimited activism of any kind becomes "socialist" activity. Preparation of a solid revolutionary cadre able to intervene in the mass struggles to come is totally subordinated to gaining the leadership of partial struggles.

Socialist minded youth become especially susceptible to reformism in a period in which the labor bureaucracy, bourgeois educational foundations, and the federal government pour money into social work at the "grass roots" level in order to head discontent into safe channels. This opens up a double temptation to petty bourgeois youth -- they can "help the masses" at the "grass roots" and often find a subsistence wage to spend full time doing it. Social work is called political work and political work becomes pure and simple, good, middle class, social work -- sometimes with pay.

This orientation is always marked by the desire to "keep politics out" of actions "we all agree on". Youth attracted to this sort of reformist "activism social work" have it systemized for them in a program by the SDS, YPSL, and the newly-formed WEED.

Ultra-Leftist Activism

Some middle class newly radicalized youth react sharply against this reformism. Some of these find their way to revolutionary socialism. But others can be led into adventures in which the attempt is made to leap over the adverse objective situation and substitute the action of a handful for the mass. This ultra-left "activism" is merely the other side of the reformist coin. Long the trade mark of 3rd period Stalinism this adventurism can only lead to victimizations which are gleefully taken advantage of by the ruling class. Ultra-leftism can be used as an excuse to crack-down not only on the entire left, but on the militants involved in daily struggle as well.

Worst of all, adventurism wears out and hardens into cynics young rebels, some of whom could have been made into revolutionary cadres. Instead of developing Marxist cadre, ultra-left organizations instead eventually breed victims, demoralized youth and cynical front-group politicians. This tendency can be seen most clearly in the Stalinist Progressive Labor Movement. (PLM).

* * *

The source of both these reformist and ultra-leftist deviations lie in the frustrations of the objective situation, the pressures and temptations of an undisciplined petty-bourgeois environment, and Social-Democratic and Stalinist miseducation. None of these elements should be underestimated. The search for either a respectable or quick road to socialism is doomed; there is no get-rich-quick gimmick to build a revolutionary movement; history has spoken decisively on this question.

Nevertheless, the middle class inexperienced character of young radicals, the programmatic and organizational heritage from Stalinism and Social Democracy, and the isolation of the socialist movement from a significant section of the working class, will continue to breed these dead-ends.

It is clear that there is no realistic perspective of fusion with any of these opponent formations. Quite the contrary in the coming period we will be competing with them head on for the allegiance of the radical youth in this country.

The absurdities and bestialities of capitalism in its decline will continue to produce rebels and opponents of the system. We have to teach them the perspective of the American working class revolution. They have to be taught that the central task of American socialists is the building of a conscious Marxist cadre capable of educating and, someday, leading the mass of American workers to take state power. They have to be taught that there is no short-cut to socialism.

YPSL

The precipitous decline of the Young People's Socialist League following the Cuban missile crisis has continued. The report of their National Secretary at the SP convention indicated that this is true of even their traditional strongholds such as the University of Chicago. Not only has recruiting dropped off, but they have been losing members as miseducation and inactivity take their toll. They are split up into a minimum of 13 tendencies and factions. Continual discussion and factional cannibalism runs rampant and leaves little time for consistent, outward-turned propaganda, recruitment or education. To add insult to injury, the SP has threatened to put the YPSL into receivership.

In spite of all their "revolutionary" tendencies the politics of YPSL are the politics of the Social Democracy and the organizational losses they have been having are the price they pay for that program. They oppose the colonial liberation movement as "Stalinist"; they oppose black nationalism as "racist"; they refuse support to DeBerry and Shaw while the SP supports Johnson to stop Goldwater at all costs.

The lack of a large reformist student movement organized around either peace or civil rights to feed off has been especially damaging to YPSL. They have concentrated on work in CORE in several places, but seem to have gained little more than some posts.

SDS

The Students for a Democratic Society which has grown as we predicted, have been very successful in involving themselves in foundation, federal grant, and labor financed social work projects in the South, in Appalachia, and in several Northern urban areas. They work within the capitalist power structure in order to pressure "good" Democrats and Republicans into realignment which they believe has started with the passage of the civil rights bill. This class collaboration is likely to become even more blatant if SDSers continue to get positions in the various poverty and delinquency projects that are appearing on the scene. They openly support the labor bureaucracy wing of the Democratic Party and they do not spend time on socialist education, propaganda, or cadre building. At the same time their ability to get money to finance an apparatus and members in projects gives them an element of permanency.

WEB DuBois Club

A nationwide Khrushchevite youth organization called the WEB DuBois Clubs has been set up to replace the stillborn Progressive Youth Organizing Committee (PYOC). In the East and Midwest, the WEBD Clubs are merely PYOC by another name and offer little

phenomena for our consideration. The West Coast DuBois Clubs were able to attract a number of non-Stalinist youth and represent an advance for the proponents of peaceful coexistence over the last few years.

Our intervention at their founding convention helped clear the minds of the youth not committed to any tendency of the idea that the DuBois Clubs were a broad, independent, action-oriented, socialist youth organization not tainted by unpleasant things such as program and line. The activities of the WEBD Clubs will have some variation regionally, but their political line is clear. It is support to Johnson behind a stop Goldwater campaign; support for local and state liberal Democrats; work in "mass" neighborhood organizations; and on the campus, concentration on civil rights action, and education in the subtleties of popular frontism. They plan to put out a magazine whose projected content is similar to New Horizons for Youth.

PLM

The Progressive Labor Movement is a 1961 Maoist split from the CP which has most of its membership in New York city. Its original core came from N.Y. state CP circles and Advance members.

PL's outspoken opposition to the opportunism of the CP and the organization of trips to Cuba have been the main factors in attracting a number of youth. They now project the formation of a party at a Thanksgiving weekend conference in New York City. Their recruits have been mainly white students, many from CP backgrounds and periphery.

They are marked ideologically and organizationally by their Stalinist origins which they have refused to deal with and overcome. Their only public statements of program are contained in several articles in the Marxist-Leninist Quarterly. These articles place PL in the Chinese camp on the major international questions dividing the world Stalinist movement (including the question of Stalin) and call for a return to the "militant pragmatism" Stalinism of the Browder-Foster third period.

Up to now, PL's "militant pragmatic" brand of Marxism-Leninism has manifested itself in a series of whirling-dervish adventures, undertaken under the explicit theory that daring acts of defiance by a handful will somehow spark a mass movement. They look at the hit and run adventures which always involve innocent non-members as sources of sensational front-page news coverage, another PLM imagined short-cut to building a socialist movement.

Their get-rich-quick school of political adventurism has a deadly internal logic of its own. As each unwinnable confrontation with the state apparatus ends, a more extreme adventure must be projected to recoup and revenge the previous defeat. This in

turn attracts more ultra-left elements which reinforces the turn to the next round of adventures. Spurning all attempts by the YSA at a united front approach to common projects around the Vietnam war, the Cuba travel-ban, etc., PL has set up front-group apparatuses to run events, speaking in the name of all those involved.

PL has consistently presented itself as the vanguard of and spokesman for sections of the population when just the opposite was true. In Monroe, N.C., in Hazard, and in Harlem this has led to victimization, and distrust of radicals generally. The police and press have gratefully seized PL's statements and actions to rationalize further attacks not only on the entire left but also on the local militants directly involved.

While voicing opposition to both Johnson and Goldwater and blasting the CP for their support to the Democratic Party, PL thus far refuses to support DeBerry. They present abstention from voting and campaigning as the correct "Marxist-Leninist" position.

Far from leading to state power, such an ultra-left Stalinist line can only lead to the division of the working class in a period of radicalization. It offers a smokescreen behind which capitalist reaction protects itself. Under the conditions prevailing today it gives a covering excuse to the reaction against the small socialist movement and the Negro vanguard. It breeds victims, and eventually demoralizes and mis-educates youth who could have become revolutionary socialists.

Approved by the NEC
August 23, 1964

TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES

(NEC Draft Resolution)

1. The decline and isolation of the socialist movement that characterized the 1950's has come to an end. At the same time the revitalization of the mass working class movement, and a general opening into it, is yet to occur. The beginnings of a radicalization among a thin but growing layer of students and the rapidly deepening radicalization of the Negro people in their drive for Freedom Now are fore-runners of and a spur to the next general upsurge of the American working class.

2. The deepening of the Negro struggle and the stirrings of radical activity among students is occurring within the context of increasing economic and political contradictions of the capitalist system. The post-war imperialist expansion, with its concomittant prosperity, is slowing down. The imperialists face not only steady economic growth and competition from the Soviet bloc, and the threat of expropriation from the colonial revolution, but also an increased competition among themselves. Today Europe's economic growth has made her primarily a competitor seeking profitable areas to which capital can be exported. Internal economic contradictions such as the threat of an over-production crisis, the stagnation of the growth rate, the growth of permanently depressed industries and regions, and high unemployment are sharpened by and sharpen the growing stagnation of the imperialist world market. We see increasing attacks on the working class through automation, wage pressures, and anti-labor legislation, designed to meet stiffening international competition. All this points to a more precipitous decline and increased class struggle in the future. Although we are at a decisive turning point and the trends are clear, the pace and form of the decline of the American economy cannot yet be predicted and measured with precision.

3. In this transitional period the revolutionary socialist youth have a crucial role to play as a link between older revolutionary socialists who have been through the class struggles of the past and the as yet unradicalized young workers who will be the vanguard of the class struggles to come. Our ability to intervene as part of the leadership of the mass upsurge tomorrow depends to a large degree on our recruitment today of the thin layer of mostly petty bourgeois youth whose minds are being opened to our ideas. Our fundamental task in this period is to recruit and train new, fresh forces in the theory, program, strategy, and tactics of Marxism in preparation for the next wave of radicalization.

4. In this period the campus is the main source of recruitment and thus should receive primary emphasis.

Historical experience has shown that the Marxist vanguard is built by the fusion of workers trained in the class struggle with young revolutionaries from other classes who come over completely to the working class cause. We are recruiting mainly petty bourgeois youth, and we are not yet able to reach many young workers. At present, the fusion we seek can be only partially realized through the consciousness of its necessity for the future when it will become possible to recruit young workers from the mass movement, through the absorption by our members of the working class outlook of Marxism, and through close fraternal relations with older revolutionary socialists.

5. The YSA developed as a result of a regroupment process within the radical movement in the last half of the fifties. During this decade the major arena of radical activity was the campus, but not in the same sense as it is today. The fifties were characterized by general apathy and fear of dissent on campus. Isolated individuals were recruited to socialism, and here and there small socialist discussion clubs grew up. But with the exception of isolated local demonstrations and issues, and the two marches on Washington for integration, there was no political action by the students. Radicals formed the major audience for Marxists and their prime arena of work.

6. A new phase opened in 1960, coinciding with the establishment of the national YSA. The Sit-Ins marked a new stage for the Negro movement and the beginning of political activity by a minority on campus. During the spring of 1960, while the Sit-Ins were still going on with strong student support in the North, the famous student anti-HUAC demonstrations took place in San Francisco. The new YSA was in the forefront of the Northern supporting movement to the Sit-Ins, gaining some recruits and its first real experience in dealing with a broad campus movement. The YSA, a product of regroupment among radicals, began a turn toward a broader stratum of students and the recruitment of fresh activists.

7. The fundamental characteristic of politics on the campus is that the world wide class struggle reflects itself there as a struggle of ideas, producing a growing ideological polarization. The thin layer of radicalized students is a reflection of and is responding to national and international manifestations of the death agony of capitalism. The upsurge and victories of the colonial workers and peasants, especially the mighty Cuban revolution, the repeated unmasking of American imperialism as the center of world reaction, and the ominous and omnipresent threat of nuclear destruction have been the major international factors cutting through student political apathy and blind confidence in the ruling class. At home

the instability and inadequacy of capitalism even in a period of prosperity, the decadence of American bourgeois culture, and the radicalization of the Negro movement have further alienated these students from the rationalizations of the ruling class and have opened their minds to the working class (socialist) solution. These students originated at all points on the political spectrum before they became radicalized.

8. Since 1960 student political consciousness has increased with the deepening of the economic and political crisis of world capitalism. The more conservative anti-nuclear student SANE was eclipsed and replaced by the anti-war Student Peace Union. The Sit-In movement in the South, going through many experiences, has developed into the independent Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. Interest in civil liberties (activities against HUAC, speaker bans, etc.) is reflected in numerous but short-lived ad hoc organizations.

9. Because students are concerned primarily with ideas they react to world happenings which do not directly involve them. The colonial revolution, the successes and failures of the workers states, and above all the Cuban revolution have had a profound impact upon the campus. The YSA as the only organization on campus which both defends and explains the Cuban revolution recruited a whole wave of students on that basis, largely through our work in support of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. It is impossible to concretely pinpoint what international struggles and victories will be important issues in rallying support to revolutionary ideas, but we must be prepared for the emergence of such issues while we continue to carry out our task of the defense of the first socialist revolution in the Americas, and of all anti-imperialist struggles.

10. While student organizations have multiplied and interest in specific issues has increased, both have been characterized by instability and sharp ups and downs. This is attributable to the petty bourgeois nature of the campus and partly to the lack of a sustained working class movement to back up the students. The issue which has brought the most sustained activity and interest is Negro freedom, and this is because of the growing mass character of this struggle. The temporary lag in the radicalization of the working class movement creates a problem of consciousness for the students, who tend to view social struggles apart from the class struggle. Our task is to draw these radicalized students into consistent and sustained struggle against the system through identification with the working class and the goal of socialism.

11. The most important change on the campus is in the ideological atmosphere which opens the door to serious consideration of our socialist ideas. This makes it objectively possible at all times, regardless of the ups and downs of student organizations and activities, to systematically seek out and recruit, through close personal contact work, by ones and twos, radicals on the campus.

12. The Student Peace Union developed into a national movement during the 1961-62 school year. The high point of its activity was the Washington demonstration, (even though the SPU capitulated to the right wing TTP, which demoralized militants) and it had a substantial growth in the spring of 1962 just after the Washington project. The failure of the SPU leadership to follow up Washington with further action further demoralized their membership and laid the ground work for the fiasco around the Cuban crisis. SPU declined in the past school year mainly due to the Cuban crisis and SPU's reaction to it. During the crisis the YPSL leadership of SPU wavered and came out weakly against the crisis with pronounced anti-Soviet sentiment and program. SPU could have taken the leadership of the student protest against the crisis with an aggressive united front policy against Kennedy's war moves, but it was paralyzed by its YPSL leadership, and in many areas the demonstrations were organized in spite of SPU. Wherever YPSL had control, SPU demonstrations became anti-Soviet. There was a general lull in the student movement following the crisis, and the fact that the peace movement was so obviously impotent at the time of the crisis discouraged students. YPSL reacted to the lull by intensifying its campaign to restrict SPU to the YPSL "third camp" viewpoint, which further aggravated the decline of the SPU.

13. The YSA missed the development of SPU in 1961-62, with the exception of the Detroit local which made valuable gains from SPU work there. As a result of fruitful work in some locals we now have a functioning national fraction able to intervene openly with our program. In some areas work in SPU has been tried and because of bureaucratic impediments and lack of student interest has been found unfruitful. The peace issue will be with us until there is socialism, however, and will flare up around specific issues. As long as SPU remains the center of the student peace movement, we have to keep our contact with it, while at the same time avoiding over-extension in this area when the objective situation does not warrant it. Our most important immediate task in SPU is to develop our national fraction as a recognized programmatic tendency in SPU. This will prepare us for differentiating ourselves from the YPSL leadership if the SPU continues its present decline or breaks up, while at the same time will prepare us for a possible revivication

of SPU, or for an important international war crisis.

14. Our intervention on the campus is a twofold one of direct socialist activity combined with work in broader student organizations. We will not recruit and hold people on the basis of our activity alone, nor will we be considered militant or serious if we abstain from the student struggles. We must intervene in campus organizations and activities to deepen our ties with activists, to gain a hearing for our own program, and to seek out recruitable students. Work in campus organizations also gives YSAers valuable experience in organizing and prevents us from missing upsurges such as occurred around SPU. There are many different campus organizations in which YSAers are working and can work: socialist clubs, SPU, CORE, SNCC, forums, ad hoc committees for special issues, etc. Our main emphasis in campus work, whether in other organizations or directly as the YSA, is on socialist education, propaganda, and recruitment. Although activities which do not lead directly to recruitment may be an important part of every local's activity, it is important to see that recruitment remains the primary aim of each local's work.

15. The student movement is volatile and reacts sharply to changing events. While we can continue to look forward to a growing political consciousness among students, the movement itself has sharp ups and downs, and shifts in organizational forms. We have to be flexible both in our approach to which organizations we work in, and how much effort is put into a particular organization, basing our intervention upon objective needs and possibilities. Local work must be carried out according to the general line laid down by the national conference. Practical activity in each instance will have to be determined on the basis of concrete local conditions, in consultation with the national office. In the past a number of locals have become so tied up with work in other organizations that they have not had time for the most important and time consuming task of systematic contact work and recruitment.

16. The radicalization and growing mass character of the Negro movement is the most important development on the national scene. Militant youth organizations, both on and off campus, have developed in the North and South. We should seek to become allies of these groups, winning white students to the Negro cause as supporters, and recruiting a young revolutionary Negro cadre. Work with civil rights organizations and Negro organizations of a more revolutionary, nationalist orientation whether on campus or off, should be considered our primary national fraction work.

17. In the past we have been able to intervene in certain strike situations by bringing student support to worker's picket lines. This has been possible in two types of struggle. In one case the union was attempting to establish itself among Negro and Puerto Rican hospital workers, and requested student "Sit-In" help. In the other, the capitalists were using students to scab, and the YSA was able to organize anti-scab students. We are the working class tendency on campus, and such work, when realistic, serves both to educate ourselves and the students, and begins to prepare the points of support in the working class movement from which we can intervene in the future.

18. The rise of unemployment is hitting youth, especially young Negroes, hard. Unemployment among young workers is very high, steadily over 15% (officially), and we expect it to grow. As of yet there have been no developments toward organized actions among unemployed youth except those important protests on lack of jobs which have grown out of the civil rights struggle. We should support and participate in these struggles which are going on, wherever possible, and keep alert for any signs of organized activity or interest in organization among the mass of unemployed youth. There is as yet no practical perspective for us to intervene as the initiators of unemployed organizations.

19. Those young workers whom we do meet and recruit at the present time are held to the organization on an intellectual basis. They may join or become attracted to the YSA because it is active and because they see its working class perspective, but they stick in this period because they absorb the program, not because the YSA is leading their class battles.

20. A major activity will be support of the SWP 1964 election campaign. Elections give us a chance to speak to the masses about our socialist program, and to get a reaction from the workers which will by and large reflect their thinking and mood. The question of political action is on the agenda in the Negro struggle, and the SWP campaign will be one way we can intervene in that struggle. Our major task during the campaign will be to organize campus support to the socialist ticket, stressing the need for anti-capitalist political action, and impell a section of the students larger than ourselves into active work for the campaign. The elections open valuable propaganda opportunities for our ideas on campus, and will mean a growth both in our numbers and influence.

21. The Young Peoples Socialist League, still larger than us in book membership (but with fewer active members), had a period of growth in the spring of 1962, in great measure due to their intervention in the SPU.

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In the past school year however, they have taken a sharp decline, especially after the pressures of the Cuban crisis which threw them into a rightist swing. The lull in student activity after the crisis took a big toll on the YPSL, as a result of their unclear vacillating "third camp" (imperialist camp when the chips are down) political line, and their lack of organization, education, communication, and general propaganda. They do not yet have a newspaper -- a clear reflection of their lack of serious organization. Their central Schachtmanite leadership, while opportunist in character, has a sectarian streak. They propound, especially when they feel pressured by us, "Trotskyist" (Schachtmanite version) positions such as the labor party. These concepts totally foreign to their politically uneducated and unprepared rank and file, further alienates these ranks from the leadership and adds to the instability and high turnover rate of the organization.

22. The youth who follow the CP line have managed to set up organizations in New York, Philadelphia, the Bay Area, and Los Angeles, but do not have a functioning national organization. Although Stalinist deceptions in their presentation of an actual pro-Democratic party line serves to delude some young militants, the continued crisis of world Stalinism has put them on the ideological defensive. But Stalinism in all its various forms still poses a danger. Stalinism is used by some radically inclined students to rationalize a soft job perspective, especially in the University. Stalinism allows students to have "anti-imperialist" ideology while not committing them to acting on it in any serious way. Informal groups such as those which exist around Studies on the Left at Madison have broken with Stalinism to a large degree. However, they substitute radical commentary for commitment and hide their default behind petty bourgeois academic snobbery. While maintaining friendly personal relations we should meet such people head on in ideological debate against their anti-Marxist, anti-working class substitute for joining the YSA.

23: There have been a number of splinter groups from the CP, generally pro-Mao, who have some youth. Most of them do not break with capitalist politics. Even those who do have proven themselves to be confused politically, and tend to substitute the action of a handful for a mass action, attempting adventuristically to overleap the adverse objective situation and speed up the class struggle. We have to be careful, therefore, in common work with them, while at the same time patiently explaining our program to them.

24. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) is becoming important in some areas. They have a general outlook of working within the Democratic Party, although many of their specific stands, such as defense of Advance

are superior to those of YPSL. They are not homogeneous and contain pro-Labor Party members, "progressives"; self-styled Marxists, social democrats and liberals. If the YPSL remains under the present sectarian Schactmanite leadership there is a chance that SDS may recruit potential social democrats faster than YPSL and become our most serious organized reformist opponent. Their open desire to work in the existing capitalist class power structure in order to realign the "good" Democrats and their mildly pro-Soviet position on the peace question give them an attractive program for reformist youth coming from either the Stalinist or Social Democratic direction. Some youth who follow the CP line in several places have decided to concentrate their work on the SDS and its potential strength can already be seen on several mid-west campuses. The Stalinists and Social Democrats can co-operate together within SDS in fighting revolutionary tendencies in civil rights, election campaigns, etc. The SDS's lack of real political cadre and loose organizational concepts give us an opportunity to cut the ground from them before they gain strength.

25. The YPSL, the youth followers of the CP line, and the SDS all engage in one or another form of class collaboration. In competing with these groups for members the YSA must wage a determined struggle against their class collaborationist programs while pushing for united fronts in action. That is the best way to expose their inadequacies. Keeping potentially revolutionary youth from these reformist groups during this period is the key to smashing reformism during the mass upsurge to come. Our ultimate advantage over these groups can be seen most clearly in civil-rights where they do not have the patience and seriousness to work well with most revolutionary Negro militants.

26. The past school year was marked by a lull in campus political activity which affected the YSA. Although some of our members quit under the pressure, we continued to recruit. The net result, contrary to the sharp decline of YPSL, was a moderate increase in membership. The upsurge in the Negro struggle had its effect upon the campus and by the end of the school year our recruitment quickened. Equally important, many of our new members have raised their political consciousness and dedication through study and activity.

27. Our work in defense of our Bloomington comrades has given our movement and program a hearing that we would not have otherwise attained. So long as this case is before us, and our comrades are in danger, a major un-neglectible task will be Bloomington defense.

28. While we will still be swimming against the stream in American society as a whole, important work is open to us. We are the best organized radical youth group, but we could stand improvement in our finances, communications, and propaganda material. We should work on both improving the YOUNG SOCIALIST and improving our sales, get out a number of pamphlets stating our views on the important problems confronting the student activists, and take fuller advantage of Pioneer literature and the MILITANT. Internal education should be the regular activity of each local, to raise the level of every member and bring each member to full consciousness of our program, and to teach the history of the class struggles in the United States. The YSA must educate itself through links with the older revolutionary socialists who are the only living bearers of the class struggle lessons of our country. To the degree we do this we will be imbued with the class struggle traditions of our country -- traditions we are a part of and continuator of -- and will thereby be preparing ourselves for the great class battles to come.