

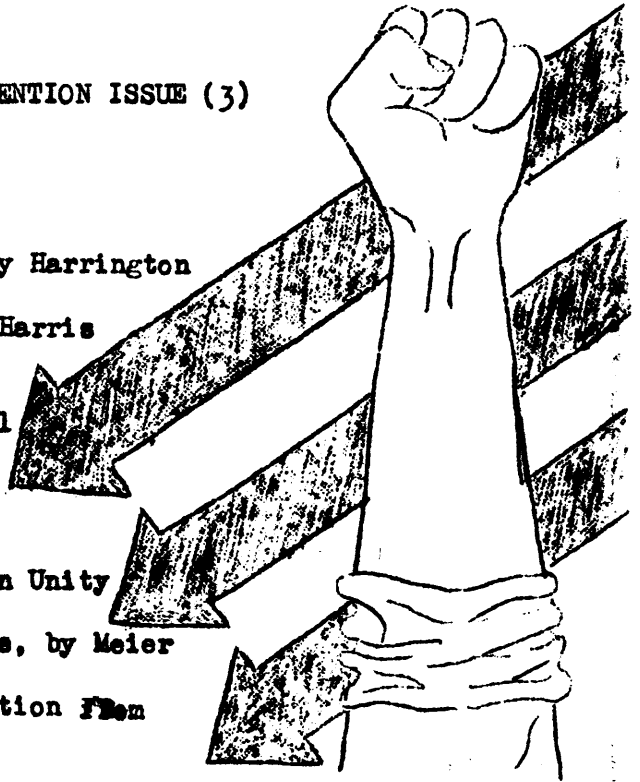
YOUNG SOCIALIST

REVIEW

CONTENTS

PRE-CONVENTION ISSUE (3)

- Page 1 Editorial Notes
- Page 3 The Minority and Splitting the YSL, by Harrington
- Page 7 5 Articles Relating to Unity, by Don Harris
(1) What We're After, p. 7; (2) The Nature of the LWC, p. 12; (3) one more open letter, p. 17; (4) how shall we define the LWC? p. 19; (5) on Harris' epoch and some other epochs, p. 26
- Page 30 Corrections on NAC Draft Resolution on Unity
- Page 31 Who's Who and Who's for What...anymore, by Meier
- Page 39 An Open Letter...statement of resignation from the LWC, by Harold and Paula Bram
- Page 40 Draft Resolution on Perspectives for American Socialism, III: International Context, by Shane Mage
- Page 47 On Berkeley's Reorganization and Perspectives: a motion and a note
- Page 49 Draft Special Resolution: Unity and Relations with Other Socialist Groups; also; Amendment on the LYL (p. 53), by Arlon Tussing



vol. 4, no. 3

April 30th
1957

cost: 10¢

Information and
Discussion Bulletin
of
THE YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

EDITORIAL NOTES

What the YSR is

The Young Socialist Review is the information and discussion bulletin of the Young Socialist League. It is prepared by the Chicago unit of the YSL.

The aim of YSR is to constitute a forum for the expression of all points of view within the YSL and is open to all members. Contributions from non-members will be accepted if of sufficiently high interest.

Articles signed by individuals do not, of course, necessarily represent the views of the YSL; "official" material will be clearly labelled as such.

The YSR is published at least bi-monthly, or more often when there is sufficient material. So, PLEASE SEND COPY AS SOON AS IT IS READY! Send copy to 1343 E. 50th Street, Chicago 15, Illinois. Send it stencilled or typewritten.

The circulation of YSR is not restricted to YSL members although it is issued primarily for members. Members should make every effort to get copies into the hands of all other interested persons. For information write the editor or the NO.

This issue

This is the third pre-convention discussion issue. It contains three articles (one a compilation!) discussing various aspects of the faction fight and the majority's unity proposal, a statement of resignation from the LWC and finally, part of a three part resolution being submitted by comrade Shane to the convention.

The page numbering in this issue is consecutive, and articles begin on either odd or even numbered pages, depending on where the previous article ended. (logical)

We remind all contributors that unless their articles come to us stencilled, we can make no guarantee as to when they will appear in YSR for we are without the help of our normal typing crew due to spring examinations.

The average YSR costs us between \$25 and \$50, all expenses included. Since that is a lot of money for the YSL we want to make sure it is being fully utilized. Therefore enclosed in this issue is a questionnaire, which we know beforehand most lazy YSL members will ignore. However, we hope that there are some unlazy ones so that in the next issue we can inform our potential contributors just whom they are addressing, what kind of material is least and what kind most appreciated, and help us in Chicago improve YSR technically. Unit organizers note this questionnaire in particular. And also remember the NO needs money!

The next issue of YSR will be out very soon, we imagine, as we already have heard from various members that they are stencilling articles and amendments for us. So if you want material included in the next issue, send it in quick, and send it in stencilled. Remember, if you send in stencilled material do not put your own page numbering on the stencil, rather pencil such information in on the top of the stencil for the editor's information.

--Debbie Meier, editor
April 29, 1957

Page 2
was blank
in the original

M.G.

The Minority and Splitting the YSL

Mike Harrington

At various times during the course of the current faction fight, the question of "splitting" has been raised. When I, in my original analysis of the "Left Wing", characterized that group as moving in the direction of a split and toward the SWP, I was sharply attacked by three comrades from Chicago. In my reply ("What is a Caucus"), I tried to explain the political basis of my statements. But now, we have an opportunity to view the split question in terms of some very interesting motions presented by comrade Wohlforth, the spokesman of the minority on the NAC.

(1) At the NAC meeting of April 2, 1957, the following motion by comrade Wohlforth was under consideration; "The NAC stands united in opposition to any split in the ranks of the YSL. We urge all sections of the YSL to oppose any disruption in our ranks and to dedicate themselves to resolving our problems within the YSL, as it was founded, as a Third Camp independent youth organization."

The background of this "unity" motion is: there are two sharply opposed views within the YSL; one calls for unity with the SP-SDF, i.e. a fundamental change in the nature of the YSL "as it was founded"; the other opposes this move (I have yet to fathom what the minority is for; that it is against the unity program of the majority is clear). In other words, one group proposes to alter the organizational structure of the YSL; the other claims that it wishes to maintain it.

In this context, for comrade Wohlforth to favor "resolving out differences within the YSL, as it was founded, as a Third Camp independent youth organization" means...that comrade Wohlforth is for "unity" of the YSL if his point of view wins!

In other words, comrade Wohlforth's unity motion is a sham. It says, "unity" on his terms.

The "official" statement of the "Left Wing" contains the same gimmick, i.e. "We dedicate ourselves to building the YSL as it was formed..." (my emphasis)

(2) But then, comrade Martin moved to amend comrade Wohlforth's statement. He proposed:

(a) to drop "as it was founded, as a Third Camp independent youth organization" - so that the statement would be for unity, not unity on the basis of the victory of one or the other side.

Comrade Wohlforth voted against.

(b) Comrade Martin moved to add to that statement of comrade Wohlforth (in place of the deleted section): "In this connection, the NAC unanimously declares that all comrades of the YSL should remain in the YSL, or any successor organization to the YSL so designated by the League, regardless of the decisions made by the YSL on regroupment, and regardless of any action taken pur-

suant to such a decision."

Comrade Wohlforth moved to strike the underlined section.

What does this mean?

It means that comrade Wohlforth is willing to go to the Convention, to participate in it, to attempt to win it to his point of view, but that he announces in advance that if the YSL, as an organization, by democratic majority vote, decides to designate a successor organization, then he will not go along. In short, he would split from the democratically arrived at majority.

At various times, comrade Wohlforth has argued as if the "YSL" were an eternal organization, that if the YSL majority, i.e. the YSL, decided to change the organizational form of its existence, then it would not be the YSL any longer, having violated some timeless principle which alone legitimates an entity called "YSL." This, I feel, is absurd. If the YSL, by majority vote, decides to unite with YPSL, for example, then the YSL, as an organization ruled by a democratic majority, and commanding loyalty, would be part of YPSL.

There is, we are told, a former comrade of the SYL who refuses to recognize the legitimacy of the SYL-YPSL unity. By comrade Wohlforth's logic, this one comrade is now the SYL!

(3) Still, comrade Wohlforth has a defensible position. If he feels that a unity policy is a complete sellout of socialist principle, and if the organization democratically decided to (in his view) "capitulate", then he would be a hypocrite to go along with a unity. He would split, and it would be a principled split.

But as comrade Wohlforth tells us, he will stay in the organization after the Convention, even if it decides to make the YSL a "capitulationist organization"; he will not split.

What does that mean.

It can only mean that comrade Wohlforth will participate in the organization in order to recruit others to split when the unity takes place, i.e. he will be doing opponents work against the democratically arrived at Convention decision (assuming that decision is for unity). He will participate in the Convention. If it adopts a perspective which he fundamentally and on principle opposes, which he announces beforehand he will not go along with, he will nevertheless stay in the organization. He will stay in, although by his own admission he will not go along with the decision of the organization.

This policy can only serve one purpose: a attempt to impede the carrying out of the Convention decision, to thwart the majority.

But, comrade Tim may answer, I will stay in to win a new majority, call a special Convention, and save the organization. But, assuming that the unity line carries, after a most thorough and democratic discussion, by an overwhelming vote (as I am sure it

will), where will comrade Wohlforth get his majority; how will he act?

Full discussion is necessary to a democratic organization. And once a position is taken by a majority, after discussion, the organization, if it is democratic, must act according to that decision. That doesn't stop discussion. But the majority must be given its democratic right: to carry out its policy.

But comrade Tim announces that he will stay in only so long as the majority line is not carried out; that he will discuss only so long as the Convention decision has not been implemented. In that context, his membership and discussion can only serve to harrass the democratic majority, to impede it from carrying out the line of the organization. It means that he is embarking on a line which is not actually oriented toward winning the organization (since he will then be only half a member of the organization; a member under conditions which he, and not the YSL defines), but toward splitting as soon as the majority implements its policy.

Such a "unity" with the organization is twenty times more reprehensible than a principled split.

(4) The strong hold of the minority is Berkeley. The leading comrade of the minority in that unit resigned from the YSL and the NEC some time ago. At the first sound of a faction fight, he and several other comrades suddenly appeared to "save" the YSL. Comrade Jim also has comrade Wohlforth's position: that if the YSL, at the Convention, adopts the unity line, it will have capitulated to social-democracy, made its truce with imperialism, and that he intends to stay in the "capitulationist," "social-democratic," "pro-imperialist" etc organization until it implements its democratic policy.

(5) Two of the leading comrades of the minority, comrade Wohlforth and comrade Shane have, admittedly, SWP politics. Given the above, given the fact that all leading minorityite spokesmen, i.e. Shane, Tim, Jim, have made it clear that they will not go along with unity, that they will take as many as they can out of the organization at that time, where will they take them?

I say the SWP, or (which is the same) the AYS.

(6) Let me summarize:

- (a) The minority are willing to resolve their differences within the YSL if the minority wins;
- (b) comrade Wohlforth, a leader of the minority, has made it clear that he will split before actual unity, i.e. that he will not honor the Convention decision;
- (c) at the same time, comrade Wohlforth has also made it clear that he will not make a principled split; he will stick around a "capitulationist" organization until the very moment it "capitulates";
- (d) comrade Jim, who has some experience in these matters, has the same general point of view;

- (e) comrade Shane and comrade Tim are both pro-SWP;
- (f) the minority, as a tendency and caucus, in its own declarations and those of its leaders is, in my view, tending toward an SWP-oriented split, but only after attempting to impede the carrying out of a democratic decision of the Convention.

This, I believe, adds up to a reprehensible political perspective on the part of the minority. It is no secret. It is openly stated by some of the minority leaders.

To those minorityites who are loyal to the YSL (not the eternal YSL; but the democratic, living, breathing YSL) I must ask: how do you feel about the direction of your leaders? Will you disavow their positions?

Five Articles on Problems Relating to Unity

by Don Harris

I. The YSL and Unity: What We Should Seek

The YSL is today faced by a major decision which may well effect not only the future of the tendency it represents, but to a large extent the future of the socialist movement in America, at least in the coming period. The Draft Resolution of the NAO prepared for the coming convention poses the problem clearly and decisively--the affiliation of the YSL or of a youth organization the YSL helps to create to a new unified Socialist Party. This unity and the regroupment which would follow constitute the major perspective for the next period; all our efforts must be aimed at achieving this regroupment. Indeed should the perspective projected by this resolution continue to develop favorably toward the actual consummation of such a unity, this resolution will become the basis of the most important organizational step in the history of the YSL or its predecessors.

It is necessary, however, for the YSL to have more than just a general attitude, insofar as we consider this question of unity as a practical possibility. Were the question merely one of general propaganda, similar to our advocacy of a labor party, it would suffice to lay down certain general ideas about its implementation. Thus, in speaking of a labor party, we can say that its program and structure, its origins and formation and the character of its left and right wings are all indeterminate; any more concrete ideas would be useless theorizing. With respect to our own attitude, it is always sufficient to declare our intention of participating as a "loyal left wing seeking to educate and influence in accordance with our general socialist and third camp program" or some such vague formulation.

The same situation would exist with respect to SP-ISL-YSL unity were the question merely one of general propaganda. In a sense we have always included the idea of socialist unity in some form in our projection of an amorphous "socialist educational force" inside of the future labor party; At various times we have discussed the question also in the context of answering the question--"Why can't all socialists unite?" We gave an answer, entirely consistent with our present position of favoring unity, indeed anticipating it in many important respects. Unity between the sects, we answered, is entirely impossible in the absence of any possibility of building a socialist movement. American socialism is not a movement, and in the absence of such a movement our most important task is the promulgation of our kind of socialist ideas as against those of the other sects. It is the only task open to us, and an important one for the future. Decide between the sects: join the one you agree with most; work for socialism in the only way it can be done today. Here are our ideas. If you agree, join us. If you agree with another group, join them.

In this answer, we never proclaimed our undying love of being a sect. Nor did we proclaim our tendency as the inevitable future leader of the American working class, as does the SP to this day. Any real socialist movement, we always understood, would of necessity be different than any of the sects. It would win to it as its basic cadres new socialist forces--unfamiliar with the experiences of earlier socialist generations which are the ideological basis of sects, but developing its consciousness in accordance with the real problems arising at the time. Our task would not be to "impose" on a revived socialist movement the program and conceptions we learned from

an earlier period, but with that experience, and those conceptions as a guide, to apply our marxist viewpoint to the contemporary problems and help create a new marxist movement. Implicit in this general conception was the willingness and the desire to become a part of any real socialist movement, whatever its origins or explicit program, in order to accomplish this.

From the General Conception to Our Present Unity Position

The purpose of a YSL resolution on socialist regroupment today, however, cannot be merely the formalization of such a conception. We are not spelling out some attitude of purely conjectural significance. Perhaps we should have done so with greater clarity in the past, so that faced with an historical opportunity we would not have to discuss and debate the correctness of such a view at this time.

Instead we face the actual possibility (by the time of the convention it may be more or less so, but it is certainly now a genuine possibility) of beginning the process of building a socialist movement on the foundations of SP-ISL-YSL unification. There are a whole host of problems, immediate and long-range, which such a unity poses. Unfortunately, a discussion of them is seriously hindered by the role which the Left Wing Caucus has chosen to play, but insofar as possible it is necessary to ignore this factor and clarify our viewpoint on a number of questions.

The first such question is the desirability of even discussing "conditions" or perspectives for a unified movement, much less what our tendency viewpoint should be toward them. Let's get unity first, might be one answer. The obvious reason for such a position (which, by omission, would appear to be the answer of the NEC resolution, and the NAC resolution to a lesser extent) is that such a discussion might tend to delay or even prevent the accomplishment of unity. In actuality, however, we cannot accept this argument as correct.

On Spelling Out the Details of Unity

As a matter of political fact, the only barrier to achieving unity in the near future (aside from the LWC which may be disregarded as a serious factor) is the opposition of the SP-SDF. Behind that opposition lies the knowledge that what the LWC has been declaring is simply not true. Unity between the ISL and SP does not mean to us "capitulation" which up till yesterday was the condition that the SP imposed upon anyone wishing to join. We have perfectly good reasons for advocating unity, which we are willing to tell the SP as well as anyone else interested. Our task with relation to this SP is 1) to make known our reasons and 2) to convince them that from the standpoint of their politics these reasons make unity desirable also. We will not be able to exert such an influence on the SP without answering their questions about our perspectives. And the answer which we give for ourselves, can never hurt the prospect of unity because they will be honest answers, consistent with our politics, devoid of reservations and entirely open and above board.

In this respect, the ISL has already gone far beyond the YSL NAC. In addition to adopting a formal statement favoring unity, it has published several articles in Labor Action outlining its views (and hence, implicitly, its future viewpoint within a united movement) toward a number of political and organizational questions. For example, it has criticized the International section of the SP-SDF memorandum of understanding from a Third Camp viewpoint. It has outlined its views with respect to what the attitude of a united organization should be toward the groups and individuals breaking from Stalinism,

in contrast to the present policy of the SP; it has developed its position on what should be the attitude of a united organization towards electoral action, and also its attitude toward individual members participating in bourgeois political activity; it has discussed some of the implications of its conception of a "broad Debsian party" with particular emphasis on the necessity of internal democracy. In this way it has assured the Socialist Party (if not Tim) that it would not expect its members, once unity is achieved, to henceforth confine themselves to attendance at annual Debs Day Dinners. No, the ISL would hope to play an important role in building a common movement.

The ISL can say these things openly because they are true and well appreciated by the SP. They will not (or should not) serve as a barrier to unity because the ISL declares also that its primary aim of building a broad socialist movement is common to the SP-SDF also, indeed an indispensable step in that direction. And because that is the aim of the ISL it can without reservation answer some of the most persistent objections to unity put to it by the SP. The ISL is not interested in "uniting" with the SP Left Wing. It is not out to "capture" the SP at its earliest convention. It is not for imposing its program on the party. It is not for "cleansing" the party of all but the ISL and a handful of left-wingers. It is not going in to engage in a knock-down-drag-out factional struggle the only purpose of which could be to produce a slightly larger or slightly smaller series of sects after demoralizing splits or expulsions. Its members will certainly not give up their views, but they will work for them within the framework of a broad movement, the primary aspect of which will be not the internal struggle of an ideological tendency, but a party which seeks to win the loyalty of a section of the American workers, which participates in the decisive social struggles of our time, which seeks once again to make socialism assume political meaning and achieve political influence. The general nature of the role we would seek to play has been thus spelled out by the ISL in advance.

The YSL's Approach to Unity

The answer given by the ISL, however, cannot serve completely as a guide to the YSL. That is a fact which can also not be concealed by ignoring it. With reference to any kind of contemplated unity, the YSL is in an entirely different position than the ISL. Whatever form the unity took, the inescapable fact is that the youth and student section of a unified socialist party would be initially composed mainly of forces supplied by the YSL. There is literally no way in which that could be avoided, even if we wished to do so. The bulk of the members, leaders, organizers, writers, contacts, finances, etc., of a unified youth movement would come from the present YSL. Even assuming the rapid growth of such a youth movement, the members of the present YSL would undoubtedly continue to play a leading role, if for no other reason that their greater experience, their proved devotion to the socialist cause, and their superior political ability compared to inexperienced newer members, etc.

Moreover, in terms of its politics, there is every reason to expect that such a youth organization would be in its majority overwhelmingly third camp, anti-war, and broadly speaking, "left-wing" compared to the adult movement. This is not only because the youth movement is traditionally in such a position, but concretely because no organized "right wing" would participate in the initial formation of a unified socialist youth movement. The only candidate for such a role (SLID) cannot be considered as a viable force in this arena.

But this means that the YSL must be prepared to assume the role of leadership in such a united youth movement. It must also be prepared to face the problems which that leadership will bring. These problems are not concerned solely with insuring the success of unity. That would be simple if the SP had its own strong youth movement. We could then proclaim ourselves to be loyal left-wing critics, willing to act in a loyal and disciplined fashion, until such time as we won a democratic majority to our third-camp viewpoint. A unity achieved by the ISL-SP, however, automatically makes the YSL together with the present anti-war YPSLs the overwhelming and automatic majority of a youth organization.

The YSL's Outline for Unity

Without laying down any "conditions" for unity, it is easy to outline in general what the YSL should press for in terms of unity with the SP, once the stage of concrete negotiations is reached. In our opinion, these views belong in any YSL resolution adopted as a guide to the achievement of such a unity, or must be concretized in resolution form side-by-side with our unity resolution.

1. The YSL is for a separate youth organization, separate from the adult party, although affiliated to it. This is simply a demand for organizational independence, traditionally the status of a socialist youth organization. Having existed for the past three years without such an organization, for all practical purposes at any rate, the SP might oppose any such organization. We, however, must be in favor of both the principle of youth independence, and its immediate application.

2. The YSL is in favor of a large measure of autonomy for a youth organization. It must have the right to have its own political program, the right to publish its own viewpoint, and the right to act in accordance with its program in those arenas which are of primary concern to it, in particular, on campus. Thus, with respect to academic freedom, relations with other student organizations, etc., we would favor the right of the youth organization to act entirely in accordance with its own program, and under its own discipline. Similarly, the youth organization should be free to publish its own youth paper and student magazine, expressing the viewpoint of the majority of its membership and elected bodies.

3. The youth organization should be granted adequate representation on all bodies of the adult organization.

4. The youth organization should be permitted to discuss both its own political problems, and those of the movement as a whole, freely and without interference.

With the establishment of a socialist youth organization under such conditions, the YSL would not have to enter a unified movement with any doubts whatever about its ability to defend the ideas of independent socialism. It would be in an ideal position to win large numbers of new youth who will be attracted to any unified movement to the basic program of the YSL as it exists today and as it will develop in the tradition of independent third camp socialism in the future.

The SP's Reaction to Such an Outline for Unity

Such an outline of aims for the YSL may be criticized as tending to produce the reaction: "that's all very fine for the YSL, but how is the SP supposed to feel about such a statement of intentions coming from the YSL at this time? Why they aren't even in yet and they are already declaring themselves practically an

independent 'left-wing,' with all kinds of rights, subversive ideas, leninist or quasi-leninist, or pseudo leninist doctrines about democracy, etc." To this hypothetical SPer we can only say the following: Yes, you are right that the YSL will want the kind of organization, with the political ideas, that it believes in. And we will work and fight for such an organization if we have to. But if you want a real socialist youth movement, as we do, that is the only kind of movement it can be. You know that as well as we, for it is not a question of political differences between us, but a matter of common knowledge, based upon the fact that the YSL is the strongest force in the youth arena. Furthermore, you know that socialist youth organizations are traditionally left-wing, and would be worth nothing if they weren't.

Continuing, we can say to this SPer--in the same frank and honest manner as the ISL--this third camp socialist youth organization which we propose organizing and building may not be entirely to your liking; it may not formally endorse the official program of the Party (although it will loyally circulate it as a part of that party); it may even embarrass the party by defending the rights of Communists to teach (even if that would continue to be a difference in program); it may advocate and circulate anti-war ideas; on this or that question it may argue publicly for a different point of view. But, unlike a dozen other times when the old YPSL was in existence, this new socialist youth organization which the YSL proposes will not be merely a factional problem for the party. It will be a source of strength to the party; a source of members, a source of activity, a source of Jimmy Higgins workers; a source of future cadres for American socialism. And further, unlike a dozen previous "left-wings" in YPSL it will, in our opinion, not be an arena for continual raiding by other organizations. It will become the undisputed voice of socialism among American youth; it will represent a real barrier to the revival of a stalinist youth movement in any form; it will be firmly committed to responsibly building a socialist movement rather than splitting off to set up its own organization or joining some sect. For these reasons you must be for the kind of organization which we propose, and will help to build, even though it may sometimes raise the hackles on your neck.

And finally, we can conclude, addressing precisely that factional antagonism which is the key to the SP's fear of unity with the ISL and YSL: you say you are afraid that our ideas may win out in the long run. We certainly hope so. But why should you be afraid, more than we. Its true, we start with an initial advantage, by supplying the most members, and uniting with other left-wing members in your own youth. But after all, you will have the party itself. And in the kind of youth organization we hope to build there will be a continual influx of new members, whose political allegiance will be "up for grabs" as we say in the YSL. You will have a chance to win it, even as we will. We will even help you (note that well, Comrade Tim, and quote it if you wish to!) by guaranteeing the same democratic rights to your views as we ask for our own. In fact, recognizing the politically subordinate position of an affiliated youth organization, we are willing to grant in advance certain special rights to your views, and establish the limits of the independence we will seek to establish.

The Youth's Responsibilities and the Limits of Its Independence

Thus, we would propose that every member of the youth organization receive the official party organ; that the membership lists of the youth organization be available to the party for any purpose; that the youth organization will undertake to distribute the official press of the party to the best of its abilities; that it will not have the right to expell any member

against the advice of the party (we don't believe in expulsion anyway); that when it speaks or writes in its own publications in disagreement with the party that it shall speak in its own name, and at the same time explain the position of the party and the reasons for it; that the party shall be granted reciprocal rights of representation on all youth committees, with automatic right to present its viewpoint on any question; that its membership shall be bound by party discipline (such as it will be in this new unified SP) on all questions not strictly within the youth and student arena. In other words, we declare in advance that we will have an organizational and political policy consistent with our perspective of loyally building a broad, "Debsian," type of socialist movement, while at the same time developing and making known our own independent-socialist, third camp point of view as effectively as we possibly can, within the framework of a common socialist youth movement.

###

II. The Future of the Left Wing Caucus in the YSL

Comrade Tim, who is the political and organizational spokesman for the minority (if not its real leader, personally or politically) has written an article entitled: "Who is the majority." Taken together with the editorial in the Left Wing Bulletin No. 2 on "The Future of the YSL," we can now piece together a picture of the perspectives of the Minority, explicitly and implicitly. The first-mentioned article also opens for discussion the question, "who is the minority?" or, what constitutes its political and organizational program.

In essence, comrade Tim's argument consists of the assertion that the present NAC is politically unrepresentative of the national membership of the YSL, that its position on unity has not been endorsed by the membership, and that on this question, at the very least, it deserves no confidence. The two grounds advanced for such an assertion are (1) that the NAC-NEV position on unity has been adopted in contravention of the last convention's resolutions and (2) the referendum vote on electoral action, which defeated the notion to support the SP alone in the election.

The first argument, of course, has neither legal validity nor political relevance. The question of socialist regroupment had not arisen at the time of the last convention, nor had the events which caused the NAC-NEC to adopt so overwhelming a position on unity with the Socialist Party. The constitutional provision that between conventions, and subject to their approval, the NAC-NEV shall have full authority to act on new questions is a necessary provision to cover exactly such situation. The question of the right of the NAC-NEC to do so cannot be questioned. And in face of the overwhelming support the unity resolution had at the last NEC plenum its obligation to do so is even more obvious.

This leaves to be considered the political authority of the present NAC and NEC. It is Tim's contention that this authority has been decisively destroyed by the vote on electoral action. With his usual flair for fatuous flamboyance he speaks in terms of a "political slap in the face," the "serene confidence of bureaucrats," "right wing capitulation," and all the other rhetorical devices of unrestrained factionalism. He concludes, "the minority on the NEC is the real majority on the important electoral issue." (i.e., Tim and Shane, the NEC minority, represent the majority on this question.)

The Meaning of the Referendum in Terms of Unity

There is no reason to discount the significance of the recent electoral referendum; despite all of the reservations which must be attached to such a procedure, it may be taken at face value as a true expression of the current state of opinion in the organization on a particular question bothering many of its members. Without even discussing the question of whether a democratically convoked convention might or might not, after full discussion, have supported the NAC's position, or modified it, or rejected it entirely, one can demonstrate conclusively however that Tim's claim to a potential majority is fraudulent.

The minority defines itself politically with reference to one question: opposition to unity with the SP. From this standpoint, it spoke unanimously against sole support to the candidates of the SP in the election. In contrast to the minority, the "majority" stands for unity with the SP--and this is clear precisely on the basis of the results of this referendum! But this majority, unlike the minority, is not a politically homogenous group. It has, undoubtedly, different modes of approaching the question, perhaps different perspectives for unity, and more important, different tactics for carrying it out. At the very beginning of the discussion of unity, with a whole host of new problems confronting the YSL, it is inevitable that this should be the case; anything less would be a sign of political sterility so characteristic of organization which can change their politics overnight with absolutely no reaction in the membership whatever.

The real political meaning of the referendum was that many who are for unity (luke-warm, moderately and even passionately) voted against unilateral support for the SP. For ourselves, we believe this to have been mistaken, a failure to think through the question to its most intelligent solution. On the other hand, it is by no means a decisive question; rather, it is the kind of error, in our opinion, that can easily be made without serious consequences. It is a "leftist" error of the same order and magnitude and importance as soon "rightist" errors which are probably equally inevitable as we maneuver tactically, but not decisive in the long run.

Flowing from such an interpretation of the significance of the electoral question, it is clear that the referendum cannot be taken as a serious challenge to the political authority of the NAC, in terms of majority-minority. An examination of the known views of different sections of the organization bears this out fully. Taking only those whose articles or discussion in the New York unit or in other public ways have explained their point of view, but who may be taken as representative of others, we know that comrades Owen, Debbie, Arlon, Joan, probably Jim B. of Los Angeles, and most of the Pittsburgh unity, all voted against the NAC's position on electoral action, and not all from the same point of view either. But it should be obvious, even to Tim, that he cannot claim to have the slightest right to speak for any of these comrades, or those who voted on bases similar to theirs. Comrade Owen, for example, even wrote an article rejecting in advance the contention that his views on this question had anything in common with that of the "official" minority.

If Tim had confined himself to making another point, far more limited in scope, it could be considered for what it is worth, but it would provide far less scope for boasting, threats and hopeful prognostications on the future perspective of the "official" minority.

That point is purely and simply this: at the time of the referendum, the presently constituted majority of the NAC did not adequately represent the diversity of viewpoint within the majority of the membership. This in no way forecloses the possibility that it will be able to win that majority in the convention discussion, but even assuming that it is not able to, there is no comfort in that which Tim can take.

A more representative majority NAC is not in the least of interest to Tim. None of the questions which divide the majority, perhaps on perspective, tactics and the like, can be considered as even parallel to the purposes of Tim. A more representative NAC, using the electoral referendum as a criteria, might include Arlon, or Debbie, or Owen.....but such changes would in no way effect the essential division between Tim and the NAC majority. For where we may disagree on how to get unity, Tim is opposed to it unilaterally. That is why his role, and that of the minority as a tendency have no common basis of agreement or purpose with any section or group of the majority. Tim's objective is to at all costs prevent unity with the Socialist Party. The majority seeks to consummate it--in this or that way, on these or those "terms." The question is that clear, and allows for no "swamp," no "bridge," no "center" between majority and minority. Such a situation complicates the problem of holding a discussion among those who differ with various aspects of the NAC's approach to unity, but it cannot prevent it, nor can it fundamentally alter the basically isolated position of the Tim-Shane-Left Wing Caucus and hence its inability to have any decisive influence on the future of the YSL.

Where is the LWC Headed

This brings us to the question of the perspectives of the Minority in the YSL. We do not know whether Tim has been carried away by his own venomous interpretation of the NAC's position as being the equivalent of "dissolution" of the YSL, or whether his use of this phrase is merely an attempt to consciously create a fictional perspective for his own supporters by implying that with entry, the YSL could become the property of the Left-Wing Caucus, with perhaps some remaining "centrists" who might stay with the YSL while joining the PS (i.e., see especially Tim's reply to Arlon and his "appeal" to Arlon to remain in the YSL even if unity goes through, etc.) We suspect that this is what the minority leadership is outlining to their followers, perhaps in combination with the idea that this YSL of theirs could then become the center of attraction for their "regroupment of the revolutionary left" on the youth field.

One of the facets of the NAC's approach toward unity has been to avoid any discussion of perspectives, for reasons obvious to them, but in our opinion not necessarily valid. It is this manner of postponing any discussion of perspectives in a unified organization, particularly on the youth field, which has enabled Comrade Tim to misrepresent, distort, and hence mislead some people about the nature of the NAC's position. Fortunately the final form on the NEC proposed resolution takes away much of the ground under this type of distortion, particularly in the section dealing specifically with youth regroupment. In any case, since we have no inhibitions on the score of spelling things out a bit in terms of our concrete perspective, we see no reason not to inform Tim that any such idea as he may have regarding becoming the dominant force in the YSL, with unity or without it, can have absolutely no hope whatever of consummation. (In another article, we have outlined our own perspective for unity, and take up some of the problems concretely connected with achieving it; here, we will confine ourselves to the question as it relates to the Left Wing Caucus.)

On the Notion of the YSL as Abstract Property

To express it crudely, the YSL is too valuable a piece of political real estate to allow any of its loyal members to even consider letting Tim and Shane build a political home for themselves or their friends on its location. Some of us who have been in the YSL (and SYL and YPSL before then) a little longer than comrade Tim have a big enough investment to make every effort to see that it does not become the location of some house of ill repute. This makes Tim's gracious invitation to "the right wing" to remain in the YSL even after they become "agents of Dulles" a contemptible piece of organizational demagoguery. In what name is he extending this invitation? And to whom? You are not yet the landlord, comrade Tim, and we are not prospective tenants. The sheer effrontery of such a statement is galling. But more than that it also indicates something about the political mentality of its originator.

The Tradition of the YSL

What is the Left Wing Caucus in relation to the YSL, considered purely from the standpoint of relative contribution? Aside from Shane, who can claim some genuine contributions over several years--and who deserves and receives the respect due those contributions--the left wing can claim little credit for the previous historic capital which the YSL has accumulated and which is our potential contribution to the future of American socialism. Long before Tim was hesitating about the YSL because it might isolate him from students and interfere with his circulatory of Dissent on campus, the YSL (and SYL and YPSL before) was creating a tradition, an educated membership, a circle of sympathizers, and a history of some small importance to literally thousands of students. On a dozen important campuses; through twenty-five issues of Student Partisan and Anvil; through hundreds of meetings, large and small; through a hundred campaigns on civil liberties and academic freedom; through political relations--hostile and cooperative--with every political force and organization which existed in the past ten years; in all these and other ways the YSL has been a consistent socialist force to the point where it has established itself as the spokesman for socialism, by and large, against all competitors on the American campus. And as the spokesmen for socialism, we have a formidable reputation for our ability to defend and advance our views.

These political assets, actual and potential, are not up for grabs under any conditions. They could not be sold to the highest bidder at bankruptcy sale, even if foreclosure took place. The assets of the YSL are the "property" of those who made them, and precious few are in the possession of the Left Wing Caucus. What is the average length of membership of the Left Wing Caucus? What is the extent of their periphery? What is their proportion of the public knowledge and respect belonging to the YSL? Any test will demonstrate the fraudulent character of Tim's inheritance claim.

This is even more true when the political reputation of the YSL is considered. Tim could not and would not want to claim most of the elements of that tradition and reputation which the YSL has created. Contrary to his claim, the fundamental idea of the YSL never was an "independent revolutionary youth organization." That was the idea for many years only of the Berkeley unit of the SYL and now the Left Wing Caucus. For them, the YSL stands for such things as irreconcilable struggle against liberalism and labor bureaucracy and social democracy--down with the main enemy, treating stalinism as a common radical viewpoint, to be attacked primarily "from the left;" an orientation toward primary concern with stalinist apologists and defensists; etc. But that is not what the YSL is known as, and if the LWC is merely interested in some property they have made an ill-advised choice. For, on the contrary the

YSL is known and respected for precisely the opposite of these attitudes. Politically (as differentiated from its organizational reputation) the YSL tradition is based on its leading anti-stalinist role in AVC—along with its stalwart defense of democracy in AVC, it is known for its anti-stalinist role in Students Governments, the Conference for Democracy and Education, the Madison Student Conference, etc. It is known as the inventor of the concept of the all-inclusive socialist student club (as opposed to or unimplemented by sectarian attitudes of both the SWP and SLID, YPSL, etc). It is known as the group willing to collaborate with pacifists in anti-war clubs; with social democrats in socialist clubs; with liberals in general political clubs; with Republicans in civil liberties clubs. It has "capitulated" hundreds of times to other political viewpoints, i.e. it has declared that its common agreement on one or another general or specific task superseded our theoretical-political disagreement on other questions. Ours was a policy of political collaboration (which is not always the same as united front, either in intention or consequences). Even before the unity question arose, Tim found himself in disagreement with this tradition as he applied it concretely to SDA. "We have no business in SDA; it means diluting our politics; for a split perspective in SDA," he argued at a crucial stage in that fight. The YSL carried through its line in that situation with the best conceivable consequences.

Who Has Whose Confidence?

Finally, let us reverse the question of "confidence." What measure of "confidence" can comrade Tim claim for the position and leadership of the LWC. Can he claim to speak for the majority of the YSL, or even all of his own caucus, or anything like it? Of course not. And that is true even on the electoral question. His "victory", as we showed earlier, on that question was a negative one, i.e. a rejection of the NAC's position on support to the SP alone. But what was the LWC for? It stands on the platform of support to all socialist candidates, but in Antioch, it applied that to support of the SP alone. Had the LWC had a majority is that what the official position of the YSL would have been? We assume so. And what measure of support would that position have received?

Comrade Tim is rapidly losing even that confidence usually conceded to any member and leader of the YSL: the confidence that he is acting in good faith, with honest intentions and a regard for the truth. His privately circulated misinformation about the Shachtman-Haskell debate is only one of a series of such attempts at misrepresentation and misreporting. Another is his claim that the NAC opened the pages of Challenge to the Minority only under pressure from the units—when in actuality that decision was based on the feelings of leading comrades of the Majority and was carried out by the NAC before ANY response from the units was received whatsoever!

Finally, the LWC can claim no confidence for its future loyalty and membership in the YSL. Tim's refusal to vote for a motion which pledged that both the majority and minority would remain in the YSL and abide by the decision of the coming convention, is nothing less than an open declaration that Tim's perspective in the YSL, unless his caucus wins a majority at the convention, which is an event highly unlikely to say the least, is exceptionally temporary and is limited to continued efforts to block the democratically arrived at decision of the July YSL Convention.

###

III: One More Open Letter

The Left Wing caucus proudly publishes the letter of Paula and Harold Bram explaining their reasons for joining the left-wing caucus. Aside from revealing the fact that the decision of these two comrades was made on false political grounds--i.e. a misunderstanding of what the real political differences are between the Majority and Minority and the fact that actually they agree not with the Left Wing Caucus but with the Majority on the fundamental question; it also casts light on the methods which the Minority uses in order to create this kind of misunderstanding. These methods should be made known to the entire membership of the YSL, because they help establish the character of the Left Wing Caucus.

After explaining why they were initially dubious about the Left-Wing caucus (correctly recognizing that its line on unity was, as we have characterized the position of both the SWP and the Left Wing Caucus--not a line permitting the building of a broad, all-inclusive movement, but a line favoring the continued existence of different sects), comrades Paula and Harold explain the basis of their factional choice of the Left Wing caucus: "However, after reading a report of the Shachtman-Haskell debate, we begin to see that this is precisely the kind of unity we are not about to get under the leadership of Shachtman, Haskell, Martin, et al." Any perceptive reader will have immediately asked himself, what was this report which had such a persuasive effect on comrade Paula and Harold? Was it some report in labor action? No. Was it some report published in Forum, YSR or the Left Wing Bulletin? No. Well, what was it?

Unless you are a member of the LWC or one of those designated apparently by them as a "centrist," you may be as much in the dark about this as we were. And if you attended that debate you will certainly be as confused as we were about what this could conceivably refer to. Well, only by accident we have learned what it must have been. Namely, a privately circulated report by comrade Tim. We emphasize, despite John Worth of Chicago's statement to the contrary, privately circulated. It is not a public report. It is not and has not been available to every member. Not only did we, of the right wing, the ISL or those attending the debate, see a copy at the same time as did members of the LWC but we have never to this day been handed a copy of that report. This is true of the entire New York membership of the YSL and ISL and according to our information is also true, for example, in the case of the Chicago unit where only the members of the LWC and several "so-called centrists" apparently ever actually received or were given copies.

Only by verbal account, we have heard it described. And neither in fact nor in substance, we can say even on such a basis, was this report an honest report of this debate. That is why Tim has chosen not to make it public, because he cannot defend its veracity nor claim for its accuracy the view of a single other person who was at that debate.

Comrades Paula and Harold, it is necessary to tell you frankly and directly: you have been deceived, lied to, hoodwinked and intellectually betrayed. It is not a pleasant thing to say, because aside from Tim, you have to take responsibility for allowing yourselves to be so misled by this kind of report, without first checking its veracity. However in your case there are extenuating circumstances--your sources of information are limited and you do not have the opportunity of observing either the majority spokesmen, or the minority at first hand.

But by now, with documents, articles, etc on hand, it is necessary for you to reconsider. Indeed, if your statement was correct, and you based your decision so largely on the report of that one debate you must certainly now reconsider. It is necessary for you to decide whether you will adhere to the Left Wing Caucus through its predictable, inevitable course of disruption in the YSL, split, adherence to the S.P and immediate and perpetual political death. How far long this course will you go with them. You are not Cannonites, or that particular brand of Trotskyite which Shane proudly labels himself. You are not for the SWP program of "regroupment" which is the policy of perpetuation of the political sects in their present shape, with the SWP merely hoping to get a few more members into its own kind of sect; you do not want to end up "captured" by the SWP through some kind of phony "unity" between the LWC and the ASY. You belong with the YSL, with it in a "broad Debsian type socialist regroupment," as part of the "strong left wing caucus inside a unified organization

What you are really in disagreement with is what you think would be the possible course of "Shachtman-Martin," i.e., a rigid, bureaucratized narrow social democratic party such as the SP is today. But just think a moment, and you will see that that is an impossibility irrespective of whatever nefarious intentions "Shachtman-Martin" might conceal in the bosoms of their heart. The minute it became known that the ISL and YSL are part of the SP-SDF, the SP automatically becomes the center of attraction for a whole host of presently unaffiliated individuals and groups which see in the SP the same possibility which we do--of making it into a broad and even influential movement. This development is absolutely guaranteed. Take just one example. The Latest Militant carries a letter from just such a person--M.G. from Kingsport, Tenn. This individual writes, probably without knowing any more about the point of view of the ISL on unity than he is able to glean from the Militant (we know he has no sub to LA or the NI!) exactly what we say about the line of the SWP on Unity, and more or less what we say about the SP-SDF unification. "Although the merger of the SP and SDF leaves much to be desired they have shown the right road to socialist unity....they have found the key to socialist unity." This sentiment--that the key lies in the co-existence of tendencies and views within the SP--is widely held today and will be increased a hundred fold and move hundreds, if not thousands of native American socialists as well as all of the groups so profoundly shaken by recent events that they are only waiting for a viable organizational alternative to leave behind their past stalinist associations, ideas and perspectives. Such a development is, we repeat, guaranteed, and along with it is guaranteed the perspective of a vigorous, politically rewarding, albeit loyal and responsible left wing.

From your letter, I can glean only one possible significant difference between us--and that is over the one requirement for such a broad movement which we feel absolutely basic, to wit, that whatever the individual or tendency views of various actions of the party are, the view of the movement and hence the political majority, must clearly be defined as anti-stalinist. And that requirement we make as a precondition for any viable socialist movement. We see no perspective at all to any "revolutionary regroupment" or any regroupment based on the ideas and organizations which in one form or another still are apologists for Russian totalitarianism and imperialism. Such a "stalinoid" organizational center would be doomed to rapid disintegration and futility.

In conclusion, comrades, we ask you to study the material published, compare your views with those of the LWC and with others in the YSL. Agree with my article, with Debbie's, with Charles Walkers or with our Philadelphia comrades. But join the loyal membership of the YSL in condemning the SWP oriented, splitting faction which the LWC represents. Resign from their caucus, do not vote for their delegates, run for delegates yourselves so that you can play an independent role. Do not be a party to the disruption-split action which the LWC is preparing to carry through to the bitter end. ###

IV: How Shall We Define the Left Wing Caucus?

Three comrades in Chicago have written a letter of indignant injury at being called members of "an organized sectarian tendency.... (with politics) not of ordinary loyal faction (but leading) in the direction of a split toward the Cannonites." They repudiate the idea that they are in sympathy with the SWP, they imply a differentiation between themselves and any possible Cannonite perspective of Comrade Shane, and end up by denouncing Harrington for slander and dishonesty,

All right, let us examine the evidence for such a characterization, modifying it if necessary in order to arrive at a scientifically precise characterization of the Left Wing Caucus. This problem is not of interest so much as a factional device, but rather in order to help the majority determine what its attitude should be with respect to the LWC.

Comrade Harrington's characterization was based primarily on the political record and documents of comrade Tim and Shane. Now the open letter does not dispute the characterization in this respect, because among other things it is true. For Shane's part, he has made it abundantly clear, internally and in public, that his political allegiance is owed to the SWP, and that as between all the socialist organizations he favors its politics and wishes to aid in its organizational growth as the main adult socialist tendency. In other words Shane is no longer part of the "independent socialist tendency." One can say this about Shane not as an unfounded charge, slander or rumor, but as an established political fact because he makes his politics an open book to any interested party. His writings for the Militant and International Socialist Review, his leading role in sponsoring SWP speakers at Antioch, his public campaign for the SWP in the fall election, his campus distribution of the Militant, all are common knowledge.

Comrade Tim's relations with the SWP are more a subject of conjecture, because, unlike Shane, he prefers to keep them to himself. In so acting, of course, he misleads not the Majority, but his own supporters in the LWC. If the comrades in Chicago really wish to dispute Mike's characterization, let them privately inquire from Tim whether or not it is true that 1) Tim consults with leading members of the SWP with reference to matters of internal concern to the YSL; 2) that he received advice and aid (including documents not made available to the YSL) from them; 3) that he keeps the SWP informed of current developments with respect to matters of concern to it. Now these are things which Tim will not proclaim, because they would serve to give his political role a certain definition—a definition which we shall refrain from applying. On the other hand, we doubt very much whether Tim will deny them. If he does so, then we can very easily establish the facts of the matter, as Tim himself knows. They need not be such secrets; Tim, like Shane, could function in this respect quite openly. But Tim is not prepared to take this risk.

But such facts are not really at issue, say the Chicago Comrades. What is at issue are ^{no} the politics of Tim and Shane, but those of the Left Wing Caucus. The Left Wing Caucus is bound only by its original policy declaration on the unity question and official statements which incorporate only a minor part of the politics of Tim and Shane. Further, declare the Chicago comrades, the question of the "leadership" of the caucus is purely a caucus matter, and is no business of anyone to question.

Well, let us see. Apparently the comrades are incapable of distinguishing between the right of a caucus to elect its own spokesmen (although a discussion of that question might also prove somewhat embarrassing) and the political sig-

nificance which can be attached to any such election.

It is true, any caucus has the right to select its own leaders, or to form on the basis of a call by such leaders. The question then is--are Tim and Shane leaders of this Caucus? If not, who are. We contend that unless the LWC simply wants to rest on the claim that it has no leaders, no spokesmen and speaks only through official statements that by this time Tim and Shane have by de facto, if nothing else, become their leaders. Tim and Shane originated the caucus, called it into being, are the LWC's NEC and NAC representatives. And the Left Wing Caucus is responsible for the records of such leaders, because they have the right also to repudiate the acts of these leaders and to appoint other leaders.

The political intentions of the leaders of the left-wing caucus are perfectly clear, not only on the basis of their personal records, but what is decisive, on the basis of their role as spokesmen for the LWC. Let us take the Editorial Statement in the first LWC Bulletin. This is explicitly put forward as an "official viewpoint" of the caucus, and should be accepted by Scott, John Worth, et al as such a legitimate representation. What is the political line drawn by the editorial between itself and the majority?

The division is nothing less than "revolutionary socialism." It directly links its opposition to unity to its revolutionary standpoint as opposed to the reformist orientation of the Majority.

Obviously, since the unity question is based on such a fundamental dichotomy of viewpoints, it cannot divide itself on that alone. Therefore it proposes as a major task of the LWC the application and extension of its revolutionary orientation. Step number one is the rejection of the concept of an all-inclusive party. Secondly it explicitly sets the goal to be the working out of a more full and extensive political program. And with the second bulletin, we have the beginning of this process, of filling out.

But what are the related questions which the editorial lists as subject to discussion by the LWC? "The Russian question, the colonial revolution" etc. In other words, precisely those questions which call into question the basic third camp political program of the YSL, and which distinguish it primarily from the SWP! So that we see how the question of the "leadership" and individual leanings of its members is not unrelated to the character of the caucus even as it defines itself "officially." If we are limited to this editorial alone, we could still say that the LWC is oriented in the direction of the SWP simply because it officially considers the "Russian question, the colonial revolution, etc." to be "open questions," i.e., subject to its reconsideration, re-evaluation and revision from the standpoint of the Third Camp politics of the YSL. In other words, "officially," and as a tendency, it does not base itself on the program of the YSL. It is true it does not base itself on the program of the SWP either. It simply states that it stands against the type of unity the majority seek, and that it otherwise neither necessarily agrees nor disagrees with the politics of the YSL!

Is that "evidence", comrade Arden or is it "slander?" It may not be very much, but according to your rules we are supposed to limit ourselves to documents about four pages in total length as of the time I write this! Since we are so limited to "official" statements, it is quite proper to try to establish the political character of the LWC as much by what it does not say officially, as by what it does. And what the LWC does not say is extremely significant. (No, comrades of the LWC, we are not attempting to draw up a program for your caucus. We are only pointing out what it means to have a program like yours.)

It limits itself to separating itself solely from the YSL majority on the basis of "revolutionary socialism." How does it apply its viewpoint to other tendencies? How does it "officially" characterize the politics of that other interested party, the SWP? In particular, how does it place itself relative to the SWP? In not one way and in not one instance is there anything in the statements of the leading spokesmen of the LWC or its official pronouncements either which distinguish it from that group. Tim can be heard to mutter something occasionally about the SWP being too "sectarian," but what this means to Tim, or how it is supposed to represent the views of the LWC remains unknown.

Since the original articles were exchanged, the Left Wing Caucus has held a national caucus meeting, at which it had the opportunity to establish its viewpoint on all questions it considered necessary (and elect its leaders), We have not yet heard what transpired at this meeting, other than the fact that they now favor a rather fantastic scheme concocted by 3 former comrades of the YSL in Newark, but we venture the prediction that this meeting did not see fit to correct any misimpressions arising out of its strange silence with reference to its attitude toward the SWP. We are sure that it adopted some kind of vigorously worded statement rejecting the majority's charge that it has canonite views and loyalties, but we doubt very much whether it adopted any statement whatever criticizing either the political, theoretical or organizational principles of the SWP.

We would be very happy to modify our characterization of the LWC (as, we are sure, would comrade Harrington as well) if, together with its repudiation of Mike's characterization, the caucus found it convenient to repudiate the same claim put forward by the SWP. If, for example, the caucus would issue an official Open Letter addressed to the Militant in which it said something like the following:

"We have taken note of various public statements by spokesmen of the Socialist Workers Party claiming that the Left Wing Caucus in the YSL is 'studying Marxism under the guidance of the SWP' or words to that effect, we take note also of information that an SWP spokesman is now distributing the Left Wing Bulletin of our caucus and making other claims upon the political loyalty of our tendency. We wish to take this opportunity to state that, while various individuals in our caucus have expressed themselves favorably with reference to your organization, our caucus rejects the contention made and implied both by your spokesmen and by the YSL leadership, that it is in political agreement with the SWP. While we consider our differences with the Majority of the YSL serious and deep-going, those differences relate to the question of socialist regroupment, and do not involve any reconsideration of our traditional views with reference to our Third Camp socialist viewpoint. While it is true that our opposition to the proposal of the YSL Majority to enter a unified organization of the SP-SDF and ISL shares in part at least the evaluation of Social Democracy made by yourselves, and in other ways as well our caucus probably considers the viewpoint of the SWP with respect to the question of regroupment superior to that of the ISL and YSL Majority as a basis for an approach to this question by any revolutionary marxist movement, we do so from the standpoint not of considering the SWP to be the representative of revolutionary marxism, but rather from the standpoint of a third camp revolutionary marxist tendency. In particular, we have not modified in any way the traditional viewpoint of the YSL (indeed, we have based our entire struggle in the YSL on the necessity of preserving the YSL as a spokesman for Third Camp socialism) that the struggle for socialism must not in any way be subordinated to or connected with "the Defense of the Soviet Union" as the Socialist Workers Party contends. Flowing from this also, of course, is a

rejection of the SWP's criteria for socialist regroupment, which places the question of "Defense of the Soviet Union" in a primary position. Naturally we reject the SWP's contention that only those who accept the programmatic position in favor of "Defense of the Soviet Union" have a right to participate in the kind of revolutionary socialist regroupment which we favor. In fact, of course, we hold that such a position is a detriment to a true and militant socialist program, and would, within the revolutionary regroupment we seek, counterpose our third camp politics to your "defensist" position and its related illusions and misconceptions. Our point of view, while not fully worked out in all respects, nevertheless holds firmly to the necessity of advancing the idea of Third Camp socialism within the ranks of all revolutionary elements, with the aim of incorporating it into the basic program of an American revolutionary socialist party. Sincerely, for the Left Wing Caucus, YSL." etc.

Now comrades, so "Righteously Indignant" we ask, what objection does your caucus have against issuing this kind of statement? It does not misrepresent your professed views in any respect, and in no way compromises your position in the YSL... On the contrary, it would strengthen it enormously, in so far as it would constitute a public refutation of Harrington's charge. Doesn't it express more or less exactly what you must claim to be true internally? And further, isn't it a more or less minimal step incumbent upon the caucus, in a situation when another outside organization has taken such interest in aiding and intervening in the YSL's factional situation, to establish its public loyalty to the YSL and its program of third camp socialism which, aside from Shane, the caucus presumably has not abandoned? Quite simply—is the above type of statement representative of your caucus or not; and if it is why does not your caucus put forward this type of statement to counter Harrington's charges instead of mere indignant denials.

But the left wing caucus will not take this elementary step of political loyalty and conviction because it is not an "ordinary loyal faction," whatever a few of its less experienced members may believe. This characterization applies not particularly, and not even primarily because of the LWC's peculiar political attitude toward the SWP, but because of the means of factional struggle which it had adopted from the beginning, and because of the particular forces comprising the disparate sections of the LWC who have subordinated everything else in order to collaborate with a couple of SWP'ers.

First, let us examine the LWC's record in the short period of its existence. How has it functioned outside the normal and acceptable limits of loyal factionalism? 1) From the beginning of its existence, the LWC has proceeded on the basis that its differences with the majority were of the most deep-going and fundamental character. If only a tenth of what it said with respect to the politics of the YSL majority were to be accepted as true, then it would follow axiomatically that the questions in dispute could only be solved by some form of political separation. 2) The bulk of articles and editorials in the two caucus bulletins have been written with a tone of virulence unrestrained by any considerations (although I understand that some were "toned down" from their original even more vicious form) of the possible consequences. It is a tone adopted only by people who do not expect to be able to function collectively in any way with those whom they are attacking. 3) It has carried on its fight against unity entirely without consideration of the public consequences of its behavior. Thus it remained unmoved by any consideration of how its functioning might hinder or prevent carrying out the line of unity proposed by the majority. 4) In its fight against the YSL majority it has behaved as though its main enemy were the NAC majority of the YSL. It recognized

no political limits on the arguments it used or the allies it accepted. It made no political demands on its followers other than hostility to the majority.

This last point of the LWC's program of struggle brings us to the question of what really unites the LWC on this common program of hostility to the YSL majority. For the fact of the matter is that it is not political sympathy with the Socialist Workers Party (yes, comrade Arden, et al, we will admit that freely) which unites the caucus. Nor is it the unity question either.

The unity question is merely a convenient issue on which the three different political tendencies (with half a dozen people who are in the LWC only because they are primarily opposed to unity--the formal basis of the caucus) have combined to make up the wrecking expedition which the LWC is engaged in.

The set of three tendencies which have united under the banner of the LWC are, respectively, the Cannonite viewpoint represented by Shane and less honestly by Tim, the principled sectarianism of the leader of the Berkeley contingent, and the simple "anti-majorityism" of comrade Arden. From their separate standpoints these tattered remnants of past controversies have united in a common effort to paralyze the YSL, to prevent its effective reorientation in the face of a series of highly complex and difficult political problems, and to create the greatest possible amount of confusion, disorientation and demoralization possible.

Newer members, both those in the LWC and in the majority, who may feel perplexed at the forum which the discussion has taken, will perhaps understand better if they learn something about the history of these three tendencies in the YSL. The "cannonite" tendency has been adequately dealt with by others and it needs really no documentation as Comrade Shane, in particular, is not ashamed of his present political position and sympathies.

The Berkeley section

This section, numerically the most important in the LWC (about half of its present caucus strength), is composed of two elements--the most numerous by far are the completely new members whose backgrounds, political ideas, etc., we cannot speak for. The leadership however comes from those with a long background of sterile, sectarian and personality-dominated activity. The history of the Berkeley organization, as comrade Robertson proudly boasts, is inseparably connected with the history of comrade Robertson. Unfortunately the comrade does not realize that even in this boast he is characterizing something about the type of organization he builds. During his long tenure over the SYL and YSL, only one capable comrade of national stature was produced by the youth, comrade Walker. Otherwise, unlike other units, Berkeley has no "graduates" throughout the country--a fact which is in our opinion related to both the theories of comrade Robertson and the approach which he has taken in building and rebuilding that unit time after time. The only type of Berkeley "graduates" around the country to testify to the effectiveness of the Berkeley unit are the many left-wing SPers and pacifists who became enemies of the SYL and YSL on the basis of their experiences with this rigid and sectarian unit.

Berkeley's sectarianism and rigidity consists of stressing the necessity of attacking reformists, social democrats, left social democrats, etc. with exactly the same degree of hostility as they would the class enemy--the capitalists and stalinists. They opposed the conception of broad socialist clubs, and our general orientation of cooperation with left liberals, pacifists, etc. Nothing less than the social democratic caricature of bolshevism was every satisfactory to comrade Robertson as a political line for the

YSL. Comrade Robertson has for years expressed his opposition to the "opportunist" character of the SYL-YSL's politics, tone and approach. Finally, last year, comrade Robertson gave up the hopeless task and withdrew to find another arena for his revolutionary activity.

Now he has rejoined us, and the LWC. In answer to the attacks of Comrades Harrington, Becker and Denitch, he has even explained why he returned. His reply, intended as proof of the inaccuracy of the charges of these three comrades that Robertson had no serious perspective in the YSL, is strange indeed. He returned, he says, because he felt "the need for an organization through which to work;" and since he had enough new members in his pocket to recreate the Berkeley unit again in his image he decided to "resume operating from the YSL as the focus of activity." This meant, incidentally "taking up YSL membership again." In hindsight, he has decided, it turns out it was unfortunate that he had allowed this "discontinuity" in his membership. The Berkeley YSL today is then the framework through which Robertson has decided to function and which he will continue to function in as long as the national organization or the local unit don't interfere with his own ideas and schemes.

Comrade Arden

Comrade Arden is a different case--although with certain similarities. The different views he has advanced at various times in opposition to whatever political leadership and program happened to exist at the time are not as consistent as Comrade Robertson. They have tended however in one direction--an attack on the organization for bureaucracy, for stalinaphobia, for being too nice to liberals and pacifist types, and for more revolutionary activity and greater "militancy." Interested members may acquaint themselves with the type of activity and militancy involved by securing back files of the YSR and reading a famous document called--appropriately and revolutionarily--"The Tasks of the September Plenum." Despite comrade Arden's diligence in carrying out the routine tasks of the national office during his tenure as National Secretary, the general political impression which he has made on the membership is best illustrated by simply noting the fact that of the (as our memory serves us) 13 candidates for the NEC at the last Convention, 12 were elected, and Scott defeated.

He emerged again into "national prominence" recently and has played a leading role since in the LWC. As usual this does not mean a leading role in determining its basic politics, but he has made a major contribution to the tone of the faction fight with his rather amusing folk tale, his various letters and comments, etc.

Every single aspect of the LWC's form of disloyal factionalism is illustrated by the motion which comrade Arden introduced into the Chicago YSL which specified that at the public meeting for comrade Shachtman the chairman state that Shachtman was not necessarily presenting the views of the YSL. This is the reverse of the ordinary treatment extended to any speaker. The procedure proposed by comrade Scott constitutes, a public repudiation of the general viewpoint expressed by comrade Shachtman on unity, which could serve only to imply that the YSL's position on this question was substantially different.

Such a procedure is used only under exceptional circumstances when a unit sponsors a speaker for some secondary--publicity, free speech--purpose. A motion then, like this, could only be interpreted as a willingness to forego 1 all consideration of possible future collaboration, insofar as it insists on the public expression of the LWC's view of the "fundamental" character of its differences over unity, and in fact demands that the majority view be misrepresented for this purpose, thus also weakening the general authority of

the YSL national organization in the eyes of the general public.

Such a motion is justifiable only on one basis: that a group is preparing to split and hence wishes either to accelerate the process and/or to begin establishing its future position as an independent organization in the eyes of the general public. Otherwise such a motion has no place in the legitimate tactics of a minority faction. (We understand that comrade Arden's counterproposal was that comrade Shachtman otherwise only be permitted to discuss unity if the meeting were turned into a public debate between him and comrade Shanell!) This entire series of actions is an example of precisely what we propose to forgo in the future as a "loyal left wing" inside of a broad socialist movement.

There is, of course, the possibility which we cannot overlook, that comrade Arden's motion was only another of his irresistible and childish attempts to discredit the bureaucracy, the leadership, etc., with no more thought or advanced motivation than that!

The Direction of the Left Wing Caucus

There is no need to document the history of comrade Shane's evolution toward the politics of the SWP, which constitutes the third thread in this faction.

The next question to consider is whether or not the LWC will actually carry out the perspective which the logic of their fight would indicate. For it is not always true that a "split-oriented tendency" always splits. This depends on many things, including the internal pressures within such a tendency. Here the heterogeneity of the LWC is a real problem. The important thing, however, is that wittingly or unwittingly the LWC has burned its bridges behind it. Its alternatives are few, and of these an eventual split is perhaps the most attractive. Certainly this is the perspective of the real SWP-oriented comrades. From the standpoint of the Berkeley group other considerations dominate. Robertson needs an arena both as the basis for attempting to recruit to his own revolutionary perspective and circle and as a basis for maneuvering in the local regroupment activities. In the end he and his group may decide that the YSL offers superior possibilities to the SWP if it can continue to function as a little local satrapy outside of the control of the national YSL. Without that assurance, however, its split seems assured--perhaps again to an independent local existence. Finally with respect to comrade Arden we predict "capitulation" to the YSL and its right wing sell-out. We predict this not because comrade Arden behaves loyally but because he knows the SWP--knows how sectarian they are and how impossible it would be for him to function within that organization. While he sympathizes often with their strident approach to politics, he also understands that they alienate people that he also wants to effect. While comrade Arden denounces YSL bureaucracy and suppression he knows that we come closest to giving that full democracy which he needs. When push comes to shove we therefore predict that comrade Arden may remain with the YSL and leave his friends, repudiating in effect every word and action of the LWC in doing so.

As for the few LWC members corralled on the basis simply of the unity line, their final decision rests entirely with them. They can remain without capitulating since they are not responsible for the conduct and level of the present faction fight, nor are they responsible for the methods of fighting which the LWC has

adopted, they can remain in the YSL with their viewpoint, without capitulating or giving up their ideas on how to build a left wing revolutionary group; they can, in other words, submit to majority decision. What they choose to do will have a result more important for themselves than for the YSL.

Of course, there is one other even more "dishonorable" perspective which the LWC may have in mind, and which it would be well to consider for a moment. And this perspective is to hold off the split until the last possible moment, or to try to engage in the kind of activities which will force the organization to take measures against them. It is conceivable that they intend, after being decisively defeated at the Convention, to simply go on their merry way within the YSL without changing one iota of their present functioning, tone, etc. Under the pretext of working for the next convention, they may engage in continual paralyzing and wrecking activities, forcing the majority to spend its time trying to circumvent its clever stratagems, outwit its maneuvers and outanswer its voluminous attacks. It is conceivable that in Chicago they might continue to create obstacles between friendly YSL-SP relations (as was done recently in the LWC's attempt to prevent YSL participation in a joint May Day with the SP-SDF, YPSL, Bund, etc.), continue to propose SWP speakers, continue in other words to object to all actions aimed at consummating unity. The aim? Possibly to wear the majority out, to try and prevent unity, to try to tear the organization apart and take with them as many as possible, etc. But certainly if they choose such a path they cannot have in mind building the YSL! This is a perspective the Convention will have to consider; it will have to give the majority the power to carry out the democratically arrived at decisions of that body.

Finally, we are now in a position to give a somewhat expanded, but more scientific definition than Comrade Harrington, of precisely what the LWC represents. We hope that it will satisfy the three Chicago comrades.

The Left Wing Caucus is a coalition of sectarian viewpoints, united primarily in its opposition to the basic political tradition of the YSL. It has placed its leadership in the hands of its Cannonite-oriented section, and conducted its fight in a manner consistent only with a perspective of either immediate or eventual split. It may thus be characterized as a disloyal, cannonite-led, split-oriented faction in the YSL.

###

V: On Harris's Epoch and Some Other Epochs

In a short meeting with comrade Robertson, he expressed the feeling that "the majority was getting bored with the faction fight." Without speaking for others, we would readily admit to holding that sentiment. Particularly so when "theoretical" questions are involved. The reason for this feeling is undoubtedly that we are forced to discuss questions which for us were settled, we thought, a long time ago; that are so obvious that they constitute the very foundations of our whole approach to American politics. Our only solace lies in the awareness that what to us seems obvious now was after all knowledge acquired only through a lengthy process of discarding cherished illusions, petty-bourgeois prejudices and utopian dreams. However, it is still a somewhat distasteful task to go back to fundamentals. Because of this, we will pass by Tim's articles on Epochs with a few debater's points.

1) Tim says that he will not discuss the Menshevik position on the Russian Revolution "whether expounded by a Martov, or by a Plekanov or a Dan." Is he implying that he knows what the viewpoints of these figures were? Then he has, perhaps, read them? No, he has only read some critics of theirs, namely secondary sources. So what is the point of the reference to the different variations in viewpoint between these writers? Only to establish Tim as an "authority" on the Russian Revolution. But of course, he is no more an authority on Menshevik viewpoints than anyone else who has read the Appendix.

2) Not pretending to be an authority on the Russian Revolution, we are in no position to dispute Tim's definition of Menshevism. But we would like to have a little evidence before we believe that the Mensheviks in Russia "insisted that Russia must go through all the stages of development in the same general way as did the German Social Democracy." Aside from being a grammatical impossibility, that definition seems a little dubious since it is well known that Menshevik perspectives for Russia included an interrelationship between the Russian bourgeois (democratic) revolution and the Western European proletarian or socialist revolution, and it seems as though that should have had some influence on their perspectives for Russia, precisely insofar as such a perspective would permit "skipping" stages. But, as we say, the details of Menshevism are a little obscure to us. Just out of a sense of fairness, however, we would like to have Tim give a little more detailed exposition of just what various Menshevik theoreticians really believed. After all, Bolshevism never claimed as a revolutionary right the right to debate with critics it had not read.

3) But On To The New World. It seems that, unbeknownst to myself, I am transplanting Menshevik theory into the YSL in developing an American perspective. This is rather a late discovery on Tim's part, since I was the author and reporter at the last YSL convention on nothing less than the American resolution, a resolution which was adopted without any modification whatever, as I recall, and even without any serious criticism. And in that resolution, black on white, I tried to develop more or less the thesis which Tim now is discovering to be the new menshevism of our time. Aside from the use of the term stages (which tends to imply some fixed, definable delimitation between various periods, and hence is false and schematic) the problem of evaluating the various periods of development likely to unfold in the future was dealt with in that resolution in a way somewhat similar to what Tim now describes. The reason that Comrade Tim found my speech at the plenum so "commendable" can only be because he has not realized the extent to which he has already revised most of the basic formulations developed by the YSL, and any programmatic platitude of the YSL now seems to him a startling discovery. And these ideas are nothing more than platitudes. It is a platitude that politics is not a direct reflection of material (i.e. economic) developments. It is a platitude that political development flows rather from the level of consciousness achieved by classes (and particularly so in the case of the working class). It is a platitude that consciousness is the product of historical experiences, and that the human mind is notoriously conservative, i.e. that it does not immediately adopt the ideas and outlook of its most advanced intellectual representatives--it seeks to hold on to prejudices of the past. It is a platitude, confirmed by all historic experience, and expressed a hundred times by Lenin, that the development of consciousness is a reciprocal process of the interaction of historical experience and the role played by the intellectual representatives of the working class organized into parties. Flowing from this series of platitudes is another, expressed by every American radical seeking ideological influence among the workers: the key to socialist

success is through the labor movement. How can that be accomplished? Different ideas may exist, but we advance nothing more than a simple, elementary idea, which may be right or wrong, but which has to be treated as the product of this analysis, and not as the wild delusion of some would-be labor flunkies. Let us try to state it once more:

The American working class is overwhelmingly bourgeois and petty-bourgeois in consciousness today. It accepts the conditions imposed upon it by capitalist society, with no greater aim than to increase its own share of the national wealth (trade union consciousness). Politically it is liberal in outlook (overall, that is, and not with reference to every question--sometimes on certain questions it tends to even be reactionary....) In no important section of the movement can it be even suggested that there exists any form of socialist or anti-capitalist consciousness. That socialist consciousness can only develop as the consequences of a series of experiences in which the political viewpoints between liberalism and revolutionary socialism are successively tested in life. We have not yet even begun that series of experiences, of which the Labor Party is both the culmination of one set of experiences and the beginning of a new series. The task of what Marx called "the advanced intellectual representatives of the class" must be determined by their estimation of exactly what "stage" of experience-consciousness has been reached.

Politically, we have said the present period is one of conservatism. That is not merely a characterization of the relationship of political forces, but also a characterization of consciousness in the working class (they are directly related). Given a movement to the left, initiated by general social and economic conditions, we ask, what is the most probably form of the consciousness which will develop? While Harrington may equivocate, and say that perhaps it may be revolutionary consciousness, I am quick to admit that I see absolutely no such development as an initial consequence. And since it will be left of liberalism, and less than revolutionary consciousness, I call it social democratic. And what is dismaying about that? Absolutely nothing.

We believe in pursuing the task of the all-sided education, organization and political leadership of the working class as it exists today and as it will exist tomorrow--in reality and not as we might like it to be. And in that process petty-bourgeois illusions about the imminence of "revolution" are scarcely of any help. (Does that sound contradictory--to call such illusions petty-bourgeois? Yet that is precisely what they are and what they represent, a petty bourgeois form of radicalism.)

But aren't we in the "epoch of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions?" (that is the correct citation, not Tim's loose "wars and revolutions") Ah, it is so painful to have to explain. But, no comrades, we are not in such an epoch. For while imperialism is decaying, and capitalism is, historically speaking, on a world scale, disintegrating, the conditions for proletarian victory do not exist at the present time. And, to quote Tim again--"When we look at the world" we see. . . . that Lenin and Trotsky . . . were wrong! Ah, the cat's out of the bag. The full depth of my Menshevik views stand revealed. Unfortunately however, that happens to be another one of those platitudes I learned something over ten years ago...in the S&P! At that time, we were discussing exactly this same question. The theses presented at that time by the S&P guaranteed a Soviet Europe after World War II with fascism the only alternative. All kinds of quotations were adduced showing how Trotsky's views proved that this was the only perspective. But history, that inevitable school mistress, showed that even great Marxists can be wrong, not to speak of epigones.

And because we have not seen proletarian revolutions succeed in the present epoch, utopians and petty bourgeois radicals have to find a substitute for the only force which can bring about socialism--a trained and organized working class. They cannot accept the difficult, heartbreaking and usually painstaking task of trying to create a real force for socialism. So they have to look for some shortcut--some substitute, something to buoy up their hopes. And where can they find such a substitute? No place except some mythical "degenerated workers state" which in some mystical way is going to be a force for socialism. From that point on the logical development is predetermined, and is what constitutes the basis for what we characterize as the pro-stalinist politics of the SP, but which is fundamentally nothing more than a form of petty-bourgeois utopian radicalism, capable of seeing in the least movement to the left the symbol of not-too-distant barricades, and of transforming a reactionary force into a revolutionary one. (Incidentally, I take no credit for "discovering" any of the platitudes cited in this article. The only thing I ever discovered was that the Workers Party--predecessor of the ISL--already had developed more or less these ideas and this approach as the basis for its political program, which is why I decided that it was the organization for serious socialists to join.)

But let us return to applying platitudes to politics. If we are in a "social democratic epoch," i.e. a period marked not by insurrectionary uprisings but the development of political consciousness along lines of legal political struggle, one must ask, what will be the political form within which the working class movement will develop? Now it is impossible to make an absolute statement, but we say that the most likely form is that of a broad, general socialist movement, not the kind of tightly-knit, highly disciplined groups known as the American socialist sects. And the place for marxists, we say, is inside that general socialist movement. Whether the SP-ISL unity can develop such a movement is also not established in advance, but it could be the beginning of such a movement. That, nothing more, lies behind the general approach we have toward unity, as the beginning of the beginning.

Perhaps we are wrong that it is possible to begin that task today. Perhaps SP-ISL unity is not the way. But the argument against such a proposal must be in terms of the real world, and not an unreal one. And such an argument cannot ask for our proof or guarantee of success, but must be based on a willingness to take political gambles, within the confines of a well thought out and real approach to the particular problems which we live amidst.

###

CORRECTIONS in RESOLUTION ON PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN SOCIALISM

The NAC Draft Resolution, which appeared in YSR, vol. 4, no. 1, March 30th, contains two typographical errors. The NAC, at its meetings of April 6, 1957 took note of these two typographical errors which they felt might be misleading and directed that they should be noted in the next issue of YSR. Apologies for being an issue late on this:

1. Paragraph 23, sentence 2 (page 6 of YSR). Add "and ISL" to end of sentence. It would now read "from the unity of the SP-SDF and ISL."
2. Paragraph 31, last sentence (page 7 of YSR). Add "the youth affiliate" so that the last part of the sentence will now read: "either part of the youth affiliate, or the youth affiliate of such a united organization."

Please make these corrections in your copies of this resolution in order that you will have as final a copy as possible at the time of the Convention to make easier and simpler discussion of amendments, etc. at that time.

The Editor
April 22, 1957

WHO'S WHO AND WHO'S FOR WHAT....anymore?

By Debbie Meier

Reading the LWB can be a confusing experience. Because the LWB ^{has} finally evolved upon a unity proposal which their leaders do not really attempt to defend and which, in fact, they actually spend most of their time attacking!

I. The All-Inclusive Type Party

The question which is in our minds is: is the LWC for or 'gain the all-inclusive party? From the first and up to the very latest issue of the LWB they seem to be attacking this conception of a party organization. We are not, they have said, in the period in which such a party makes any sense; besides a socialist organization today, being primarily a propaganda group, must rest on the basis of agreement over basic politics. This means that an "all-inclusive" organization in which various diverse tendencies would co-exist (who do not agree on such basic questions as the nature of capitalism or stalinism, the nature or form of Russian or American imperialism, the road out of the present cold war crisis, the eventual road to power, the need for a revolutionary or reformist ideology and party, or even the tactics and approach necessary in American 'class struggle' politics,--i.e. the SLP thinks that's its disagreement with the ISL over Beck makes coexistence impossible for it, etc) is neither proper not desirable nor conceivable in this period they argue. Some members also contend that this type of socialist organization is never desirable since the vanguard cadre party is the major need of the American working class and socialist movement.

So, we repeat, are they for or against the "all-inclusive party?" The party in which right-wing social democrats and stalinoid types can coexist. The party in which reformists and revolutionaries can coexist. This does not mean these tendencies or differences would be buried, nor that they would not continue to compete for adherents. It simply means that the various tendencies would concede that in the period now facing us certain questions are secondary and others primary. It means that they concede that certain minimal immediate demands, along with the basic definition of the party as anti-capitalist and anti-stalinist, can form and serve as the framework for a viable organization of American socialism.

Of course, one might conclude, they are against this type of organization. Yet--isn't this in essence what they are proposing in the youth field?

And, in fact, in the youth field they appear to be proposing that we have an even more limited programmatic agreement, i.e. that the question of the organization being anti-stalinist be phrased very fuzzily.

Let us clarify one thing about this however. It is absolutely true that we are not today, nor were we yesterday interested in a regroupment based on illusions or fuzzy conceptions of Stalinism. Such a regroupment could have been created anytime in the past, and the Stalinists themselves have gone in for these regroupments time and time again. We are, of course, interested in creating an anti-stalinist center to which ex-CPers, ex-LYers would be attracted. We want to create a movement which is itself unequivocal in its opposition to the Russian system, whatever it might be defined as, but which can be attractive to those who are still equivocating. That means it need not and should not have a detailed theory or analysis of Russian society, but simply state clearly that

Russia isn't socialism. That means it must be a vigorous, militant, loose and nonsectarian organization. It means it must welcome into it individuals who disagree with the party on the question of Russia even, but who feel that in their opinion, they can function within the organization loyally because the question of defining Russia is no longer decisive. For those who still think a pro-Russian orientation is decisive, such a movement would play and could play no positive role. Let us make no bones about this. For the importance of the collapse of the Communist Party is not merely that people are drifting but that it makes it possible to move people, rapidly and basically, if an organization can be created which can serve as the framework for their energies, from pro-Stalinism to clear "anti-stalinism." That is what we are interested in. A socialist party that was not anti-stalinist (i.e. differentiating socialism from stalinism) would be as unthinkable to us as a socialist party that was not anti-capitalist (i.e. differentiated socialism from capitalism). We continue to hold by our basic proposition that socialism must be identified with democracy and that the identification of socialism with Russia is, especially in America, an insuperable handicap with which the movement must not be burdened.

The LWC, with the exception of the fact that they also remain far fuzzier and more confused on this latter point, SEEM to be for this general type of organization in the youth field. They seem to advocate, ala the Newark proposal, that the YSL invite the youth of the SP-SDF, SWP, ASU, ISL, former LYers (in the latter case only those, we assume, who have reoriented their politics), the readers of the American Socialist, Dissent and the Monthly Review to join the YSL. I assume they are therefore for creating a YSL in which these people, AS THEY ARE TODAY, WITH THEIR PRESENT POLITICS, could join with full democratic rights for themselves as individuals and as a tendency. The political program they outline (which we will discuss later) is conceived of, WE ASSUME, as meeting the minimum requirements of acceptability for all these groups, or at least the largest share of each of these groups.

Or are we wrong? We wish we could be clear about this; that the LWC would tell us not only at whom their darts of cooperation are aimed, but whom they really expect can, or will or should take up this magnanimous offer. That is, we would like to know whether they are concretely in favor of all the youth of the SP, SSP and ASU joining, or only elements from each? For example, do the YPSL and AYS, the only two youth groups in the field at the moment, meet the minimum requirements as they stand today in the opinion of the LWC?

There are two possibilities: (1) That in actual fact this attractive youth regroupment slogan is intended only for the AYS and odds and ends of "rank and filers" elsewhere, and therefore the LWC does not really envision an all-inclusive socialist youth organization, or (2) it is intended to attract all the youth of the SP-SDF, SWP and ASU, i.e. youth with diverse political ideas and formulations. In the latter case the LWC is favoring a genuinely all-inclusive organization, even if we feel their proposal cannot achieve it.

If the latter is true however why does the LWC only propose this in the youth arena, and why do they so vehemently attack the very idea in the adult arena? It is not merely because we propose that the SP serve as the framework (in a manner similar to their proposal that the YSL serve that purpose in the youth field) because they seem to be attacking the very conception itself.

We propose to unite with, or enter ("dissolution-and-entry" for the ISL is not a frightening word to us, it is the content of the new organization that concerns us and our rights within it) the SP in order, NOT to make the SP into

a replica of the ISL (because then it couldn't be the framework either!) but to make the SP into a center for a regroupment somewhat similar to that being proposed in the youth field by the LWC.

But, argue the leaders of the LWC --this is a proposal to capitulate, to sell out! This is utopianism!

But in this respect it is absolutely no different from what they CLAIM they are proposing in the youth field. They are advocating, we think, co-existence between themselves, the AYS, the SP youth and the present social-democratic leadership and ranks of the YSL. And not only that but in this last issue of the LWB they have gone a step further and even agreed that it wouldn't be capitulationist (whatever other name it might be called) for them to join the youth affiliate of the SP, when and if the YSL as a whole decides to do so!

Capitulation has obviously nothing to do with any of this. The real difference between our proposal and the LWC's, if we take their proposal seriously, is that we say it is absolutely ludicrous to conceive of regroupment in the youth field occurring separate and apart from adult regroupment. To begin with the LWC already concedes that the SP won't be interested and unlike the Newark proposal they don't appear interested in approaching it in such a way as to arouse their interest. They speak of including those SP youth "who no longer can stomach the SP-SDF", i.e. those no longer in the party or about to leave! The only adult disciplined organizations whose youth might enter are the ISL and SWP. And an organization in which the real political leadership and "cadre" came from these two groups would have a short and happy time, but it should not take a political genius to realize that it would not be a step towards a viable and healthy regroupment.

The SWP and ISL as tendencies can coexist in an adult socialist organization, in which various other tendencies and numerous other individuals belong, as long as both had a loyal, open attitude toward the party and their own tendencies. Today, for example, both have much at stake in attracting to themselves young or new faces. Today the question becomes decisive because (1) new members are necessary for the survival of the tendency's views and (2) because if a "contact" joins another of the sects, what may at the beginning have been political accident--who got their first--will isolate the individual from any real, live and unprejudiced contact with all the other sects. In an all-inclusive party with open and loose, rather than rigidly disciplined tendencies, these problems would not arise. To begin with in such a framework a tendency could remain alive so long as one individual within the party still put forth its views! Secondly, all could genuinely feel that the main task was recruitment to the party, no matter into what tendency the new member might immediately gravitate toward. For the success of one tendency, at the expense of another which is the rule today, would no longer be decisive.

Only through the formation of such a broad adult movement can the factional struggles which create such havoc today in the youth and adult movement, be concluded and genuine, nonfactional cooperation begin.

To accomplish this we urge the ISL and SP to negotiate some sort of unity, and from this unification we hope to see the basis laid for a new adult center for regroupment. Within this framework we hope to create the youth section for such a regrouped movement. For the youth are simply a part of the general socialist movement. We do not care in what name this youth organization is created--although some of us prefer the name YSL. What we do care about is that the youth organization be of such a nature that it can be an attractive

center for radical youth--with considerable political and organizational autonomy, with an active leadership, with free and completely democratic internal life. For this purpose we cannot in the youth field advocate the same type of unity that we advocate for the ISL in the adult field. Therefore in the youth field we set down a series of general conditions and demands--which in essence amount to the demand for a viable, healthy youth movement.

(Shane takes us to task for only stating, in the Denitch-Harris-Meier motion, that we "seek" certain goals. He suggests that we state our minimum demands! But because we want our maximum, not our minimum demands, we will not be so foolish as to state or settle upon that matter beforehand. We are afraid that the YSL membership's intelligence and powers of judgement will have to be taxed once again in determining whether the agreements arrived at by its negotiating committee meet its own minimum standards for a viable, healthy youth.)

II. The Political and Programmatic Basis for Unity

Much in the past has been made, by the LWC, of the argument that it is no good to talk of unity and regroupment until a thorough discussion of political differences has been gone through and a sensibly arrived at programmatic basis for regroupment can be formulated. We say, incidentally, that this same argument which the SWP also uses, is in the latter case anyhow a dodge. Flowing from their conception of a highly disciplined vanguard party and its vital role today comes the further proposition that the only programmatic basis for regroupment is their own, with perhaps minor concessions. That is why they are frank in admitting that no other ORGANIZATION today meets their requirements for a revolutionary and principled regroupment. For example, the ISL fails in many respects--but to give you just the "feel" of the type of principled programmatic agreement they require--we are told by an SWP spokesman in Chicago that the ISL's position on the present labor racketeering situation would make it ineligible for regroupment on a principled "class struggle" basis. The SWP wants to regroup, they honestly state, with "elements from each"--who are genuinely revolutionary, down to the last detail or who are willing to submit to the discipline of an organization which is revolutionary to the last detail. We contend that it takes no higher form of intelligence to realize that what the SWP wants is political discussion and forums and joint activity for the purpose of recruiting to their own program and their own organization.

But does the LWC have this same conception? And is their proposal, which is so similar in every respect to that of the SWP, really the same thing? For Shane and Tim this may well be true. But it is our contention that the LWC as a whole is not agreed upon this and that as a result they cannot put forth their position any longer in a clear and consistent manner. So that they are unable to solve the apparent contradiction of proposing in the youth arena what we propose in the adult arena, while at the same time charging us with capitulation, sell-out, unprincipled maneuvering, naivete, etc. In the adult sphere they still want more discussion and forums, in the youth field they have "unityitis."

The only "way out" of this apparent contradiction that we can find is that what they appear to be saying is not at all what the leaders of this caucus really have in mind. And that they have hit upon this youth regroupment gimmick as a strategem for answering the attractiveness and appeal of the majority's position.

The formula they have arrived on calls for youth regroupment and then also puts forth 5 political programmatic formulations as the basis for this regroup-

ment (therefore making it principled).

These five points are: (1) civil liberties for all and an emphasis on the democratic nature of socialism, (2) a labor party and opposition to the two capitalist parties, (3) opposition to the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism and support to national liberation movements in colonial countries, (4) opposition to Stalinist bureaucracy (not the system or its imperialism, we note) and support to the Hungarian and Polish revolutions, and (5) a firm alliance with the Negro people.

The wording is not EXACTLY pure; it comes closer to that of a YSL member who is appealing to the SWP, etc. However, for the moment, let us accept it. Especially if it is us and not Shane who will interpret these 5 points. Because we suspect that Shane is going to interpret them with a bit more detail and with a bit more of his own twist and exclusiveness. Interpreted in our way the SP, as it is today, can come under this classification. It's true they do not oppose "the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism" the way we would--they don't for example consider the Marshall Plan or N.A.R.O. the "foreign policy of U.S. imperialism," or support of these instruments to imply support of such imperialism! Shane thinks that such a position is contradictory? That's his right, as it is my right to think this and that about the SWP's position is contradictory. But as long as they don't...well then? Similarly the question of support of national liberation movements in colonial countries--to some this includes Mao of China, to others not. Similarly with the phrase "opposition to Stalinist bureaucracy," some think that means one thing and another interpret it an entirely different way. There are some who are "for a labor party" and "oppose the two capitalist parties" but who nevertheless work within the Democratic Party. You think that's illogical? However, there are those who don't.

In other words: is the united movement that the LWC is proposing really that? Is it really a unity between organized youth tendencies who DISAGREE on various questions, who would interpret the above five points in fundamentally different ways? And if it is, what has happened then to that basic programmatic and principled unity that the LWC seeks?

What the LWC is really after is unity with the SWP youth as they are today, as much of the youth of the ASU and individual LYLer types. To gain these ends they are willing to make political "concessions" to their illusions. However no concessions in interpretation are going to be made to what they call the right (the pro-Russian oriented elements now constituting the left), because they frankly are seeking unity only with those SP-SDFers who "no longer can stomach" the SP-SDF. And finally they are forced to accept the YSL right, center and left as they stand today--except that the right and center will be considerably diminished in relative strength.

In the overall socialist movement we favor much the same thing, except that we plan to include also those with whom we disagree with on the nature of the capitalist state, who have illusions about American imperialism but who don't have such illusions about Russian imperialism--i.e. the SPers, the SDFers, and other unaffiliated right wing socialists. For we feel that the question of the organization disassociating itself from Stalinism, as it is automatically disassociated from capitalism, is decisive. To create this organization no drawn out political debates, discussions, etc. are needed.

We do not expect to convince whole tendencies of our views, nor ^{do we believe} that they can convince us of theirs. Therefore we suggest that we recognize the differences

and try to decide how, based on these accepted differences, we can organize ourselves into one party.

This is the problem the ISL and YSL have addressed themselves to, and the more closely one looks at the proposals of the LWC the more one begins to realize that they are not addressing themselves to this problem at all.

The LWC, like the SWP in this respect, are simply using fancy "regrouping" sounding words to put forth quite a different conception. They contend that a genuinely all-inclusive party cannot and should not be created today. The task of revolutionary socialists today, as always, is to develop their own cadre party, which party will function in various frameworks in order to reach and lead the masses. Therefore they oppose the very idea of a party, into which the tendencies would dissolve themselves as unique entities, which is broad and all-inclusive in nature. They favor this in the youth field, especially if it is limited so as to exclude right wing social democrats, because they also recognize that such a youth regroupment will serve merely as a recruiting arena--like broad socialist campus clubs--for the revolutionary vanguard party.

This is the only explanation which we can find for the otherwise contradictory elements in the LWC's statements, arguments and proposals.

III. Some Questions for the LWC

We suggest that members of the LWC urge their caucus to seriously consider their answers to the following concrete questions.

1. Are you for an all-inclusive type socialist party, organized so as to include reformists, revolutionaries, anti-Leninists and pro-Leninists, those with illusions about capitalism and those with illusions about changing stalinism, anti-marxists and pro-marxists, etc.?
2. If you favor this type of party what purpose do the present forums, debates and discussion serve and why cannot the SP, SWP, ISL, ASU, etc. unite right now?
3. If you do not favor this type of all-inclusiveness, are you nevertheless favoring it in the youth arena? If so, why do you think it can function viably in the youth and not in the movement as a whole?
4. Does your position rest upon certain assumptions with regard to the role of a vanguard party today or not?
5. What groups, on the basis of the programmatic statement you set forth (a) do you hope will join and (b) do you expect will join?
6. What kind of discussion, propaganda and activity could this diverse youth group carry on and could a similarly diverse adult group also do this?
7. Would it be capitulation for the AYS to enter the YSL on the basis of the YSL's present leadership and program, which the AYS considers social-democratic and petty-bourgeois. Is it capitulation for you to think in terms of remaining in an organization whose politics, direction, leadership and overwhelming majority are, in your opinion, social democratic?
8. When is it progressive for revolutionary socialists, in other words, to split from a social democratic sect??

9. Do you think the present right wing leadership and membership of the ysl and ISL could, in good conscience, accept the 5 programmatic points you advocate? Could social democrats accept these 5 points?

IV. Our Proposal

Now our proposal, which we stated quite frankly a long long time ago, has certain similarities, for example, to the Newark resolution - in intent.

We feel however, that

REGROUPMENT, to be healthy, viable and nonfactional, MUST BEGIN IN THE ADULT ARENA, i.e. the real socialist movement itself.

We think that today, for a variety of reasons, regroupment can take place on an all-inclusive level. We think that various organizations which exist today could coexist on the basis of certain minimal political propositions which they do today hold in common, or which they would today be willing to concede. The kind of organization they could co-exist in would have to have certain characteristics:

1. It must have a reputation which enables those who have been engaged in bitter factional and inter-party struggles in the past to feel free to join without raising the question of their capitulation to another hostile tendency.
2. It must be an organization which is not noted for its particular analysis of Russia.
3. It must be an organization which in its reputation does not alienate and repel that important body of opinion outside of the present ^{organized} radical world-- the unaffiliated socialists, the socialistically inclined, the militants in the unions, etc.
4. It must be an organization which could not be labelled immediately, by all sophisticated unionists, unaffiliated socialists and leftists as a new "communist front."
5. It must be an organization which is democratic and which permits all individuals and tendencies to express themselves internally and externally.
6. In its politics it should stand for an independent labor party, for civil rights and civil liberties, which emphasizes the democratic nature of socialism and which distinguishes the socialism it seeks from the Russian social system and which makes clear that it does not consider Russia a socialist society. It must be a party which counterposes its own militant and democratic demands to the policies of U.S. capitalism as these issues arise, and which defends democracy everywhere in the world--Algeria and Hungary. We ask no further interpretation, judgement, committees or entrance examinations.
7. And on the basis of such a program, and such a call for all socialist tendencies to regroup under this program and party, we feel that a party which does not demand rigid discipline and a high degree of centralization can attract those still undecided and those still wavering between Stalinism and democratic socialism and between capitalism and democratic socialism.

The question is what party can do this, and how can it do it. We think the

Socialist Party is the only organization that meets the first four criteria mentioned above. We think the unity of the ISL and SP, or the entrance of the entire ISL into the SP in terms of its clear statements beforehand of intention, is the best way to transform the SP into a center such as is described in points 5, 6 and 7 above! This means we, the ISL, hope to help create the most democratic possible Socialist Party, we hope, along with the present SP. to build a party which can serve as a framework in which various tendencies with their own different and distinct views can function viably and healthily in building the general Socialist Party.

And we hope that whether the YSL affiliates with such an SP, or whether the YSL united with the present YPSL to form a new youth affiliate--it will prove the same thing possible in the youth arena.

We think the YSL, because of its present role, because of the absolute absence of any real YPSL and because of the radicalness of youth, can and must play a somewhat different role in the youth field. Therefore we advocate that the YSL, at that time when ISL-SP unity is consummated, begin the task of negotiating for a unity which leaves the youth that autonomy essential to its healthy survival. We do not propose, however, an irresponsible youth organization, one engaged in hostile acts directed at weakening the party, building a rival adult organization, etc.

We think that this type of reorganized, revived and regrouped socialist movement--adult and youth--has a real perspective. We think the LWC knows it too. And we think that those in the LWC who genuinely favor the type of proposal that the caucus APPEARS to advocate in the youth field should begin to consider how this can be achieved in the adult field, what framework it should work through, and who should and how should it be created. We suggest that we have put forward a real proposal and a real answer to this question, and we wish for once we could begin to hear a discussion about our specific and real proposal, instead a merely counterproposals and long theoretical diatribes about capitulation, social democracy, the war question, revolutionary vs. reformist politics, etc., etc.

In conclusion, we think our proposal is real, genuine, bold and important. And for that reason we see it as the major task for the YSL in the next period. And for that reason we get our strategy, our tactics and our tasks in line with this goal--and we propose that all those who are serious about their commitment to socialism will not find it difficult to understand why we are willing even to forgo immediate organizational glory or organizational gains for the far larger gain of recreating a broad, inclusive socialist movement.

###

OPEN LETTER TO THE YSL MEMBERSHIP

from

Paula and Harold Bram

At the time we joined the Left Wing Caucus, the statement which had appeared in YSR as well as the communiques from the National Office, seemed to indicate a willingness on the part of our national leadership to enter, merge with, or in some way unite with the SP-SDF "at any cost," that is, with no limitations either political or organizational. The first issue of the Left Wing Bulletin, and letters from comrades Shane and Tim, seemed to us to indicate the formation of a caucus primarily concerned with creating and pushing a set of limitations to unity, i.e. minority rights within a merged organization, a third camp position, etc..

We joined with the feeling that the LWC was the place for those of us who wanted unity, but wanted it with full minority rights for a left-wing third camp tendency, the right to publish a tendency organ, the right to representation and a voice as a minority, looking toward the day when that minority might become a majority. We still look toward this kind of unity. However, we no longer feel that the LWC is the place for those of us with this perspective.

In the past two months, since the unity discussions began within the YSL, we have been able to gain more insight into the various positions being advanced. After receiving personal letters, documents, additional copies of YSR and LWB, we find ourselves in a much better position to evaluate the positions taken by the NAC, individual comrades, and by the Left Wing Caucus.

On April 25 we received the YSR published March 30th, which included the NAC draft resolution on Socialist Regroupment. We find the NAC draft resolution expressing all of those concerns we raised in our letter in the Left Wing Bulletin, vol. 1, no. 2. We particularly feel that Section 5 of the NAC draft resolution covers, clearly and adequately, our doubts concerning the path our YSL leadership was taking.

We can find no reason for believing that the LWC is attempting to establish criteria for unity that would result in unity. The LWC's position was, as we stated in our first letter, and still is, more one of "unite against unity" than for unity, although we do not believe that this has been motivated by what some of our comrades call "cannonite-opportunism."

We repeat, we want a unity with those conditions which we have already stipulated, and which have been included in the NAC Draft Resolution on Unity. Because we find that we agree with the NAC Draft Resolution on Unity, we wish to withdraw from the Left Wing Caucus.

We would like to add one note for our comrades in the Left Wing Caucus. You are acquainted with our position on unity, our doubts, and misgivings; we do not intend to give up our views within the SP-SDF, and we see no reason why any of you should give up your position within a unified ISL, YSL, SP-SDF. We urge you to join with us and your other comrades in helping to unite the socialist movement.

###

I: DRAFT RESOLUTION ON "PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN SOCIALISM"

proposed by Shane Mage

I. THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

(1) All social forces in the U.S. exist in a world context. Capitalism is an international social and economic system. The working class also exists on a world scale. The American section of the international working class is today insulated from international developments by a thick wall of bourgeois nationalist ideology reinforced by the position of America as an aristocratic island in an impoverished world. Nevertheless the workingclass in America is no more immune from the social transformations now taking place in the rest of the world than is the American capitalist class.

(2) The international situation of the past two years has been marked by a continuous increase in the strength and activity of the progressive and revolutionary forces in the world. This development is shown most conspicuously in three inter-related phenomena: the rise of the Russian and East European working class and its consequence, the crisis and disintegration of Stalinism; the full scale eruption of the colonial revolution at the doorstep of Europe, in the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa; and the slower, but profoundly important, intensification and deepening of working class struggles in the decisive capitalist countries of Western Europe.

THE CRISIS OF STALINISM

(3) The crisis of Stalinism was announced to the world by the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party. The speeches at this Congress, most notably Khrushchev's "secret" report, tore away Stalin's self-woven mantle of immortality and revealed the founder of the present Russian system in his true character as "the most sinister character in history." The immediate consequence of this action was the total collapse of Stalinist ideology.

(4) The international Stalinist movement since its very inception was based on a system of lies about the nature of the Russian state and its leadership. The exposure of the most important of these lies has shaken, if not destroyed, the entire structure in the mind of every honest "Communist." In every Communist Party probing questions have been raised going to the root of Stalinist "socialism" - the totalitarian rule of a privileged bureaucracy. This ferment has in no way been restricted to the Stalinist parties of the "West," but has appeared most strikingly in the Communist Parties of East Europe and Russia itself.

(5) The revolt of the Stalinist intellectuals in the countries of the Russian bloc has a double significance. It is an expression of the bankruptcy of Stalinist ideology. It is also a harbinger of revolution. In Poland and Hungary the intellectuals were the first to speak out against an unbearable system, the first to show the people that revolt was possible. The Stalinist intellectuals made themselves into spokesmen for the most profound and pressing needs of the working class. They were able to do this because they sensed and reflected the enormous pressures of an aroused and restless working class.

(6) In Russia too, the "liberalization" expressed in the actions of the 20th Congress and the increased intellectual freedom which followed it represent in

large measure an adaptation and concession to the pressure of the Russian proletariat. The Russian working class is a huge, new, modern proletariat. Its first unorganized stirrings made the Stalin-type police terror an economic impossibility. Its struggles in the past year reached the level of significant strike action in several giant factories - the first successful strikes in Russia since the 1920's. The Russian working class has proven itself strong enough to impose a fundamental revision of the Stalinist differential wage system and to defeat the efforts of the regime to carry thru this revision at the expense of some sections of the working class.

(7) The working class upsurge in the Stalinist bloc reached its highest level with the revolutions in Hungary and Poland. These revolutions do not differ at all in social nature, only in tempo. Both demanded full national independence in order to establish control of the economy by the workers themselves and a democratic political structure. Both were inspired and sparked by intellectuals who had been stalinists until shortly before. In both the active combatting and organizing force was the working class. In both, students played an honorable role at the side of the workers.

(8) In its bloody slaughter of the Hungarian revolution and its present attempt at slow strangulation of the Polish revolution the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy has proven once again that it is an irreconcilable enemy of all workers democracy of all socialism. The concessions to the workers made under the aegis of Khrushchev have changed nothing in the basic nature of the bureaucracy as an anti-workingclass social force. Budapest proves that the ruling bureaucracy will not reform itself out of existence, but can only be eliminated by the revolutionary action of the working class.

(9) The Hungarian working class charted the path for this revolutionary action. In their struggles against Stalinism the Hungarians naturally and spontaneously adopted the basic organizational form of proletarian rules: the Workers Councils. The Stalinist counter-revolution prevented the full development of the Councils, cut short their evolution toward their natural role as the basic organ of state power. But the brief Hungarian revolution of Workers Councils has pointed the way, not only to the workers of the Stalinist bloc but also to the working classes of the "West." It has demonstrated in practice and without the slightest ideological preconceptions the necessary form of the socialist revolution - the Republic of Workers Councils, the Republic of Soviets.

THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

(10) The struggles of colonial peoples for independence continue to be an important factor weakening imperialism and favoring a socialist development in the advanced countries. In the past period the most important revolutionary developments have been those in the Arab world. The focal points of this revolution have been Egypt and Algeria.

(11) The Egyptian revolution has to date developed under the leadership of a military elite. In the early stages of this revolution, the group of officers headed by Nasser made significant advances; elimination of the corrupt monarchy, initiatives toward agrarian reform, expulsion of the British from the Suez canal zone. The events of the past year have brought about an important increase in the revolutionary actions of the Egyptian regime.

(12) The first significant development of this nature was the role of Egyptian political influence in the revolutionary demonstration in Jordan. U.S. and British imperialism had attempted to force the regime of King Hussein to enter

the Bagdad pact, the counter-revolutionary military alliance directed primarily against Egypt. Egyptian influence, propaganda, and, according to the reactionaries, money, aided the mass demonstrations of the Jordanian people which blocked the Bagdad pact proposal, compelled the King to eliminate British control over the Jordanian army, and led directly to the free elections which resulted in the present nationalist and anti-imperialist government in Jordan.

(13) The most important accomplishment of the Egyptian revolution to date was the nationalization of the Suez canal. The canal has been one of the prize possessions of Anglo-French imperialism. Built by the slavery and death of thousands of Egyptians, the Suez canal was the source of huge profits into one of the great institutions of imperialist capitalism, the "Universal Suez Canal Company." Nationalization of the canal was a deadly political and economic blow to English and French imperialism, and a possible source of great advantages to the Egyptian people.

(14) The importance of this action is shown most clearly by the action to which it provoked the French and British imperialists. In alliance with Israel they resorted to military aggression to destroy the Nasser regime and seize the canal for its former "owners."

(15) The Egyptian government and the whole Arab people replied to the imperialist threat by revolutionary actions of great scope. The whole Egyptian people was armed and fought fiercely against the allied landing at Port Said; of course they had no chance against the modern imperialist armies which had no scruples about bombing and shelling the workers quarters of the city. General strikes throughout the entire Arab world showed the solidarity of the Arab peoples with Egypt. In Syria, where the entire people was armed as in Egypt, the pumping stations for the main oil pipelines were blown up totally cutting off European supplies of Middle Eastern oil.

(16) The threat of a general Middle Eastern revolution in which American oil interests would share the fate of the British, combined with the open threat of Russian military intervention in the Middle East, forced U.S. imperialism to place a restraining hand on its British, French and Israeli "partners." The aggressors were compelled to withdraw from Egyptian territory. The result of Egyptian military defeat at the hands of vastly superior forces was a substantial political victory for the Nasser regime and for the Arab revolution.

(17) The Egyptian revolution at its present stage is represented by a military dictatorship. This fact flows from the weakness and immaturity of the Egyptian working class. While the army dictatorship has been capable of taking important revolutionary actions, its insistence that social change be directed from above, its identification of its own interests as a privileged caste with the general interests of the Arab people represents a block to the full development of the Arab revolution. This is shown by its failure to carry through a sweeping land reform, by its willingness to compromise with western imperialism, particularly U.S. imperialism, and by its alliance with feudal despots of the Saud type. Any further, major extension of the Egyptian revolution in the direction of Middle Eastern federation and radical improvement of living standards requires the emergence of independent working class and socialist political forces to take a leading role in the national revolution.

(18) The Algerian revolution is a far more profound and sweeping revolution than the Egyptian one, both in its social character and in its implications for western capitalism. This fact is recognized full well by the French bourgeoisie, which has fought the Algerian people with methods worthy of a Hitler or Stalin.

(19) Algeria was the first North African state conquered by France, and has been colonized by the French on a vastly wider scale than either Tunisia or Morocco. As a result, the Algerian people has been radically proletarianized. The former independent peasantry has been largely expropriated from the land, leaving a residue of desperately poor peasants on tiny landholdings, landless agricultural proletarians, employed on the rare occasions when they can find work by the giant French-owned farms, and a large working class. The Algerians in France play the same role the Negroes (and now Puerto Ricans) play in the U.S. They represent to French capitalism a pool of dirt cheap labor for the worst jobs, jobs which a French worker would never accept at Algerian pay. Hundreds of thousands of Algerians have worked in France, in French industries.

(20) Complementing the proletarianization of the Algerian masses is the tiny size and scope of the Algerian upper and middle classes. France has allowed no Algerian industry or commerce above the hole in the wall size. Such Algerians as have achieved upper class status have done so within the confines of French institutions, and become thoroughly "frenchified" in the process. It is this tiny section of the Algerian population that has in the past served French colonialism as native agents of its rule, while the pretence was still maintained that the people of Algeria had some semblance of democratic rights.

(21) The Algerian nationalist movement has, since its beginning under the leadership of Messali Hadj, had a pronounced proletarian and socialist character. The political program of the Algerian revolution today is a socialist one. National independence, for the Algerian worker or peasant, would be a bitter joke if the huge French farms and industries were not expropriated and made to serve the Algerian people.

(22) The leadership of the Algerian revolution is split into two wings. The Algerian National Movement, headed by Messali Hadj, remains true to the proletarian socialist traditions of the Algerian independence movement. Its program is unequivocal on the basic democratic issue of the right of the Algerian people to decide their own destiny through a sovereign Constituent Assembly. It has consistently repudiated any form of chauvinism, and appealed to the French proletariat in internationalist socialist terms.

(23) The second tendency in the Algerian liberation movement is the National Liberation Front. This group is a coalition between certain sections of the Algerian underground army and the entire mass of middle class pro-French Algerians, who had served the French faithfully until the full scale outbreak of the revolution made their position untenable. The social features of the program of this group are quite radical, reflecting the proletarian nature of Algeria. However it has at no time adopted an unequivocal democratic and socialist position comparable to that of the MNA. It has always declared itself to be the sole legitimate spokesman for the Algerians. Its present leadership would undoubtedly be willing to negotiate a settlement with the French on terms falling considerably short of full independence. The main factors preventing a settlement a la Bourguiba to the Algerian revolution are the refusal of the Algerian underground army to accept any settlement from which MNA would be excluded and the refusal of the French colons in Algeria to make any concessions to the FLN.

(24) The decisive fact of the Algerian revolution is that it is a social revolution as well as a national one. The bourgeois coloration of the FLN has been used by world imperialist propaganda to hide this fact - but if the FLN and its leaders were all that was involved the war would be settled tomorrow. Whatever the momentary relationship of forces between the two groups, the MNA is the

legitimate historical representative of the Algerian workers and peasants. In turn, the social interests of the Algerian masses are strictly incompatible with the interests of the French colons and of French capitalism. As in all social revolutions, even a relatively durable compromise is out of the question. One of the two forces must prevail. The victory of the Algerian workers and peasants, the victory of the MNA, would not merely mean a social revolution in Algeria, it would be a profoundly revolutionary factor in the political life of France as well. Similarly, the victory of French socialism, even under the form of a "compromise" between the "liberal" imperialists and the leaders of the FLN, would signify an enormous strengthening of all the reactionary forces in French politics and might well lead to the establishment of a highly authoritarian government or worse in France.

THE WESTERN EUROPEAN WORKING CLASS

(25) The current situation in Western Europe is one of the beginning stages of a general working class offensive. The present intensification and sharpening of the class struggle follows a period which saw the stabilization and even strengthening of reactionary regimes throughout the continent. Nothing approaching a showdown fight has yet developed. Nevertheless, the results of the partial struggles of the past few months show a balance of class forces clearly favorable to the working class in the major European countries, and give every sign of larger, more important and more generalized struggles in the next period.

(26) The most important developments so far in this working class offensive have taken place in England. The results of an important series of by-elections show a major popular swing toward the Labor Party. More important, the recent strikes in the shipbuilding and metal working industries have given impressive evidence of the solidarity, militancy, and striking power of the British proletariat. The English capitalists were forced to concede substantial concessions even before the full might of the Engineering Union had been brought into play.

(27) West Germany has just seen the conclusion of a long and relatively successful strike of the Schleswig-Holstein metal workers, the most important by far since the rise of Hitler. Spain is seething below the surface, and Franco has been compelled to reshuffle his cabinet and promise economic concessions. In France, short strikes have hit most sections of the economy, and the economic prospects for French capitalism are extremely dismal. All these movements are only at the starting point.

(28) Despite the feeble scope of the movements so far, it is already clear in every country that the principal obstacle that the working class must overcome in order to carry on any sort of effective struggle against the capitalists is its own leadership.

(29) This is most obviously true in France. There the leaders of one of the "working class" parties - and use that power to carry out the policies of the most reactionary section of French capitalism, to repress the working class in every way, to force the workers to pay for the breakdown of French capitalism in general and the criminal Algerian and Egyptian wars of Mollet in particular. The other "working class" party in France is no better. The Stalinist leaders of the French CP have loyally supported the Mollet government. They have voted to give it the special powers in Algeria, have saved it by their votes whenever its majority in Parliament was in danger, and... "opposed" it when their votes didn't count.

(30) The French trade unions are faithful representatives of the parties which

control them. The "Socialist" FO is openly strikebreaking, as in the recent miners strike. The Stalinist controlled CGT is more subtle; it has merely used every means at its command to prevent any generalized strike movements. It calls on the workers to fritter away their energy and combativity in "turning strikes," hour long or day long walkouts, department by department. All the unions agree on the essential - no general, even industry wide strike over economic issues, no action of any sort against the Algerian war.

(31) Nevertheless, the potential combativity of the French proletariat is extremely high. This was shown in the spontaneous general strike of 1953, in the militant strikes of Nantes and St. Nazaire, in 1955, in the long series of spontaneous protests against the Algerian war. The pressures forcing militant working class action are today more intense than ever, and steadily increasing.

(32) German capitalism is in a wonderfully healthh condition compared to the French variety; but the role of the workers leadership in West Germany is not fundamentally different than in France. The strikers of Shleswig-Holstein scored a partial victory. At the end of their strike, the employers gave in on many points that they had been unwilling to concede at the beginning. Nevertheless, almost 70% of the strikers were opposed to the final settlement. Their return to work was forced by a bureaucratic ultimatum from the West German federation of trade unions.

(33) The reason for this betrayal by the Social-Democratic leaders of the German trade unions is that the Social-Democratic party, which has grown steadily stronger during the past few years, looks forward impatiently to this fall's elections, after which it hopes to enter the West German government. But it does not expect to get a parliamentary majority, and so establish an authentic Labor Government; rather, the SPD leaders look forward to a coalition government in which they would share power either with the Christian Democrats or the "liberals," both direct representatives of German big business. The relationship of the German Social Democracy toward independent class struggles is essentially dictated by the reliance of the Social-Democratic bureaucrats on an alliance with "liberal" big business, just as it was in the days before Hitler.

(34) In England, the working class is being forced to pay for the weakness of British capitalism by the Tory government. This government has a solid parliamentary majority which gives it legal authority to govern for the next three years, despite the evident fact that the majority in Britain supports Labor, not the Tories.

(35) The recent strikes, represented an attempt by the British proletariat to defend its living standards against the effects of Tory policies. They represented a partial victory. However, the leadership of the trade unions has been responsible for the failure of the strikes to win their original demands for a 10% wage increase. The leadership of the railway union undercut the movement by settling for 5%. Then the Engineering Union refused to call an immediate strike of all its members, but phased the walkout over two weeks. Finally, even before all the Engineering workers had gone on strike the trade union bureaucrats called off the strike, over rank and file opposition, on the promise of arbitration by an "impartial" government board, on the basis of the employers 5% offer. The effect of the tactics adopted by the labor leadership was to prevent the type of struggle capable of winning the 10% - a militant and uncompromising general strike of the British working class.

(36) Even more important than the failure to win the workers full demands in the recent strikes is the failure of the Labor Party leadership to pose the essential economic problem before the British working class - the problem of political power. As long as the Tory government remains in power, any economic gains won by the strike action of the workers will prove illusory. The wage increase will be rapidly eaten up by increased prices due to the actions of the government in cutting subsidies, decontrolling rent, and reducing imports, as well as to "natural" price inflation. The defense, let alone the improvement, of the living standards of the British proletariat requires a Labor Government.

(37) The Tories cannot in the foreseeable future be expected to yield power by calling an election they expect to lose. They will not resign by choice; their resignation must therefore be forced by the workers. The British working class has one and only one weapon with which to oust the Tories and install a Labor Government - the general strike. The political general strike could in very short order cause the downfall of the present regime and the establishment of a workers government. The immediate possibility of such a strike was posed by the recent strike wave. It will be posed again by every working class struggle of the next period. But the leadership of the BLP has absolutely no desire to carry out the revolutionary mobilization of the British proletariat.

(38) In England, France, and Germany today, as in all other countries tomorrow, the problem of socialism is the problem of the revolutionary leadership. The labor bureaucracy, entrenched in party and trade union, is deeply committed to capitalism by its privileged position and entire "leadership" mentality. It represents the major obstacle to successful workingclass struggles. The victory of the workers requires that the grip of this leadership be broken, that the workers create revolutionary parties capable of leading and directing the class struggle up to the establishment of socialism. These parties, the objective necessity of the present historical period, are today only in the nascent stage. Their cadre is coming together within the Left Wings of the mass social-democratic parties in such countries as England, Germany, Belgium and Italy (the Nenni party), or altogether outside the social democracy as in France and Spain.

(39) A new period of heightened class struggle is opening in western Europe. Its outcome will have the highest historical importance. If revolutionary parties can be built these struggles can be led to victory and the socialist future of mankind will be opened. If, on the other hand, the Social-Democratic and Stalinist leaderships are again able to betray these new struggles, the door will be opened to the emergence of neo-fascist regimes throughout the continent, starting with France. The consequences of either variant upon the American working class, on the one hand, and upon the proletariats of the Stalinist bloc, on the other, are obvious. To a large extent, the political life of American socialism in the next period will be shaped by the European class struggle. It is a prime obligation of American socialists to aid in the birth process of the European parties of the socialist revolution.

End of Part I

(Editor's note: Part II, on the domestic scene, will appear in a future issue of YSR. See also Part III on regroupment, etc.)

PROPOSED MOTIONS TO IMPLEMENT A NEW PERSPECTIVE OCCASIONED BY THE DECOMPOSITION OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNIST (STALINIST) MOVEMENT

Presented in writing to the Berkeley unit, YSL, on Feb. 17, 1957 after several weeks of discussion previously. adopted as amended on Feb 24.

1. That for the present period of "regroupment", our primary and controlling arena of work be within and among Stalinoid and leftist groupings and in forums and like embracing such people; rather than an approach to the campus directly and in formal competition with those whom we seek to influence and win.
2. That without attenuating the political views which we propagate or without surrendering the essentials that maintain us as a functioning, organized grouping, we will reduce to a minimum the organizational barriers and manner of functioning which inhibit our access to and fruitful work with and among these anti-capitalist elements whose political moorings have been torn loose.

Specific Motions

- a) That we adopt as our designation in meeting announcements etc. the name "Bay Area Young Socialist Club, YS I".
- b) That our regular, routine schedule of general, area-wide business meetings be every fourth Sunday, with regular executive committee meetings to be held the preceding and following Sundays, respectively to prepare for and to implement the Club meetings.
- c) That our executive committee number an approximate 30-50% of the membership of the Club, so as to be an effective working body, and that it be a politically representative selection of the Club's activists.
- d) That we do not make a practice of excluding an individual from the Club meeting during the point at which his admission to YSL membership is being discussed and voted on. This "secret" practice tends to create a dubious feeling toward the Club on the part of new members. The executive committee shall regularly review the development of Club contacts and sympathizers from the standpoint of the possibility and desirability of their recruitment.
- e) That the title of the principle officer of the Club be "chairman" rather than "organizer".
- f) That our San Francisco comrades constitute themselves as a working body as soon as is feasible.* (Note Below)
- g) That the greatest emphasis be placed on our Club educational work, both in the form of classes aimed at the training of revolutionary socialists and in sponsoring meetings for the widest range of socialist speakers of prominence or ability. It is through this work that we will render concrete our gains in the regroupment period immediately ahead and so be in a stronger position for whatever will come afterward.
- h) That while we explicitly recognize the constitutional right of members to dissent publicly from the policies and tactics of the Club and the YSL as a whole (so long as comrades make it clear they are not speaking for the organization), we must make it clear that such dissenting members have a

duty, if we are to avoid organizational disintegration, to discuss with the Club such publicly expressed differences so that the group will have, at least, the opportunity of seeking to act in as organized and coherent a manner as possible.

#####

* note: Steps have already been taken to carry out this point:

"We now have strong forces and excellent prospects in San Francisco; so at our last unit meeting we adopted the following proposals to get the comrades on that side of the Bay functioning as a coherent group:

(1) To work in S.F. as the San Francisco Young Socialist Club; initially comprising the six S.F. resident comrades (4 active) and comrade M, who works there.

(2) To start off with the following structure:

- a) Joint Berkeley - S.F. membership meetings
- b) the present exec to continue as a joint exec and alternately meet on each side of the Bay together with the active comrades from that side.
- c) our area membership to continue as the basis for convention delegate elections since pre-convention discussion will be held jointly."

- From a communication to the YSL National Secretary from the Bay Area, dated April 8, 1957

The above motions and perspectives are, in effect, a formal organizational report from the Bay Area. In general the specific motions are a mixed bag. Some, such as d) and f), are independent of our particular orientation, being designed to correct previous inadequacies. Others follow directly from the perspective adopted.

Additionally, a good deal was said about Berkeley in the reply of Comrade Robertson to certain allegation about the Bay Area by Comrades Harrington, Becker, and Denitch recently in the pages of Young Socialist Review.

DRAFT SPECIAL RESOLUTION: Unity and Relations with
Other Socialist Groups

Seattle, Washington
April 12, 1957

EXPLANATION: Both wings of the Young Socialist League have declared themselves opposed to a split in the organization. As a result, the Y.S.L. looks forward to an extended period of factional conflict, a situation not conducive to the growth of the League.

This resolution is proposed on the assumption that the present YSL policy in favor of unity between itself, the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation, and the Independent Socialist League will be affirmed by the League's convention. Its objective is to remove from factional contention several specific issues connected with the larger issue of socialist regroupment - - issues which might otherwise have to be fought out weekly in the various units of the YSL, and in the National Action Committee, without a specific mandate from the convention.

There is nothing peculiar or unprecedented in this resolution. It derives its "authority" from Article VII of the YSL Constitution, sections of which are included below as an appendix to the resolution. The key sentence is found in Sec. 5 of this article, which says: "Members of the YSL shall be guided in their political actions by the principles and decisions of the League."

We hope to specify here an area which the League assembled in convention regards as of supreme importance, and consequently in which it regards its "principles and decisions" as most important. This specification is undertaken to avoid all misunderstandings, for the protection of the rights of the minority, as well as that of the majority to carry out its democratically arrived-at decisions without their being subverted undemocratically.

The resolution specifies the type of relations to other groups which we feel are inconsistent with a campaign for a democratic and inclusive socialist unity. We want to repudiate the whole tradition of raids and splits which has helped fragment American socialism, and with which our own wing of the movement -- the democratic and anti-Stalinist revolutionary wing -- has been most closely identified in the minds of the more or less "radical" public.

Our attitude toward these signatures of a sectarian existence is especially important in our dealings with socialistic individuals to the "right" of us, who have long regarded them as inseparable from some mythical "bolshevik morality", which in turn was suspected of being inseparable from revolutionary socialism.

Our attitude on these matters is doubly important in establishing relations with those who have left or are leaving the Communist movement. Not only have many of them been repelled by the C.P.'s disruptive and disorienting conduct toward other mass organizations; the Communist Party was in itself a kind of mass movement, and the ineffectual socialist sects nipping at the flanks of the CP looked only like professional disrupters, or even like caricatures of the worst features of the C.P. It is this appearance, and the lack of any effort to change it, which more than anything else has made the best and most sensitive ex-Communists, Worker supporters, etc., despise the Socialist Workers Party more than any other of the socialist splinters. The same considerations are incidentally very important to our view that the Socialist Party is the best vessel in which to regroup these individuals.

Just as we have no intention of making other organizations "arenas" for fraction work, we do not believe that the cause of socialist unity -- nor indeed the parochial interests of the YSL -- is well served by turning the Young Socialist League into a general factional arena for other socialist groups -- those who are hostile to our conception of socialist unification. For this reason the resolution excludes for the foreseeable future dual membership between the YSL and the Socialist Workers Party.

The SWP's conception of regroupment is essentially one of unification around the program of the SWP, an outcome which both we and the spokesmen of the SWP acknowledge can be accomplished only by splitting other organizations, including the ISL and YSL, or more immediately, by preventing YSL participation in a unity between the Independent Socialist League and the Socialist Party. We can therefore only regard the entry of SWP members into the YSL, or the recruitment of YSL members to the SWP, as attempts to interfere in the affairs of a rival organization, or as this activity is known in the SWP, as "opponents' work".

There is, however, a place for the theoretical and political beliefs of the Socialist Workers Party in the YSL's conception of socialist unity. We believe that the unification of the ISL and SP-SDF will create an attractive center which even the most sectarian socialists can not ignore. We hope to win the membership of the SWP, and consequently the Party itself to our conception of regroupment. The resolution is not intended to restrict in any way contact or joint activity with the SWP or its projected youth affiliate, the American Youth for Socialism, so long as these activities do not otherwise violate YSL policy.

This resolution is not proposed as a section of the resolution on perspectives for American Socialism because the latter is mainly an analysis of a political situation and a general programmatic approach which should be applicable for some time to come. As such it is not only a guide to political action but a public propaganda document. This resolution is more temporary, more specific, more organizational, and more internal.

There may be charges that this resolution makes of the minority "second-class members". A moment's reflection should dispose of this objection. The minority in any democratic organization is in a sense in "second-class" status, because its policy is not being carried out; the majority's is . . . No democratic organization can allow a group of members to carry out at the expense of the policy of the majority, one which was defeated at the Convention.

No one has proposed to "gag" the minority, or deny it the right to advocate making the Young Socialist League a battleground between the ISL and the SWP (and god knows who else!), but there should be no question in their minds how the YSL as a whole looks upon any attempt by a small section of the membership to accomplish de facto what they could not convince the League to do.

Arlon Tussing

DRAFT SPECIAL RESOLUTION: Unity and Relations with Other Socialist Groups.

1. The Young Socialist League regards the unification of democratic socialists as its primary activity in the period following this convention. The League's position on socialist unification is spelled out in greater detail in the "Resolution of the YSL on Perspectives for American Socialism."
2. Unity between the Independent Socialist League, the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation, and the YSL shall be given first priority at all times, even over the numerical growth of the YSL.
3. The Activities of the League, of units and of members shall at all times be consistent with the YSL position on Socialist unity.
 - (a) No unit nor member of the league shall attempt or carry out any raid on any section of the SP-SDF, nor shall any unit or member attempt to persuade any member of the SP-SDF to leave that organization to join the YSL or any other organization.
 - (b) Neither the League nor any unit or subdivision of the League shall conduct "fraction work", "opponents' work", or any other divisive or disruptive activity in any other socialist organization.
4. The Socialist Workers Party and its Youth section, the American Youth for Socialism, through its press and the statements of its leaders, and through its activities, has indicated

that its conception of socialist "regroupment" consists of a series of raids and splits, resulting in an organization substantially the same as the SWP today. This conception of regroupment is diametrically opposed to that held by the YSL. The SWP is a rival organization to the YSL, and its intervention in YSL disputes represents only the implementation of the SWP's peculiar conception of regroupment.

(a) No member of the YSL may also be a member of the SWP or AMS, or write for its press in opposition to the program of the YSL.

(b) No unit nor subdivision of the League shall sponsor an SWP or AYS speaker at any public meeting without an opposing YSL speaker or its equivalent (e.g. an ISL or "left-wing" SP-SDF speaker), except in the case of a meeting organized around a current civil liberties case involving the SWP.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to preclude YSL units participating in united fronts, forums, debates, symposia, etc., or endorsing local SWP candidates, provided these activities are otherwise consistent with YSL policies.

5. The units of the League, and the National Executive Committee and National Action Committee are instructed to enforce fully those sections of the YSL Constitution concerning Democracy and Discipline (Art. VII) in relation to the provisions of this resolution.

6. No section of this resolution shall be interpreted as diminishing the right of any member of the YSL to differ with YSL policy (including policy on socialist unity), privately or publicly, nor to publish his views in YSL publications or elsewhere (with the single exception noted in sec. 4a above), provided he clearly states that his views are not those of the League.

APPENDIX: From the Young Socialist League Constitution

Art. VII Democracy and Discipline

Sec. 3. Local bodies of the YSL may publish material of their own choice; however they must make it clear that it is a local publication.

Sec. 4. Minority caucuses or tendencies may publish their own material for internal or external distribution, but they must make it clear that these publications do not represent the views of the organization as a whole. All National and local mimeograph and mailing facilities shall be open to such tendencies and caucuses at cost.

Art. 5. Members of the YSL shall be guided in their political actions by the principles and decisions of the League. In pursuing their work they may not take action which is in contradiction with the principles or policies of the League without making it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not for the League.

AMENDMENT TO DRAFT RESOLUTION "Youth and Campus and the YSL"

by Arlon Tussing
Seattle, Washington

STRIKE: p. 4, section 6 a. in its entirety, and substitute:

a. The Labor Youth League and its periphery: The dissolution last winter of the Labor Youth League only emphasized the end of totalitarian influence among American youth. The exposure of Stalin by the Russian leadership, and the revolutions in Eastern Europe completed the elimination of the last traces of prestige or authority the Communist Party had among young people in our country.

The disappearance of the LYL increases the opportunity to build a real movement of democratic socialism. Its demise not only removes a powerful competitor to socialism from the youth scene, but its activities are no longer present to confirm the reactionary prejudice that socialism equals totalitarianism.

There are, however, scores, and perhaps thousands of young people who were formerly members of or influenced by the various Communist youth groups. Most of these individuals have been repelled by the reactionary and undemocratic character of Stalinism.

In a few localities, former LYL clubs continue to exist in various forms and with varying and uncertain relationships toward the Communist Party. In some of these clubs, there are strong tendencies, parallel to the Daily Worker group in the CP, which is reexamining the relationship of Socialism and Democracy, and who favor a broad and democratic socialist movement.

The YSL realizes that most of these young people were attracted to the Communist movement by the humanitarian and democratic appeal of socialism. We also realize that the number of former LYL members and sympathizers far exceeds our own numbers. Our concern with these youth must be to prevent their leaving politics entirely as they become disillusioned with "Communism".

Our members and units should maintain the closest possible contact with former LYL members, whether organized or not. We should keep these relations as friendly and sympathetic as possible, especially avoiding offensive demands for humiliating "confessions", breast-beating, or political capitulation as the price of cooperation or comradely treatment.

Without insisting upon complete agreement with our evaluation of Russian society, we should emphasize the disastrous consequences the association of "socialism" with Stalinist totalitarianism has had. We should attempt to win these individuals and groups to our program for socialist unity, and eventually to the politics of the Third Camp.

In the past, the YSL usually attempted to exclude the LYL and other Communist-controlled organizations from united front activities on civil liberties and other issues. This was necessary because the presence of a totalitarian organization immediately compromised any democratic cause. Regardless of any anti-totalitarian statements in the program of the united front, the well-known, monolithic Stalinism of the LYL was a discrediting factor.

The disintegration of Stalinism and the new opportunities for democratic socialism on campus and among youth require the Young Socialist League to view united fronts in a new light. Regardless of any continuing illusions about Russia on the part of Communist-influenced clubs, they are no longer monolithic, and there is no longer a monolithic Communist Party to enforce a line through disciplined fractions. What remains of the former movement is in turmoil, and individuals will continue to move in the direction of third camp democratic socialism.

In this context, Young Socialists welcome former LYL members and former LYL clubs into united activities with the YSL. We do however insist that any joint activities make clear to the public that we favor democracy and democratic rights wherever they are in question. In no case should the YSL give "democratic" cover to totalitarian politics. (For instance, the YSL would not wish jointly to sponsor a debate on "Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy" between a reactionary capitalist spokesman and a defender of Russia.)

While the YSL looks toward a general socialist unification around the framework of the Socialist Party as the most effective pole of attraction for former Communists and Communist sympathizers the YSL is open to all these individuals; our requirements for membership are only the standards we require for united activity -- a commitment to socialism and support of democratic struggles everywhere (e.g. the Hungarian fight for independence). The League as a whole stands ready to negotiate for unity with any remaining LYL clubs on the same basis, and on the basis of full democratic equality within the merged organization.

In addition, the units of the League are prepared to discuss permanent arrangements for joint activity and education short of organic unity with any of these clubs on a local basis, as with the Y.P.S.L. or any other socialist youth organization which shares a perspective of general socialist cooperation and unification.