

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

May 1, 1974

TO ALL ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a report on the Philadelphia local's high school work by the YSA organizer, Valerie Libby.

Other locals with similar experiences in high school work or other activities should consider writing up similar reports.

Comradely,

Rich Finkel

Rich Finkel
YSA National Secretary

PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL WORK

By Valerie Libby

I want to report on the final results of some concentrated high school work we've done in April. After we've thought out May high school activities we'll send along any ideas we think other locals might be able to use.

We organized a special two-week blitz the weeks of April 1-5 and April 15-19. We went to a total of 13 inner city high schools, including one Catholic school, with teams of three to five comrades in the mornings before school started. In addition we had speakers at two other schools.

The results of this were: 1) we sold 105 Young Socialists and 2 Militants; 2) we got 12 campaign endorsers; and 3) we handed out about 2,000 campaign platforms stuffed with a special leaflet we made for high school students and materials on our regional campaign conference.

Initial evaluation

First of all, we had totally underestimated the sales potential at the high schools. The first week we didn't even officially budget in high school sales along with our other weekly sales projections.

We found that some of our opponents -- particularly the Nation Caucus of Labor Committees and the Workers League -- have in the past done a fair amount of work at some of the high schools, and at a few of the schools, some students confused us with other left groups.

Not many students stopped at the campaign tables we set up, but a few did at each school. On the tables we had campaign literature, "Join the YSA" brochures, P.R.D.F. material, buttons, leaflets for forums and other political meetings, and one or two inexpensive pamphlets. In addition, we used old centerfolds from back Yss, such as the article "How to Fight Nixon's Racism" and "Why Socialists Back the Arab Struggle" as free handouts. (If you pull them out and fold them backwards they all make great free samples that make the table much more interesting and attractive.) Hopefully by continuing to go back to the high schools, interest in the tables will increase.

Although we handed out thousands of leaflets for our regional conference, it did not bring any of these high school students to our weekend. As you might guess, now that we know the interest exists at the Philadelphia high schools, we still have to spend a lot of time thinking out how to transform this initial interest into recruits to the YSA....We'll be working on that for May.

One important way to recruit to the YSA will be through actual speaking engagements in the high schools. So far we've

had a few, but we've had difficulty getting engagements in the center city, predominantly Black schools -- most of our speaking engagements have been in the suburban schools. We sent out letters to all the social studies teachers in the schools, and we will have to aggressively go after their sponsorship of meetings. We have been thinking of just trying to build an after-school meeting by leafleting at a school, but that's still in the planning stages.

April 24, 1974