

YEAR END YOUTH REPORT
Presented to San Francisco branch on
June 22, 1966
by Kipp Dawson

This report will deal with one of the most important areas of party work, i.e. with the activities of our comrades in the YSA and of the YSA during the last 12 month period.

The work of the youth has centered around the anti-war movement. Recruitment and the building of a cadre of youth has depended largely on the situation in the anti-war movement, and our work there. In addition, our relative position among our opponents has been and is largely dependent on our position in the anti-war movement. All of this is because of--and testimony to--the importance of the anti-war movement for the newly radicalizing youth in this area.

We have seen many ups and downs in the anti-war movement during the last twelve months, but from the confusion we can see the emergence of a general pattern of development. An important trend is occurring: a political differentiation is taking place within the movement, and we are witnessing the formation of fairly conscious left and right wings and a polarization around them. The right wing has solidarized around the Stalinist dominated "neighborhood" and "Concerned Citizens" groups; it included, along with the Stalinists, the pacifists and the liberals. A left wing is developing around the militants in the two Vietnam Day Committees. We have seen the Berkeley VDC develop from a broad, all inclusive organization to a more politically defined, vanguard formation for the anti-war movement. The Berkeley VDC now forms the center of the left wing of the anti-war movement in the Bay Area. In San Francisco it is our comrades and the militant independents around us who represent the ideas of the Berkeley VDC, and, thus, who form the center of the left wing.

We should quickly retrace the development of the anti-war movement in the last 12 months, and especially our work in San Francisco. One year ago the Berkeley Vietnam Day Committee was the anti-war organization in the Bay Area. It had just completed the first Vietnam Day with great success. The anti-war movement was young, fresh, and optimistic. The activities of our youth from around the Bay Area were centered in Berkeley.

Near the end of the summer the Bay Area antiwar fraction decided that the San Francisco comrades should switch their concentration to San Francisco, and particularly to San Francisco State College. We decided to form a VDC at SF State, and our comrades got the "charter" (mainly, the use of the name) from the Berkeley VDC. We started the VDC at SF State, and got very good response from the very beginning. The VDC quickly became the largest organization on campus, and the center of all radical activity. We held formal leadership of the committee throughout

the fall semester, but changing conditions within the anti-war movement, coupled with the fact that SF State had been a DuBois Club stronghold the year before, led to the ascendancy of the Stalinists within the SF State VDC. The decline of the Berkeley VDC after October 15 and 16 (actually the beginning of the process of its transformation in character) and its dissolution in the beginning of this year, coupled with a renewed activity and growth on the part of the Stalinists, led to a decline in activity among the independents at State--a sign of general, temporary demoralization. This left the door open for the Stalinists to assume the leadership of the SF State VDC, as they did. Their grouping held formal control of the SF State VDC Executive Committee during the whole last semester. But their actual influence in the VDC has been on a sharp decline during the last two or three months.

The reorganization of the Berkeley VDC in its new form gave the independents at State something to look to. Once again it was our comrades, who have always been closely identified with the Berkeley VDC (and with its ups and downs) who benefited, in that we were given a base around which to form a left wing in the SF State VDC. This process has been going on for the past couple of months, and will continue and intensify during the summer and next semester.

In addition to our work in the SF State VDC, our comrades at State have been carrying out regular propaganda activity in the name of the YSA. We have had regular literature sales at least once a week (with large literature tables set up all day in front of the school cafeteria); these sales netted an average of about \$7-\$10 per week. There were also regular Militant sales, and less regular YS sales. We sponsored several public meetings, including talks by Pete C. and Doug, and the FALN film. The YSA has been established as an important campus group.

We have also had comrades working at Stanford University. This was an extremely difficult situation to work in. The campus is very conservative, and the activity which does exist on the left is dominated by liberals. In addition, our comrades working there were fairly new to the movement, and have been operating in an isolated situation--it has been difficult for the rest of us to help them as much as would ~~xxx~~ have been desirable. Nevertheless, they were able to get our ideas out on the campus, largely ~~xxxx~~ through the sale of our literature.

The work of our campus comrades has been backed by our off-campus comrades. A major area of work, and one which had netted a sizable number of recruits, has been the educational work of the local. We have had a series of two contact classes, each of which has brought in new people to the movement. In addition, it has been mainly our off-campus comrades who have been responsible for internal local education and for sales at public meetings.

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Our growing strength in the anti-war movement has been largely responsible for, and is reflected in, the great change in the YSA here in San Francisco. It is difficult to compare the present local to that which existed a year ago, for conditions have changed so much, both the general political climate and the level of the YSA. In general, the level of ~~the~~ commitment to the movement is the greatest I have ever seen in the SF local. Every single comrade feels responsible for the movement, and for educating himself as a revolutionary. Every comrade is reading the basic works of the movement on his own. Every comrade is available for assignments on the shortest notice. It is easiest to see the change in the movement in terms of numbers--numbers of recruits and, especially, financial figures.

Twelve months ago there were 10 people in the San Francisco local of the YSA. At that time monthly sustainers averaged about \$1 per comrade. In the fund drive preceeding the one we have just completed, the SF local had a quota of \$150. We paid in \$220--an average of \$22 per comrade.

In the last twelve months we have recruited 6 new people to the YSA in San Francisco. We have also, just recently, had two transfers in, added to the one transfer in about a year ago. During this period we have transferred out, to other locals, four comrades. We lost one comrade because of age (he is still sympathetic to the movement, and has contributed to the last fund drive), and one other for personal and political reasons. In June the average sustainer in the local is about \$5.60, but the sustainers are being raised considerably right now, to the point where the average individual sustainer will come to about \$15 per month (beginning in July). In the fund drive just completed the San Francisco local, still with 10 comrades, had a quota of \$350, sent in \$400, and has taken in (or will soon get) an additional \$130. Thus whereas in the previous fund drive 10 comrades gave \$220, or \$22 each, in this fund drive 10 comrades have given \$530 or \$53 each. Thus we see not only increased commitment in general, but an increased feeling of being part of a national organization.

During the last twelve months four more YSA'ers have decided to commit their lives to the revolutionary movement and have joined the SWP. This trend will continue.

In summary: the last twelve months have seen a tremendous growth in the YSA, in terms of our position in the anti-war movement and in relation to our opponents, and in terms of building a youth cadre for the revolutionary movement. All signs indicate that this trend will continue and will increase in tempo in the coming period.