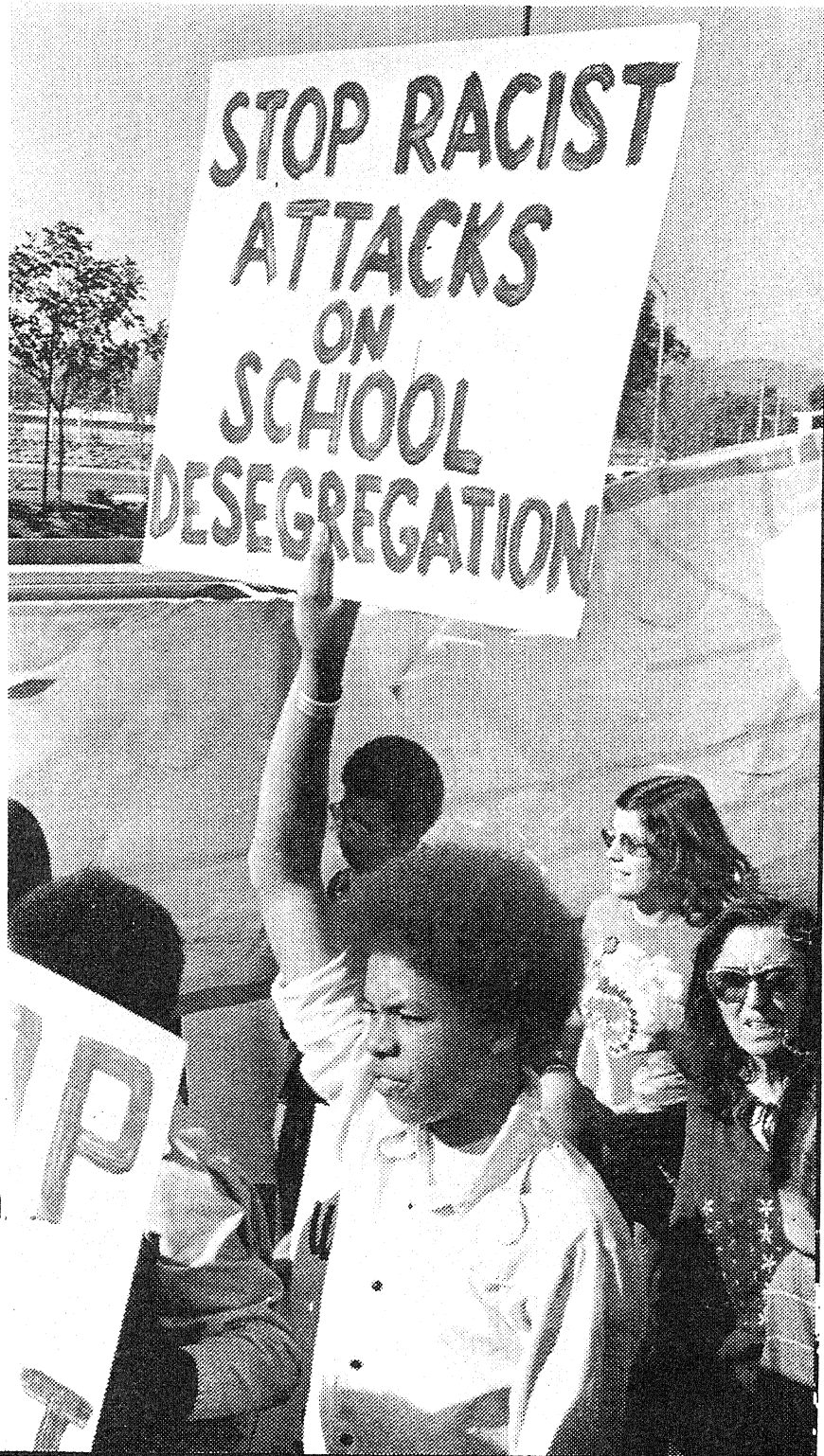


THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM

A SOCIALIST
STRATEGY FOR THE
BLACK LIBERATION
STRUGGLE TODAY



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Presented in this bulletin is the Young Socialist Alliance National Executive Committee draft resolution on the Black struggle in the United States. The resolution will be considered for adoption at the upcoming 15th YSA National Convention, which will be held on the University of Wisconsin's Milwaukee campus from December 28 through January 1.

In the weeks leading up to the convention, local chapters of the Young Socialist Alliance from coast to coast will be discussing this and other important resolutions. We encourage everyone to attend these pre-convention discussions in your local area and join with us at the Milwaukee convention.

Over the past year, the Young Socialist Alliance has had an unprecedented opportunity to put our strategy for Black liberation to the test in a struggle of national significance and scope. Through the work of building a movement to counter the racist attacks on busing and school desegregation, every YSA local has been involved in antiracist activities. In helping to initiate and build the National Student Coalition Against Racism, we have been able to apply our strategy for winning the fight for Black rights.

The upcoming fifteenth YSA National Convention will be an opportunity for us to evaluate the results of this experience and to determine what steps must be taken next in the antiracist struggle.

In the YSA's view, the fight against racism is a central aspect of the overall fight against capitalism. Racism exists in the United States today for two reasons and two reasons alone: because it is profitable and politically useful to capitalism. An effective struggle against racism has to involve a fight against those who are responsible for its existence and perpetuation in this society: the capitalists who rule.

Their system profits from racism. Their system has fueled the racist ideas that have been imbedded into the minds of millions of whites. Their system has a fundamental stake in the maintenance of racism. And that system must be done away with to lay the basis for the eradication of

racism and racist prejudices from this society. It will take a socialist revolution to do that.

But how do we get from where things stand today to that ultimate victory for the Black liberation struggle? This is one of the major questions on the minds of the growing number of Black American freedom fighters who have concluded that a socialist revolution is a precondition for Black liberation. The experiences of the probusing and prodesegregation campaign today hold valuable lessons that offer some answers to this question.

There are many others who don't yet have a socialist perspective for winning Black liberation. But they too are considering important questions. Questions like, why does racism exist? Who is responsible for it? How can Black liberation be won? What is the role of Black students in the antiracist fight? What should activists in the Black liberation struggle be doing today?

This draft resolution offers the YSA's answers to these questions. Because of the national importance and implications of the busing fight for the Black movement, this document uses the example of this concrete struggle to show how racism can be fought. It explains why building a movement in defense of busing and school desegregation is a priority for revolutionists today. And it outlines a strategy for how the fight for Black liberation can be advanced in the United States, and how it can be won.

I. RACISM TODAY

The current economic crisis is having a disastrous effect on Black people in the United States. The 1974-75 depression has been a "superdepression" for the Black community. According to figures recently released by the National Urban League, sixteen million or 25 percent of Black workers are jobless--more than twice the national rate. Last spring the Black unemployment rate in hard-hit cities such as Detroit skyrocketed to as high as 40 percent.

Even with the slight uptum in the economy, Blacks have little to look forward to. For decades the Black community has lived through a permanent depression. For the entire decade of economic growth preceeding the 1974-75 depression, Black unemployment was consistently twice the national average. The gap between the income of Black families and white families widened by 3 percent from 1969 to 1973 alone.

If the effects of the economic crisis on the Black community as a whole are severe, the effects of the crisis on Black youth are devastating. The government's own jobless rate for Black teenagers is 40 percent. More realistic estimates put the figure closer to 60 percent. In the last ten years the unemployment level for Black youth has never fallen below about 25 percent.

This year, for example, summer jobs were in shorter supply than at any time since the 1940s. In New York City 41,000 jobs were made available at subsistence wages. But an estimated 500,000 young people were looking for work.

Why so few jobs?

Why are Black people facing a crisis of such proportions? Unemployment is a permanent aspect of life under capitalism. Corporations need a reserve pool of labor to be tapped when the economy expands and to be pushed out of industry during recessions and depressions. Blacks--along with Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, other oppressed national minorities, women, and young people--make up a large portion of this reserve army of unemployed.

The "last hired, first fired" status of Black workers also aids the ruling class in encouraging racist attitudes among whites. By pitting white against Black in competition for jobs and promotions, the employers seek to keep wages down and generally foster disunity. By promoting a "white job trust" attitude in the unions, the capitalist class tries to prevent Black and white workers from joining together to fight for their common interests against their employers, and the government.

This ruling class strategy is apparent today in the debate over preferential hiring and discriminatory layoffs.

In the 1960s militant struggles on the part of Blacks secured the employment of Black workers in previously all-white industries--construction trades for example. In many cases affirmative-action programs were established to guarantee that Blacks received preferential treatment in hiring and upgrading to compensate for past discrimination.

The goal of these struggles was to gain equality. Throughout history whites have received preferential treatment. Because of centuries of racist discrimination, it is impossible for Blacks to gain equality without fighting for extraordinary measures to close the gap with whites. This is an objective fact.

The Black community is fighting today for special measures to protect and extend preferential hiring gains in the face of the economic crisis. Employers have been quick to use layoffs of Black workers hired under affirmative-action programs to do away with preferential hiring and upgrading.

An essential part of fighting against all layoffs is fighting to assure that any layoffs that do occur are not used to discriminate against Blacks.

Wherever layoffs occur the same percentage of Black workers should be retained after the layoffs as were employed before the layoffs.

The working-class unity necessary to wage a powerful struggle for full employment can only be forged on the basis of total opposition by the unions and by white workers to job discrimination against oppressed national minorities.

Black youth will be in the forefront of resisting the capitalist strategy of driving the Black community even deeper into economic misery. Demands must be put forward for government-funded public works programs to create millions of socially useful jobs. The workweek should be shortened with no loss in pay to provide more jobs. A resolute fight must be waged to stop cutbacks in funds for vital social services, health care, and housing. And Black youth must continue to fight discrimination and racism in hiring and on the job.

Racism in the schools

Today as capitalism plunges deeper into crisis, racism is being intensified. For many years, a central battleground in the fight against racism has been the schools. The segregated, third-rate education forced on Black youth is part of the very fabric of American life. Public education in this country is organized to prepare Blacks for the worst and lowest paying jobs. Schools in the Black community are deteriorating at an accelerated pace. Blacks are among the first to suffer from cutbacks in funds for education.

School segregation is still a very real fact of life in America. In a variety of forms, segregated education is used to channel Black students into the lowest rungs of the educational system. The vast majority of ghetto schools are run-down, and ill-equipped. Racist school boards like the one in

Boston have allocated significantly more funds for predominantly white schools than for predominantly Black ones.

The results are not hard to predict. In heavily Black-populated cities such as Detroit and Washington, D.C., as many as 75 percent of public school students read below grade level by the time they reach junior high school.

"Tracking" is a more subtle device used to reinforce racism in education. Starting in elementary school, students are segregated into classes for "slow learners" and "fast learners" based on reading scores, racist I. Q. tests, and behavior. The vast majority of Black students end up in lower tracks. Once they reach high school, Blacks are often pressured into choosing poorly taught vocational training courses that prepare them to accept low-paying jobs or join the ranks of the unemployed. Many simply drop out of school before graduation.

School textbooks have either totally written out or distorted the contributions of Blacks in American history. Disciplinary suspensions are handed out to Blacks at twice the rate of white students.

Colleges

There are 800,000 Black students in college today. The YSA National Executive Committee draft political resolution explains that the ruling class, because of capitalism's current economic decline, needs fewer highly educated workers than it once did. Therefore, from the rulers' standpoint, there is a diminishing need for students to attend college today--especially Black students.

Between 1967 and 1972 the number of Black students enrolled in colleges across the country doubled. But since 1973, college admissions of Black students have decreased substantially--by about 15 percent. Black women suffered the biggest drop in enrollment over the past few years.

The economic crisis has meant cutbacks in funds for higher education, and programs designed for Black students are among the first to be slashed. Affirmative-action hiring and admissions programs, tutorial and Black studies programs, open admissions--all won by the Black student movement over the past ten years--are being attacked by college administrators and government officials.

Black students, who are among the lowest income students, face increasing cuts in financial aid and loans, while tuition costs continue to soar. The financial crisis plaguing the campuses is especially severe at the all-Black institutions that still produce half of all Black college graduates.

A much higher proportion of Black students than white students are forced to limit their college education to vocational or two-year community colleges because of the financial obstacle a four-year education represents.

As the economic crisis worsens, the advances that have been made by Black students over the last decade in gaining access to higher education are coming under increasing attack.

II. BUSING AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

The question of busing and school desegregation is at the center of the Black struggle today. Blacks are demanding that their sons and daughters be bused to the better schools in white neighborhoods in order to break down educational inequalities. As a result, busing plans have been implemented or are currently being considered in more than forty cities.

The goal of busing is to destroy the kind of inequalities that prepare Blacks for the worst and lowest paying jobs. It makes better educational facilities available to Black students -- facilities which have been denied them because of racial discrimination. Busing allows Blacks to exercise their democratic right to have access to schools located in white neighborhoods.

The attempts by Blacks to win an equal education through busing have been met with sharp attacks by racist forces seeking to maintain the relative privileges of white students in predominantly white schools. The attacks on the right of Black students to an equal education have become the cutting edge of a campaign by racist forces to attack the Black community's rights.

The mobilization of the Black community and its allies to demand Black equality is not at the level today that it has been in the past. This has made it easier for the government to launch new attacks on gains that have already been won by Black people. The school desegregation issue has been chosen as a testing ground by racist forces to see how far they can go in their assault on Black rights. Their audacity and confidence has been demonstrated by the bus stonings and the violent rampages of antibusing bigots in Louisville and Boston. Boston became the center of the busing controversy when the issue exploded into national prominence on October 7, 1974 -- the day a mob of whites attempted to lynch a Black man who was driving through all-white South Boston.

The struggle for busing and school desegregation is not merely a local issue in Boston or Louisville. It is a national issue because of the implications that a defeat for Blacks in any city would signify. Such a defeat would set back the Black liberation struggle, as well as hurt the overall fight of working people.

The government understands the effect that a victory for Blacks on this issue would have. What's involved in the desegregation battles being fought today isn't just a challenge to divisions and inequalities between Blacks and whites, but a challenge to the divisions between classes in this society.

The American ruling class knows that each victory against racism in education will have greater implications and ramifications beyond that one issue. If Blacks can win victories in the desegregation fights in Boston, Pasadena, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, New York, Houston, Kalamazoo, and elsewhere, they will be encouraged to demand equal treatment on the job, in housing, and in other areas. Other workers will be inspired by their example and join in demanding better job conditions, better housing, and better educational facilities for all workers. Because they

have been forced to put up with the worst conditions, Blacks have become some of the most militant fighters. They can play a leadership role in leading the working class to fight for the solutions to these problems.

Democratic and Republican politicians -- the chief spokespeople for the American ruling class -- are helping to lead the antibusing campaign around the country. The politicians on the Boston School Committee and the Boston City Council have not only supported, but have helped to organize and lead the anti-Black, antibusing rallies and protests of ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights), Boston's principal antibusing group.

President Ford has placed the authority of his office behind the antibusing viewpoint, providing fuel and inspiration to the racist antibusing movement. Democratic and Republican Congressmen in Washington are currently in the midst of discussing antibusing legislation. Senate hearings have been organized to consider the racists' proposal for an antibusing amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

And in the atmosphere being generated by the antibusing campaign, organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi party have become more active and gained more of a hearing for their anti-Black views. "Scientists" like William Shockley and Arthur Jensen are more aggressively promoting their racist theories on the inferiority of Blacks.

Some questions about busing

The issue of busing and school desegregation has become one of the most controversial in American politics today. Only a small minority of people as yet have become active proponents or opponents of busing. Among the overwhelming majority of Americans, there is massive confusion over the busing question and the issues involved. While the majority say they support school desegregation efforts, for example, more than 70 percent also say that they are opposed to busing. Here are the YSA's answers to some of the questions most often asked by those who are confused about the busing issue:

Why is the busing issue so important?

The busing issue involves the democratic right of Black students to get an equal education. This is what participants in the antibusing campaign are attacking. They are trying to maintain racial discrimination in the schools. Of all students who go to school in this country, 43 percent ride buses to get there. But there was never an uproar over the use of busing as a means of transportation until the 3 percent of students being bused for the purposes of desegregation began to ride them.

The racist campaign against school desegregation is an attack on one of the most basic and fundamental legal rights that Blacks ever won in this country -- the right to an equal education embodied in the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation decision. If the Black movement and its allies cannot successfully defend this right today, the struggle for

equality will be severely weakened in campaigns on other fronts.

The busing and desegregation struggle is not a fight of concern to the Black community alone. It is also a central struggle today against ruling-class inspired attacks on democratic rights in general. In Boston, antibusing groups and individuals have also provided the shock troops for attacks on the women's liberation movement, for example. Some of the same forces participating in the antibusing campaign in Boston physically disrupted a pro-ERA demonstration there and participated in the successful effort to get Dr. Kenneth Edelin convicted of manslaughter for performing a legal abortion for a Black woman.

The antibusing movement is threatening the future progress of the Black liberation movement, and it is laying the basis for attacks on other democratic rights. That is why it is so important to stop it.

Members of the YSA are steadfast proponents of busing. We support the full desegregation of the public schools. That includes the right of Blacks to utilize busing across school district boundaries, city limits, and county lines. We say that no limits should be placed on Black students' right to equal educational opportunities.

We also support this right for Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asians, and Native Americans. We support the demands being raised by Spanish- and Chinese-speaking communities for bilingual education in the public schools. Where busing plans cut across these programs, we say that these plans should be modified so that they do not.

Will busing solve all the problems of educational inequality for Blacks?

No, busing is not the total solution to the problem. Black students not only have the right to go to the best schools available, they also have a right to be treated equally within those schools. They have a right to protection from racist attacks at those schools. They have a right to not be discriminated against by racist suspensions. But like every right -- including the right to use busing -- these have to be fought for if they're going to be won. They are not going to be handed over gracefully by racist school administrators just because busing has been implemented. It is going to take a struggle to win them, too. But these vital struggles won't even arise if the elementary right of Black students to go to better schools isn't won first.

Busing offers a solution to one key aspect of the problem of racism in education: that Blacks are now segregated into the worst schools. But it isn't the implementation of busing that's responsible for the fact that Black students face other aspects of racism when they cross the threshold of what used to be predominantly white schools. Racism within those schools is responsible for those problems.

The fact that the YSA supports school desegregation doesn't mean that we support what racists attempt to do to "prove" that school desegregation won't work. It means that we must fight against every racist attack on Black rights to an equal educa-

tion. It means that we don't give in one inch to the racists' attempts to stop the buses from rolling and to prevent Black students from going to better schools. And it means we have got to defend and fight for Black students' rights once they get there.

Why not focus our efforts today on fighting for quality education for everyone?

The questions of a quality education for everyone and an equal education for Black students are both important, but they are separate issues. The first involves the general need to improve all of the schools in the country to give every student the best education possible. The second concerns the problem that given the educational facilities that exist right now, Blacks and other oppressed national minorities get the worst education of all.

The issue in the desegregation struggles that have broken out around the country is racial inequality. Blacks today correctly view as their immediate priority ending racial discrimination in education. They are demanding that Black students be given at least the same kind of education that white students have. An equal education for Black students may not be the best possible education, but it's certainly a better education than they get right now. Blacks are simply demanding equality and the use of busing to make it possible.

The racists consciously counterpose and try to confuse the two distinct issues of a quality education and an equal education for Blacks. For them, "quality education" has become a code word for maintaining all-white schools and privileges in education. The racists claim to be for quality education, when in reality they are not carrying out the fight for a quality education for all. Instead, they are fighting to maintain the better treatment for whites under the existing educational system.

Ignoring the question of an equal education for Blacks helps to maintain the superiority of white education. And doing that only places an obstacle in the way of a united fight for a better education for everyone. Because we can't achieve quality education for all without also winning equality for Blacks. These two goals go hand in hand.

Why not just let everyone go to their own neighborhood schools?

White neighborhoods today are separated from Black neighborhoods by consciously segregated housing patterns. White neighborhoods have many privileges that Black neighborhoods don't have. One of those privileges is better schools. Having everyone go to the schools located in their own neighborhoods would mean that the educational advantages of whites relative to Blacks would be maintained.

The cry for "neighborhood schools" is another racist code word used by the opponents of busing. Some racist parents claim that walking to a neighborhood school is safer than riding a bus to a school in another community. Their argument is belied by a Pennsylvania Department of Education survey that showed busing to be three times safer than

walking to school. In Boston, some white parents who now say busing is dangerous, bused their children for years to virtually all-white specialized trade or academic high schools located in Boston's Black community. Only when the desegregation order was handed down did busing become "unsafe" from the racists' point of view.

The racists are saying that they intend to fight to keep from sharing the relative privileges of white education with Blacks. Everyone going to their own neighborhood school is exactly the situation the racists want to preserve. It would mean that Blacks would continue to go to inferior schools.

Why not fight for Black community control of all-Black schools instead of sending Black students to white-controlled schools?

Every school in racist America is a white-controlled school. Even those public schools in which every single student, teacher, and administrator is Black is a white-controlled school. The real control of all the schools is in the hands of the wealthy, white big businessmen and multimillionaires who run the cities and the rest of the country. The schools are being run in accordance with their priorities and their plan. They maintain racism in education by segregating Blacks into the worst schools and also by keeping Black community schools inferior. Both these racist practices must be stopped in order to achieve Black equality in education.

We've seen the fight for equal rights for Blacks in education take different forms over the last several years. One form has been the fight for Black control of schools in the Black community. The fight for the right to use busing is another. Both school desegregation and Black community control are attempts to break down white racist control of the entire public education system. These two struggles are totally compatible, not counterposed. The YSA supports both.

Black, Puerto Rican, and Asian American parents in New York City's School District One are involved in a struggle for community control of their schools. They are demanding decision-making authority and adequate funding for their community schools. Many of their leaders have expressed their solidarity with the Black communities in Boston and Louisville that are struggling for the right to use busing to achieve equality.

In winning a better education for Black students through busing, Black communities in these cities have also won more control over the education of Black students. They are able to stop school committees from keeping Blacks locked into inferior, segregated schools. The demands for Black studies courses and a Black history week that Black students being bused to South Boston High School are raising represent the fight for more Black control over the education of Black students within these newly desegregated schools.

Busing and school desegregation have also meant that those schools that were once predominantly Black will be improved. When white students have been bused to the dilapidated schools that Blacks alone have been forced to put up with, the conditions of these schools has improved. As soon as it became clear that busing was going to be implemented in Louisville

this fall, local officials started to make plans to improve the rundown schools that white students would be attending for the first time. Plans for better facilities, and streamlined classes were announced for what used to be all-Black schools.

The antibusing movement is opposed to the goals of both the busing and community control struggles because they understand that busing and community control are being raised by Blacks to accomplish the same goal: to end Black discrimination and to get an equal education.

How can we protect Black students being bused from encountering racist violence?

We should demand that the government do whatever is necessary to enforce the desegregation law. When the civil rights movement forced Washington to dispatch troops to Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 and to Selma, Alabama in 1965, the segregationists were dealt a serious defeat, while the struggle for Black liberation was spurred forward.

We must demand today that the government implement and enforce the busing orders. When Black students are attacked by racist mobs, that means providing whatever force is necessary to protect them. That force may be cops, it may be state troopers, or it may even be armed federal troops riding the buses to protect those students. The racists are using force to break the law and attack Black students. We must make the government use force to stop them.

Only through mass pressure and massive mobilizations will this demand on the government be taken seriously. We've seen this work in Boston. Last fall, when busing was first implemented there, Black students were physically attacked and harassed every day. Black community leaders asked the city for some increased security for protection. The city did nothing.

The Black leaders appealed to the governor and President Ford to send in federal troops to protect the students. The governor and Ford refused.

Blacks began to make it clear that they would no longer tolerate the violence. The Black community and its allies began to take action. On December 14, 1974, 12,000 marched, and 15,000 marched on May 17, 1975, to demand an end to the racist violence and the implementation of busing. This summer, mini-rebellions broke out spontaneously in the Black community in response to the racist violence. A leader of the Boston NAACP initiated "Crisis Teams" -- several teams of community leaders who rode the buses with Black students and monitored outside and in some cases inside the schools in an attempt to provide some measure of protection.

Government officials began to fear that Blacks would take further steps to exercise their right to defend themselves and offer retaliation to the racist violence. They also feared the growing mobilization of the Black community and its allies in an attempt to fight back. And they recognized that the majority of people opposed the unbridled mob violence against Black students.

As a result, the government provided increased security

when schools opened in Boston this fall. A few thousand cops were on duty as the buses rolled. They encircled the schools in the racist strongholds. The national guard was put on alert in case the cops were not enough. And for several weeks this fall, until the security began to be scaled down, there were very few incidents of racist mob attacks on schoolbuses. This happened only because the security prevented it. It is just one example of the force that can be put to use to protect Black students if we demand it and organize the mass mobilizations necessary to make it happen.

The YSA also supports the Black community's right to take measures of self-defense in the face of the violence and racist attacks against the Black community in Boston and other cities. Self-defense is a democratic right. The experience of the civil rights and Black power struggles have increased its acceptance. Experience has shown that self-defense actions are most effective when they are based on mass support and a perspective of mass mobilizations.

How can the widespread confusion over the busing issue be resolved?

Those who recognize the threat posed by the antibusing campaign must take the initiative, as the NAACP and the National Student Coalition Against Racism have done in Boston. The facts about this issue must be gotten out to as many people as possible.

A major national educational campaign on busing is absolutely necessary today. We must discuss this issue as widely and broadly as possible. By doing this, we can begin to counter the lies being spread by the racists and the confusion being sown by the bourgeois media and in the halls of Congress. We must explain that everyone who is for desegregation and Black equality in education today should support busing. All of the liberal schemes currently being

proposed as alternatives to busing are, at best, compromises to that equality.

Such an educational campaign needs to be carried out particularly among whites, but we should recognize that there is also confusion about busing even among a significant number of Blacks today. According to the latest Gallup poll on the question, 47 percent of Blacks are opposed to busing. Some hesitate to support busing because of the racist violence that has accompanied it in some cities. They are justly concerned about the safety of Black students. While others firmly support school desegregation, they are confused about the issues involved in the busing controversy. And they've gotten no clarity on the issues from the bourgeois media.

We must convince those who may question it today that a massive movement can realistically be built to defend busing and make the government provide protection for Black students.

We must convince those who are involved in local struggles against various aspects of racism of the national importance and significance of the probusing fight. We must win those who are involved in related struggles for Black equal rights in the schools to the probusing movement. As more people learn the truth about what is involved in the busing issue, they will be won to the probusing fight.

Such an educational campaign has already brought about results in Boston. When the struggle for busing began there last fall, a slim majority of the Black community was firm and unconditional in its support for busing. Many were still undecided about the issue. But as the issue gained prominence and protests and public forums were organized to tell the truth about busing and expose the racist campaign against it, more Blacks began to recognize what was involved and actively joined the probusing movement. Today, as much as 75 percent of Boston's Black community supports busing.

III. HOW TO FIGHT RACISM

We must organize to counter the attacks on Black rights and to solve the problems facing the Black community. Every organization and individual opposed to racism must be brought together in massive protests and other activities to educate broader layers of the Black community, trade unionists, and other allies of the Black struggle to the dangers posed by the racist offensive in education and other arenas.

United action coalitions involved in fights to defend busing and school desegregation and other issues can help to lead the struggle. These coalitions can involve every person and group willing to fight racist conditions, no matter what their opinions or disagreements on other political issues. Because various aspects of racism are national issues, they require national attention. National campaigns such as that around the busing issue can help to strengthen local antiracist fights by linking up with them.

The organization of united actions to protest racist conditions and united coalitions to organize them can be an important step toward overcoming the disorganization and the vacuum of leadership that exist in the Black movement. They can help to mobilize Blacks and their allies to not only win the right to busing but to win victories on other issues as well.

Out of these struggles and organizations, new leaders can be trained and brought forward to give positive direction and leadership to the Black liberation struggle.

Lessons of the 1960s

It was a united action campaign that won previous gains in the Black liberation struggle. The lessons of the history of the fight for school desegregation offer one example.

The ruling class never intended to fully implement the 1954 Supreme Court decision that made segregated education illegal. But the mass action of civil rights activists forced the government to actually take steps to implement school desegregation in Little Rock, Selma, and many other southern cities. The massive marches and protests forced the government to grant other concessions as well, including the destruction of the apartheid-like Jim Crow laws in the South and the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

But the fight to desegregate the schools suffered a setback in the late 1960s. At that time, the government began a counteroffensive against the Black struggle in order to destroy the civil rights and Black power movements. Some of the central leaders of these struggles were put on the payrolls of government poverty programs and offered positions in the Democratic party. As a result many activists put aside organizing action in the streets for Black rights. Other leaders who refused to be bought off were the targets of government harassment and victimization, like Malcolm X. His assassination cut short his attempts to build a new, mili-

tant Black leadership.

The leadership that did arise after 1965 came primarily from the student wing of the civil rights movement. The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee became a militant, nationalist organization and raised the call for "Black Power." The Black Panther party emerged in 1966 and put forward a ten-point program that included the call for Black control of the Black community. The Black power movement spread across the country.

None of these organizations, however, ever developed a correct program to fight for Black liberation. SNCC and the BPP developed ultraleft strategies based on their misconceptions of the models of revolutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Others joined up with the Democratic party.

The government's campaign was successful in temporarily undercutting the level of protest and action to fight for Black rights. Fewer concessions were granted Blacks, and because the pressure to implement them was no longer as strong, desegregation plans were either put aside or held up in the courts.

The civil rights and Black power movements had a tremendous impact on the consciousness of all Americans. Today there is much less tolerance of blatant racism than there was ten to fifteen years ago. In addition, the ruling class fears the resurgence today of massive civil rights-type actions and ghetto rebellions by masses of Blacks and their allies.

These factors have placed the rulers in the midst of a contradictory situation today, which they have yet to figure out how to resolve. Because, while a new social consciousness and their fear of a Black mobilization places some limits on the extent to which they can utilize racism, the rulers need racism to maintain their rule.

Today, Blacks are demanding that the laws won by the Black struggle in the 1960s be enforced -- including further implementation of school desegregation. And the pressure and persistence of organizations like the NAACP, which have continued the fight on the legal front, combined with the fear of Black rebellion has forced the rulers to offer some further concessions on the desegregation question. A number of judges hearing local cases challenging racism in the schools have been forced by this pressure to order busing plans that would provide for school desegregation.

The key to an effective strategy to stop the racist anti-busing movement and to see the further extension of school desegregation is massive countermobilizations by supporters of Black rights. These kinds of massive actions are the best way to tell the ruling class that the democratic rights of Blacks cannot be taken away very easily -- that Blacks, students, and pro-Black rights forces will unite together in defense of the Black community. This was the strategy that was used in the civil rights movement -- that is the reason why

that movement was so effective. We have to do the same today.

Racism and capitalism

The Black liberation struggle will not be won unless the entire working class is unified in a struggle to fight for it.

Racial oppression is a fundamental feature of American capitalism. Racism continues to reap profits for the tiny minority of multimillionaires and big businessmen who run this country. Corporations pocket billions of dollars every year because of the gap between the wages paid to Black and white workers. Racism continues to politically strengthen the capitalists, as well. Racist ideology, for example, is used to help justify U. S. imperialism and the oppression of Africans, Latin Americans, Arabs, Asians, and other nonwhite people around the globe.

Today, racism is being promoted and whipped up once again in this new period of capitalist uncertainty and prolonged crisis.

Racist prejudices divide and weaken the working class as a whole. Racism undermines the development of class consciousness and solidarity among all workers. It is used by the rulers to try to divert from themselves the responsibility for the growing social crisis of American capitalism.

Racism is used to pit whites against Blacks instead of against the ruling class. Racism teaches whites to see Black people as their enemies, not the capitalists. It encourages whites to accept the low status of Blacks in this society as a product of "Black inferiority." Racism preaches that whites can enjoy better conditions and a decent life by accepting and helping to maintain the inferior status of Blacks.

The fact is that racism opposes the interests of all workers, Black and white. The low wages and standard of living that Blacks have been forced to accept helps to lower the level of wages and the standard of living of all workers. In the schools and on the campuses, the inferior conditions forced on Black students helps to keep the quality of education low for everyone.

Black and white workers share a common enemy: a capitalist class that economically and politically dominates them and benefits from their divisions. The only way to solve the social problems that all workers face is for Black and white workers to join together in a united struggle against the capitalists. The unity of the entire working class in that struggle can only be achieved by winning the workers' movement to a policy of complete and unconditional support to the struggle of Blacks.

The YSA thinks that white workers who have racist prejudices today can be won to support the struggles of Blacks. It is in their long term interest to do so. It is not in the interests of white workers to support racism, an outgrowth of a system that exploits them. The way to win racist white workers to the fight for their true interests is not to bend to their racism. To break them from their racism means to fight uncompromisingly against their racism.

A strong, independent Black movement -- one that puts

forward its own democratic demands as well as class demands that express the interests of all workers -- will help to win white workers to support the Black struggle. The example of the Black struggle combined with their own experiences will teach white workers that racial divisions result only in defeats for them. More workers will begin to recognize that society is not only divided along racial lines, but is even more deeply divided along class lines.

Combined revolution

The thirty million Black Americans trying to win their liberation today are part of a struggle that has two aspects: it is a struggle of the most exploited section of the working class for their rights as workers, and it is also a fight by an oppressed nationality for its equality as a people.

Because of the size, social weight, and nationalist consciousness of the Black population, Blacks will continue to play a leading role in the political radicalization of the working class. The example of the civil rights movement changed political life in America. The vanguard role Black students are playing on the campuses is just a preview of more to come as the Black struggle continues to show the way forward for all fighters for social change.

Blacks will play a leading role in the development of a class-struggle left wing in the unions and in the political radicalization of the working class. Today, as the rank and file of the labor movement are beginning to move into action to defend their interests as workers, the Black movement will continue to be even more outspoken and militant as it presses on for its demands for equality. The development of the Black nationalist movement and the growing radicalization of Blacks has confirmed Leon Trotsky's prediction that Blacks "are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class."

The Black struggle, alongside and intertwined with the labor movement, is going to be a powerful force in the fight against capitalist exploitation and oppression.

The American socialist revolution has two central tasks to accomplish: the liberation from capitalism of the entire working class, and the equality and freedom from racial oppression for Blacks. The American revolution, as part of carrying through the democratic task of equalizing opportunities in all aspects of social life, will also be a revolution for the self-determination of Black people. Blacks will have the right to decide for themselves what state form they need to guarantee their complete liberation from racial oppression. They may choose to form a separate state, share a common state with whites, or decide upon some other alternative.

If the legacy of racism and degree of oppression are so great that Blacks feel it is necessary to separate from this country and set up a separate Black state, it will not only be the obligation of the new workers state to defend the right of Blacks to do this, but to provide all the material assistance necessary.

IV. THE BLACK MOVEMENT TODAY

The need to build a militant and revolutionary leadership in the Black movement is made especially obvious in the context of today's severe economic crisis and the rulers' increased attacks on Black rights. Racist forces have been encouraged by the fact that there is no strong and unified Black leadership today to challenge them. This is the major problem confronting the Black struggle today.

A crisis in leadership

The attempt by the ruling class to channel the Black liberation movement into the Democratic party and other government apparatuses was highly successful. It has resulted in a dramatic rise in the number of Black elected officials--from little more than 100 in 1965 to around 3,500 today.

The "leadership," to the extent that one exists in the Black movement today, remains in the hands of the Black Democrats. The Congressional Black Caucus and local Black politicians elected over the last several years, including mayors like Thomas Bradley in Los Angeles, Kenneth Gibson in Newark, and Coleman Young in Detroit, continue to derail the Black movement into the ranks of the capitalist Democratic party.

None of the other traditional Black organizations, including the Congress for Racial Equality, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the NAACP has provided a clear perspective for solving the social and economic problems facing the Black community. But significantly, the NAACP, because of its consistent legal offensive against attacks on Black rights, has shown through its initiatives around school desegregation that it has the potential to become more of a leadership force in the Black movement.

In order for some of the NAACP's legal suits to win in the courts, action is necessary. Some of the younger NAACP leaders are beginning to understand this. As a result the NAACP initiated the May 17, 1975 national march in Boston in defense of school desegregation. The YSA will want to continue to collaborate with the NAACP and support and relate to any future initiatives by them.

Other groups may come to the fore and participate in leading the defense against attacks on the Black community.

The YSA will want to follow the activities of every organization, even groups that may have been conservative in the past, and support any initiatives they may take to struggle against the problems facing the Black community.

The Nation of Islam, for example, has recently shown more interest in some cities in participating in political activities, such as support to the Hurricane Carter defense campaign in Newark. Particularly significant, too, is the impact that the feminist movement has had on this organization. Women are beginning to play more of a role within the Nation of Islam. They are participating in political discussions at mosques and even becoming Muslim ministers. These are new and important developments. They also

reflect what has become a broader trend throughout the Black movement of beginning to correctly recognize the relevance of feminist issues to the needs of Black women.

New developments like these within existing organizations are likely to continue to take place. As the YSA political resolution explains, we are entering into a new political period. Once this fact hits more people and other organizations it may prompt them to move into action no matter what their previous role has been.

The 1976 elections

The increase in the number of Black elected officials over the last several years is an indication of the breadth of nationalist consciousness in the Black community. It reflects the strong sentiment of Blacks to be represented in the political arena. Many mistakenly see Black participation in the Democratic party as a step toward eventual political independence.

Many Blacks today look to these Black elected officials for leadership. But the primary orientation of all the Black Democrats is to convince Black people to rely on the Democratic party to fight racism rather than on their own independent initiatives and struggle.

The Black Democrats are operating as servants of the capitalist system. They are encouraging Blacks to rely on the party that is dominated and run by the same forces who are responsible for the oppression and exploitation of Blacks. The dramatic increase in the number of Black elected officials over the last ten years has not resulted in an increase of gains or concessions for the Black community. But by opening up the Democratic party to Blacks, the capitalists hope to make Blacks feel they are part of the system and that they help to make decisions for it.

The Black Democrats are miseducating Blacks on how to find solutions to the problems confronting the Black community today. They preach that reliance on the Democratic party is the way forward. They promote the misconception that solutions can be found to the problems of Blacks without a consistent campaign of struggle and action and without a political confrontation with the representatives of the capitalist system.

One of the key tasks of the Black struggle today is to break the hold of the capitalist politicians, Black and white, on the Black community. In order to win gains, political independence is a necessity for the Black movement. This means that Blacks must rely not on the promises of capitalist politicians, but on themselves and their own actions to win victories in this struggle.

The Black community needs a political party of its own. An independent Black political party is needed--a party that would not counterpose action to participation in the elections. Candidates of such a party would actively participate in the united actions needed to advance the struggle and even give national leadership to them. Independent Black party candi-

dates would use their campaigns and their offices to serve the interests of the struggle rather than present obstacles to it.

Because the overwhelming majority of Blacks are workers, an independent Black party would represent a class break with capitalist politics and the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties. It would provide an example to other workers of the independent political perspective that is needed to win the rights of all workers.

As the pace of the 1976 presidential election campaign steps up, there will be pressure placed on those Black leaders participating in the probusing movement today to withdraw from protests and demonstrations until after election day. The Black Democrats will be among the chief spokespeople for this point of view. They will pose the 1976 election campaign as the opportunity for Blacks to get politically active. In many cases, they will counterpose this to participation in mass action and to building the kind of movement to win Black rights that's necessary today.

We should not underestimate the effect of the Democrats' campaign. In the last presidential election, 89 percent of the Black vote went to the Democratic party. Leaders of organizations like the NAACP, which has been taking some initiatives in organizing protests to defend school desegregation, will also be affected by this pressure. Many will succumb to it.

The increased pressure to get sucked into capitalist party politics will mean that the YSA and the ranks of our movement will be called on even more than over the last year to continue to advance the perspective of building an independent movement with a mass-action perspective to carry out struggles in the interest of the Black community.

And as we do that, we can point to the independent political alternative in the 1976 elections of the Socialist Workers presidential campaign. Socialist Workers candidates Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid are the only candidates running for President and Vice-president who are building the independent movements of Blacks and other working people. They are the only candidates who have given their unconditional support to busing and school desegregation. They are the only candidates promoting and participating in mass actions to win Black rights. What the Black community needs in 1976 is not more Democratic and Republican party rhetoric, but action in the streets and the kind of independent, working class alternative in the 1976 elections that the Socialist Workers campaign represents.

The Black student movement

In the fight to end Jim Crow, Black students played a leading role. The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee was formed in 1960 and spearheaded the sit-ins that rapidly spread across the country. SNCC was also active in the freedom rides to desegregate public transportation. They played a key role in the civil rights movement and helped to rally white students to the side of the civil rights struggle.

The YSA was also active in these early sit-ins and other militant struggles of the movement.

Today Black college and high school students are the most organized and politicized group in the Black community. They can be looked to to help fill the vacuum of leadership in the Black movement as a whole.

The struggles of Black students on the campuses during the 1960s radically transformed the relationship of the entire student body to the university administration. These struggles prepared the ground and set the precedent for the May 1970 upsurge over the antiwar university.

Black students demanded that whole departments and schools be devoted to the study of Black history and culture and that these departments and schools be under the control of the Black student community. They demanded the admission of more Black students and the hiring of more Black faculty. The Black community supported and received inspiration from the example set by the Black students in the campus struggles they led.

Black students are continuing to play a leadership role in both the student movement and broader social struggles. A significant number of the campus anticutback struggles last spring and this fall have been led by Black students.

Black students have been the hardest hit by the financial consequences of the cutbacks and tuition hikes. They have been among the first students forced off the campuses by the cuts. Special programs for Black and minority studies have also been under attack by school administrations. Because they have been the hardest hit by the cuts, Black and other nationally oppressed students have been among the first to fight back against them. In doing so, they have set an example not only for other students, but for working people in general who are also facing cutbacks stemming from the financial crisis of the cities.

At the City University of New York, which is currently threatened with drastic financial cutbacks, Black and Puerto Rican students have taken the lead in fighting against the cuts. They played a major role in helping to build the November 19 march against cutbacks in Washington, D. C., which was initiated by CUNY students. Black and Puerto Rican students also represented a large number of the participants in that march of 6,000. These students are in the midst of planning other protests against the cuts. The Washington march and future protests are providing an example to other students and workers in New York of how the cutbacks can be successfully fought-- that is, through a united campaign of all affected by the cuts and mass actions to protest against them.

On other campuses this year, struggles have taken place that were initiated or saw significant input by Black and other nationally oppressed students. They have included the University of Washington in Seattle, Brandeis University, Ohio State University, Brown University, Boston College, and the University of California at San Diego.

Affirmative action on campus

One consequence of the education cutbacks has been cutbacks in the number of faculty and staff members on the campuses. In many cases, the first to go have been Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano faculty and staff. Demands for the implementation or maintenance of affirmative action programs affecting faculty hiring were central demands raised by Black students in last spring's anticutbacks struggles at Brown and Ohio State universities.

Another instance of affirmative action under attack on the campuses was the DeFunis case, the first case involving the affirmative action issue that was argued before the Supreme Court. In 1971 Marco DeFunis challenged the affirmative action measures which the University of Washington law school had been forced to implement. He charged that Black students who were "less qualified" than he was were admitted to the law school while he was rejected.

Other white students came to DeFunis's defense. They failed to recognize that the university had been forced to correctly give oppressed minority students preference in order to correct a history of discrimination against them. Most importantly, they failed to see that it was in their own interest, in order to win rights for themselves on the campus, to support affirmative action at the University of Washington. They should have fought along with Black students for affirmative action and for open admissions to solve both the problem of racism and the denial of anyone's right to an education.

The struggles of Black students for their rights on the campuses have been struggles that have been in the interest of the rights of white students as well. In New York City in 1969, for example, it was the protests of Black, Puerto Rican, and Asian-American students for admission to the City University of New York schools that resulted in the open admissions policy of the CUNY system today--a system which is benefiting both Black and other nationally oppressed students, as well as white students who wish to attend CUNY. The struggles being led by Black students against campus cutbacks are also struggles that white students should support since current and future financial cutbacks are also affecting their educations. Wherever Black and white students unite in struggles on the campuses to defend the rights of Black students and issues facing the student body as a whole, the chances for victories in those struggles increase. Black students will continue to be among the best fighters not only for their rights as Blacks but for their rights as students as well. A united student movement can only be built on the basis of white students supporting the demands of Blacks for equal rights on the campuses.

The high schools

Black high school students have also played a leadership role in the Black and student movements. In many cities they, too, helped to lead the civil rights sit-ins and other protests. They have also set an example as some of the best fighters for student rights in the high schools. The actions of Black students have been responsible for a few of the historic

court rulings that have marked victories in the fight for high school rights.

In one of the most important breakthroughs for high school students, nine students who had been victimized took their case to the Supreme Court in 1971. They had been suspended from school for organizing a "Black studies week" in the Columbus, Ohio schools. It was their case that prompted the Supreme Court ruling that "those young people do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse door." They established that high school students have a right to a hearing before they can be suspended from school.

With fewer and fewer Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Asian and American Indian students making it into the universities and colleges, the high schools are where the largest number and concentration of Black students are. We can expect to see increasing participation in political action to win Black rights by high school students.

In Boston and other cities, high school students are most directly involved and affected by the busing controversy. Some of the Black students being bused in Boston have organized themselves and are raising demands for increased protection from racist violence and the arrest of racist cops who harass them.

There have been several actions and militant protests organized by high school students this year to protest the cutbacks in public education. Last June, the Newark Student Union, a group that includes the student body presidents and vice presidents from every high school in Newark, initiated a school boycott against budget cutbacks that involved close to 30,000 students. Other high school anticutbacks protests have taken place in San Francisco, New York, and other cities.

These high school students are deeply affected by the racist attacks on education and by the economic crisis. Black and other high school students victimized by racial discrimination are also seeing their families suffer socially and economically. Today's high school youth are political people who are questioning the ideas they are taught inside the schools. From among their ranks will come some of the most militant fighters and leaders of the struggle for school desegregation and other antiracist issues.

YSA's role

The crisis of leadership which plagues the Black movement generally is also reflected in the Black student movement. Here, a crisis of youth leadership exists.

Many of the Black student organizations which during the 1960s were centers for Black nationalist activities either no longer exist or have been transformed from political organizations into purely social and cultural groups.

The National Association of Black Students, an organization formed by Black student members of the National Student Association, no longer exists. The youth councils that the NAACP is attempting to build don't exist today as viable organizations. The February First Movement (formerly the Youth Organization for Black Unity) operates on

the campus but has been disoriented by a sectarian, Maoist strategy. Pan-Africanist groups, which exist on some campuses, also are not providing direction and a clear perspective for the Black student movement.

We can expect that in the Black student movement, as in the broader Black movement, new groups will develop as the new period unfolds, and many nonpolitical Black student groups will become more active in the struggles defending the democratic rights and social needs of Black people.

As the attacks on our standard of living, our right to an education, and Black equality continue, the new and old leaderships of the Black and student movements will be put

to the test.

The YSA thinks that the student movement today can take the lead in organizing support for the struggle against racist attacks. Just as Black students inspired white students and workers into action against racism during the civil rights movement, this can happen again today with the new layers of students in the colleges and high schools. The YSA can play a leading role in mobilizing both Black and white students against the racist antibusing offensive and other racist conditions. The campuses can become organizing centers for the fight against racism.

V. THE NATIONAL STUDENT COALITION AGAINST RACISM

When the racist attacks on the schoolbuses began in Boston last fall, the Black community there was disorganized and lacked leadership. Since that time, three major events have contributed to instilling confidence in the Black community and laying the basis for a national counter campaign to the antibusing movement.

The first of these events was the December 14, 1974 march against racism in Boston initiated by Massachusetts Senator-elect Bill Owens. The Youth Against War and Fascism played a role in organizing the action. Although YAWF's sectarian approach cut across the breadth that the march had the potential to realize, the YSA threw its energies into helping to build that protest. We saw it as an important first step to building a probusing movement and turning around public sentiment in favor of school desegregation.

The May 17, 1975, NAACP-initiated march in defense of school desegregation was another major event. It represented the first national countermobilization of busing supporters. This national protest of 15,000 contributed to further inspiring confidence that something could be done to stop the antibusing drive. The march also helped to pressure the government to provide more security to protect Black students when schools opened in the fall.

The formation of the National Student Coalition Against Racism is the third major factor that contributed to promoting a national countercampaign to the racist antibusing drive. NSCAR played a major role in organizing and helping to build the May 17 march. NSCAR was launched by leaders of the student movement, including the YSA, to organize a response to the racist violence and attacks on busing.

The YSA welcomed the formation of NSCAR because we recognized the significance of the Boston events and saw that the student movement could play a leading role in doing something about it. Since its formation, NSCAR has continued to play a leading role in building the antiracist struggle.

NSCAR was formed in February 1975. At its founding conference in Boston, 2,000 students and young people from around the country joined together to denounce the racist antibusing violence and to announce their support for busing and school desegregation. NSCAR's founding conference decided to throw its energies into building the NAACP-initiated May 17 prodesegregation march on Boston.

At the second National Student Conference Against Racism held in Boston this October, NSCAR reaffirmed its support for busing and launched a national education and action campaign to defend school desegregation and fight racism.

NSCAR is a united action coalition. All those willing to fight racism whether they are in a Black Student Union, student government, a national youth organization, or no other organization at all, can be part of NSCAR. This open

and all-inclusive approach is key to the Student Coalition's broad-based character and its ability to mobilize people in struggle.

NSCAR is a politically independent organization. It is not based on reliance or subservience to the Democratic or Republican parties or any individual politician. NSCAR's main concern is to help build a united action campaign of the Black community and its allies nationally to defeat racist mobilizations against Black rights. It has no interests above and beyond the struggle against racial discrimination against Blacks, and other oppressed national minorities. Its decisions and leadership are decided upon democratically at its national conferences.

The other aspect of NSCAR is its single focus on how to fight racism. It utilizes the method of mass action--a working-class method--to carry out its campaigns against racism. This approach is key in its strategy to fight racism and is the method it uses in all the struggles it takes up. This approach has enabled NSCAR to draw new forces into the organization, as the Student Coalition has related to other issues of racism outside of the desegregation fight. It has also enabled NSCAR to draw new forces into the desegregation struggle.

While Blacks are the largest oppressed national minority in this country, there are other peoples who are also victims of racist oppression.

They include the Puerto Rican population in this country, Chicanos, Asian Americans and American Indians. NSCAR is involved in struggles around the needs of these nationally oppressed people as well, relating their victimization to that of Blacks. They, too, bear the brunt of the racist cutbacks affecting the campuses and jobs. They are victimized by racist frame-ups, police brutality and other injustices. They have a stake in defending the right of the Black communities and of themselves to an equal education. They have the right to utilize busing, and to exercise community control of all Puerto Rican, Chicano, or American Indian schools.

NSCAR supports the just demands of Spanish- and Chinese-speaking parents and students for bilingual education programs in the schools. NSCAR maintains that where a busing plan may destroy what advances have been made toward winning a bilingual education for these students, the busing plan should be modified to accommodate bilingual programs according to the desires of the Spanish- and Chinese-speaking communities.

An organization like NSCAR, a broad-based united action coalition of students and youth of all nationalities, has been a necessity in the United States since racism has been in existence. But it could only develop out of the concrete struggles against racism. The desegregation issue became the basis for the formation of NSCAR. As NSCAR has grown, so has the scope of its activities. And while

the defense of busing and school desegregation remains at the center of its work today, NSCAR also relates to other issues of racism.

It played a major role in defending JoAnne Little. NSCAR initiated protest activities for Little around the country and sent a leading activist to Raleigh, North Carolina to help organize her defense. NSCAR has also organized support for J.B. Johnson, Hurricane Carter, Delbert Tibbs, and other political prisoners. It has helped to organize support for the United Farmworkers and for Black, Puerto Rican, and Chinese-American parents in their community control fight in New York's School District One.

NSCAR has recognized the need to relate to broader social struggles. It has played a major role, for example, in the fight against the budget cuts on and off the campuses. In New York City NSCAR is currently helping to lead the fight against cutbacks at the City University of New York. It is pointing out in particular the racist nature of the cuts, which affect Black, Puerto Rican, and other oppressed national minority students most. NSCAR has helped to lead citywide cutbacks protests and the November 19 march on Washington to protest the cuts. The activities of NSCAR and other students fighting against the cutbacks is setting an example for working people in New York for how to fight back.

As an organization of students and youth, NSCAR's primary arena of activity is on the campuses and in the high schools. The movement that was built against the Vietnam War demonstrated that the campuses could be used as organizing centers to build the antiwar movement. NSCAR wants to put the campuses and high schools to use today as organizing centers for the fight against racism. NSCAR has used the schools as educational centers--to educate on the real issues involved in the busing controversy. NSCAR has worked to put campus resources to use on behalf of the desegregation movement. It has also involved students on the campuses and in the high schools in the fight against racist practices in the schools themselves.

By organizing in this way, students are setting an example for those outside the campuses for how to build a movement that can win victories. Those students who have taken the initiative in organizing Student Coalition chapters on their campuses and in their high schools have also

set an example for other students. Many of the students who have joined NSCAR in its antiracist activities have also gained confidence in their abilities to organize to fight campus administrations on other issues affecting students as a whole.

As a multiracial organization of students and youth, NSCAR aims to mobilize the strength of the entire student movement in the fight against racism. The role that both Black and white students can play in using the campuses to build the struggle makes them a valuable ally for the Black movement. The YSA also supports and encourages the formation and mobilization of all-Black student groups to lead and build the fight against racism.

There are some Black students who do not want to join an ongoing multiracial coalition like NSCAR, but still want to participate in specific actions against racist conditions in the schools and elsewhere. The YSA wants to encourage NSCAR to work in joint activities and ad hoc coalitions with these Black youth and their organizations wherever possible.

Black members of the YSA should join these Black student organizations and participate in their activities where it would help to build the antiracist movement. Black YSA members can participate in these organizations and in NSCAR through discussing and planning activities and developing a strategy for the antiracist fight.

Their experiences in ad hoc coalitions and working with YSA members can help show Black activists the value and importance of both all-Black student organizations and a multiracial action coalition such as NSCAR to mobilize support for Black rights.

NSCAR's strategy of independence; mass action to counter the racist offensive; public education to indict the racists; and non-exclusion to allow all antiracists in the coalition who support the democratic rights of the Black community, is the key to the survival and growth of the organization.

By maintaining this strategy, NSCAR can become a viable and permanent fighting coalition for the rights of the Black and oppressed minority communities. It can aid in the formation of a left wing of the general movement for Black liberation that can begin to fill the vacuum of leadership in the Black liberation movement.

VI. PSEUDO-SOCIALISTS AND THE DESEGREGATION STRUGGLE

A growing number of Blacks today are investigating and discussing the ideas of revolutionary Marxism. Many of them have correctly come to the conclusion that a socialist revolution is necessary before Black liberation will be won. Black students and young workers are attracted to organizations that proclaim themselves socialist and put forward a program for the Black struggle today.

The busing and desegregation struggle has put the program and practice of every group advocating socialism to a decisive test. With the exception of the YSA and SWP all the organizations on the American left have failed that test.

Communist Party and Young Workers Liberation League

The Communist party, USA, and its youth affiliate, the Young Workers Liberation League, say on paper that they support desegregation and defend busing. But in practice the CP and YWLL have backed further and further away from participating in any actions to defend school desegregation.

The YWLL reluctantly joined NSCAR at its founding conference last February. After remaining an inactive member-organization for four months, the YWLL dropped out of the Student Coalition on the eve of the NAACP-called May 17 demonstration in Boston. While giving May 17 verbal support, by dropping out and red-baiting NSCAR, the YWLL and CP aimed to undercut support for the demonstration.

This fall the CP's New England District announced "a stepped-up drive against the ultra-Right and racist extremist forces in the school integration struggle." What did this ambitious-sounding campaign consist of? Its activities were confined to distributing several thousand copies of CP National Secretary Gus Hall's report to the last CP convention and supporting the campaign of a Black Democratic party candidate for Boston School Committee.

At the November conference of the National Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression, the CP -- which dominates the National Alliance -- took another step backward. The conference organizers refused to include any discussion of busing or desegregation struggles on the agenda. A representative from the NSCAR national office was refused permission to even attend the conference.

Lying behind the Communist party's abstention from the desegregation struggle is their willingness to subordinate any struggle if they think it may conflict with the diplomatic aims of the Moscow bureaucracy in the United States. What is paramount for the CP today is going to bat for U. S. -Soviet detente. Massive, militant demonstrations by the Black community against the government run counter to the CP's general policy of collaboration with capitalist politicians and its attempts to minimize the development of such protests. In addition, the CP knows that YWLL members working shoulder to shoulder with YSA members in coalitions like NSCAR, in many cases, can be won away from Stalinism to a revolutionary socialist, Trotskyist program.

Maoist organizations

Various groups who look to Peking for leadership have also defaulted in the concrete struggle against racism. Some of these groups have attracted Black youth who mistakenly identify the revolutionary victory of the Chinese workers and peasants with the privileged bureaucracy headed by Mao-Tse-tung.

Despite infighting among themselves, none of these groups have advanced a real strategy to defend desegregation. The Revolutionary Communist party (formerly Revolutionary Union) and its youth group the Revolutionary Student Brigade have taken a position in opposition to busing. Over the past year their stance has pushed them steadily to the right until today many of their positions are hardly distinguishable from the racist, antibusing outfits like Boston's ROAR.

In fact, this fall they see themselves vying with ROAR for the leadership of the antibusing movement. In the September issue of their newspaper Revolution they explained that Louise Day Hicks and the other ROAR leaders "promised the people that they would smash the busing plan." But, the RCP laments, "their promises of real struggle soon proved to be hot air and their influence has decreased." Thus the RCP vows to replace ROAR not because ROAR is a pack of lynch-minded racists, but because of their "opportunism" in leading the antibusing struggle.

In Boston the RSB has lost half its membership. Last year, as well, a rapid exodus of the RSB and RCP's Black membership began. That process is almost completed as indicated by the presence of only 8 or 9 Blacks out of the 500 who attended the RSB national convention this fall in Chicago.

The October League, another contender for the Maoist franchise in the United States, criticizes the antibusing policies of the RCP. The OL correctly characterizes the antibusing movement as racist and segregationist. They even call it neo-fascist. Yet the October League has confined itself to commenting on the struggle from the sidelines or calling its own small, sectarian demonstrations. OL refused to participate in the May 17 prodesegregation march of 15,000 in Boston. The Maoists attacked the march as "assimilationist" because it was initiated by the Boston NAACP. They later criticized this position.

Several other Maoist organizations that are predominantly Black, have recently emerged from formerly anti-Marxist, Pan-Africanist groups. The most prominent of these new Maoist groups are Amiri Baraka's Congress of African People, the February First Movement, and the Revolutionary Workers League. All of these groups hold the position that busing is a "ruling-class plot" to divert people's attention from the real "anti-imperialist" struggle. In practice they have done nothing to defend the rights of the Black communities in Boston and Louisville, who are under attack from racist, antibusing forces.

They say that busing is not the battleground on which

revolutionists should be confronting the ruling class today. They do not recognize that we are not in a position to determine the battleground today. This is being done by those who control state power. But as revolutionists we must be able to respond to attacks on our class on whatever issue the ruling class decides to pick. Today busing and school desegregation is one such issue.

Because CAP, the February First Movement, and the RWL still represent a pole of attraction to radicalizing Black youth, it is especially important that the YSA thoroughly expose the abstention of the Maoist groups from real class struggles and the fight for Black equality.

Social democrats

Social Democrats, USA, represent a social democratic tendency in the American working class. While they are barely visible on campus, they are a significant force in the trade union movement. For years they have provided advisors, speechwriters, and functionaries for the wing of the labor bureaucracy represented by George Meany and Albert Shanker.

The social democrats have tried to straddle the busing issue. Bayard Rustin, the national chairman of SDUSA, is also an officer of the NAACP and claims to support busing. Albert Shanker, on the other hand, successfully opposed every probusing resolution that came before the recent con-

vention of the American Federation of Teachers. Rustin, who was present at the AFT convention, gave back-handed support to Shanker's moves.

The SDUSA wants to maintain its ties to major civil rights organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League. But any serious fight against de facto segregation will bring them into sharp conflict with the white-job-trust bureaucracy they serve in the trade unions. It will also bring them into equally sharp conflict with the Democratic party. This is the contradiction the social democrats face.

Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, which split from the SDUSA in 1973, supports busing and backed the May 17 demonstration in Boston. Unfortunately, DSOC has done little to aid the struggle in Boston or help mount future May 17-type actions. A number of important liberal union leaders are associated with DSOC and their participation could lend important weight in the fight for school desegregation. They have not done so.

In light of the generalized interest in Marxism among Black youth today, the YSA has the responsibility to explain where and why all of the nonrevolutionary, pseudo-socialists go wrong in their analysis and program for Black liberation. Through our activity in defense of Black rights and our patient explanations of the correct strategy for Black liberation, we can win the most serious Black activists away from the incorrect positions of these groups to a revolutionary socialist program.

VII. BUILDING THE YSA

The YSA knows that Black liberation can and will be won only through the American socialist revolution.

The YSA is an organization of uncompromising fighters for Black liberation. Ours is the only revolutionary youth organization whose program unequivocally supports and incorporates the demands and the aspirations of Blacks and other oppressed national minorities and has a strategy to achieve them. This is the basis for uniting Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, and other oppressed national minorities, and white youth in a common revolutionary organization.

Through our participation in helping to organize youth against budget cutbacks, racist frame-ups, school segregation, and other manifestations of racism, the YSA is having an important impact on the fight for Black rights. YSA members on the campuses, particularly Black members, are being recognized and respected as outstanding leaders in these struggles. Black activists and other antiracist fighters are taking a serious look at the YSA and in growing numbers are deciding to join our ranks.

The YSA can be proud of our role in helping to build the National Student Coalition Against Racism. NSCAR's continued growth and its initiatives in the antiracist struggle are of critical importance today because of the step-up in racist attacks and the crisis of leadership that exists within the Black movement.

This situation poses unprecedented responsibilities and opportunities for the YSA. For this reason, our top priority in the period ahead must continue to be offering our leadership and our energies in helping to build the National Student Coalition Against Racism.

The central arena for this work will be on the campuses and in the high schools. This emphasizes the importance of the YSA and its leadership sinking even deeper roots in the student movement.

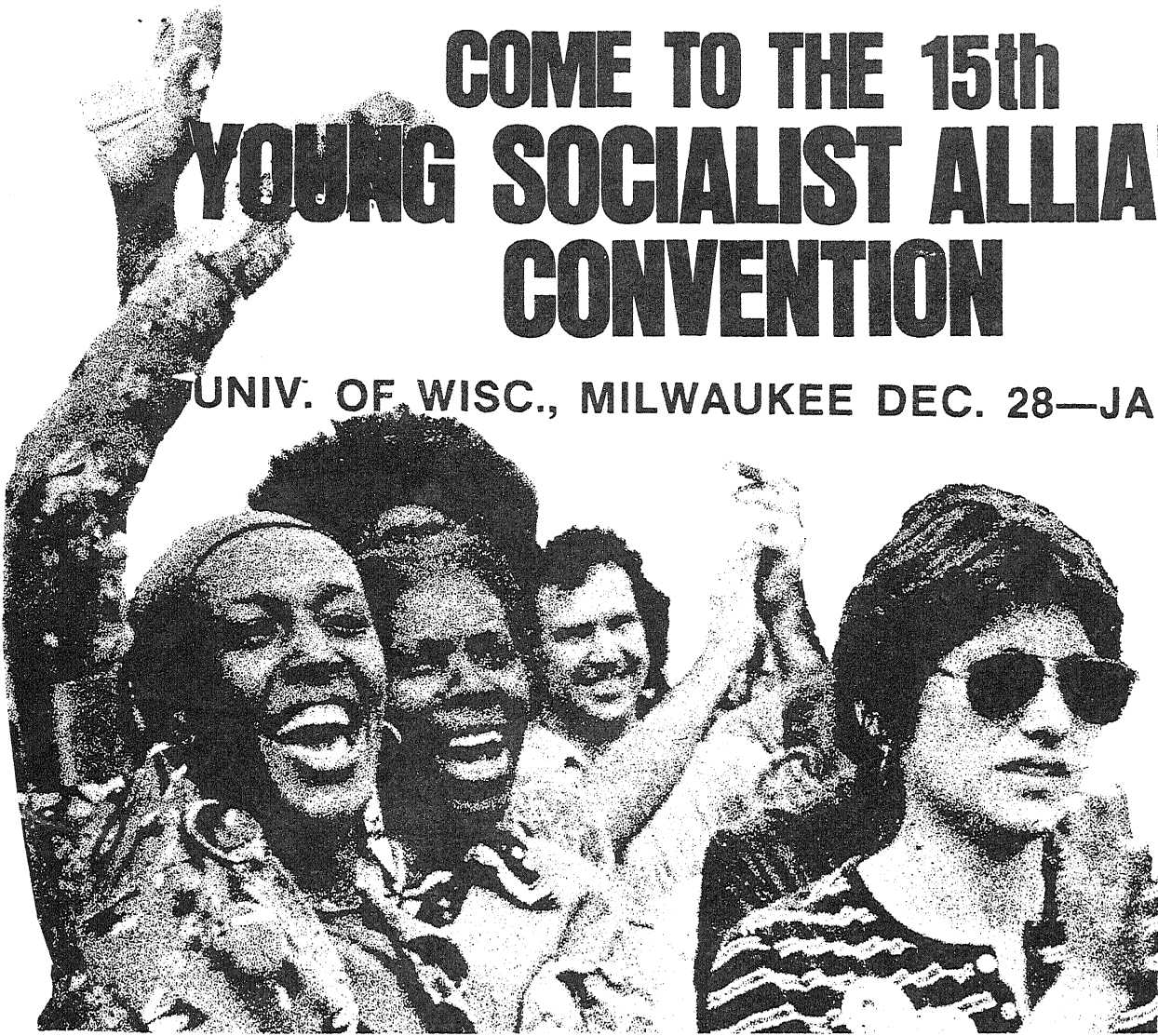
The Young Socialist and Militant newspapers can be valuable assets to antiracist fighters providing information about their struggles and a perspective for winning them. Our press can inform activists of struggles around other issues, introduce them to a socialist perspective on broad social questions, and explain the role of revolutionary youth in the fight to eradicate capitalist oppression. We want to place a special emphasis on getting the YS and Militant into the hands of antiracist fighters and Black youth in general.

The YSA must continue to take the news of the only independent, working class alternative in the 1976 elections to the Black community. That alternative is the campaign of Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid. These candidates are running on the platform of the Socialist Workers party, the party that the YSA thinks is the nucleus of the mass, multinational working class party that is needed to lead the American socialist revolution.

All of these activities will help gain a broader hearing for the YSA's ideas and root us more deeply in the struggles of Black youth. Each antiracist struggle will help to educate, inspire, and radicalize new activists. The YSA will win the most uncompromising antiracist militants to the fight for socialism. In this way, we will be constructing a vital component in the leadership of the American socialist revolution.

COME TO THE 15th YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE CONVENTION

UNIV. OF WISC., MILWAUKEE DEC. 28—JAN. 1



Schedule

- **The Crisis Confronting Youth—A Socialist Strategy to Fight Back and Win**
- **Portugal—Revolutionary Struggle at the Crossroads**
- **The Fight for Desegregation and the Black Liberation Struggle**
- **The Offensive Against Government Attacks on Democratic Rights**
- **Our tasks in the Coming Year**

Also—Socialist Workers 1976 Campaign Rally featuring Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid, SWP presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

Arrangements

Hotel Rates: ... single \$13.50/night
double \$15.50/night
triple \$19.00/night
quad \$21.00/night

Low-cost housing (bring your sleeping bag) will also be available at a minimal charge near the convention site.

The cafeteria at UWM will be open at the convention for all meals.

Registration is \$3.00 for the entire convention.

- I want more information about the Young Socialist Alliance National Convention.
- I want to attend the convention. Enclosed is \$3.00 preregistration fee.
- I want to join the YSA.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send to: YSA, P.O. Box 471 Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Local address: