

YOUNG socialist discussion bulletin

Volume 16, No. 4

November 2, 1972

Contents

ON YSA RECRUITMENT by Mirta Vidal	2
BUILDING A CAMPUS BASE by Lisa Potash, Seattle YSA	6
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE MARIJUANA POLICY IN THE YSA by Calvin Vail, Portsmouth, N. H., YSA	9
THE YOUNG SOCIALIST OR THE OLD SOCIALIST by Marty Rothman, Los Angeles YSA	10
WHY AREN'T WE GROWING? by Marty Rothman, Los Angeles YSA	10
THE COMMUNIST PARTY, YOUNG WORKERS LIBERATION LEAGUE, AND THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION by Mark Ugolini, Brooklyn YSA	11
THE "YOUNG" SOCIALIST OR THE "IRRELEVANT" SOCIALIST? by John Beadle, Los Angeles YSA	15
THE YSA AND STUDENT GOVERNMENT WORK by Richard Stuart, Austin YSA	18
RAZA ANTIWAR WORK IN HOUSTON by Tank Barrera, Houston YSA	19
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE ABORTION MOVEMENT by Marilyn Markus, Brooklyn YSA	20
BUILDING THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE AFTER THE '72 ELECTIONS by Laura Miller and Tom Vernier, Brooklyn YSA	22

Published by:

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

25 cents

ON YSA RECRUITMENT

by Mirta Vidal

The following article originally appeared in the March 24, 1972, Young Socialist Organizer. This article contains information which will be of help to YSAers in carrying out our most important task as revolutionaries -- that of gaining new members to the YSA.

M. V.

November 2, 1972

Our expectation that the 1972 SWP presidential campaign would be enthusiastically received by a significant number of radicalizing young people has been confirmed by the fact that over 6,000 endorsers of the campaign have already been obtained—more than half of them since the YSA convention.

One important effect of the presidential elections is that most people become more aware of and more interested in political questions. In 1972, because of their experiences of struggle against the war and around other social issues, young people and especially students are more politically sophisticated than they were in previous election years. Many of those who are still supporting one of the capitalist candidates do so with the attitude that they are "giving the system one last chance." Among a certain layer of young people in the high schools and colleges, there is widespread disillusionment with the capitalist system and much broader interest in socialist ideas than ever before.

Experiences in building meetings for Jenness and Pulley and the YSJP coordinators on tour, signing up endorsers, and beginning work on local SWP campaigns have brought home to nearly all YSA locals the possibilities this campaign opens for winning large numbers of these young people to socialist ideas and eventually to joining the YSA.

The opportunities open to us this year for significantly increasing the size of the YSA are as great as they have ever been—possibly the greatest in our history.

To take advantage of the situation, however, it is essential that we have a clear understanding of where we now stand in building the revolutionary socialist youth movement and that we derive from this a realistic approach.

IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING THE YSA

While it is true that the YSA is at this time the largest socialist youth organization, and that we are the only socialist tendency carrying out consistent political activity on a nationwide scale on the campuses and high schools, we are very far from being the *mass* organization we aspire to be. We are very far from achieving hegemony in the student movement. Although we have accomplished a great deal with the small numbers that we have, we are still a tiny fraction of what is needed numerically to accomplish our goal of helping lead the socialist revolution in this country.

What we are doing now is laying the groundwork by recruiting and developing the cadre that can build the YSA into a mass organization. Our most important task is gaining and developing these new members.

Why do we consider this work so important?

Our desire to become *the* mass revolutionary youth organization in this country does not reflect some sectarian fetish about numbers on our part. It flows from our understanding of the historic role that such an organization can play and of the necessity for it based on past political experiences.

All the work that YSAers are doing against

the war, for the repeal of anti-abortion laws, etc., would be virtually wasted if there were not a youth organization and revolutionary party that can analyze and integrate the dynamic of these different movements in an anticapitalist direction and prepare the masses for the final struggle necessary for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a socialist society.

The YSA is not a federation of groups involved in building one or another of the movements for social change, but a democratic-centralist multinational socialist youth organization fighting for hegemony among the youth.

The YSA is based first and foremost on a program—a correct program for making the socialist revolution. Without such a program, numbers alone would not make the YSA an organization capable of helping to lead the revolution. SDS in its time had tens of thousands of members, but lacking a revolutionary program it disintegrated and was swept aside.

But just having the correct program is not enough, either! The YSA must also have the *number of members*, the developed and experienced cadre, to put the program into practice, to demonstrate to the masses of students that our program—rather than that of any other group—is correct.

During the May-June 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France, the revolutionary socialists had the correct program—but the French Trotskyists were simply so small that they were unable to prevent the massive Communist Party from dampening and misdirecting the upsurge and thereby saving French capitalism.

During the vast working class radicalization in the U. S. in the 1930s and '40s, the Trotskyists had the correct program. But then, too, we were so small in comparison to the Communist Party that we were unable to wrest the leadership of the radicalized workers away from the Stalinists. While the working class won significant gains in that radicalization—most important, the building of the industrial trade unions—it was successfully confined within the limits of the Democratic Party on the political arena and thus the radicalization was eventually dissipated. The Stalinists played a crucial role in that process by their support for the Democratic Party, and we were unable to stop them.

One of the most important differences between the current radicalization and those of the past is that in the beginning stages of the radicalization—the period we are going through now—the Stalinists do not have the overwhelming lead over the revolutionary socialists that they had in the '30s and '40s. The work we are doing right now to build the revolutionary socialist movement—the YSA and the Socialist Workers Party—can have decisive significance in determining who will lead the radicalization of the working class that we see as inevitable.

The major question confronting us, then, is how can we build the YSA in this period? What

measures can we take to make the maximum gains in new members of the YSA? For the rest of this year, the answer to these questions lies primarily with the SWP election campaign.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS FOR JENNESS AND PULLEY

The election campaign will get out our socialist program to more people than we are able to reach any other way. Thousands already support the campaign, and thousands more will before it is over. Our recruitment efforts over the next eight months will be directed primarily toward those people who support the election campaign.

We also expect to recruit many young people who now support one of the capitalist candidates. Their experiences through the course of the campaign will demonstrate the futility of working through the capitalist parties to achieve social change. Some will come to this realization after the primaries, some after the Democratic Party convention, and some not until after the election. We will eventually win over the greatest number of them by starting now to go after them aggressively with the SWP election campaign—that is, by discussing and debating with them the difference between the SWP campaign and that of McGovern, or Chisholm, or whoever they are supporting.

The YSJP is a vehicle for young people who support the SWP campaign but are not yet willing to join the YSA to become involved in socialist political activity. People who are becoming active in the YSJP are the most likely to join the YSA, so one important side of YSA recruitment is building the YSJP. This article will not go into how to most effectively build the YSJP (see "Building Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley," in *The YS Organizer*, December 3, 1971), but will take up the question of recruiting directly to the YSA.

While it is true that young people today are radicalizing faster than at any time in the past and are more readily receptive to our ideas, joining an organization with a revolutionary perspective is often considered a big step to take.

Many young people have already reached the conclusion that this system does not work and are looking for an effective way to change it. Our job is to talk to them about our ideas and convince them that the YSA is the only youth organization with a program for effective change, and that joining the YSA is a worthwhile commitment for them to bring about the changes they seek.

There are two interrelated aspects to the question of how to bring people into the YSA, and both are crucial. One is personal, individual discussion with every single person who expresses an interest in our ideas; the other is systematic, well-organized YSA activities aimed specifically at recruiting YSJPers to the YSA. There are no shortcuts or gimmicks for convincing people to join.

INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

The importance of personal contact and discussion with people we think are potential new members cannot be underestimated.

Most people when they first come in contact with socialist ideas do not automatically understand every aspect of our politics and do not automatically decide to join by virtue of the fact that they have finally discovered us. They have questions and misconceptions. They are rarely ready to commit themselves right from the start. We cannot rely on one single "join the YSA" type class, or one exceptionally good forum, or even the fact that a person has a *Militant* subscription, although all these things are naturally an essential part of the process of recruiting someone.

We have to spend time *talking* to people about the YSA. We want to impress upon them the fact that we think being in the YSA is the most important thing that anyone can do—that *they* have an important contribution to make, that their commitment can help significantly to advance the work of the YSA, and that it is by joining the YSA that they can be most effective.

Such discussions should be an integral part of our other activities. The time we spend selling *Militants*, staffing literature tables, working to build an antiwar demonstration, organizing an abortion coalition—all of which are standard YSA campus activities—is also the best time to talk with people about our politics and raise the question of joining.

The fact that we are involved in so many different activities is one factor that differentiates us from all other groups on campus and makes us that much more attractive to people who are serious about politics. Some sectarian political tendencies, which do not participate in building the antiwar movement, or the abortion campaign, or other campus struggles, do nothing but try to recruit people by talking to them about their politics.

We recruit people to our ideas not only on the basis of what we say, but also on the basis of what we do: we are in the forefront of ongoing struggles to win needed changes and we have the best strategy for advancing these struggles. Others who work with us in these movements can see how we function, see how we put our ideas into practice, see what kind of leadership we provide. But we cannot expect them to come to an understanding of the relation between these movements and the YSA entirely on their own.

In addition to talking to people in the course of our work, all social events organized by the YSA or SWP, such as forum dinners, fundraising parties, or campaign banquets, should be seen as prime opportunities to invite non-YSAers and sit down with them to talk about joining the YSA.

For example, in Portland the SWP campaign has been conducting regular interventions at

school board meetings, and afterwards parties are organized at which YSAers can discuss politics with others who participate in the interventions.

Every local is probably aware of several people who are particularly likely to join soon. Each member of the local should consider recruiting these people his or her personal responsibility—seeking them out and arranging to sit down over a cup of coffee, over dinner, or at some other appropriate time, to discuss our politics with them and bring them closer to joining.

Not everyone that we attempt to interest in joining will necessarily respond right away. People are different, and there is no set formula for recruiting them. Many may be willing to join right away—others will take months or even years to make up their minds. The important thing is to recognize that prospective members are not a homogeneous, defined category of people who will automatically join if we carry out certain routine activities. Building the cadre necessary to carry out the revolutionary struggle requires a flexible, creative, aggressive, and above all consistent attitude and consciousness on the part of every YSAer.

ORGANIZATION OF RECRUITMENT

The other fundamental aspect of recruitment is its systematic and professional organization. One basic organizational step is to assign a person in the local to head up recruitment work. Having a person assigned to head up recruitment does not, of course, mean that he or she is solely responsible for thinking out and overseeing that work. Least of all does it mean that he or she is individually responsible for getting people to join. The recruitment director, however, can take responsibility for organizing various recruitment activities, keeping accurate and up-to-date lists of prospective members, and helping to see that the local as a whole is conscious of recruitment and organized to carry it out.

Some areas, particularly the larger locals, have established recruitment committees consisting of YSAers heading up campus fractions, internal committees, etc. These committees serve the function of keeping track of prospective members, informing the various fractions in whose activities they might become involved, and thinking out activities the local can organize to help convince them to join.

The Washington DC YSA, for example, has established a recruitment committee consisting of the recruitment director, regional secretary, renewal drive director, the Black fraction head, who is also on the campaign committee, the women's liberation director, the campus fraction head, and a member of the high school fraction.

Other areas have been handling recruitment through the campaign apparatus.

There are no set patterns for how individual locals can maximize the recruitment of YSAers. That must be worked out in the context of each

local's situation. Smaller locals, for example, may find it unrealistic to set up recruitment committees or even assign a recruitment director, because of size limitations. In such situations the organizer could be in overall charge of this work.

There are several elementary steps which locals might find useful in organizing this work.

1) Locals can keep a card file of YSJPer's with their addresses, schools, phone numbers, and comments indicating their status in relation to the YSA, as well as any other pertinent information.

2) In larger locals, the recruitment director could then work out how these names should be divided up and utilized by the local to ensure that each one of them, in one form or another, is being followed up. All the names could be incorporated in mailing lists for forums, classes, and conferences, while certain key prospective members might be singled out for special follow-up.

3) The various fractions can then be given the names of those people each fraction is most likely to come in contact with. Each fraction can then take responsibility for following them up with more direct contact, and seek to involve them in activity.

4) Locals should be conscious of which YSJPer's are most likely to join the YSA soon. These individuals should be given special attention, particularly in terms of personal discussions.

The Oakland/Berkeley local, for example, is compiling a list of the 10 to 15 YSJPer's most likely to join. These people will be included on a special mailing list and the executive committee members are taking responsibility for personal discussions with them.

5) Campus fractions, while they may not have so sophisticated a division of labor regarding recruitment, depending on their size, should still systematize and organize this work. Large campus fractions might keep a list of potential recruits to follow up, and in any case fraction heads will want to pay particular attention to this work.

6) Periodic reports and discussion in the executive committee and local can give YSAers a chance to discuss out the local's progress and perspectives for recruitment.

One important general rule to go by in organizing the local's recruitment is that our perspectives should be realistic and in line with the overall projections of the local. While some locals may want to set a quota to be fulfilled over a period of time, others may find this method too rigid. Ultimately, the result of organizing this work should be achieving a real conscious-

ness in the local about the importance of gaining new members and developing them into revolutionary cadre.

For example, we should avoid getting bogged down with lists so huge that the individuals cannot be realistically followed through step by step. Rather, an effort should be made to concentrate on those people that the local can feasibly follow up and eventually convince to join.

CLASSES

One valuable tool for getting people interested in our ideas is a class series on the basic concepts of our program. These classes teach people the elementary things they want to find out about the YSA, facilitate their integration once they join, and show them that we are serious not only about the practical application but also the theoretical aspect of our politics.

In some larger locals it is possible to organize these series on an ongoing basis so that new people coming around can immediately participate in such a series. Other locals may prefer to organize them as the opportunity to involve several new prospective members arises, such as right after building some action that has brought several activists close to the YSA.

Whatever the case, these class series will be the most effective if they are aimed primarily at those people we are trying to recruit. That is, there is no all-purpose set of "contact classes." Classes should be creatively prepared to take up the specific questions that a specific group of prospective members are most interested in.

The Washington DC local has recently recruited two women who were attending a class on women's liberation, and the local is currently holding a class series on socialism at a high school where there are 50 YSJPer's.

We should also keep in mind trying to schedule classes at a time and place that will maximize attendance by non-YSAers. Some locals have found it most productive to hold classes on a particular campus, rather than at our local headquarters if it is not near the campus.

While occasionally people with whom we have had no contact before will be interested in a YSA class series, usually such people are more likely to be attracted to other activities such as the election campaign, or working with us in the antiwar movement. Therefore, we want to set up these classes for specific people we already know are interested in our politics, rather than trying to project them as general public functions that we expect large numbers of people to attend.

The Spring Socialist Conferences will also provide an opportunity for large-scale recruitment.

BUILDING A CAMPUS BASE

by Lisa Potash, Seattle YSA

The purpose of this article is to relate how the University of Washington fraction this spring further concretized our general conceptions of building a campus base, starting from the premise of improving our previous work in attaining a balance between our mass movement and direct YSA-building work, projecting an independent YSA face inside the Campaign and the mass movements and apart from them, and projecting the YSA into the center of campus political life and struggles. Central to this was how the fraction was organized on a day-to-day basis.

Organizing the fraction

This spring we started with 6 UW students, reflecting the work done during the previous year, and 5 campus workers, 3 of them Party fraction and committee directors of major areas of work, available during the day for consultation. All of the students had been on campus as students for at least 6 months already, thus enabling the fraction to gain a good feel for campus political sentiment, the student government and newspaper, and the different political organizations on campus. Several of the comrades were already seen as authoritative student leaders and well-known YSAers as a result of the previous year's work.

In carrying out the spring work, the fraction integrated several important goals in all activities. From the very beginning it was clearly established that the major job of the fraction head was to direct the fraction - we consciously did not project her as a key activist in the SMC, the Campus Abortion Committee, or the YSJP. This enabled her to maintain an overview of all work and to insure that the tasks directly building the YSA got done. We tried to think and plan ahead as much as possible in order to avoid haphazard organizing resulting in periodic crises. We established the norm that if comrades felt that they could not sell Militants or carry out some other specific YSA assignment they had previously signed up for, they would sit down with the fraction head and decide with her whether or not that assignment took priority over the conflicting work they had to get done, instead of making the decision on their own. This consultation helped insure that direct YSA building work did not fall by the wayside under the pressure of mass movement work with deadlines. In line with this, we were successful in involving independents in SMC, AAC, (Campus Abortion Action Committee) and YSJP work, thus releasing our comrades time for sitting at YSA tables, selling, and recruitment.

Fraction meetings

We regularized the time and place for the weekly fraction meetings and chose a time when all comrades could make it. The order of agenda points reflected our priorities and insured

that if we ran out of time, YSA work would not be cut off the meeting agenda. A sample agenda looks like the following:

1. Recruitment
2. YSA literature tables
3. Sales
4. Campaign
5. Anti-war
6. Women's liberation

Recruitment

The UW fraction had a permanent representative (the fraction-head) to the citywide recruitment committee, which met every two weeks. The fraction held an ongoing series of recruitment classes on campus. The series was as follows:

1. How To Make A Revolution in the U. S.
2. Nationalism and Socialism
3. Feminism and Socialism
4. Young Socialist Strategy For the 1972 Elections

We built the classes through attractive leaflets posted up and an announcement in the campus daily paper.

In relation to all activities, we tried to organize our work so that nothing cut across recruitment. Recognizing that personal political discussion is central to getting a contact to join, each comrade tried to set aside a block of time each week to talk to the contacts that they were assigned to and comrades were strongly discouraged from letting any other work no matter how pressing, from interfering with that block of time. For more information on these personal discussions, see YSO 6/2/72.

Under the recruitment point in all fraction meetings, each comrade would report on the contacts that they were assigned to, what questions they had about joining, what YSA events they were attending, etc. This took time, but it was invaluable. Comrades gained a sense of how to approach contacts, answer their questions, and to sift out the recruitable from the non-recruitable contacts in order to use their time more effectively. The fraction head had a master list of all comrades' contacts and in between fraction meetings she called each comrade to discuss the progress with each contact.

By the end of the spring offensive, we recruited 7 new UW comrades, all students.

Sales

Under the sales point in the fraction meetings, a list of all upcoming political events on campus, obtained from the campus paper calendar, was passed around and comrades signed up for those events and signed out the Militants right there in the meeting. We prioritized our sales, putting poli-

tical events to sell at first, since that is where we sell most successfully and the Militant has the most impact. Some examples of such events that we sold at were the following: Native American Fishing Rights teach-in, Palestinian teach-in, Roll-back tuition rallies, and the SMC and AAC meetings and events. We also found that having such a sign-up list made it more likely that comrades would sell, instead of having comrades sign-up to sell and deciding later where and when and reaching the end of the week with the Militants still sitting under their beds. By the end of the spring we had more than doubled the number of sales we had had in the fall. We assigned a comrade in the fraction to organize sales, in order to insure that the work got done and that money was accounted for.

YSA literature tables

We set these tables twice a week, and kept them separate from the YSJP tables, thus maintaining a YSA face separate from that of the campaign. The fraction head was assigned to see that these tables were set up and adequately staffed with at least one comrade who was experienced in sitting at tables. The tables were set up in the student union building and at specific events. We chose hours to set up when there was the most traffic, 10 am to 2 pm. On the table was an attractive spread of popular pamphlets on the mass movements and major issues as well as a few basics and a sign up sheet. Behind the table was a large colored recruiting poster saying who we are.

Forums

We assigned a comrade to post-up the forum leaflets each week and to get a mention in the daily campus paper calendar at least once if not twice each week.

Fund-raising

The campus fraction was the backbone of many of the activities of local finance committee in raising money for the fund drive. Because of the sporadic nature of this work, we did not assign a campus comrade to it. Instead we had all campus comrades participate in it under the direction of the citywide finance director. For one month, each fraction member took turns sitting at a booksale table which netted us over \$300.00. To build the booksale we held it in the major lobby of the student union with an attractive sign above the table. Often independents would help staff the table, releasing our comrades to do political work. We found that after the bulk of the good books were sold, it wasn't worth setting up the table even though we had a large quantity left. The fraction also helped build 2 major film showings which netted us a total of over \$500.00. This activity was the one which netted us the most money for the least amount of work.

Posters which were printed professionally and attractive

ads in the campus paper made up the publicity.

Mass movement work

Our basic approach was that the major contribution we could make to building and pushing the mass movements forward was our political perspective and our experience in organizing.

In line with this we were successful in getting independents to participate in the bulk of the work, in the day-to-day building, along with comrades. In the SMC steering committee there were two members of the Young Democrats and the co-ordinator of the Youth for McGovern for Washington state, as well as other independents, most of whom actually participated in the day-to-day work. In the AAC, there were about 5 consistently active independents, among them 2 Young Democrats, who played a very active role. For further information on the UWSMC and the major teach-in it built and the way it approached the whole winter/spring period, see our YSO article in issue 3/31/72. For more information on the Abortion Committee and the referendum it had on campus, see our YSO article in issue 4/21/72.

Campus struggles

In order to really become part of the center of campus political life, we understood it was important not to rigidly box ourselves into just SMC, AAC, and YSJP. We set the norm of having the fraction head bring the daily campus paper to the organizer each day, strongly encouraging all campus comrades to read the campus paper every day, and made sure we got a hold of and read every leaflet passed out by anyone on campus. This gave us a good feel for the development and the potential of the different campus struggles and issues. We participated in the following campus struggles:

1. YSA and the YSJP were part of the coalition initiated by the Foreign Student Council to roll back tuition.
2. YSA and the YSJP helped build the campus referendum to win women the right to abortions in the university health services.
3. As part of its printed election campaign platform for student government, YSJP supported the Black Student Union's demand for more funding of Economic Opportunity Program.
4. The YSA and the YSJP were part of the coalition to defend Babak Zahrie, an Iranian student threatened with deportation for his political activity.
5. YSA was involved in the campaign by the Chicano and Black students for a Minority Dining Hall in the dorms.

In these struggles we also showed our solidarity by having the YSA and the YSJP send letters to the Daily campus paper.

Campaign

The fraction assigned a comrade on campus to head up

YSJP work. She had a master list of all UW endorsers and called them regularly to help staff YSJP tables and to participate in interventions as YSJPer. Throughout the entire spring, tables were staffed mostly by independents and we recruited some of them to the YSA through this activity. Having a campaign presence at all major political events helped people see that it was part of the activist movements not just talking about them. Facilitating this was that one of our statewide candidates was the central leader in the UWSMC. His picture and articles by him appeared frequently in Daily campus paper in regards to anti-war activity.

The YSJP ran a slate in the elections for student government in February. In our printed campaign platform were not only planks on the mass movements, but also on all the campus issues with programs of action relating to them. Although we were unable to get other forces into the slate because of lack of sufficient political agreement on program, our campaign, the most visible one on campus, had a real effect in pushing the campaigns of BSU and MECHA to the left; the BSU and MECHA candidates came out in favor of abortion, child-care, and tuition rollback.

Most of the YSJP candidates were well-known as mass movement activists and YSAers. The Daily campus paper came out in support of one of them because of her well-known activity in the abortion struggle. Since one of the YSJP candidates was also on the SWP statewide ticket, the relationship between the SWP campaigns and the YSJP ticket were more concretely and clearly shown.

Although there are many events worth noting, for lack of space I will cite one. The YSJP debated Youth for McGovern on campus. This event drew over 150, including many McGovern supporters. We found that persistence in pushing for a debate pays off; the McGovern apparatus had refused to debate for more than 3 months and finally agreed to it because we did not give up. This event helped further establish the YSJP as a legitimate alternative on campus.

During the upsurge

The whole process of better organizing the fraction from the very beginning of the spring better prepared us for the anti-war upsurges. Instead of dropping all but anti-war work, we shifted the focus of our direct YSA building work to the upsurge, using it as an arena to build the YSA. The tone and organizing of a balance in our work during the spring was crucial in making this shift possible. However, it was not easy since our comrades were taking central responsibility on a 24-hour basis for organizing the anti-war activities. We took several steps to minimize problems; we had fraction meetings almost every day where specific comrades were assigned as their sole responsibility to sell Militants, set up campaign tables, and distribute the Socialist Activists Conference brochures at the rally or meeting of that particular day. We

had at least one comrade speak in the name of the YSA at all of the mass meetings in order to help further establish the YSA as an organization with a clear perspective of action for the anti-war movement. We ran out of Socialist Activists Conference brochures early in the first wave of the upsurge, so we printed up and distributed another 5,000. As a result, the Conference, held in the ebb of activities, drew over 120 participants. There wasn't one activity during the upsurge where there wasn't a visible presence of our movement.

Miscellaneous, but important

1. Having the organizer at all campus fraction meetings, SMC, AAC, and USJP activities is necessary both for the organizer's understanding of the campus, and the work of the fraction. Also, it helped facilitate the most efficient and thorough fraction meetings by having the organizer meet with the campus fraction head before every fraction to go over the reports and the agenda. Because of the scope of campus work, the fraction head and the organizer have to be in constant touch with each other.

2. Having an interventionist approach to the campus paper -- the campus paper is respected and widely read by most students, probably even more than the bourgeois press. This spring we audaciously tried to get articles by the YSA, YSJP, AAC, and SMC in the Daily campus paper on all issues we could relate to. Once again, here persistence is key; many writers and editors of campus papers resent being told what to write or having others write articles. We found that personally meeting with the editor and getting a definite commitment to print something and to call us before printing if any editing changes need to be made is a very effective way of getting your foot in the door. After a few articles have been submitted, the editor will be more responsive if the articles are well-written and don't need editing; the personal meetings with the editor began to convince him of our seriousness. Not one week went by this winter and spring without at least one article on some aspect of activity our fraction was involved in.

3. Socialist Activist Conferences -- Without going into detail here on the total organization of the Conference on campus, there is one point worth noting. Getting money from the student government can be done. The UWYSA received \$850.00 for our Conference this May. There are two important lessons we learned. 1) Investigate all sources of money on campus before applying for any; if you don't, the student government thinks you are not serious. 2) Prepare professionally itemized budgets that are thoroughly understandable without any verbal motivation.

4. We found that one weakness of our work on campus was that we did not have an accurate, on-going account of what supplies and literature we had in our campus office, and where they were located in the office. This made the office a very difficult and confusing place to work in, especially since the

YSA, YSJP, AAC, and the SMC shared one office. To alleviate these problems, we are assigning one comrade on the fraction to be office manager. This person will keep weekly inventory of all literature and supplies, restock them when necessary, and keep them organized in an orderly, logical way, so that everyone can find what they need.

Seattle Community College

In addition to the strong fraction we had at U. of Washington, we also had 4 comrades at Seattle Community College this past fall and 2 comrades there this past spring. This is the only campus in Seattle where the Stalinists have any sort of fraction; however, they are not visible or active for the most part on campus. In February 1972, SCC teachers went on strike; it was the first strike in the history of Washington state. Because of the constant work done by our comrades in the name of the YSA, YSJP, and the SMC for some time, our comrades on campus were able to intervene as leaders from the beginning of the strike support meetings called by students. At these meetings, the YWLL came out of the woodwork, and was stronger numerically than we were.

For a full report on the strike, the student support strike, and our intervention, see YSO of 3/17/72.

We sent the YSA organizer to work full-time in our fraction on the SCC campus for the duration of the student support strike. We politically defeated the YWLL in the mass meetings. Two of our comrades were elected as co-ordinators for the student support strike, and they also served in the teachers union office as student picket captains, getting dozens of students on the teachers picket lines. As a result of the good relationship we built up in the name of the YSA and YSJP with the union leadership, we were able to get the union president to give a forum. Because of our intervention a student strike support steering committee was set up; it met daily and organized all the day-to-day work of the student support strike. I think one generalization that should be drawn from this experience is the importance of relating to whatever degree possible to all important political struggles that take place, even when they are not where we have large, strong fractions.

July 29, 1972

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE MARIJUANA POLICY IN THE YSA by Calvin Vail, Portsmouth, N.H., YSA

At present the YSA has a "drug" policy that states that members of the YSA cannot, under any circumstances, smoke grass. This policy, which was adopted to defend the YSA from police entrapment, is outdated and should be changed.

Today millions of people illegally smoke grass. The type of people who smoke this weed are highest among the people radicalizing the most. These include: Black and other oppressed nationalities, high school and college students, gays and Vietnam veterans. To many of these people grass is a part of their life style. To these people, to give up smoking grass is a big sacrifice.

With the present YSA policy we are preventing many of these people from joining the YSA. Maybe it is because of lack of seriousness that stops some of these people from giving up grass to join the YSA, but how many people first join the YSA with a serious attitude and understanding to sacrifice for the revolution that they develop after a period of membership? It is clear that the main roadblock to recruitment is our grass policy.

The policy, which doesn't tolerate pot smoking under any circumstances, is filled with contradictions. The grass laws are unenforceable. The only busts you hear about these days are pushers or very careless people. The society has learned to accept it. The YSA is the only people practically in the

youth radicalization that don't turn on. There are many "safe zones" where people turn on. Rock concerts, college dormitories, antiwar demonstrations, the privacy of one's own home and the woods. Our old gay policy, which excluded gays for the absurd reason that it was illegal and has discredited us in the eyes of much of the gay liberation movement, was changed because, among other reasons, the law was unenforceable.

It has been our experience that some of the most politically healthy and active people do not join the YSA because of our policy.

The cops would have a difficult time trying to bust our organization on a grass frame-up: 1) because we are a strong organization and could defend our membership easily, 2) the majority of the population favors legalizing grass and the ruling class would have trouble justifying jailing comrades for grass, 3) sympathy would be with us and against them.

These are just a few of the reasons our grass policy should change. The longer we keep this policy the more we have to lose. Are we going to wait with our grass policy like we did with the gay policy and suffer the same consequences?

September 1, 1972

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST OR THE OLD SOCIALIST?

by Marty Rothman, Los Angeles YSA

The first issue of the Young Socialist is entirely different than I had hoped.

I had hoped that the Young Socialist (or whatever it was going to be called) would be a "youth paper."

From the technical point of view the first issue is well done. The grammar is correct, the printing of high quality, the politics accurately stated.

But the paper lacks the style, imagination, audacity, and the other hard to define things which would make it a "youth paper."

The new Y. S. is written in the style of The Militant -- "strait" coverage of current political events.

The question is: Do we need an inferior version of The Militant when we already have the best radical newspaper in the country?

In its present form the Y. S. will be badly overshadowed by The Militant. Why sell the Y. S. on your campus when you could be selling The Militant? They are both written in the same style, and both appeal primarily to people who are already political activists. The Militant is bigger, weekly, and much more attractive.

What we need is something different that The Militant. It should be directed towards young people and should speak

their language. It should strive to awaken the interest of people who do not yet see the relevance of an organization like the YSA, but who are rebelling in other ways against capitalist society.

Fortunately we have good examples at hand. One is the Young Socialist of our Canadian co-thinkers. It is a living illustration of the provocative style that can capture the attention of youth.

We should write our paper in the spirit of the Canadian example.

The second example is the U. S. Young Socialist in late 1969, just before it was discontinued. We were printing some exciting stuff!

I listed a series of excellent examples from the Canadian paper in my contribution on "Youth Culture." I strongly urge YSAers and especially the Y. S. editors to leaf through some of the examples I've mentioned. I urge the Y. S. editors to sit down and do some more thinking about who it is we are trying to appeal to, and what kind of style will succeed in reaching these people.

Fortunately, we have published only one issue of the new Y. S., not yet enough to set us in a mold. Let's break the first mold before it hardens around us and start printing what we need -- a genuine youth oriented newspaper.

October 12, 1972

WHY AREN'T WE GROWING?

by Marty Rothman, Los Angeles YSA

"By the time of the next convention, the YSA will have doubled and possibly tripled in size."

This statement was made in December 1971, at the last YSA convention, by the national leadership of the YSA.

It is now almost time for the 1972 convention and appropriate to reconsider that statement. Did we double in size?

The official figures will not be available until the convention opens, but unless something unexpected happens we already know the answer: We did not even approach doubling our membership in the last year.

Why?

This is the single most important question for the YSA to discuss at the 1972 convention. This is the most serious matter we have before us.

There are three kinds of answers:

- (1) The original projection was unrealistic.
- (2) The objective conditions for recruitment were less favorable than we had expected one year ago.
- (3) The YSA has failed to take adequate advantage of its opportunities.

I am inclined to place a large amount of responsibility on (1) and (3), and a small measure of responsibility on (2). I think the original projection was unrealistic, but the YSA should have grown significantly in the last year (is a 40% gain unreasonable?). It is true that the radical movements were, on the whole, less active this year than during the period 1967-70. But the opportunities for recruitment have not disappeared; the objective situation remains promising.

I would like to hear the opinions of other members and the opinions of those in the YSA national leadership on this question.

October 12, 1972

NOVEMBER 1, 1972: The following contribution to the discussion was written before the announcement that Washington and Hanoi had reached agreement on the basic points of a cease-fire. The analysis of the role of the Communist Party and Young Workers Liberation League in the antiwar movement is still of educational value. The relationship of world Stalinism to the tentative agreements and the implications of these developments for the antiwar movement will be discussed in depth at the YSA convention itself. /

The NEC Political resolution reaffirms the position of the YSA that the struggle in Indochina is central to the world revolution today. It deals at length with the political situation facing the Vietnamese freedom fighters and the objective factors Nixon must deal with in his attempt to crush the Vietnamese revolution.

Adding heavily into Nixon's plans have been the counter-revolutionary policies of the world Stalinist movement.

In this contribution I want to expand on this point and deal more specifically with the role of the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League in the U. S. antiwar movement.

MOSCOW-PEKING BETRAYALS

At a time when the Vietnamese revolution is entering its most crucial stage, the treachery of the bureaucracies in Moscow and Peking has reached a new high. They have refused to supply the Vietnamese freedom fighters with sufficient military aid and have turned their backs on the task of helping to build an international antiwar movement. In addition, since last spring they have stepped up efforts to pressure Hanoi to accept a compromise settlement favorable to imperialism in return for various diplomatic and economic advantages.

The Nixon visits to Peking and Moscow marked a widening of the rift between China and the USSR. They now compete with each other for who will win the greatest diplomatic privileges, from imperialism, at the expense of the Indochinese revolution.

Their policies are based on the Stalinist theory of "socialism in one country" and their stated goal of reaching "peaceful co-existence" with imperialism.

This theory is based on the notion that socialism can be achieved in one country without the victory of the world socialist revolution and is used to justify the subordination of the world revolution to the narrow, national and diplomatic interests of the ruling bureaucracies in Moscow and Peking.

The Stalinist bureaucrats have attempted to pose their betrayals of the world revolution and their diplomatic maneuvers as being in the interests of the masses of people in the Soviet Union and China. In fact, every action of the Stalinist bureaucrats is aimed solely toward maintaining and increasing their own material privileges. These goals run directly counter to the interests of the masses both within the workers states and around the world.

The Stalinist bureaucracies have attempted to rationalize their opposition to the victory of the socialist revolution by putting forward the concept that the victory of these revolutions would spur the harsh retaliation of imperialism, thereby disrupting the consolidation of the workers states.

The falseness of these concepts has been proven time and again throughout history. The aim of the international capitalist class is to crush the world revolution. They will not be appeased by the defeats of liberation forces around the world -- defeats create an opposite effect. The victories of the world working class movement, on the other hand, serve to give impetus and inspiration to other liberation struggles. The only real defense against imperialism lies in the victory of the world socialist revolution.

The major role of Moscow and Peking and the Communist parties around the world which are subservient to them, has been to divert revolutionary struggles in an attempt to improve their diplomatic positions on a world scale.

THE CP, YWLL AND NIXON'S MOSCOW TRIP

Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union last spring and the diplomatic maneuvering that has taken place since have occurred in the face of a step-up in U. S. bombing raids to a level unprecedented in the history of warfare. By greeting Nixon with open arms in the Kremlin on May 22, the Moscow bureaucrats reassured Nixon that Soviet retaliation to the mining of North Vietnamese ports was out of the question. Moscow's summitry not only resulted in increased pressure on the Vietnamese to negotiate a settlement, but also bred widespread illusions about Nixon's real intentions. Nixon and Brezhnev's demogogy which portrayed the Moscow trip as "a step forward to world peace" had the effect of undercutting the massive upsurge of the antiwar movement last spring.

In the United States the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League, which are totally subservient to the dictates of the Kremlin, did their best to cover up Moscow's treachery. They launched a major campaign to offer justification for Moscow's deals with Nixon.

In a speech given at the May 21 antiwar demonstration in

Washington, D. C. , while Nixon was en-route to Moscow, Gus Hall, CP general secretary, had the nerve to declare: "...I can tell you on the highest authority -- that the continued all-out support of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries to the just struggle of the people of Indochina--will not be up for discussion or negotiations when Tricky Dick visits those cities. Whatever the Vietnamese want they will get."

Hall's lies fly in the face of repeated reports that have appeared in the press recently on Moscow's relationship to the Vietnamese struggle. One such report indicates what the Vietnamese are not getting from the Soviet Union. According to the August 20 New York Times:

"Since the interruption in bombing of North Vietnam in 1968, American technology has developed highly effective jamming devices that drown out signals from launching sites to the missiles and interfere with tracking radar.

"While Soviet technology is understood to have kept pace with the passing years, relatively few Soviet anti-aircraft innovations seem to have been passed on to Hanoi. By all indications, the Russians have been far more helpful to Arab defenses against the Israeli Air Force than they have to the North Vietnamese."

Another report in the September 12 New York Times shows the role of Moscow in Nixon's recent diplomatic maneuvering:

"... Western travelers who had meetings in the last few days with top-level representatives of the Soviet Union, North Vietnam and the Vietcong, said they had indications that Mr. Kissinger's current talks in Moscow could be decisive on the war."

The leading section of Moscow bureaucrats the report continued:

"... is intensely eager to develop large-scale trade and credit relations with the United States and is prepared to urge Hanoi to compromise in return for economic promises from Washington."

The central justification for the Kremlin's detente with Nixon was put forward in a May 31 editorial in the Daily World: "The most important factor in the international political scene today is the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. The most important goal in that relationship is agreement on peaceful coexistence."

Of course, the CP and YWLL are dead wrong on this question.

The most important factor in the international political scene today is the Vietnamese revolution. The most important goal is not "peaceful coexistence," but the victory of the

Vietnamese liberation struggle.

CP AND YWLL IN THE AMERICAN ANTIWAR MOVEMENT

Since the early days of the mass antiwar movement the Communist Party has firmly opposed its united front, mass action character. The strategy the CP has counterposed to the mass action perspective is one which conforms to the dominant political ideology in the U. S. today -- the reformist strategy of reliance on the capitalist electoral process and politicians to end the war.

The CP has attempted to dissolve the independent character of the antiwar movement in two basic ways. First, by directly attempting to have the antiwar movement formally support liberal democrats. An example is the recent endorsement of George McGovern by the Peoples Coalition for Peace and Justice, the "antiwar" formation the CP has been active in. Secondly, it attempts to dilute the character of the antiwar movement by advocating a "multi-issue" movement. By attempting to have the antiwar movement take a position on a whole series of other issues, the CP has hoped to cut across its independent, mass-action thrust.

The CP has also opposed the principled stance of the antiwar movement for Vietnamese self-determination. Since the early days of the antiwar movement the CP has consistently opposed the demand of immediate withdrawal -- the only demand fully recognizing the right of the Vietnamese to self-determination. In 1965 the CP attempted to counterpose the demand of "Negotiations Now" -- a demand that implies that the U. S. government has a right to be in Indochina in the first place.

Had the CP succeeded in imposing the demand for "Negotiations Now" on the antiwar movement the logic would have been for the antiwar movement to dissolve in 1968 when Johnson, under pressure from the antiwar movement, agreed to negotiate with the Vietnamese in Paris.

A more recent example of the CP and YWLL's hostility to the immediate withdrawal demand is illustrated by its campaign for the antiwar movement to adopt a slogan calling for the US to "set a date" for withdrawal of troops. The "set the date" demand is not consistent with the right of the Vietnamese to self-determination because it also concedes the right of the U. S. to occupy Vietnam.

The CP and YWLL demagogically tried to rationalize their support for the "set the date" demand by the fact that it is raised by the Vietnamese as an aspect of their negotiating position. In reality, the positions that the CP and YWLL take in the antiwar movement have nothing in common with the interests of the Vietnamese revolution. The real reason the CP put forward the demand of "set the date" is because it is a demand that is more easily accepted by the liberal democrats and would therefore be a basis for the antiwar movement to

support liberal electoral campaigns.

Although on rare occasions in the past the CP and the YWLL have supported and helped build mass antiwar demonstrations, they were viewed as a tactic to be subordinated to their general electoral strategy.

For example, in the spring of 1971 after Nixon's invasion of Laos, NPAC, the SMC and other forces built participation in the April 24 March on Washington which attracted over 800,000 people. It wasn't until just one week before the demonstration, after it had become clear that it would be large, that the CP and YWLL finally endorsed it. Previously, they actually played a destructive role, attempting to undercut the authority of April 24 by counterposing it to the Mayday activities scheduled to take place in Washington the week after.

Although they did finally support the demonstration, in an article that appeared in the Daily World distributed at the demonstration entitled "To Stop the War..." W. W. Weinstone, a member of the CP's Political Committee outlined the real course they were proposing.

In the article, Weinstone indicates that mass actions in the streets have little or nothing to do with "stopping the war" and focuses primarily on "mass political actions on the electoral front." Weinstone points out that what is needed to end the war is a new electoral realignment of the liberal wings of the Republican and Democratic parties to form a new "Peoples Party."

"What the people need -- what has been urgently needed for some time," he writes, "is a People's Party based primarily on the working class and the oppressed minorities. Such a party will be established as conditions become more acute and particularly as the Communists and progressives vigorously agitate for it and prepare a real substantial mass base from below."

This in a nutshell is what the CP and its youth organizations have been trying to accomplish all along. The reformist demands they have put forward in the antiwar movement have been part of a general attempt to turn it into a "real substantial mass base" that can be used to strengthen the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

THE 7-POINT PROGRAM

Over the last year the CP and YWLL and other forces have proposed that the antiwar movement adopt as its central demand "Support the 7-Point Peace Plan."

Before going into what we think the response of the antiwar

movement should be, I want to explain what the attitude of the YSA is to it.

The 7-Point Program is the formal negotiating position of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam at the Paris peace talks. It demands that the U. S. set a terminal date for the total withdrawal of all U. S. forces from Indochina and that: "The U. S. must end its intervention in the internal affairs of South Vietnam and stop backing the regime of Nguyen Van Thieu."

The PRG proposal offers the establishment of a three-part coalition government, including the National Liberation Front, representatives of the present Saigon regime other than Thieu, and "neutralist" elements belonging to neither grouping. The newly established government, according to the proposal, would organize "genuinely free, democratic, and fair national elections" and would "refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries."

It also offers arrangements for a cease-fire, and a reciprocal release of all prisoners of war.

At a time when the Vietnamese face a massive terror-bombing assault, the PRG proposal offers the U. S. concessions in return for an end to the destruction of their country.

For example, the fact that the 7-Point Program proposes that the U. S. set a date for withdrawal, rather than demanding an immediate, unconditional withdrawal is a concession. According to such an agreement the U. S. would be given a right to stay in Vietnam for a certain period of time, which, as history has shown, would pose real dangers for the Vietnamese revolution.

Our position has been that we recognize the unconditional right of the Vietnamese to self-determination. That is, we see it as their right to determine, free of outside interference, the political future of their country. For this reason, we fully recognize the right of the Vietnamese to negotiate and offer such concessions.

However, it is important for us as socialists to understand that the 7-Point Proposal is more than simply a negotiating position that lays out purely tactical considerations and military logistics for U. S. withdrawal. It does much more than that. It proposes a political perspective for the future of South Vietnam, and outlines, in part, the political program of the PRG of South Vietnam.

In our opinion, a negotiated agreement on the 7-Point Proposal would not solve the fundamental problems that the Vietnamese have been fighting against for over thirty years.

The Vietnamese workers and peasants have been struggling around demands for national independence and basic land

reform. The interests of the imperialists and the Vietnamese capitalists have always and will continue to run counter to these demands. Their basic aim remains the same -- to crush the Vietnamese revolution.

The history of the Vietnam struggle clearly indicates that the imperialists have been able to maintain a foothold in Vietnam by maintaining a capitalist government in Saigon.

The PRG 7-Point Proposal offers the establishment of a "three segment government of national concord" -- a government which will include representatives of the Vietnamese capitalist class. Such a government -- a popular front -- cannot solve the problems of the Vietnamese.

A capitalist government in Saigon will continue to provide a foothold for the imperialists and will not satisfy the desire of the Vietnamese masses for national independence. In addition, such a government would not be able to carry out any real thoroughgoing land reforms or any other major concessions to the Vietnamese masses without undercutting its social base.

The question at stake for the Vietnamese liberation struggle is which class will rule in Vietnam. The basic democratic demands of the Vietnamese cannot be realized short of a socialist revolution and the establishment of a workers state.

Despite these disagreements that we as revolutionary socialists have with the 7-point program, our major task remains the same -- to build an international antiwar movement that can act in defense of the Vietnamese revolution and serve to relieve the pressure that the Vietnamese are now under.

We do not build the antiwar movement because we are in full political agreement with the programs of the PRG and the DRV. We do not require this agreement as a condition. We give unconditional defense to the Vietnamese liberation struggle. What the Vietnamese most need now from us is a massive, independent movement demanding that U. S. forces get out of Indochina now.

Over the fall, a number of groupings including forces involved in PCPJ set up coalitions in the Bay Area, New York, and a number of other cities around the country to build mass demonstrations in local areas on October 14 around support for the 7-Point Proposal.

This perspective for the antiwar movement is incorrect.

For the antiwar movement to adopt this demand would not be in the interests of the Vietnamese revolution. First, the demand "Support the 7-Point Proposal" would narrow the base of the antiwar movement and therefore undercut its ability to mobilize masses in action against the war. The demand for "Out Now", a clearly formulated, principled demand aimed at the U. S. government, has a far broader appeal to antiwar

Americans than a demand calling for support to a specific negotiating position. Secondly, the demand "Support the 7-Point Program" does not address itself to the question of self-determination for the Vietnamese, and therefore gives credence to the notion that Nixon has some right to be negotiating the future of the Vietnamese in the first place.

In addition, the fact that the terror-bombing campaign of the U. S. imperialism has forced concessions of the Vietnamese is not something that the antiwar movement should welcome. The antiwar movement should expose the role of the imperialists in attempting to terrorize the Vietnamese into major concessions.

An example in history is instructive on this point. In 1918 the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty which included a major concession giving up a large section of Soviet territory to the German occupation forces. The Bolsheviks saw this as a concession that was necessary given the military pressure the Soviet Union was under. However, Lenin and Trotsky made clear the attitude that German revolutionaries and antiwar forces should take toward the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Lenin characterized as "scoundrels" anyone who didn't oppose the imposition of this treaty on the new Soviet government. Lenin said just because the Bolsheviks had signed it was no excuse for socialists around the world to support it.

In the same sense, the Vietnamese today have a right to negotiate concessions they see as necessary to defend their country from the merciless attacks of imperialism. However, the antiwar movement in the U. S. has no need to make concessions for them and should not see its role as one of passing judgement on the plans of the Vietnamese liberation fighters. The job of the antiwar movement is to get the government out of Indochina now so that the Vietnamese can decide for themselves the future of their country.

Of course, the CP and YWLL failed to learn this lesson. Not only do they propose that the antiwar movement adopt it as a demand, but according to the October 7, Peoples World, the West coast organ of the CP, they proclaim the 7-Point Plan as the "only just solution to the war." (Emphasis added.) Is the only just solution one which forces concessions from the Vietnamese? Would not immediate, total withdrawal of all U. S. forces be a "just" solution?

Some proponents of the 7-Point Plan in the antiwar movement have gone so far as to indicate that this demand would be better than "Out Now" because it shows the "reasonableness" of the Vietnamese liberation forces, the leadership of which doesn't call for installing a "communist regime" in South Vietnam.

They claim that because it calls for a three-segment coalition government it addresses itself to the fears of many Americans that there will be a "communist takeover" and "blood-

bath" (sic) in South Vietnam after a U. S. withdrawal.

Again, among the main proponents of this type of twisted reasoning are the CP and YWLL. An editorial in the October 7 Daily World points out:

"... (Nixon) is laying waste to Vietnam to prevent a settlement which would impose a Communist government directly or indirectly on the people of South Vietnam."

"The 'Communist government' bit is a deliberate lie. The truth is... the proposal for a three segment provisional government in which the PRG would be a minority. That government would carry through a democratic national election."

This type of reasoning is a clear bending to anticommunist notions that the antiwar movement has been so instrumental in undercutting. The antiwar movement must continue to explain that the people of Vietnam alone have the right to determine their own future and establish any type of government they see fit to.

An antiwar movement based on the 7-Point Program would amount to nothing more than building support for the Vietnamese on a conditional basis. That is, building support for withdrawal of U. S. forces only if the Vietnamese agree to certain conditions of withdrawal.

In addition, it would leave the antiwar movement open to the disorientation that Nixon would attempt to create through his diplomatic maneuvering.

* * *

This fall, as election day draws near, the CP and YWLL have directed more and more of their energies into support for George McGovern's presidential campaign. The Peoples Coalition for Peace and Justice, the "antiwar" formation the CP and YWLL have worked in, other than its endorsement of McGovern, has done little in its own name.

However, in some areas the CP and YWLL have played an active role in building various antiwar activities. For example, YWLLers in some areas were openly active in the Indochina Peace Campaign, a pro-McGovern tour of Jane Fonda, and a program called Medical Aid for Indochina, a project to raise money to build a children's hospital in Vietnam.

The YWLL played a heavier role in building the October 14 demonstration in the Bay Area, where they openly participated in various planning meetings.

Also, in the Los Angeles area YWLLers have initiated Student Unions for Peace and Justice (a multi-issue student group PCPJ hopes to counterpose to the SMC) on a few campuses and high schools.

Over the last period YSAers have made a conscious attempt to involve YWLLers in joint antiwar activity and have also aggressively approached them with our program to win as many as possible to revolutionary socialism.

This is an approach we will want to continue.

October 17, 1972

THE "YOUNG" SOCIALIST OR THE "IRRELEVANT" SOCIALIST?

by John Beadle, Los Angeles YSA

The revived Young Socialist is not the kind of paper the YSA needs if it is to gain hegemony over the youth radicalization.

A reading of the first issue of the paper reveals a rather dry, sterile, boring journal which should cause little excitement among radicalizing youth today. This is not a criticism of the politics of the paper; the politics are fine. But the style of the new paper reveals an inability on the part of the editors to perceive the process of radicalization and the needs, aspirations and level of consciousness of college students, high schoolers and youth in general.

Youth today are frustrated. They are generally dissatisfied with the state of things. They are against the war. In their majority they support legal abortion and equal rights for women. They think Blacks, Chicanos and gays are get-

ting the short end of the stick (this is assuming that they are white and straight; gay and Third World youth are naturally rather irritated about the whole affair too.) They smoke marijuana. They listen to rock music. Youth who work think the foreman and the boss are full of shit. They support George McGovern (but can't really get excited about him). If they go to high school, their parents and the school authorities are always telling them what to do. The whole world is against them and they don't know what to do. They are looking for answers.

Along comes a member of the YSA with a copy of the Young Socialist. The person described above will probably say: Young Socialist? Yeah, I'm interested in socialism. Here's a quarter." "Wow," they think, "I've always heard about socialists but I've never seen a real live socialist newspaper before." Inside they see an article on the "Youth Rebel-

lion in Argentina," a story about a YSAer running for Congress, an open letter from the YSA (an organization this person has probably never heard of) to the YWLL (something he or she has heard even less about,) an article about what's happening in New York City high schools, plus a number of shorter articles and the cover feature, "Is McGovern the Answer to Nixon?"

This person may or may not be interested in these articles. They are all interesting subjects in and of themselves, worthy of coverage in a revolutionary newspaper.

The chances are, however, that he or she will throw the paper away after skimming through it. Why? Because there is little that links up the consciousness of the average "Healthy Independent" (that is, a person generally disgusted with the shape of things) with that of the revolutionary socialist youth organization. The paper is full of all sorts of articles about subjects that should be interesting, if properly handled. But the style of these articles is generally dry and uncreative, written in the traditional manner used by bourgeois journalism. The cover article, "Is McGovern the Answer to Nixon," is a good example of how not to write an article which can educate the McGovern supporter and raise his or her consciousness to an understanding of socialist politics. Here we have that mythical creature, the all-knowing, clean-cut, applecheeked "YSJPer" (our typical YS reader thinks, "What's the 'YSJP' anyway? And what does it have to do with me?") in an across-the-literature table discussion with a "more radical-minded" McGovern supporter.

Does any YSA member think such a conversation would actually take place? If a McGovern supporter comes up to a YSA literature table, and makes a statement on the need to defeat Nixon, a YSAer does not launch into a long, dogmatic, cliché-ridden rap about the "pro-capitalist" McGovern supporting Israel, an "imperialist beachhead which is denying over two million Palestinians the right to self-determination," among a number of other things. YSAers don't do things like this because, unlike members of such organizations as the Spartacist League, we recognize that radicalizing youth today have quite a few erroneous political ideas which have to be ironed out gradually, and that to come off like self-righteous puritans would only be defeating this purpose.

What does Laura Miller mean by a "more radical-minded" McGovern supporter? It's true that quite a few McGovern supporters use anti-capitalist formulations. This is because capitalism is becoming more unpopular every day. They do not have a clear-cut, well formulated radical positions, so what's the point of this article? If the point of the article is to demolish radical arguments for McGovern, why not aim it directly at the politics of the Communist Party, instead of this misguided polemic which will no doubt leave the majority of McGovern supporters cold?

So what concrete suggestions do I have to improve the

quality of the Young Socialist? I'll go into these later, but first I want comrades to think about the sort of paper we do need and want.

Let's take a look at the kind of publication radicalizing youth do read: the underground press. The underground press has a circulation of over a million, far more than the combined circulations of the YS, the Militant, and the International Socialist Review (plus our major opponent radical papers). Why do youth read the underground press? There are a number of reasons. First of all, the underground press is written by people just like them, who like rock music just like them, who smoke dope just like them, who are anti-establishment just like them, who face the same sort of garbage just like them in the classroom, in the army, in the high school cafeteria and on the job. The underground press is readable. The type on the page of an underground paper reaches out and grabs you because it is written in the same sort of language you use (and not the tripe taught journalism majors in college). It is not afraid to use dirty words or tell things like they are. The underground press has articles about all kinds of things that young people are interested in: rock music, left-wing politics, every imaginable topic interesting to young people written from a generally anti-establishment, radical perspective. The underground press has interesting writing styles, unconventional cartoons and graphics, and most of all, chutzpah.

Which is precisely what is missing from the pages of the Young Socialist! We need a paper similar to those of the underground press, with the same feeling of imagination and excitement. But this doesn't mean we want to repeat all the faults of the underground press: its lack of political clarity, its glorification of the Youth Culture as opposed to political action, and its often sexist attitudes. But the best underground papers have always combined serious politics with an understanding of the cultural trends in the community they relate to. What a blockbuster the YS would be if it combined the best features of the underground press with our correct politics!

To use another example: the paper published by our co-thinkers in Canada (also called the Young Socialist). In my opinion, during a period from late 1970 to the summer of 1971, this paper showed the way forward for all other socialist youth periodicals (in the English-speaking world at least).

The March '71 issue featured a cover cartoon of Premier Trudeau saying "Let Them Eat Shit" (a real quote, by the way). This cover no doubt brought heart attacks to the current editors of the American YS, and we could possibly question the advisability of using this cover for legal reasons, but it does show that the editors of the paper were not afraid of taking chances and experimenting in their production of the paper. (This particular issue also sold out, incidentally.)

The May '71 issue features an interview with John Lennon and Yoko Ono in which they talk about the need for socialism.

I think it certainly legitimizes socialism in the eyes of many young people when people they hear every day on the radio and whose music they enjoy, talk about how screwed up society is, and the need for a socialist world!

Marty Rothman, in his article "Youth Culture," (DB #1) went into a number of other examples of the "style" of the Canadian YS, so it would be repetitive to go into them here.

The reason, I think, that the Canadian YS has been such a good paper has been the fact that it has made a conscious attempt to reach high school, college and working youth on their own levels of consciousness. The articles are invariably readable, written in a casual style making frequent use of stories of personal experiences (thus bringing the point made even closer to the reader). There are all kinds of articles about things a part of every young persons life: unemployment, the sexual repression of youth, the insanity of stupid jobs, which are not political on the face of it, but certainly factors in the overall radicalization of young people. The impression a person would get from a reading of the Canadian Young Socialist is that here is a publication put out by people who are sincerely interested in making a socialist revolution in Canada, and who have made this decision as a result of the same experiences they've had (thus pushing them a little further toward becoming socialists themselves).

The character of the American YS is still unformed. I think everybody agrees on the necessity of having the paper. I'm sure most YSAers don't want the paper to be a "junior" Militant or ISR. Yet this is precisely what the YS is and will remain if some changes are not made. How else can one explain the fact that YSAers never seem to get excited about selling the paper, and, in fact, have to be prodded into doing so? But why should somebody sell the YS if there is another and better paper which says the same things, namely, the Militant?

If the Young Socialist is to become a serious and respected force in the youth radicalization, it must be organically connected with youth as a whole, but should not liquidate itself into this milieu. The paper should be hip (a rather vague term, admittedly) but keep its politics up front at all times. It should be principled but not dogmatic. It should be readable but not so readable as to be illiterate. It should appeal to people who do not necessarily consider themselves socialists.

The paper must not take a sectarian or condescending attitude toward that manifestation of the youth radicalization commonly known as the "Youth Culture." The YS should have at least one or two articles every month dealing with the cultural aspects of the youth radicalization, rock music, book reviews, movie reviews, etc. (The review of the Bell Jar in the first issue, I think, is an excellent example of this.)

In addition to polemics with other forces on the left, which form an essential part of clarifying political questions, I'd al-

so like to see an article dealing with our other opponents in the student movement, namely such degenerate social phenomena as the Jesus freaks, Hare Krishnas, etc. who are every bit as powerful as the YWLL, ultralefts, etc. And how about articles on, say, the sexual repression of youth, the fight against restrictive marijuana laws, and similar subjects, as well as stories on more "political" topics.

Articles should be written with a humorous slant wherever possible and necessary. Another thing which is sorely lacking is a socialist cartoonist. The YSA needs its own Robert Crumb or Gilbert Shelton! If this is not possible, cartoons should be reprinted from other papers.

The editors of the Young Socialist need to make a thorough study of the underground press, analyzing it, finding out which aspects of the underground press are applicable to our paper. The YS should become a member of the Underground Press Syndicate (address: Box 29, Village Station, New York, 10010), a worldwide federation of underground papers. We should make frequent use of reprints from underground papers.

Writers for the YS should experiment with new and different writing styles. A conscious effort should be made to totally eliminate all vestiges of "Trot lingo," ("key task", "flows from", "broadest and deepest" ad nauseum) the stupid rhetoric and cliches I'm sure most everyone in the YSA is overly familiar with. Another thing which could stand use is the concept of opening up the pages of the YS for a discussion on any number of topics.

So, these are my ideas. I'm looking forward to comments on this article and further discussion on the subject.

October 22, 1972

THE YSA AND STUDENT GOVERNMENT WORK

by Richard Stuart, Austin YSA

In her Organization Report to the June 1972 YSA plenum, Mirta Vidal stated, "Our goal is to gain hegemony in a key sector of the radicalization at this point: the student movement." In order for us to achieve this goal it is necessary that the YSA become recognized as the leading radical organization on campuses across the country. This recognition is not something that can be mechanically proclaimed or reached by short cuts. For the YSA to be able to lead the student movement, it is first necessary that we gain respect and legitimacy through day-to-day organizing and utilizing every available means to disseminate our ideas. A valuable vehicle for this organizing and propaganda is student government work.

The first step to successful student government work is running vigorous campus election campaigns. The nature of these campaigns has been discussed previously in some detail so I want only to point out some of the more important aspects. First, these campus campaigns should always be centered around our program, one of activism and change based primarily on our concept of the antiwar, women's, and black and brown university. Of course this does not mean that campus programs should consist solely of the dates of national actions and excerpts from the Young Socialist. These programs have to be carefully thought out and applied to the specific situation at a particular campus.

Secondly, the candidates we run and the character of the campus campaign should be a reflection of the entire YSA, since thousands of students come into contact with these campaigns. So it is important for comrades to be in school and to stay on campus. It is extremely difficult to have a campus orientation with no campus fraction to direct that orientation.

After election to student government offices, the executive committee, the local, and the campus fraction should have discussions on an attitude toward student government work and the priorities we want to set. Key to the success of student government work is the understanding by the entire YSA that it can not be haphazardly organized. Student government work should be seen as the responsibility of the whole local, since many people see our student government work not as that of this or that person but of the YSA. It is helpful to set up a student government work committee or fraction to organize the work, especially where there is a large campus fraction. The particular organizational form used can be decided by each local, but the main consideration is that student government work be viewed as an important area and organized as such.

Our actual intervention into a student government should not be in any way fundamentally different than in other areas of work. Our priorities should be those of the YSA, that is, the building of the antiwar movement, the women's movement, the struggles of oppressed minorities, and the defense of stu-

dent's rights. Student governments are usually relatively loosely knit bodies and even a small number of Trotskyists can radically change the character of a student government. One year a student government may be totally irrelevant and apolitical, but when members of the YSA are elected, miraculously, the student government can begin working on antiwar demonstrations, abortion projects, student strikes, etc.

A common attitude toward student governments among students is that they are just breeding grounds for burgeoning politicians, or that they are a joke. In many cases this is true, but when we become members of student governments we should explain that we are out to change this, and that the main reason for the farcical nature of student governments is that they have refused to face the fundamental political issues of the day. We point out that we are fighting to make the student government an active part of the antiwar movement, the abortion campaigns, sponsor candidates' debates, etc. As a result of our serious attitude to student government and our consistent work to implement our program, it will become clear to the real activists the difference between our concept of a student government and the concept of traditional campus hacks.

In addition to the more obvious political gains to be made from our student government work the potential frequently exists for financial allocations from student government budgets to political groups. Our attitude toward the funding of political groups is that it is an important component of our idea of the university as a center for radical organizing. We support, as a general rule, the funding of all women's groups, antiwar groups, etc. even though we may not be active in some of them. However, we have to also keep in mind that there is a good reason why we do or do not work in some organizations and that our number one priority is that the Student Mobilization Committee and the abortion committees be funded. This setting of priorities does not come from selfishness, but instead from a careful assessment of the political strategies and goals of the SMC, the abortion coalitions and the YSA and the importance of these goals being met.

In summary, I think it is clear that there are definite gains to be made from well organized student government work. Student governments are an ideal forum for explaining our program and recruiting people, especially since the activities are usually followed in the campus press. It is often possible to involve student government members in our activity, especially in the antiwar movement. The hosting of the NPAC convention by the UCLA Student Association is a good example of this. It is also good to create student government committees specifically designed to work on an antiwar or other important action.

It should be noted that these guidelines are not restricted to college campuses and that most of the same opportunities exist

in high schools. There is a tremendous thirst for political ideas in High Schools as a change from the personality contests that characterize many High School student governments.

The kind of student government outlined here requires a great deal of persistence and patience since the work is not

always as exciting or productive as antiwar or abortion work. But in the long run we stand to gain from student government work and move toward the political hegemony we are striving for.

October 23, 1972

RAZA ANTIWAR WORK IN HOUSTON
by Tank Barrera, Houston YSA

One of the key areas of our work in the Chicano movement has been building the antiwar movement. In the beginning of the spring, Chicano YSAers helped to initiate the Houston Raza Contra La Guerra (Raza against the war) Committee. The committee was formed to build Chicano support for the spring antiwar offensive to culminate in the demonstrations on April 22.

The first activity that Raza Contra La Guerra carried out was building a Chicano contingent for a local antiwar action held on April 8. The committee immediately began to get endorsers for the actions as well as financial support. It was able to receive endorsement for the actions from nearly every Chicano organization in the community and on the campuses, such as MAYO (Mexican American Youth Organization) and La Raza Unida Party. Raza Contra La Guerra built working committees in a number of high schools and jr. high schools. It was able to draw in active participation from a number of organizations and many of them sent representatives to the Raza Contra La Guerra meetings. The committee was able to put out thousands of leaflets and posters to build the actions in its own name and was able to send speakers all over the city before Chicano groups and high school classes.

In the process of this activity however, a number of the "older leaders" of the movement who had been seen as the Chicano movement before, were gradually becoming very uneasy with all this activity and motion that was occurring in the community around an issue these leaders felt was of secondary importance. These people were basically centered in a Chicano collective that put out a newspaper called Papel Chicano. They did not feel that the community should be mobilized around such an issue and decided a week before the local action to go on a redbaiting telephone campaign saying that socialists were involved in this action and that therefore Chicanos should boycott the action. Even though these developments did hurt the turnout, the action was still very successful and Chicanos comprised approximately half of the entire demonstration of 250 people.

Raza Contra La Guerra was also able to send 10 - 15 Chicanos to the Los Angeles April 22 demonstration, and participated in building the emergency actions during the May upsurge.

Even though the redbaiting campaign hurt the functioning of the committee, members of the committee conducted a successful defense against these redbaiting attacks during the summer, especially through The Militant and by speaking with various people in the Chicano movement.

This fall, the committee organized a successful action during the Sept. 16 Mexican Independence Day celebration. The annual parade held here in Houston is run by a group of conservative Chicano Democrats and Republicans called the Fiestas Patrias Parade Committee. This committee barred us from participating in the parade on the basis that we would be introducing politics into it. This, of course, notwithstanding the fact that gubernatorial candidate Dolph Briscoe and other Democratic Party candidates and hacks would be participating, as well as Houston's racist Mayor, Louie Welch, and the Houston police department!

A week before the parade Raza Contra La Guerra launched a publicity campaign exposing this exclusion and preparing for an outside intervention at the very least. We passed out leaflets during the week's activities and had a successful press conference on the day of the parade. At the parade the committee had a banner which read, "RAZA SI! GUERRA NO!", and marched alongside the parade. We drew support from the crowd and the antiwar contingent grew from 6 people to 25 to 100. Through this Raza Contra La Guerra was able to get its name out in public in a big way and draw support from the Chicano community.

Raza Contra La Guerra is now preparing for the Nov. 18 demonstrations in Houston which will include a march through the Chicano community and a rally in a park in the barrio.

The efforts of YSAers in building Chicano participation in the antiwar movement have been very fruitful, as demonstrated by the impact of the Raza Contra La Guerra Committee in the Chicano community. In addition, as a result of our participation some of the activists in the committee decided to join the YSA. In the course of our work in Raza Contra La Guerra the number of Chicano YSAers in Houston has grown from 2 to 5.

October 26, 1972

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE ABORTION MOVEMENT

by Marilyn Markus, Brooklyn YSA

The events of the past year have confirmed that abortion is the most explosive issue of concern to women in this country today and one which the women's liberation movement as a whole must take up and deal with as a top priority. As revolutionary socialists we have been among the most consistent activists and builders of the women's liberation movement as a whole and the abortion law repeal movement in particular.

When we consider the importance of abortion as a national political issue, it is clear that the women's liberation movement as a whole has not responded as aggressively as the abortion fight demands. The number one task before the women's movement today is forging unity of the entire women's liberation, radical and abortion rights movements around a program of struggle for a woman's right to choose.

There are many fights in many different states over abortion but the fight in New York state between the anti-abortion forces, led by the Catholic Church hierarchy, reactionary state legislators, and the Nixon administration, and the women and men of New York who in their overwhelming numbers support the tremendous gains of the liberalized New York law, is one of the most important fights on a national scale.

Taken by surprise last spring, the pro-abortion forces were dealt a huge setback when the New York legislature voted to repeal the New York liberalized abortion law and return the state to the archaic 19th century criminal anti-abortion statute. One result of this development was that the theory that the issue of abortion is going to be an easy issue to win was laid to rest. But the biggest lessons of this setback are yet to be learned by the vast majority of activists in the women's movement: the only strategy that will ensure victory in New York state and throughout the rest of the country is to organize a massive, visible, public, action-oriented campaign that can involve the largest number of people.

The Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC) has been the organization most consistently taking up the fight both in New York and around the country. Its activities over the past year have kept the abortion issue up front, but WONAAC in and of itself is not yet broad enough or strong enough to organize by itself the large-scale campaign that is needed.

In stepping back from the day to day work of building the abortion law repeal movement and WONAAC it does seem ludicrous that so much time and energy has been spent by sections of the women's movement and radical movements slandering WONAAC. There is no other organization that is fighting so consistently for abortion law repeal, yet WONAAC has been met at various times and in various areas, with lies, slanders, half-truths and innuendoes attempting to undermine WONAAC's ability to continue the struggle. Behind these

slanders lie important differences in perspective for the women's liberation movement and the abortion fight. Some sections have counterposed lobbying and working for candidates to independent actions. With the elections coming to a close, there will be more openings and opportunities to discuss these differences and come to agreement among broader forces for a united plan of action for abortion law repeal. WONAAC's ability to pave the way by showing how the fight can be waged is probably the most important factor in building a bigger and broader abortion law repeal fight. In this process, WONAAC itself will be strengthened.

The work that WONAAC carried out in New York and other states around the country has been an important example and has objectively aided the strengthening of the abortion law repeal movement. Having been actively involved in the fight in New York, I would like to give a picture of how New York WONAAC was built as an example to those who are interested in building the abortion law repeal movement.

Since the spring abortion fight in New York, there has been a renewed interest in the abortion issue here. There are three approaches taken to the abortion struggle in New York in the women's and abortion movements. One section of the movement has focused its entire energy and resources on electing or reelecting men and women to the legislature who would vote the "right way" when the issue was brought up again. Those who took this position included the traditional abortion groups: Planned Parenthood and the National Association for the Repeal of All Abortion Laws. This position was also taken by sections of NOW's leadership. They look to a "Balance of Power" in the legislature as opposed to a "Balance of Power" in the streets. There were others who took a very sectarian position to the fight and declared that fighting to defend the rights for women recognized by the New York liberalized law was incorrect and a diversion. They stated that the focus should be on total repeal and that the passage of the New York law was a setback for the struggle for repeal. This position was fully developed at the last WONAAC national conference by Cindy Cissler and some other women.

Basing itself on the position taken at the WONAAC national conference, New York WONAAC sees that the central political question in the struggle for a woman's right to choose in New York is going to be around the present law. In fact, the question of abortion has become a central political issue in New York politics. The repeal of the most liberal abortion law in the country -- which would mean reinstatement of the reactionary 19th century law -- would be a huge setback and defeat for the entire women's liberation movement. The existence of the New York law, which has enabled hundreds of women over the past two years to obtain legal abortions, has affected considerably the attitudes of millions of people in this country. It has been a powerful example for the women's liberation

movement to show the correctness of its position. The results of the New York law destroy myth after myth by the anti-abortion forces. Space does not permit me to deal with this, but all revolutionaries should be familiar with the facts of the successes of the New York law from a medical and psychological standpoint in helping women. This is what this fight is all about.

The ability of WONAAC to grow and be a real force in the development of this fight in New York came not only from an understanding of the above. WONAAC did not just set dates and organize events out of an abstract understanding of the issue. It became familiar with what the situation was in New York state and organized accordingly. For example, when so-called "right to life" forces and the Archdiocese announced a "Respect for Life" week focusing on abortion, WONAAC called a picket line at the headquarters of the "right to life" which "happened" to be at the Archdiocese headquarters in New York. The publicity around this event, and the work of building the local hearings, netted WONAAC broad support for its plans, even from those groups who do not fully agree with the perspective of struggle developed by WONAAC. The abortion hearings held October 21-22 dealt very explicitly with the situation in New York state, drawing on testimony from the City Health and Hospital Corporation, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, NOW, and others. Probably the most dramatic aspect of the hearings was the counterposition of the personal testimony of women who were forced to have illegal abortions before passage of the liberalized law and those women who have been able to benefit by the liberalized New York law.

WONAAC has gained considerable respect from the women's and abortion movements in New York. One important reason for this was the fact that WONAAC did all it could to involve other sections of the movement. WONAAC was able to involve broad forces in the actual hearing itself. But even more importantly, WONAAC was able to develop a plan of action that was able to involve scores and scores of women in New York who are concerned about the abortion issue and want to do something about it. No other abortion organization has been able to involve in its plans, organization and activities as many women as WONAAC has this fall. The New York Post endorsed WONAAC and encouraged all pro-abortion people to get involved in its activities.

WONAAC was able to offer to women in New York an opportunity to participate in, lead and make decisions on an effective response to the situation in New York. Holding weekly meetings leading up to the hearings and organizing an open steering committee have enabled WONAAC to broaden its base and support from activists in New York. Many volunteers became actively involved in WONAAC and took major responsibility on committees set up to organize various aspects of the hearings.

The head-on clash between the anti-abortion and pro-abor-

tion forces is yet to come in New York state. The activities this fall organized by WONAAC can only be seen as a prelude to the extensive organizing effort that is yet to come. Hopefully the strengthening of New York WONAAC and the public actions it has carried out will be an important factor in the entire movement coming together to take this fight head-on. The fight in New York will have its own dynamic as is the case with other states around the country. But what happens in New York state will affect what happens in other places.

The fact that the International Tribunal is taking place in New York will increase interest in it around the country. The decision of WONAAC to establish an independent Tribunal Committee to organize the Tribunal itself is very significant. Such a formation can be broader than WONAAC and provides an avenue for people to participate fully in decision-making who may not wish to join WONAAC. The International Tribunal will be exciting and also an educational event with the potential to involve very broad forces in the women's movement. It is the first time an event of this nature has ever been organized by the abortion movement and can do for the abortion movement what the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal and antiwar teach-ins did for the early anti-Vietnam war movement. WONAAC can help establish an important precedent for the entire movement. The key to winning the fight for abortion law repeal is the unity of the movement around a program of action and struggle. No narrow organizational interests should conflict with this important task.

October 29, 1972

BUILDING THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE AFTER THE '72 ELECTIONS

by Laura Miller and Tom Vernier, Brooklyn YSA

For over a year the YSA has made support to the Socialist Workers national election campaign the focus of our work. We expended a great deal of time and energy on the campaign because we knew that during the election period the attention of radicalizing young people would be directed toward the presidential contest. National and local campaigns allowed us to present our program for changing society to everyone who was thinking about the elections.

The response to the SWP '72 campaign has exceeded our initial expectations. Not only have Jenness and Pulley reached more people than ever before with our strategy for revolutionary change, but they have been met with increasing enthusiasm and receptivity. Campaign meetings this fall have been large and spirited. Campus engagements like those at Berkeley and Austin of over 200 people were composed largely of campaign supporters.

The 17 Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley teams this fall have sold thousands of Militant subscriptions, helped to recruit new locals in Carbondale, Illinois, Lexington, Kentucky, and a number of other places, and covered nearly 400 campuses with publicity for the campaign and the YSA convention. The teams reported significant interest in the YSA on every campus they visited.

Inquiries to the YSA national office for information, for at-large membership, and for new local charters increased this fall directly as a result of campaign activity. Over 400 inquiries about the convention and the YSA were received in the national office during September and October.

One of the most striking indications of the impact of the SWP '72 campaign was the effect it had on young McGovern supporters. Because we approached them in a serious and nonsectarian way, we were able to explain to many of them the nature of the Democratic Party and the futility of trying to achieve change within it. Of course, McGovern's steady shift away from his earlier, more radical rhetoric facilitated this process.

Throughout the campaign most McGovern activists treated Jenness and Pulley as a serious alternative to their candidate. They readily acceded McGovern's weaknesses as a capitalist politician and expressed agreement with our socialist program. Many McGovern supporters became campaign endorsers, and some joined the YSA.

An important statistic of the campaign is the nearly 15,000 endorsers. These are people who not only recognize the need for a principled socialist alternative in American politics, but also want to be identified with that alternative.

And there are thousands more of them that we did not have the resources to reach.

The campaign has proved to us that there are tens of thousands of people who are disgusted with the system and its apologists. They may still retain some illusions about individual capitalist politicians like McGovern, but they are looking for an alternative, an alternative that we represent.

These people will not stop looking for political alternatives on November 8. The political education they received from the McGovern campaign will continue beyond the elections. If McGovern loses, most of his activist supporters will not be at all eager to take his advice to wait four years and try again. If McGovern wins, they will see their worst fears (generated by his actions during the Democratic primaries and since then) realized as McGovern takes over the administration of American imperialism. The best of them won't buy that either.

These young activists will remember what the socialist candidates said. They will follow the same path that a large number of us did in 1968 and since then. They will reject capitalist politics once and for all and join the YSA.

Our job is to make it as easy as possible for these radicalizing young people to join the YSA and begin to develop their revolutionary talents. That is the most important task of this convention - to organize our entire membership around a campaign to publicize the YSA and to recruit new members.

The Jenness-Pulley campaign has provided us with hundreds of new openings on campuses and thousands of new people who have expressed an interest in our politics. Because of the ambitiously and audaciously public focus of campaign activities, thousands of people heard of us for the first time, and many of them were attracted by our program for changing society. The campaign helped to popularize socialist ideas much more extensively than any similar activity of our movement in the past.

After the elections the YSA must assume responsibility for many of the activities that the national and local campaign committees have been carrying out. Although an election year provides unique opportunities for us, certain aspects of our work during the election campaign can be and should be continued.

LITERATURE

Try to imagine how impossible it would have been for the SWP '72 campaign to function on the scale that it did without the brochures explaining our positions on the war, the Black

struggle, women's liberation, the labor movement, and the role of young people in the 1972 elections. Imagine the SWP '72 campaign without the truth kits, without the buttons and posters and stickers. It should be just as hard to imagine the YSA without similar materials at our disposal.

When the average radical first hears about a political group or a different strategy for organizing the movement that he or she is involved in, the usual reaction is to want to read about it and discuss it with other activists. For this kind of person (which describes most of us when we first became interested in politics) we should have, along with the Young Socialist, attractive, well-written brochures, pamphlets, and leaflets that explain what our program is and what we do to implement it. These new materials will show people what the YSA is and what we are doing, and motivate them to join us.

In addition to brochures on the movements that we support and a general brochure about the YSA, we might find it very useful to print YSA cards, similar to endorser cards, which people could fill out and send to the national office for information or to join the YSA. These cards would give people something to do about their interest in socialism, and provide us with a way of keeping in contact with them. Just like endorser cards, they could be distributed at meetings, with copies of the Militant and the YS, and from literature tables.

Publishing the Young Socialist was an important step for the YSA. We should give careful attention to YS sales and distribution, making sure that our paper is sold on the campuses. Selling the YS regularly on campus is one of the best ways to introduce the YSA to students.

REGIONAL TEAMS

One of the features of the SWP '72 campaign that brought us the most new contacts and endorsers was the YSJP teams that went out last spring and this fall. The teams visited campuses where we had never been before as well as campuses where there were YSA locals. They distributed campaign literature and YSA convention materials, and sold Pathfinder books and pamphlets. They publicized the socialist campaign, distributed the YS, sold subscriptions to The Militant and the ISR, and recruited people to the YSA.

We should have as many Young Socialist teams on the road in the spring as possible. The teams will set up literature tables, organize public meetings, and sell subscriptions to The Militant and the YS. As our experience with the teams this fall has demonstrated, they are an important asset to regional work. The Young Socialist teams will show the face of the YSA on hundreds of campuses that we could not otherwise reach. They will initiate a recruiting process on those campuses that will lead, sooner or later, to YSA locals.

NATIONAL SPEAKING TOURS

Public speaking tours by several YSA leaders next spring

will continue the process of establishing the authority of the YSA as a national organization and an important part of the student movement. These tours would focus on campus and high school meetings that will result in new YSA members and income for the YSA through honoraria.

Again, imagine the SWP '72 campaign without the tours of Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley. It should be just as hard to imagine the YSA without public spokespersons on the road speaking for our movement like the campaign speakers did. Naturally, the fact that there is no presidential campaign will affect these tours in quantitative terms (size of meetings, etc.), but that does not lessen their importance.

NATIONAL SPEAKERS BUREAU

One of our biggest problems is money. We can think of all kinds of things to do, but we are always limited by finances. One substantial source of income that we have been drawing on more and more is honoraria. But we have learned that obtaining money for speakers requires careful planning if we want to take maximum advantage of it.

We could improve this area of fundraising qualitatively if we gave more consistent direction to regional speakers' bureaus, viewing them as top priority fundraising and propaganda projects. Experience in this area could lay the base for the possible establishment of a national speakers' bureau to give national continuity and direction to this work.

CAMPUS MEETINGS

Many locals have already begun the practice of organizing frequent YSA-sponsored meetings on campus. These meetings can take the form of debates, panels, or discussions led by YSAers. They should become regular events that will attract people who are interested in the YSA or in radical politics in general.

ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Running ambitious YSA campaigns for student government can help make us an important part of campus politics. Our candidates can explain the YSA's position on current campus issues, and they can present our broader analysis of the student movement. When YSAers are elected, they can help utilize the authority and resources of the student government to build campus struggles and political movements.

RECRUITMENT

The way in which locals organize recruitment work will vary, but in every case the leadership of the local must be on top of recruitment. The executive committee should hear frequent reports about potential members and plans for reaching out to new people. Each fraction must view recruitment as an essential part of its work that is to be discussed by the fraction just like planning for a mass meeting or fundraising

activities.

At-large YSA members should view themselves as a nucleus of a YSA local. In collaboration with the regional center locals, at-large YSAers should plan their political activities with the intention of recruiting other YSA members.

BEYOND THE '72 ELECTIONS

After the convention it will be necessary for the YSA to take over many of the functions of the SWP '72 campaign. The YSA will have to produce the literature, send out the speakers, and organize the regional teams for our movement. The focus of our public activities will shift from the campaign to the YSA. All of the campaign endorsers, and many people who did not sign endorser cards, will be looking for us. Many of them will be ready to join us.

Of course, the growth of the YSA in size and influence will depend not only on what we do but, just as importantly, on the development of the student movement and the radical movement as a whole. There is no gimmick that will transform the YSA into a mass organization. That will take a lot of hard work, a lot of energy, and a lot of time.

But there are many young radicals who should be in the YSA now who are not. Many of them would join if they simply knew we existed, or if they were more familiar with the YSA.

Our job is to make it clear to as many of these people as possible who we are and what we do, and to invite them to join us.

November 1, 1972