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Mike Leibman, Knoxville, Tenn., At-Large

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TASKS OF THE YSA IN THE COMING PERIOD

By Laura Kreis and Mike Leibman, Knoxville, Tenn., At-Large

The purpose of this document is to examine certain crucial aspects of the past radicalization, the coming period and the tasks of the YSA in the context of this period. Depending upon the course of the discussion, the document may be put forward as a counter to the NEC Political Resolution for the coming year.

It is impossible to cover all aspects of the YSA practice in the past period, just as every area of work in the future cannot be dealt with as adequately as might be desired. What is crucial is to outline a coherent and unified approach to guide our work in whatever sphere of activity we may be involved.

I. THE RADICALIZATION OF THE '60S

A decisive aspect of the radicalization of the 1960s was the failure of workers, as a class, to become involved in the struggles. The reasons for this are not difficult to discern. The 1960s did not represent (in spite of the recession of the early 1960s) a period of decline in living standards of American workers, or an overt attack on workers and their organizations. Rather, it represented in general, a boom period, a period in which the standard of living continued -- on the whole -- to rise or at worst, to remain constant.

This did not mean that the working class remained quiescent; on the contrary, strike activity demonstrated a marked upward trend beginning in 1964. In that year, there were 3,655 strikes involving 1,550,000 workers, and 22,900,000 person-days idle; by 1969, this had swelled to 5,700 strikes, involving 2,481,000 workers and 42,869,000 person-days. Major strikes of maritime workers, longshoremen, transit workers, auto workers, the construction trades, truck drivers, teachers, and rubber and typographical workers occurred during this period. In 1970, strike activity reached a peak comparable to the waves of 1919 and 1945-46; this wave declined somewhat during the period of 1971-72, but began to pick up again in 1973. Similarly, the percentage of collective bargaining agreements rejected by workers rose dramatically from 8.8 percent in 1964 to 14.2 percent in 1967, declining to 12.3 percent by 1969, and leveling off at roughly that level through 1970. There was a decline to 9.6 percent a year ago, and a new rise to 12.3 percent this year.

If the 1960s saw an increase in strike

activity and the beginnings of a rank and file revolt against the bureaucracy -- exemplified by the fight of rank-and-file leader Steve Kochis against Tony Boyle in the UMW in 1964 (a struggle later co-opted by out-bureaucrat Joseph Yablonski) -- the fact remains that such activity was confined almost solely to bread-and-butter issues. In the absence of a general assault on workers' living standards, the continuation of even a relatively high level of combativity was offset by the increasing absorption of the labor bureaucracy into the machinery of the bourgeois state and the simultaneous deepening involvement of the state in the internal running of the unions.

While the working class as a whole remained apart from the 1960s radicalization, other sectors (which were not apart from the class, but rather included portions of it) moved to the fore. The term "peripheral sectors" is in many ways misleading; the fight of women and oppressed minorities such as Blacks and Latinos for liberation is an integral part of the American class struggle. The radicalization was peripheral, however, in that it did not bring into action the decisive bulk of American workers and insofar as it began, in many cases, in the non-proletarian sectors of the oppressed group.

Black Struggle

The Black struggle provided the impetus for the radicalization; spurred by the 1954 Supreme Court decision on desegregation, Afro-Americans became involved in increasing numbers in the struggle for basic democratic freedoms. Prior to the 1954-55 period, organizations such as the NAACP had channeled virtually all of their efforts into legal reform; while this resulted in such legal victories as Shelly vs. Kremer (in which restrictive clauses in housing were struck down) and the 1954 school desegregation decision, it provided no real change in the situation of the Black masses to meet the expectations the decisions had aroused. As a result, the Black ghetto populations turned increasingly to more militant tactics and leadership, sparked by the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott of 1955. New organizations and leaders began to emerge, from the nonviolent assimilationist perspective of Martin Luther King to the separatist/nationalist concepts of the Nation of Islam, which during the period began to establish a base in northern Black ghettos. The rooting of the Black Muslims was largely the work of Malcolm X, who became head of the Muslim New York City

organization in 1954. He became a national figure following the Muslim-organized protests of the arrest and beating of Johnson Hinton in 1958.

Student Struggles

The growing civil rights movement of the early 1960s in turn provided the nucleus of the student movement; the "sit-in" movement which began in February, 1960 led to the development of a nationwide boycott of such chains as Woolworth's and Kresge's. (The first YSA convention in Philadelphia in 1960 was temporarily adjourned so that delegates could take their place on the picket lines.) The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), was the first outgrowth of this nationwide fight; it was joined by a number of (as yet very small), northern student organizations (such as the Friends of SNCC) aimed at aiding the Black struggle.

At the University of California at Berkeley, in 1964, the engagement of such a nucleus of students in support of the civil rights movement led directly to the first major student upsurge of the decade -- the Free Speech Movement (FSM). Throughout 1963, these students had been involved in the boycott and sit-in movement; the whole charge by the university that the FSM demanded the right to advocate "illegal" actions on campus was based, in reality, on the question of the right to plan picket lines, sit-ins, and similar actions on campus. Once the fight began, however, it naturally spilled over into the student population as a whole, involving thousands of students who had never been actively involved in the Black freedom struggle, but who felt that their vital interests and concerns were at stake.

A parallel source of the student radicalization lay in the antiwar movement. Even in the mid- and late-1950s, not insignificant numbers of students had shown concern over such issues as nuclear testing and disarmament. The growing American intervention in Vietnam provided a concrete focus for the antiwar sentiment which became the prime locus of student radicalization as the '60s progressed. The first small actions -- such as the Washington Peace March of February, 1962 -- were under the hegemony of traditional, properly "anti-communist" forces such as SANE and the SP-run Student Peace Union (SPU). Beginning with the demonstrations of 1963, and especially with the SDS-organized march on Washington in April, 1965, the movement began to evolve its own structures, tactics and leaders.

Women's Liberation Movement

Reflecting the growing role of women in the work force, in particular in the service industries, and concomitantly the

changes necessitated in the educational system, the women's liberation movement, stemmed at least in part from the new student left; as groups such as SDS came to involve the most conscious and militant women in this period, it became apparent that it involved them only on the same terms as the society as a whole -- it did not speak to basic needs of women as an oppressed group, did not seek to utilize them as leaders, but as (unpaid) secretaries and ego-boosters. By the mid-60s, women's caucuses were commonplace in SDS chapters and other left and antiwar groups; as these proved the subject of hostility and ridicule in many cases, however, numbers of left women struck out on their own -- not necessarily abandoning the broader struggle, but sensing the need to form organizations speaking concretely to their own needs, their own liberation. Groups such as the Feminists, Radical Feminists, Bread and Roses and the Redstockings all sprang up in this period, many or most initiated by former SDS or other new left women.

Simultaneously, the influence of the continuing civil rights movement aided in the development of the conservative wing of the women's liberation movement; organizations -- notably NOW -- sprang up which were consciously molded in terms of structures, goals and tactics on civil rights groupings such as the NAACP. Though these remained markedly smaller than their Black counterparts, they began -- sometimes in cooperation with more militant feminists, sometimes in opposition to them -- to inspire consciousness raising and similar groups around the country, involving an increasing proportion of women.

Dynamic of the Radicalization

A natural dynamic propelled each and all of these movements forward, beyond their original bounds and goals. In the Black movement, just as the rising expectations of the NAACP-inspired court cases (and the bitter disappointment of the lack of results) had led to the first mass actions (such as Montgomery), so too did the combination of high expectations of the Black masses in regard to the activities of the civil rights movement and the 1964 Civil Rights Act and bitter disappointment at the lack of real change in the ghettos lead inevitably to the violent ghetto revolts of the mid- and late-1960s.

In Cleveland, in Watts, in Newark, in Chicago, in Detroit, in ghettos all over the country -- Blacks struck out, not at whites, but at the white-controlled power structure and institutions which served as a symbol of their oppression. The 1967 Kerner Commission Report was forced to conclude that "The 1967 disorders, as

well as earlier disorders in the recent period, involved action within Negro neighborhoods against symbols of American Society -- authority and property -- rather than against white persons." In other areas, Blacks reacted to white racist attacks with self-defense forces of their own -- Deacons for Defense in Louisiana, the Community Action Patrols set up in Watts after the 1965 revolt, and later the forces of the Cairo United Front in Illinois. A culmination of this process came in 1967 when Huey Newton and Bobby Seale set up the Black Panther Party for Self Defense as an armed association for community protection against the police. With the panthers, the gulf had been bridged between a reactive self-defense posture and the need for a political expression of the demands and needs of the ghetto masses.

Nor was this bridge solely the work of the Black Panthers. Robert Williams was the first major leader to call for Black self-defense, breaking with the NAACP over the issue. Williams' Monroe Movement in North Carolina played a key role in educating the Black masses to the need for armed self-defense, as well as political action. Williams was later forced into exile, faced with frame-up "kidnapping" charges. Malcolm X similarly called upon Black people to form armed self-defense forces. Years later, Eldridge Cleaver of the Panthers acknowledged the vanguard role played by the two leaders in this respect; he stated that "Robert Williams and Malcolm X stand as two titans, even prophetic figures, who heralded... armed struggle by Afro-America."

The other non-white peoples in the U.S. began a similar evolution during the 1960s. To a large extent, this was the result of indigenous factors and problems -- the struggle of Reies Lopez Tijerina's Alianza in New Mexico and the continuous struggle to organize farm workers being prime cases in point. But the powerful development of the Black movement acted as a beacon for other oppressed minorities in the U.S. Latin American and Asian students joined with Blacks at campuses like San Francisco State in "Third World Coalitions," inspired by the Panthers, organizations such as the Young Lords (among the Puerto Rican people), and the Brown Berets and Black Berets para la Justicia (among Chicanos), the Red Guards (among Chinese-Americans) sprang up in ghettos and barrios across the country. Disparate Chicano forces which had rejected the Democratic Party came together ultimately as La Raza Unida Party.

Spread of the Student Movement

The student upsurge likewise swept across the country. SDS grew from an estimated 250 in Dec., 1960, to 3,000 in 1965, to as many as 100,000 in 1968 (in

400 chapters) -- with a much broader periphery. Underground papers such as the Great Speckled Bird in Atlanta, The East Village Other, the Berkeley Barb, Good Times in San Francisco, the Seed in Chicago, Space City News in Houston, etc., established themselves (with varying degrees of success) in communities across the country. The number of student demonstrations involving 35 or more students stood at 71 (on 62 campuses) in the first half of 1967-68; by the second half, it had grown to 221 on 101 campuses. In 1970, the American Council on Education counted 9,408 "protest incidents," involving arrests on 731 occasions and physical violence of some sort on 231. Open running battles took place in a number of areas -- Buffalo, San Francisco, Harvard, Berkeley, Kansas, Madison. Isolated from the workers' movement, the student struggle turned in some cases to individual terrorism and "trashing." In spring, 1968, there were only 10 reported campus bombings; by the period from Jan., 1969-April, 1970, there were as many as 862. Major targets included ROTC centers, war research centers, government and administration buildings, banks and other corporate offices.

The women's liberation movement also began to catch hold in local areas across the country during the mid- and late-1960s. Various women's journals -- Cell 16's Journal of Female Liberation, Just Like A Woman, Off Our Backs, etc. -- were set up in almost every major city; campus women's centers became commonplace. Sporadic coalitions engaging (usually on a reformist basis) in work on such issues as child care, equal pay or abortion work, came into existence. Typical was Boston, where the New England Women's Coalition (embracing 40 different women's groups) was set up to coordinate activities. In most of these cases, the specific groups and organizational structures proved ephemeral; what was important, however, was the impetus which led to such groups being set up in the first place. The outgrowth of all of these developments was the call for local demonstrations on the famous "three issues" in August, 1970: 1) free abortion on demand, 2) equal pay for equal work, and 3) free 24-hour daycare. While the demonstrations were small by the standards of the antiwar movement, they involved a minimum of 1,000 women each in a whole series of localities.

Limits of the Radicalization

The generally low level of political consciousness of the American masses vis-a-vis those of Europe or many third world countries ensured that the bulk of those engaged in the mass radicalization of the 1960s would remain -- however reluctantly -- within the broad limits of bourgeois politics. Groups such as the NAACP, CORE and the Urban League remained the largest

Black organizations, and even the impulse toward independent political action led in most cases to formations such as the Mississippi Freedom Democrats or the National Democratic Party of Alabama rather than to a translation of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization and similar groupings on a national scale. The majority of antiwar activists related with at least passive support to the McCarthy and McGovern "peace" campaigns and the efforts of local left democrats such as Dellums, Chisholm and Abzug. The hegemonic women's forces remained NOW and the explicitly pro-Democratic and Republican National Women's Political Caucus set up in July, 1971.

Important sectors of the more conscious militants in the '60s radicalization, however, began to develop past the confines of bourgeois political solutions and to grope, however hesitantly, toward socialist conceptions. Within SDS, for example, Marxist views began to be expressed; by November, 1967, Carl Davidson could define the United States as an imperialist state, noted that "to... operate within the realm of bourgeois civil liberties is to remain enslaved," and even define himself as a Marxist-Leninist, and meet with considerable (though not undisputed) agreement within the organization. Similarly, the writings of Ernest Mandel were widely discussed in sections of SDS. The Black Panthers dropped the "for Self Defense" from their title the same year, and explicitly began to define the enemy not as an amorphous "white power structure," but as capitalism; when Stokeley Carmichael rejected the BPP's class struggle analysis in favor of a classless "Black United Front," Eldridge Cleaver noted sharply that "suffering is color-blind, that the victims of Imperialism, Racism, Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism come in all colors, and that they need a unity based on revolutionary principles rather than skin color." Sections of the antiwar movement progressed to open solidarity with the Indochinese liberation fighters. Within the women's liberation movement, the term "feminist" was augmented by "socialist feminist" in some circles; interest grew in the Marxist analysis of the roots of women's oppression and in the role of women in the Russian, Chinese and Indochinese revolutions.

The radicalization was spurred in this direction by the revolutionary struggles of the period. The Cuban revolution in particular played a prime role in inspiring and serving as an example to a generation of radicalized youth; the brutal attempt to strangle the revolution at the Bay of Pigs aided in ripping the "progressive" cover from the Kennedy administration. Through the Fair Play for Cuba committees, the SWP and YSA were able to play a major role in the defense of Cuba and

win over a layer of advanced youth; tours and work groups allowed a comparatively large number of American youth to experience, first-hand, the workings of a revolution in process. The liberation and independence struggles of the peoples of Africa played a similar role in the development of the Black struggle. Patrice Lumumba became a symbol of African goals and aspirations; his bloody overthrow by the imperialist puppet Tshombe served, like the Bay of Pigs, to underscore the reactionary role of American foreign policy. Identification with African liberation struggles -- first in Kenya, then the Congo, then in the Portuguese colonies and southern Africa in general -- aided in the development of an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist consciousness among young Blacks. The continuing impact of the great Chinese Revolution also played a significant role in molding the consciousness of advanced layers.

In many of these cases the "Marxism" expressed was tentative and crude, marked by opportunism and/or sectarianism, colored by third-worldist notions and a mechanical translation of Cuban, Vietnamese or Chinese expressions into American terms. This was entirely predictable; the Trotskyist pole in the United States (and in the world as a whole) is still not sufficiently strong to prevent such deformations among the advanced layers. But the process itself was a wholly progressive one, and one which offered an opportunity for the YSA to intervene and root itself.

The Role of the YSA in the 1960s Radicalization

It is entirely to the credit of the SWP and YSA that they recognized the broad outlines of the radicalization process and oriented toward it. The majority of the "Trotskyist" sectarian grouplets, by contrast, viewed the 1960s radicalization with utter contempt and sat back to wait for the working class to come marching by en masse, pipe wrenches in hand. (The Workers League, for example, was notoriously hostile to the women's movement, referring to women's activists in its press as "women's libbies"; the Spartacists were de facto abstentionists in the antiwar movement, except when intervening to "smash NPAC.") The crucial role of the YSA in building the Student Mobilization Committee (and NPAC) helped to provide one of the most critical factors in the establishment of a principled, mass antiwar movement. It is not sufficient, however, for the YSA simply to acknowledge the strong points of its past interventions. Rather, it is necessary for us to discuss and evaluate the short-comings of the work in the past period, so as to be able to intervene clearly and correctly in the period which is to come.

Sectoral Adaptation

The question of sectoral adaptation has been discussed at length in both the SWP and YSA; it remains, however, a topic of vital importance. It should be noted that it was the very decision to intervene actively into the mass radicalization which raised the possibility of error in this direction. The sects, after all, remaining in a sort of splendid (and, of course, "principled") isolation from the mass movements, are in no danger of adapting to anything. Rather, they utterly ignore the existing objective reality and toss out their "full program" without regard for how to relate such a program to the existing level of the struggle or the consciousness of the masses.

The intervention of a small revolutionary nucleus into a dynamic mass movement poses the danger of adaptation in a very real sense, however. Just as the sect -- by its abstentionism -- tends to produce "full program" interventions divorced from the actual level of the struggle, a powerful danger exists that activist groupings will tend to confine themselves to that level, glossing over or even ignoring the need to develop means of significantly advancing the struggle to a higher level and raising the level of consciousness of the participants.

The antiwar movement provided a good case in point. The YSA, as has been pointed out before in a number of documents, had three tasks in the antiwar movement. The first was to develop as broad and active a movement as possible on a principled basis. The second was to galvanize an anti-imperialist pole within the broad movement; the third was to recruit directly to the party and YSA. The role of the SWP and YSA in NPAC and the SMC was thoroughly positive insofar as it led to the isolation and defeat of such slogans as "Negotiate Now!" and aided in the construction of a militant, non-exclusionist movement around the issue of immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces and materiel from Indochina. The size and character of the antiwar movement was due in no small part to the activities of the SWP and YSA and there is much we can be proud of in that period.

But a comparison of NPAC and SMC (and the SWP and YSA's role within them) with the activities of our French and British comrades in the Front Solidarite Indochine (FSI) and Vietnam Solidarity Committee (VSC) demonstrates the inability of the SWP and YSA to come to grips with the second task of revolutionaries in the antiwar movement. The YSA recognized only two levels in the struggle. On the one hand, we offered our full program for that tiny fraction of the over-

all movement ready to join a Marxist organization. On the other, we put forward an extremely broad, common-denominator approach tailored to the mass level of consciousness. Our full program or "bring the troops home" -- those were the two levels we offered antiwar activists.

But the broad masses of antiwar activists were not homogeneous, were not all at one level or the other. Rather, within the broad strata were numerous militants who, while still full of misconceptions and unready to join a Trotskyist organization, were marked by their solidarity with the NLF and other Indochinese revolutionaries. To have attempted to win these layers by counterposing "Victory to the NLF!" to "Out Now!" would have been to ignore the needs of the mass struggle. The YSA, however, counterposed the two slogans from the other direction, maintaining that support for "Out Now!" as the central, unifying slogan for the antiwar movement precluded any use of "Victory to the NLF!"

In reality, the two slogans were not counterposed. As the YSA leadership has -- correctly -- pointed out, the "immediate withdrawal" demand is the only one which can be acted upon by the U.S. government (as opposed, say, to "All of Indochina must go Communist!", a demand on no one, except perhaps all of Indochina); it is also the only principled unifying slogan. To have attempted to make "Victory to the NLF!" the sole slogan of the antiwar movement would have simply removed the YSA de facto from that movement.

But what about the slogans of the YSA as the YSA? Why could the YSA not have marched in the united front demonstrations under banners solidarizing with the NLF and the Indochinese revolution? Or further, organized contingents supporting such a victory, with which anti-imperialist militants could have marched? Though our French and British comrades were not confronted with the direct involvement of their respective bourgeois governments in the war -- making for problems in terms of ability to mobilize and the immediate context of these mobilizations -- we must nonetheless point out that this approach, which they adopted, aided them in implanting themselves with a broad periphery. The SMC, which was a part of the left wing of the antiwar movement, was incapable of taking the lead of the anti-imperialist forces because of its self-imposed limitations.

The YSA moved in the other direction. Rather than carrying the slogan "Victory to the NLF!" into the antiwar movement, it carried the concept "self-determina-

tion for Vietnam" -- which properly belonged in the broad antiwar movement -- into the YSA. The idea that revolutionaries are not simply for "self-determination" in the abstract, that we support it only insofar as it advances the socialist revolution, was lost. Further, YSA policy left a vacuum among vanguard elements, which the Maoists partially filled, and worked against the survival of a solid activist core in the antiwar movement, as the nature of the war changed.

Other Examples

Such a process of sectoral adaptation took place in other ways as well. The lengthy debate in the SWP and YSA over nationalism and feminism was in part a terminological dispute. But the significance of the debate lies not in the question of whether what Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin meant by feminism is what the SWP and YSA mean by it, but in the question of whether feminist ideas in the sense Luxemburg, Lenin, Bebel, et al, used the term (i.e., bourgeois feminist views) seeped into the cadre of the SWP and YSA. The answer, reluctantly, would have to be yes; the only real discussion can be over the extent of the process. Examples abound here: the use of the slogans such as "when women want the war to end, the war will end" and "stop male aggressive war" in our women's contingents at antiwar actions (and the chant "Take it from the misters, give it to the sisters" which echoed even at YSA conventions), and utopian campaigns in some areas to "smash the nuclear family" and "institute new relations." These examples are not new; many have been repeated on several occasions. What they share is that none have ever been replied to by the leadership in anything but an evasive manner. Though members of the YSA leadership felt compelled at the Cleveland 1972 convention to point out that the "smash the nuclear family" campaign was alienating non-YSA women and hindering recruitment, and to note that personal appearance and lifestyle were not a subject of YSA jurisdiction, the same leaders react indignantly to analysis of what prompted these remarks on their part.

This sort of adaptation to the level of various sectors was reflected in the response of the YSA to those positions of the radicalizing layers which attempted to go beyond this level. On the one hand, the YSA in its various pronouncements was entirely too rosy in its estimation of the ease with which nationalists, feminists, etc., would "naturally" gravitate toward a Marxist position; nationalism and feminism were often viewed tacitly as ideologies which could painlessly "grow into" a socialist consciousness, rather than as ideologies which (though a response to a real national or sexual op-

pression) had to be overcome to produce a genuinely Marxist analysis. Simultaneously, however, when groups such as SDS, the Black Panthers, or the Chicago Women's Liberation Union attempted to actually move toward a socialist perspective, they met with hostility from the YSA. In the eyes of the SWP and YSA leadership, these groups crossed the invisible line between "mass organizations" (which are inherently healthy, good and supportable) to "opponents" (which are to be opposed and crushed).

In all fairness, the YSA leadership pointed out a real problem. The SDS leaders did isolate themselves from their mass base, the BPP and Chicago WLU did narrow in scope and potential. Further, the "socialism" put forward in some of these cases was a caricature of Marxism. But the effect of the YSA's position was to establish in the minds of the more active members of these groups the idea that the YSA was acting to retard and hinder the movement, to keep their organizations as large, loose, amorphous globs with no real leadership or ideology, from which the YSA could then recruit the best members.

A good example of the inability of the SWP and YSA leaders to even visualize going beyond the lowest common denominator level of the various sectoral struggles came in a contribution by Comrade Evelyn Reed in the preconvention discussion prior to the last SWP convention. Responding to a statement by Internationalist Tendency (IT) comrades that they supported the women's liberation movement but not feminism, Comrade Reed commented that if there was a women's liberation movement separate from the feminist movement she would appreciate the IT comrades pointing it out to her. This response was regarded as quite a telling blow in SWP and YSA circles. The obvious comeback, however, is that the greater the identity between bourgeois feminism and the women's liberation struggle (and if NOW and NWPC are included in the party's definition of feminism, then it is bourgeois feminism we are discussing), the greater the corresponding need of revolutionary Marxists to combat these ideas and work to build a socialist pole in the women's liberation movement.

Thus, our French comrades' work in the abortion struggle through MLAC (the Movement for Free Abortion and Contraception) is oriented toward working women and class solidarity. Unfortunately, we chose to ignore the gains made by our comrades through MLAC and focused instead on the bourgeois Choisir (To Choose) group, headed by the millionaire Claude Servan-Schreiber (wife of the leader of the Radical Party). In general

women's liberation groups, the ex-Ligue supported the initiation of a pro-Marxist wing of the movement, exemplified by "Les Petroleuses."

It can be objected that the party and YSA have fought against erroneous views in the feminist and nationalist movements. An example of this is the literary fight against the concept of women as a class or caste carried out in a series of articles in the ISR. Such a fight is both necessary and correct; it does not, however, make up for countervailing adaptations in both theory and practice to pressures within feminist and nationalist movements. In reality, even within such articles the emphasis has shifted since the early and mid-1960s. Thus, as late as 1969, Susan Lamont could state, in a review of Evelyn Reed's Problems of Women's Liberation, that "The conflict is therefore basically a class conflict. And in this struggle the class interests of bourgeois women are considerably more fundamental than their interests as women. The participation of bourgeois women in the fight for certain reforms, may at times be useful. But their participation is circumscribed by their interest in maintaining the capitalist system and will be withdrawn as the dynamic for the movement for women's liberation closes in on those who are the real oppressors -- the capitalist system." (Young Socialist, October 1969, p. 28). By the following year (when feminism entered the SWP and YSA as a positive concept), the emphasis had subtly reversed itself; now it was admitted in passing that women had different class interests, but only so that one could go on to stress the common oppression as more important. The 1970 YSA resolution "The Struggle for Women's Liberation," thus stated that "it is obvious that most women in the ruling class have more loyalty to the privileges of their class than to other women," but stated further that "there can be and are exceptions," and stressed that "no woman, even in the ruling class itself, can be arbitrarily ruled out as a potential feminist." (YSDB, Vol. 14, No. 1, November 9, 1970, p. 7). By 1971, the evolution had proceeded to the final step; the SWP resolution "Toward a Mass Feminist Movement," for example, admitted that women in different classes "suffer to very different degrees from lack of child care and abortion facilities, unequal pay, job discrimination, warped education, and social conditioning." It went on, however: "But these are all aspects of the very real oppression of women and all women have a stake in struggling around these issues. The broadest unity in struggle, closed to no woman, is possible and progressive if this unity is based on demands which mobilize women in struggle and which combat the oppression of women..." (SWPDB, Vol. 29, No. 14, April, 1971, p. 12). The alliance is thus

no longer seen as transitory, around "certain reforms," but as ongoing, even permanent; what is ignored is that "ruling class" women not only do not suffer from such factors as unequal pay and job discrimination, their whole system of bourgeois class privilege is based upon the superprofits which these factors help to create.

Independent Movements

The concept of independent movements also developed in this period. The independence of these movements was a contradictory phenomenon. On the one hand, it meant that their course of action was not dictated by the interests of the ruling class, or the Democratic and Republican parties. It also meant that they had achieved some form of organizational autonomy. This was progressive in that it contained the potential of freeing sectors of the working class and its allies from the backwardness of the bulk of the organized working class toward fighting against the special oppression of these sectors, thereby preparing unity of the class on a high level of struggle.

But independence can also mean unconcern for the struggle of other sectors of the working class and its allies, or equally dangerous, for the struggles of the bulk of the organized working class. This aspect of independence deserved to be fought by revolutionaries. While the YSA did promote the idea of interdependence of these movements, this was unfortunately limited to explaining how each movement could learn from another and reinforce itself on the plane of organizational forms: non-exclusionism, action coalitions, membership based on common oppression, etc. The whole question of the need for alliances based on linking up with the fight of the working class against the bourgeoisie was not given the emphasis that was required by the ideological confusion which reigned in these independent movements, and by their predominantly student composition.

Chanting the refrain that "movements can't substitute themselves for each other," the SWP and YSA often gave the impression of visualizing a chain of hermetically sealed movements, each marching to its own special drummer, linked only by the SWP and YSA (busily best-building) and their common glorious future when, coordinated by a mass SWP, they would combine to make America's socialist revolution (each in its own contingent). In reality, of course, to the extent that movements were "independent" from one another (in the sense of ignoring all but their own most basic demands), they were reactionary. Again, examples all but fall over themselves to be noted: attacks by nationalists such as Imamu Baraka on

the women's movement (and on the right of women to wear pants, smoke or do anything but raise future Black warriors), Ms. magazine's praise for the racist Louise Day Hicks as a fighter for women's rights, anti-union attitudes in many of these movements, and conversely, in the form of economism (reverse sectoralism), trade union discrimination against Blacks, other non-whites and women.

We are not opposed, of course, to Black or women's struggles developing their own organizational forms. But we must stress again our firm opposition to the concept of independence which allows struggles to become hostile to one another in their all-consuming drive to achieve their own demands. In the 1800s, for example, the women's suffrage movement managed to earn the hostility of both the Black and labor movements. A number of suffragists (around Susan B. Anthony) were initially welcomed by the radical National Labor Union, but were rejected when Anthony advocated scabbing on striking unions. Their attempts to obtain suffrage ultimately included arguments that the votes of white, "American" women were needed to cancel out the votes of Blacks and immigrants. Such "independence" only injured the women's struggle -- just as labor hostility to women workers greatly hampered the unionization struggle.

If for no other reason, the party and YSA conception of "independent" movements built around the most basic slogans so as to include all Blacks, all women, all of those opposed to the war, coupled with downplaying the orientation to working class and the most oppressed layers, falls afoul of the basic fact that a movement can't include everyone. If, for example, a women's organization does not speak to the needs of Black women it will not, in the final analysis, include very many of them. If it slides over questions of specific concern to working class women, it will be seen by them as a middle-class group and they will move to another organization which speaks to their special concerns.

The WONAAC Experience

When the YSA, jointly with the SWP, helped to launch the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC), our failure to orient sectoral movements to the working class components of their sectors and to the working class as a whole, and to structure and organize the more advanced layers of these movements around higher level demands was compounded by a gross overestimation of the reluctance of the ruling class to legalize abortion. The result was miseducation of a whole layer of activists involved in the abortion fight, and isolation from the more radical groups in the women's liberation movement.

The women's liberation movement burst onto the streets with the demonstrations of thousands on August 26, 1970, demanding "Free Abortion on Demand; Equal Pay for Equal Work; Free 24-Hour Community-Controlled Childcare Centers." These demands expressed a consciousness of the essential aspects of women's oppression which could lead rather rapidly to an anti-capitalist consciousness. Consciousness of particular aspects of women's oppression, however, was far more widespread than this overall consciousness of women's oppression. For example, women in and around campuses were particularly sensitized to the issue of simple repeal of abortion laws. Spokespeople for poorer women in the oppressed communities emphasized the need for free abortion. These same layer, and others in the community were also potentially mobilizable for struggles for childcare. The equal pay demand which eventually was to find a major response among working women was not yet one around which mass action could be organized as most discrimination cases were still being handled through court cases.

In the face of these differentiated layers in the movement, the YSA adopted an exclusive orientation to mobilizing the widest possible layers around the simple demand of repealing abortion laws, which was combined with the demand for no forced sterilization and no restrictive laws on contraception. This was a departure from the 1970 YSA resolution which stated that "unlike the antiwar movement, the movement for women's liberation is not limited to a single central demand" and noted that "the demands of August 26 have widespread support and speak to the needs of the most oppressed women." (The Struggle for Women's Liberation, p. 10). This departure corresponded to a new mechanical transposition of the lessons of the antiwar movement into the women's liberation movement, and to a rightist orientation within that movement. The impulse to turn the in-grown women's liberation movement to broader masses of women was a positive one; and the abortion issue was one of the more pressing and popular ones. But the YSA simultaneously pulled out of all the multi-issue women's liberation groups, junked any campaigns around childcare, fought against those who were trying to explain the need for free abortion on demand even if they did not counterpose it to the repeal demand as the basis of mobilizations, and began orienting WONAAC more and more to pressuring legislatures through self-proclaimed mass pickets which were in reality neither mass nor pickets, but shamefaced lobbying.

Bluntly, WONAAC was scarcely the success that the SWP and the YSA leaderships claimed. Its conferences were marked by

the walk-outs of independent women and by the resignations of women staffers, its demonstrations remained small and isolated and in many areas shrank as they went along. It would be wrong to say that WONAAC had shown itself so powerful that it wrested a favorable decision from the Supreme Court even before women could be fully mobilized. WONAAC did not stand on the brink of titanic mobilizations of women; on the contrary, the resignations of independent staffers following the last WONAAC conference reduced WONAAC nationally to little more than a skeleton of SWP and YSA women, with our immediate periphery. (The resignations themselves cannot be judged as a block; many stemmed from a reactionary hostility to Leninist organizations and were coupled with vituperative red-baiting. Others were avoidable and were at least in part the result of our own organizational heavy-handedness and refusal to go beyond the single-issue approach.) The Supreme Court decision, of course, did not take place in a vacuum; it reflected the developing strength of the women's movement and the growing support for abortion law repeal in public opinion polls. To argue that the small and generally dispirited WONAAC demonstrations played anything more than a marginal role in this process, however, is totally without foundation.

The SWP and YSA leaderships misread the situation in regard to the abortion struggle in the United States. First, they underestimated the ease with which the bourgeois state could meet the demand for legal abortion. Rather than establishing the idea in the minds of women activists that rights could only be won through mass struggle, the notion that rights can be won through the regular processes of the bourgeois state seemed to be confirmed. There is no indication that women viewed WONAAC as any more a decisive factor in the abortion decision than reformist, lobbying groups such as the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL). Second, they mistook the essentially passive support for abortion law reform or repeal for an active commitment to engage in mass struggle around the issue. Third, they ignored the level of those women who were prepared to engage in such an active struggle. These women were prepared to fight for repeal of abortion laws as part of the fight for the original demands of August 26, but not as the sole issue. The single-issue fetishism of the SWP and YSA served in these cases to actually narrow the potential base, by setting up local WONAAC affiliates as rivals to existing women's groups and campaigns, rather than as allies of them.

Impressionism

A final characteristic of SWP and

YSA practice in the 1960s radicalization was impressionism. This lay at the root of the projections of rapid growth in the YSA and of the exaggerated claims of "irreversible" turn, of the continuation of the forms of radicalization of the 1960s without statement until the posing of the question of power. The YSA documents from the late 1960s reflect a response to the developing radicalization; they do not reflect a very deep understanding of the radicalization process. The growth of SDS from 250 to 100,000, to use an example, shows the very real pace of a radicalization process; it does not imply a continued growth at that pace to an organization of 300,000 or 3,000,000. The rise of student protests, of the antiwar movement, the rapid spread of "underground," feminist and other publications -- all these were real. But they did not augur the entry of an "irreversible process." By the early 1970s they began to sputter -- especially the student radicalization. Why was this so? The critical factor was the development of the radicalization process out of synchronization with the rise of the workers struggles. This was not the "fault" of the Black or women's or student movements, it did not mean that, for example, the Black masses should have sat on their hands until the working class as a whole began to move. The antiwar movement, for its part, was absolutely essential. It is simply a fact that the peak of the 1960s radicalization process was reached long before the rise of working class struggles. Without the decisive entry of the bulk of the working class into the fight, the process could not continue to go forward; nor could it simply remain at the same level. It necessarily went into a period of lull, of retrenchment, pending the entry of the proletariat as a whole into the process. This did not mean, as bourgeois commentators gloated, that the 1950s had come back, that we were witnessing (in the words of Time magazine) the "cooling of America." It did mean that the same social pressures and forces which had propelled the 1960s radicalization were beginning to operate within the class (especially among young workers) while the original foci of the radicalization process -- especially the student population -- showed a marked decline in scope and level of activity.

The SWP and YSA, therefore, were correct in seeing in the radicalization of the 1960s the nuclei of a future mass radicalization process. They erred in that they saw this future mass struggle as a continuation of the existing structures and ideologies of the 1960s -- in that they saw the existing feminist, nationalist, student, etc., movements continuing to grow and root themselves, with the working class as a whole entering the struggle as a separate (if decisive) fac-

tor. They did not conceive of the worker's struggle as transforming the existing movements, of incorporating the basic demands and needs of women, of Blacks, of Chicanos and Latinos and making them its own.

It is in this context that we must examine the nature of the coming period.

II. THE COMING RADICALIZATION

In the spring of 1973 a major survey was taken among young people aged 16-25, involving both college students and non-college youth living at home. The study, summarized in the booklet Changing Youth Values in the '70s: A Study of American Youth by Daniel Yankelovich, reveals a marked decline in student activism -- a decline, however, accompanied by a sharp rise in the consciousness and dissatisfaction of young workers. The results show a deep permeation of "new social and moral norms" among working class youth, a "wide and deep penetration" of the basic concepts of the women's liberation movement, and a weakening of the work ethic among noncollege youth. The study states that "campuses are quiescent, but many signs of latent discontent appear among working-class youth." It notes at one point that "noncollege youth today are just about where the college population was in 1969." It makes the point that young workers today are both more disgruntled and more militant than their predecessors: "They want interesting and challenging work but they assume that their employers cannot -- or will not -- provide it. By their own say-so, they are inclined to take 'less crap' than older workers.... Being less fearful of 'discipline' and the threat of losing their jobs, they feel free to express their discontent in myriad ways, from fooling around on the job to sabotage.... They want more freedom and opportunity and they will struggle to achieve it."

Worker Discontent

What are the reasons for the growing discontent of young workers? To a limited extent, the militancy and discontent among working class youth is strengthened by a form of cross-fertilization from the student movement; many young workers have attended at least one year of college and were exposed to the student movement in one form or another. In much larger degree, however, two factors are at work: 1) As the Yankelovich study points out, modern worker youth are not, as their parents were, the products of the Depression. They are far less subject to the fear of older workers that any "rocking the boat" will result in dismissal. Simultaneously, they were not a part of the mass unionization struggles of the 1930s and have no illusions concerning the unions as they are today. They see the reality of con-

servative and bureaucratized unions; some react to this with cynicism, but others are determined to make the unions serve them and their needs, rather than the needs of entrenched bureaucrats. 2) Young workers are subject to the same social forces as are students; factors such as the break-up of the bourgeois nuclear family, the decline in religious belief, the questioning of "traditional" cultural and patriotic values are at least as vital an aspect of working class youth today as they are of the student population. Young Black workers are the product of the same conditions which produced the ghetto revolts and Black student upsurges in the 1960s.

What is vital is that the increasing number of restive and dissatisfied young workers have emerged at precisely the same moment that the United States is plunging to an acute economic crisis. The indications of such a crisis are already here; a recent article in the New York Times noted that in the month of October and the first week of November alone industrial production dropped 6/10 of a percent (not counting large cutbacks in auto production), the GNP continued to decline (after a 2.1 percent drop from July-September, the third quarterly drop in a row), unemployment continued to soar, automobile sales were off 38 percent, wholesale food prices rose 4.7 percent for October alone, and the wholesale price index rose 2.3 percent. While Ford doggedly insisted that the U.S. was not in a recession, the figures indicated a combined recession/inflation pattern of a major order.

The government's efforts to confront the problem range from the ludicrous to the ominous. Ford's own proposals belong in the former category; during one speech, sporting a "WIN" button, he declared war on inflation and called on Americans to enlist to fight it. In a second speech, he informed the people that to save money they should clean their plates, "shop wisely," and not get sick. Behind the self-parody, however, stands a concrete program aimed directly at poor and working class Americans: cutbacks in jobs and raises, a five percent supertax on wages, higher gasoline taxes, all coupled with a pattern of layoffs and production cutbacks in major industry.

Significance of the Crisis

There have, of course, been major recessions before in the post-war period; one occurred in the latter part of the Eisenhower administration, while a second took place during the Kennedy regime, and a third in 1970-71. None sparked a major upheaval of the American working class. This crisis, however, differs not only in the fact that it coincides with the rise

of a discontented and militant working class. The prior recessions took place in the context of an overall rise in American living standards. Even when unemployment soared on these occasions, there was a general -- and partially justified -- expectation that the crisis was only transitory, that the downturn would soon be overcome. This crisis takes place in the context of a spiraling crisis of capitalism on a world scale. The American ruling class has been confronted with the problem of attempting to simultaneously maintain its hegemonic role in world capitalism and control of raw materials -- necessitating a relentless struggle against liberation movements in the colonial countries -- and keep up a relatively steady rise in the standard of living to hold back the class struggle in the United States. It has encountered growing difficulties in this effort. It has been faced with increasing competition from Western Europe and Japan; though the pre-eminent overall role of U.S. capital remains intact, American corporate interests have suffered from encroachments in key sectors by its rivals. Higher U.S. production costs and falling productivity have added to the difficulties in this area, making it increasingly difficult for American-based firms to find markets in the face of lower-priced foreign products. The rise of Arab finance capital and the formation of the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) is only the first and most obvious sign of threats to American control over natural resources in the Third World.

In the long run, American corporate capital has but one solution: an assault upon the standard of living of the working class. It can delay the attack through deals with the ruling Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies or through attempts at cooperation with its capitalist rivals; but the assault will at most be postponed. The "anti-inflationary" and "anti-recession" plans announced by federal and state governments in company with the layoffs and production cutbacks very clearly show the pattern of the future.

The response of the Nixon administration was to move toward a further strengthening of the repressive arsenal of the state. The incorporation of the labor bureaucracies into the state system was accelerated, while the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) in steel marked an ominous precedent in the abrogation of labor unions' right to strike. The autonomous powers of the presidency continued to increase at an unprecedented pace; simultaneously, Nixon attempted to build popular support for the curtailment of civil liberties by staging a series of show trials of dissidents across the country -- exemplified by the so-called 'Chicago conspiracy trial,' the repeated trials

of Panther leaders (Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, Eldridge Cleaver, David Hilliard, the Panther 21 in New York), the trial of Angela Davis, the 'East Coast Conspiracy' frame-up, etc. Harassment or surveillance of even slightly left-of-center groups reached a high not achieved since the McCarthy Era; it was coupled with a nationwide, sustained offensive aimed at exterminating the Black Panther Party. Ultimately, Nixon failed; the ludicrous show-trials almost universally produced acquittals, giving the impression not of a country menaced by left-wing conspirators, but of a government aimed at repression. Nixon's removal from office demonstrates not that a portion of the bourgeoisie is opposed to such measures, but that Nixon's incompetence jeopardized such plans. The result was a determined exposure of the seamy underside of bourgeois politics; the exposed stew of corruption, racism, anti-semitism and cynical manipulation reflect not only the Nixon regime but the state of bourgeois politics in general in the United States.

One response already in evidence is a new upsurge in rank-and-file activity in the unions. The victories of Arnold Miller in the United Mine Workers (UMW) elections and Ed Sadlowski in District 31 of the United Steel Workers (USW), the formation of militant rank-and-file caucuses in almost every union show the growing dissatisfaction of union members with the entrenched bureaucracies. (In other cases, ironically, 'reform' leaders have been defeated because of similar rank-and-file discontent. Much of the crushing margin of Albert Shanker's victory over David Selden for President of the American Federation of Teachers stemmed from Selden's do-nothing reputation, contrasted to Shanker's image of a tough fighter who 'delivers' in contract negotiations.) Miller and Sadlowski, et al., do not, of course, represent a class struggle leadership in the unions, but they do represent the initial level of consciousness of workers just beginning to move into action.

The Form of the New Radicalization

As the struggle of American workers and oppressed proceeds in the next period, what form can we predict a worker radicalization will take? One obvious fact -- which the sectarian groups have missed completely -- is that it will not be completely separate from the 1960s radicalization. The working class did not go into hibernation in 1947, to pop up in the next period untouched by the intervening 27 years. Neither, however, will the next period be merely a lineal progression of what occurred in the '60s; the radicalization will have its own dynamic and characteristics.

Lenin's statement that the spontaneous consciousness of the working class is economist is correct; but economism is not the sole form of spontaneous consciousness. Nationalism is similarly a spontaneous and partial response to one aspect of oppression; feminism is another. There is no abstract rule for determining whether initial radicalization will stem from a wage struggle (economism), from racial or national oppression, or from the oppression of women as women. What is clear is that workers will not separate out the various ways in which they are oppressed; a Black woman worker, for example, will not divide her oppression as a Black, as a woman and as a worker into neat categories.

Each of the streams which made up the 1960s radicalization -- including nationalism and feminism -- will flow into the workers' upsurge of the 1970s. The Yankelovich study shows that in many ways this process has already begun. As the struggles deepen, Blacks and other minorities will carry their specific demands into the workers movement; as a central and militant sector of the proletariat, Black workers will be in a position to win their demands. Similarly, women workers will carry their basic demands into the workers' fight.

This process will not come about because it is "good;" nor will it take place because we wish it. It will occur because, for the workers to win their struggle, it will become apparent that it must incorporate the basic demands of Blacks, of Chicanos and Latinos, of women, etc. The overcoming of racist, sexist, and other reactionary attitudes in the proletariat will not come about automatically; it will require strenuous efforts within the class. But just as "American" workers united with "foreign" workers in the famous IWW strikes in Lawrence and Paterson, just as Black and white tenant farmers united in the Sharecroppers Union and Southern Tenant Farmers Union, workers in the next period will be able to overcome the reactionary prejudices imposed by capitalist society and unite in a common struggle against a common enemy.

It should be noted that in this process there will also be a transformation of the struggle of Black, other minorities and women workers.

In the past period, we saw that the advanced consciousness of minority workers led in some cases -- the Chicano unions in Crystal City, Texas, and Black caucuses such as DRUM and ELRUM -- to separate militant formations. This was a demonstrative indication of the vanguard role of Black and Third World workers.

It would have been unthinkable for

these workers to restrict their struggles to the lower consciousness of white workers in the name of the "unity of the working class." In a worker radicalization, we may see episodic repetitions of this pattern as Black or Latino workers go into action significantly ahead of their fellow workers. But as the economic crisis deepens and the other sectors of the class catch up with the Black and Latino advanced layer, however, the thrust of the struggle will enhance unity rather than separation, a common fight rather than separate (or separatist) ones. This will not represent the liquidation of Black, other minority, or women's movements; rather, it will represent the victory of these movements in that it will mean the more frequent adoption of their basic demands by the workers movement as a whole, as a result of the combined pressure of internal caucus-type formations and community-based committees.

Effects of the Radicalization upon "Independent" Movements

In the context of the radicalization of the 1970s, will the existing Black, Chicano, women's and student movements simply pack up and go home? Of course not. The critical factor, though, is that mass organizations of Blacks, Latins, other minorities and women, as they exist today -- organizations which focus on those issue which are the common concern of all Blacks, all women, etc. -- naturally exist on a multi-class basis. In a worker upsurge, these mass organizations will each have to respond to the demands of the working class elements within it. Some of them will not prove responsive to worker demands and working Blacks or Latinos or women will bypass them; others will split; others will support the workers' struggle and speak to the demands of the working class. Such a differentiation is inevitable; bourgeois and professional women, for example, will not and cannot rationally support basic demands of women workers (equal pay for equal work; no discrimination in hiring, firing or promotions; paid maternity leave, and so on). These demands are not in the interests of the bourgeoisie as a class, whether the individual bourgeois is white or Black, man or woman. The inevitable result will be that these bourgeois elements will break away from struggles and organizations which will orient toward the working class; the crucial problem is not maintaining bourgeois Blacks or women in these movements, but ensuring that petty-bourgeois strata in the movements are won to the side of the working class.

In the case of the third of these possibilities -- that the mass organizations relate to proletarian demands -- it does not mean that they will give up specific sectoral demands in favor of

broad, pan-working class demands. But the focus will be on the demands of Black, Latino, or women workers and will naturally include demands of concern to the class as a whole.

The same sort of differentiation will take place in the student milieu. College and university students have significantly different backgrounds from their counterparts in the 1930s; far more come from working class families and backgrounds. But while the proportions may change, there is no reason to assume that the pattern of the '30s -- when one segment of the student population vigorously backed the workers and a second group helped to provide scabs -- will change. In the 1930s, it was the first segment which played the prime role in the construction of the radicalizing student milieu -- in the building of an antiwar campaign, in the development of the American Student Union. This is the most likely variant in the coming period as well.

The Pattern of the Radicalization

The basic pattern of the emerging radicalization can thus be roughly outlined. The decisive entry of the working class into the radicalization will necessarily shift the entire focus and course of that radicalization process. The labor movement will tend to move frequently, incorporate into itself, spearheaded by Black and other oppressed workers, the demands of the specially oppressed layers of the class. The existing movements of Blacks, of Chicanos, of Puerto Ricans, of Asian-Americans and Native Americans, of women, will divide along class lines, with sections of these movements adding their weight to the proletarian struggle and fighting for the specific demands of their portion of the working class. This will not mean, of course, that the union struggle will simply swallow up every liberation movement. The movement of Blacks and other oppressed minorities, and of women for liberation will continue both within and outside of the union movement -- within because the labor movement will incorporate basic demands of these movements into itself; outside because minority and women workers and their allies require autonomous organizational expression to guarantee the realization of their full liberation.

It is therefore insufficient for the YSA to continue its past orientation and practice; nor is it enough to add union and/or strike support work to our past areas of work and intervention. We must understand the overall pattern of the coming struggles and intervene precisely and selectively to ensure the best possible position of the YSA in the next

period. The next section of this document will focus on the form and content of our intervention in the coming year.

III. THE WAY FORWARD

It should be noted once again that there are no "independent" struggles or sectors that are not affected by the general central political questions of the day. In any fight, the YSA has to keep in mind through its interventions the need to conduct a struggle against reactionary ideas and forces in every movement; above all, racism and sexism in portions of the labor movement; but also, "women as a class" theories in the women's movement; elitism and anti-working class biases in the student milieu; etc.

While every struggle will necessarily raise and emphasize certain issues and slogans over others, it is not "substitutionism" to fight to overcome such reactionary and divisive views. On the contrary such a fight is necessary to ensure that every movement we support can attain as strong and unified base of support as possible.

It is nonetheless useful in discussing areas of intervention for the coming period to delineate certain broad areas of work and outline basic slogans and campaigns in these areas. These include general labor support, Black struggles, Chicano and Latino struggles, the women's liberation movement, anti-imperialist work, support of comrades around the world, and other campaigns and activities (gay work and the elections). It is also useful to examine forces outside the YSA.

1. Propaganda and Agitation Around Issues Facing Labor

The grave proportion of the current recession and the world context in which it takes place have put the questions related to the state of the economy in the center of political life, thrusting them onto even the most bread-and-butter struggles of the working class. This political reality must guide the YSA in all its fields of intervention. The Trotskyist movement has answers at a programmatic level to the questions of unemployment, inflation, speed-up and state intervention on the side of the bosses. There is now a need to propagandize for these concepts on a much larger scale. At the same time, although the basis for united-front-type-mass-action coalitions has narrowed since 1971, and has not yet substantially broadened again, there are opportunities for the YSA joining or initiating mass struggles around these issues.

The fact that the YSA remains a predominantly student organization in no way minimizes the extent to which the YSA should

campaign around these central political issues, or leave them to another organization. To do so would be to adapt to the YSA's composition by limiting the YSA to student concerns. It would be a form of sectoralist adaptation. All the sectors where the YSA intervenes, including the main one -- the campuses -- are materially affected by these central political questions. An important layer of student radicals is searching for answers to them. There are a number of vehicles for this propaganda campaign and for actions around specific demands raised by sections of the masses. We will indicate some of them here.

Labor Questions and Election Campaigns

While not limited, of course, to questions directly related to the economic struggle of the workers, the campaigns should put major emphasis on this theme, in this period. Election campaigns per se will be dealt with later in this document. What is important here is to note that election campaigns can be a prime means of propagandizing around basic issues of concern to working people, and even of influencing the direction of actual struggles in an agitational manner.

The most recent SWP campaigns -- especially the campaign of Ed Heisler in Illinois -- have moved toward such an approach. The contrast between such campaigns and those of two years ago is obvious and welcome, and goes beyond a simple change of constituency due to the conjuncture. The centrality of the war has been replaced by the centrality of the economic crisis. This has forced the working class back into the center of our program, foreshadowing its moving into action in reality. It has given a new unifying approach to our campaigns which is a step forward from the former adaptation to sectoralist concerns, with its myriad of special constituency candidates and programs. At the same time, our candidates must remain the voice of all the struggles of the oppressed, remember their internationalist duties even in the most parochial races, and address themselves to the concerns of the most conscious militants not only in introducing the vision of socialism, but also in offering strategic solutions for their struggle.

As concern over economic issues gives way to workers' struggles over economic issues, it will become necessary to move beyond the unfocused and diffuse program of general socialist propaganda of our campaigns. A good example of how a campaign can speak to issues emerging from workers' struggles was the recent campaign of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) in Canada, for the elections to Parliament. The RMG platform -- "A

Program of Struggle for Canadian Workers" -- focused on basic demands of the Canadian working class. They put forward demands centered on the fight against inflation (reopening of all contracts; a cost-of-living increase; opening the books of the capitalist to show their real profit), against unemployment (reduced work week with no loss of pay, providing jobs and income for all, occupation of shut-down enterprises to force nationalization without compensation under workers' control), democracy in the trade unions and union solidarity with workers struggles around the world. It called for specific tactics of worker action against employers' and state repression. The RMG platform was intended and was utilized for the specific purpose of aiding the working class in mobilizing for these struggles. It is true that the pan-Canadian state had just experienced a massive rise of workers struggles in Quebec and a general strike of railroad workers and postal workers, both of which directly confronted the state as their employer. But it does show how a campaign can serve not only as a generalized means of getting out socialist ideas, but as a concrete tactic for intervening in workers struggles and putting forward proposals that can be picked up by vanguard workers.

Strike Support

Recently, the strike by the bituminous coal miners raised the need for widespread strike support. Strike support work based on forces outside the particular group of workers on strike is important both as a means of making up for the weakness of revolutionaries within that particular union and for the general themes which it can serve to illustrate in action. Its purposes are: 1) to eliminate the union bureaucracy's ability to point to the strike's isolation as a means of blackmail against militants. This strengthens the class struggle among the strikers; 2) to develop conscious solidarity with those workers on the front line among the other organized workers; breaking down the conception that each union can best achieve its goals on its own; and 3) to rally unorganized workers, unemployed, students and various middle layers in support of organized labor's struggles as a means of preparing more long-term alliances between these layers and the working class.

The United Mineworkers strike can be useful as a model of the type of strike support work in which the YSA can participate in future mass strikes, in auto, steel, rail or other major sectors of the work force. A problem which is posed in regard to this (or any future) UMW strike

is common to any major strike in the United States -- the leadership of the union. While Miller is not a Boyle or a Meany, he is in no sense a determined class struggle leader. One by one, he shelved, postponed or put aside the original demands of the Miners for Democracy; the MFD itself has been dissolved. The UMW strike was viewed by Miller and his associates as a demonstration of his own "militancy" as well as an escape valve for militant rank-and-file pressure upon him. In this context, the UMW leaders have made no attempt to build support for the strike in the rank-and file of other unions, or to call for support in the broader public. (Given the longstanding hostility of the AFL-CIO officialdom to the independent UMW, little aid could be expected from that quarter; this is especially true in view of the danger that pro-Miller reform forces can represent to the conservatized leaders of AFL-CIO unions.)

The major task of the YSA in such instances is therefore to mobilize whatever support it can in the areas where it intervenes. Three concrete fields of activity are particularly important here: local and/or campus strike support committees, CLUW and work inside of trade unions. The various strike support committees established during the 1969 General Electric strike provide valuable lessons for future YSA strike support work. In a few areas, unfortunately, the committees became de facto fronts for various left sects. These "strike support committees" focused their energies far more on "exposing" the union leadership rather than on providing actual support to the strike. To ensure that strike support committees be established on as broad a basis as possible -- including invitations to local unions, independent activists, etc., general appeals to and leafletting of the campus and/or community can also be effective; requests for food, supplies, money, are prime tasks for such a committee.

A second area of work useful for strike support is the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). CLUW per se will be discussed elsewhere in this document; what is important is that one of the stated goals of CLUW is strike support work. Comrades in CLUW should introduce resolutions calling for support to strikes; in a case such as the UMW strike, comrades should seek to have CLUW chapters invite striking unionists to address meetings and take charge of support work in a whole series of other areas as well.

Finally, comrades in unions should seek to build support for the strike among their co-trade unionists. In situations such as a miners strike, the

bourgeois media consciously works to develop antagonisms between various sectors of the work force, stressing layoffs in steel, auto and other workers due to the coal strike. Comrades should put forward resolutions supporting the strike in question; such resolutions involve discussions of labor solidarity which can play an educational role, as well as helping to bolster the morale of the striking workers. Comrades should also seek to get their union local to contribute to support of the striking union.

In general, it is necessary to intervene with audacity and vigor. To break through the media barrage aimed at the striking union, it is often a requisite to capture attention through a gesture which is both dramatic and useful to the striking workers. Besides mass leafletting, appeals for aid, demonstrations, etc., a strike such as the UMW's could be aided by such a gesture as a call for a caravan of supporters to go to the areas affected to show their support and walk the picket lines. They could bring medical and food supplies, money, clothing or other necessities; their very act of mobilizing to go to the area would serve to publicize the strike and establish that not all of the community agrees that the strike is a "menace" or "selfish" or "uncalled for" and "inflationary."

Union Organizing Campaigns

In addition to support for strikes, comrades should work whenever possible to aid organizing efforts among workers in their localities. Obviously, the YSA does not have the size or scope to participate in such an effort everywhere union organizing efforts are taking place; further, in some cases of routine NLRB elections, the union may neither need or welcome any outside support.

In other cases, however, YSA locals can furnish concrete assistance. This is particularly true in regard to campus locals or fractions. University and college employees -- clerical, staff and professors -- are increasingly involved in organizing campaigns. Clerical and staff are especially apt to be subject to severe harassment from the school administration, and are the most in need of aid. Students are often uninformed concerning the struggles of these workers, and therefore apathetic; in some cases, they are openly antagonistic to the workers. The YSA can help in these cases by organizing support committees, by helping to distribute materials, by helping with such tasks as mimeographing statements, posting notices, etc. YSA comrades inside and outside student governments should demand that the stu-

dent government provide funds, supplies and assistance to the workers. Comrades should also strive to get the workers case explained in campus and community media -- the press, radio and television.

In general, the tasks of the YSA in this area are similar to those it faces in regard to strike support activity. In both cases, its goal must be to provide as much aid and build as broad a base as possible for the struggle of the workers in question.

Trade Union Fractions

It has not been the practice for the YSA to have union fractions; indeed, the YSA leadership has intervened on several occasions to discourage such fractions in locals where they have been established. The rationale for this has been that the YSA is a student organization and that young workers are recruited directly to the party.

In regional centers, there is some basis for this. Those few YSA trade unionists not in the SWP have generally been invited to work with the appropriate party fraction. In regional locals, however, a difficulty has emerged. There are a number of comrades in regional locals who are actively involved in unions or organizing committees. The ruling out of trade union fractions (as it has in the past) in these areas should not prevent comrades from engaging in union work; the lack of such fractions merely ensured that their work took place without organized and planned direction from the local.

It goes without saying that a trade union fraction is not a necessity wherever a comrade is a union member; likewise, a fraction made up of comrades in a wide variety of industries and unions is not always useful. Where a number of comrades are engaged in the same (or similar) work, however, a fraction is both useful and desirable. Such fractions should be authorized, with implementation left to the locals.

Unemployed and Mobile Youth

The rate of unemployment of youth is approximately double of that in equivalent categories of the general population. Many of the gains which the CP (and, to a lesser extent, the SP and the Workers Party -- the Musteites) made in the 1930s were through a militant organizing drive among the unemployed through groups such as the CP's National Unemployed Council. The rising number of unemployed -- particularly Black and other minority workers -- justify the beginnings of a campaign around the issue of unemployment. We must attempt

to reach out to unemployed workers demanding: 1) Guaranteed jobs at union wages; 2) 30 hours work at 40 hours pay to expand free time and create new jobs; 3) reallocation of federal, state and local funds toward areas (construction, health care, education) which will aid in creating new jobs; and 4) full employment compensation at union wages.

There is also a broad layer of youth who experience in the same way a number of problems: the restrictions of their family, the authoritarianism of educational institutions, police brutality, discrimination in employment and the glum prospects of enrolling in the armed forces. Many are between jobs, or between terms in school, or between periods of unemployment and the army. We must seek to attract these youth to the YSA through our activities.

Black Struggles

The struggle of the Black masses is a central component of the class struggle in the United States. If the YSA is to become in fact as well as in aspiration the revolutionary youth organization in the United States, it is absolutely crucial for the YSA to become deeply implanted in the Black and Third World communities. Involvement in Black struggles in the coming period will take a number of forms -- the fight against racism, political prisoners work, an orientation to community colleges and Black workers. It is also necessary, given recent events, in Boston, to take up a whole series of questions relating to busing.

The Fight Against Racism

The YSA must become recognized as a prime factor in the fight against racism by the masses of Blacks and Third World people in this country. Both last year's Political Resolution and John Hawkins' Black Struggle Report emphasized this as a necessity. In the year since the convention, however, the YSA, with the notable exception of Boston, has not become involved in the sort of continuing, day-in, day-out way which would serve to establish the YSA in the eyes of Black people as such an organization. It is unfortunate that the YSA has not, in most areas, seen fit to assign this work the same priority as has the Stalinist YWLL. The result has been in case after case to leave the field wide open for the CP/YWLL and its reformist proposals. The next year provides us with ample opportunity to change this.

One crucial aspect of the struggle is the need for day-to-day involvement in local struggles -- community organiz-

ing campaigns, the fight against discriminatory practices on the job and in hiring, rent strikes, community control fights in the schools, defense of Black studies programs under attack, high school blow-outs, etc. The YSA can gain in two concrete ways through such work: 1) It can make its identity known to the Black community in the area and establish itself as a force which the community can count upon to participate in its struggles. 2) It can recruit directly to the YSA, especially in the case of high school student struggles.

YSA support in these fights can take a wide variety of forms. It can involve publicizing them in our press, allowing community leaders involved in these struggles to speak at our forums; aiding in production and distribution of materials; building support groups for the fights in areas where we have strength (both nationally and locally), and so on. In every case, however, the involvement of our comrades must be serious, active, intense and ongoing.

Racism and Free Speech

The question of how to deal with racist organizations and individuals is also important here. Two specific types of situations are involved -- the localized rooting of racist and/or fascist groups such as Rights of White People in North Carolina, the National States Rights Party (NSRP), the Klan, neo-Nazi groups in various cities and the propaganda campaigns of racist academics such as Shockley Jensen and Herrnstein.

In the first category, we should not overemphasize the importance of these groups. Facism is not a major phenomenon in the United States at this time on a national scale. But wherever and whenever such groups establish a base -- and in communities such as South Boston there is certainly a potential for such groups to root themselves -- we must confront the situation squarely.

The importance of Shockley, Jensen, Herrnstein, Banfield, et al., does not lie simply in the abstract thrust of their views; they have provided racists with an academic cover which they have not had in decades. The effect which the views of these and similar "intellectuals" has had and will have in regard to cutbacks in funding of Black aid programs, etc., has been documented not only in the left press but the works of such academics as Noam Chomsky.

Two obviously incorrect methods of dealing with racist individuals and organizations have been advanced. On the one hand, various sectarian groups, notably the Spartacists, have derided the fight

as "utopian," as racism will always exist under capitalism. On the other, formations such as the Progressive Labor Party and Party for Workers' Power have taken a substitutionist stance, engaging in adventurist confrontations without the slightest effort to involve broad layers in the struggle.

While the YSA has successfully avoided both of these errors, its own approach has been fundamentally propagandist. We have limited ourselves to distributing material exposing the racists, arguing that to attempt to prevent them from speaking diverts the issue from the views of the racists to the question of free speech. This argument is incorrect. It has long been a tenet of revolutionary Marxists that racists and fascists do not have any right to organize, hold meetings or express their views and that, when the balance of forces was sufficient to afford even a chance of success, that revolutionary forces should intervene against them. It was on this basis that American Trotskyists took on the fascist followers of Father Coughlin in the 1930s. The question of the right of fascists and racists to speak is not counterposed to the exposure of their views; on the contrary, the questions are intimately interrelated. We oppose the right of these organizations and individuals to spread their poison because of the nature of those views and the concrete effect these views can have.

The recent campaign of the International Marxist Group in Britain and the Canadian Revolutionary Marxist Group against these vermin provide a solid example of the sort of struggle which can be waged. The actions of our RMG comrades in regard to a Western Guard/NSRP forum in Toronto are particularly useful as a model of the sort of approach which the YSA can take. The RMG did not (as PL does) simply march in and take on the fascists. Rather, it organized a united front through a well-advertised and attended public meeting on campus and built a campaign against the fascist Stoner on the widest possible basis. Neither, however, did the RMG comrades avoid the fight to prevent Stoner from speaking on campus; they took the position that if a balance of forces at all favorable could be constructed, that no fascist forum would be held. The prevention of the speech did not hinder the debate about the views of Stoner, the NSRP or the Western Guard; on the contrary, the campus underwent a very thorough discussion on every aspect of the situation in the period immediately following the abortive forum. On most American campuses, with solid blocs of Blacks and other specially oppressed students, the ability to build such a broad united front is correspondingly enhanced. Similarly, in

major urban centers, there is no lack of opportunity to take on racist and neo-fascist groups head on in coalitions with the most militant Black and other oppressed groups and individuals.

Political Prisoners Work

The defense of Black and other non-white political prisoners has largely become a haven for the CP/YWLL and the sects. The results of domination by either have been disastrous. The CP, building skillfully on its defense of Angela Davis, has become by far the most important force on the left in this field, but it openly picks and chooses which prisoners it will defend. The result -- as Gary Lawton pointed out in a bitter letter to Davis -- has been the throwing of such unglamorous political prisoners as Ruchell Magee to the wolves. As for the sects, their "defense" efforts have frequently done more harm than good to the prisoners. Venceremos (a now-defunct Maoist group) was typical in its defense of Billy Dean Smith, a Black soldier accused of "fragging" two officers in Vietnam. Venceremos leaflets (emblazoned with an AK-47 automatic rifle) proudly asserted that Smith had blown up the officers and explained why this was progressive. Such an approach does not seem calculated to build a mass base.

It is unfortunate that, confronted with the hegemony of other groups, in this field, the YSA has, as a general rule, played a more or less inactive role in this sphere. In the past defense work around Ruchell Magee, Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, George Jackson, Martin Sostre, the Panther 21 in New York and Angela Davis, the YSA has (except sporadically in local areas) played no major role at all. In many cases, of course, the sectarianism of the various defense committees vis-a-vis the SWP and YSA made work within such a committee all but impossible. Yet this in no way lessened the responsibility of the YSA to defend these militants as vigorously as possible; these prisoners were not under attack, after all, because the Panthers or CP have an incorrect ideology. They were the subject of vicious oppression from the state precisely because of the threat to the state which their popularity and strength in the Black community represented. Many of these defense committees included a number of healthy independents -- Black and white -- who were primarily active in this field, rather than an area where the YSA was more involved. To these independents, the generally lethargic attitude of the YSA (coupled with a fairly common YSA practice of "participating" in such committees by sending a single observer to meetings to take notes) served to prejudice them against the YSA and our ideas.

In the coming period, the YSA should

seek wherever possible to operate in a non-sectarian manner with major defense committees. It may well be that we will be barred from some of these committees. In such cases, we should make clear our commitment to defend these militants by offering to help raise funds earmarked for defense and offer to distribute defense materials at our lit tables. Coverage of Black and Third World political prisoners should be sharply increased in Young Socialist. Press coverage in The Militant must be followed with concrete and active involvement in ongoing work, wherever possible.

Our Orientation

If we are serious about recruiting Black students to the YSA, we have to go where they are. In the past, YSA locals and work have been predominately centered in more or less "elite" state and private universities and colleges. There is a good reason for this, of course; YSAers no less than other college students tend to have enrolled in college originally to attain some sort of decent education -- and a decent education is conspicuous by its absence from most Black state and community colleges. Yet the YSA's orientation has tended to isolate it not only from the bulk of Black students, but, more importantly, from the most militant and radicalized Black students.

How do we deal with this? It is not necessary for us to pack up all our campus locals and fractions and ship them all off elsewhere. To orient toward Black community and state colleges, however, requires two conscious decisions on our part: 1) to allocate a number of cadre, particularly in urban centers, to such campuses in their area. Preferably, this would involve transferring a nucleus to such a school if this is not possible, a work fraction centered on the school should be established. 2) Regional recruitment should be focused primarily (though not, of course, exclusively) on such campuses. In Tennessee, for example, efforts should be directed toward Tennessee State, Memphis State and Knoxville College rather than the University of Tennessee; in North Carolina, toward North Carolina Central, Winston-Salem State (and the predominantly Native American Pembroke State) rather than toward UNC at Chapel Hill and Duke; in urban centers, toward community colleges such as Malcolm X and Roosevelt in Chicago, toward Merritt and Laney in the Bay Area, and so on.

A second problem emerges here, however: the majority of young Blacks are located not on campuses, even at community colleges, but in the urban work force, many of them unemployed. Within the working class, young Blacks form the nucleus of much of the militant opposition to the

union bureaucracy. In major cities, Blacks form the backbone of caucuses in union after union, especially in the United Auto Workers, the United Steel Workers and other unions in basic industry. Workers in such caucuses -- who have already come into action on at least an implicit class struggle program -- are in many cases receptive to our ideas, if we patiently win their political confidence. More immediately accessible, although possibly less stable, are layers of young workers who have been generally affected by the racialization, either in the form of accepting new values, or of experiences as Vietnam veterans, or graduates of high school or ghetto revolts. They tend to be less interested in union affairs unless struggles are taking place, and many lean toward escapist solutions. Struggles against racial discrimination by companies and by unions have taken place. There is a necessity for the YSA in areas with a significant Black work force to orient toward it and its struggles -- in terms of sales of our press at plant gates, support in our press and through hand-outs of their strikes and demands, invitations to Black union militants to speak at our forums and so on. We should publicize demands which speak to the needs of these struggles, such as: Jobs for All, No Layoffs; No Racial Discrimination in Hiring or Promotion Procedures; Plant-Wide Seniority, etc.

Busing

The racist upsurge in Boston has once again confronted us with a whole series of questions regarding busing and related issues. While a thorough discussion is not possible in the context of this document, a few points need to be made.

First, on busing itself, there should be unanimity regarding our total defense of the right of Black and other oppressed children to attend any school of their choice. In this context, of our defense of this basic right, we have to delineate the limitations of the specific court order in Boston -- a rotten scheme which ships Roxbury children to decaying South Boston schools, and Southie children to decaying Roxbury schools, while leaving the elite, white suburban schools -- the only decent schools in the area -- totally untouched. We are in favor of an even more comprehensive desegregation and busing plan. That is, while we support the right of Black students to attend South High (if they so desire), we also support their right to attend any other school in the area. We must not be caught in the trap of limiting our support to Judge Garrity's cynical maneuver.

Second, there is no principled reason why, in the current context, revolution-

aries cannot call upon the state to implement its formal duty to protect the Black community. The state, after all, placed the children in jeopardy through the Garrity order in the first place, yet it has cynically withheld any protection of them. The tactical question of whether to emphasize such a call, however, must also be considered; we should never, of course, place the slightest faith in any "mediatory" role of the federal troops. Recent articles in The Militant have helped here to clear up the confusion on this point which existed in the first articles on Boston. While calling for federal troops can play a role in exposing such liberals as Senator Kennedy (who counterposes troops to praying), the emphasis on a call for troops should be secondary to a call for self-defense by the Black community and its allies. This call is not only a necessity if troops are not sent it; it is also essential if federal troops are sent it, as they may well shed their guise of "neutrality" and openly side with the racists against a burgeoning Black movement. (In Northern Ireland, for example, British troops were at first welcomed by the Catholic community; the troops very rapidly showed their support for the Protestants, however.) The self-defense call, unfortunately, is not sufficient by itself, as it does not speak to the needs of Black children bused out of the ghetto into predominantly white areas.

Two other possibilities present themselves in regards to calls for defense of the Black community and students. A call for "workers defense guards" to aid the Black community is totally nonsensical in the current context; a far more relevant demand could involve union participation in monitoring committees. Some liberal bureaucrats have taken verbal stands against the racist violence; it is thereby possible for us (especially in areas where we have union comrades) to call upon the bureaucrats to place themselves on the line beside the Black students.

Finally, the December 14 demonstration is an excellent approach to the task of mobilizing nationwide solidarity with the Black community in Boston. This demonstration, which is being built at the time this document is being written -- involving civil rights activists, trade unions, independent militants, other left formations and individuals -- can help capture the imagination and enthusiasm of all anti-racist forces in the United States and will be of concrete aid in mobilizing defense of the endangered Black community. The YSA's initiatives in this regard have been exemplary.

Beyond this, we must deal not only with busing, which is the struggle going

on today, but with the basic causes of rotten slum schools. Specifically, we must call for the elimination of a school system based on local property taxes -- a system which creates excellent schools in the rich neighborhoods and totally inadequate schools in poor neighborhoods. We must call for a system in which every school receives basically equal funding for repairs, salaries, materials, etc. -- the funds to come from equalization of funding on a metropolitan basis, increased taxes on corporations and massive federal aid. The struggle must be seen in the context of a fight for free quality education for all. While this is said, we state that we must not make the mistake of substituting tomorrow's victories (quality education) for today's struggles (busing), and in that struggle, we place ourselves always at the side of the most oppressed.

3. Chicano and Latino Struggles

Much of what was said in regard to intervention into the fight against racism, political prisoners work, an orientation toward community colleges, and so on, applies here as well as it does in regard to the Black population. The struggles of Chicanos and other Latin peoples in the United States, however, have developed special features as well, which must be dealt with specifically. For example, the language problem of Spanish-speaking people -- that is, the problem of a state which has imposed the English language by force -- means that more than just busing is needed to give Spanish-speaking people and their communities equality in education, even as a temporary measure until free quality education for all is achieved. The privileged school committees have attempted to use this to make Latinos accept inferior quality education. Thus, students who have only recently won the right to speak Spanish in their own schools are not apt to be enthusiastic over throwing the right away by being shipped to a predominantly Anglo school. (We have also seen in several Southwestern cities the incredible spectacle of Chicanos being classified as "white students" for busing purposes, so that Black children are bused into Anglo and Chicano schools, but only Chicano children are bused into Black schools.) We respond to this situation in two ways: 1) We fight for the right of Chicano and Latino students to have bilingual programs and all-Spanish curricula located in all available facilities according to their need and not just in old barrio schools. (This also applies, of course, to other communities in which English is not the first language -- Chinese- and Japanese-American populations, etc.) 2) As in the case of the Black community, we must stress the breaking up of the current system of education and its replacement by one which

provides a decent education for all children.

Three issues must be discussed concretely in regard to the struggles of Chicano and other Spanish-speaking peoples in the U.S.: 1) the fight for freedom for Puerto Rico; 2) La Raza Unida Party; 3) the question of undocumented workers.

Freedom for Puerto Rico

The issue of Puerto Rican independence, dormant since the crushing of the nationalist uprising led by Pedro Albizu Campos in 1950, has once again come to the fore. The United States stands in violation of a ruling by the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization of Puerto Rico and has been condemned by a growing number of countries for its policies. More importantly, the freedom movement has grown both in Puerto Rico and among Puerto Ricans in the United States. The most recent manifestation of this was a rally of 25,000 in Madison Square Garden on October 27, cosponsored by the Partido Socialista Puertorriqueno (PSP).

The PSP has launched a major campaign under the slogan "A Bicentennial without Colonies." While the slogan could imply a two-year delay, it does have a potential for reaching large numbers of people by showing the incongruity of celebrating the 200th anniversary of an anti-colonial revolution while simultaneously maintaining an iron grip on colonies all over the world. We must couple this in our press with explicit support of the Puerto Rican people's struggle for self-determination and socialism. It also provides a framework for discussing the situation in the United States' other colonial possessions: Guam, "American" Samoa, the Virgin Islands, Micronesia and the Panama Canal Zone.

In the past, the YSA has often taken a sectarian attitude toward the PSP's political evolution toward socialism. This has not, of course, been unilateral; but we cannot control the actions of the PSP and we can take responsibility for our own. We should seek to work closely with the PSP in support of Puerto Rican independence -- cosponsoring (where possible) demonstrations, rallies and forums, offering to help build meetings and actions and distributing pro-independence material. At present, the PSP represents the most militant and conscious sector of the Puerto Rican masses; to allow the CP/YWLL a free hand in its relations with such a group would be a tragic error. The YSA has, in all frankness, been extremely tardy in its appreciation of the problem of Puerto Rico; it cannot afford to miss current opportunities in the movement.

La Raza Unida Party

The contradictions in the RUP have accelerated in the recent period, producing differentiations in the political orientation of its different components. Some trends have oriented toward municipal action for reform (Gutierrez in Crystal City); others are seeking to build a base for pressure politics on a state level (Ramsey Muniz in Texas); in Los Angeles, the RUP chapter has taken a stand for tightening of the border against undocumented workers; in Colorado, debates over the role of electoral action have taken place. These differentiations offer opportunities for discussing our own perspectives. Our aim should be to extend critical support to RUP election campaigns where they represent a step forward toward working class political action. This, we can judge on the basis of program, origins in struggle and composition, in each concrete case. We should also participate in RUP activities outside of the electoral arena. This differentiation in the RUP confirms the position that a mass nationalist party with a class struggle platform is an absurdity. In the absence of a politically active working class movement, the drawing power of bourgeois forces becomes overwhelming, and the only way to save at least a section of this formation is to politicize it into an openly socialist formation. This happened to the PSP's predecessor, the MPI, prior to the present upsurge of Puerto Rican workers. We should seek to repeat that experience with RUP. In the case of a high level of activity by the working class, the ideologically nationalist character of any massive organization of proletarian Chicanos would tend to diminish. It would give way to class solidarity, while the organization would retain its autonomy in the fight against the special oppression of Chicanos.

Undocumented Workers

The campaign against undocumented workers has reached a new pitch; attempts have been made by the government to blame the undocumented workers for the rising unemployment, by the grotesque assertion that if all "illegal immigrants" were deported five million jobs would be made available. Unfortunately, labor unions -- including the United Farm Workers whose strike and boycott we should continue to support -- have joined this campaign.

The campaign against undocumented workers bears a number of points of resemblance to the rightest offensive against "foreign workers" (Algerians, Turks and Southern Europeans primarily) in such European countries as France, Switzerland, Luxemburg, West Germany and Austria. The major differences are that in the United States the government has taken the lead in the offensive and that undocumented workers in the U.S. -- without papers,

without work permits, without a formal right to even be in the country under racist immigration laws -- are in a far more precarious position than their European counterparts.

The primary tasks of the YSA in the face of this campaign are both educational and agitational; the fights waged by our comrades in the FCR, LMR/RML, GIM, GRM and other European sections can provide a useful model for us in this struggle. A major difficulty of course, is that the documented workers are scarcely in a position to organize and fight for their right to remain in the United States with any degree of freedom whatsoever.

The tasks of the YSA include 1) education on this issue through our press, forums and other publications, 2) organizing demonstrations and rallies in defense of the undocumented workers and 3) aiding in whatever manner possible the political and legal fights of the undocumented workers; this could involve contributing whatever legal talent we have at our disposal, petitioning, demands that labor leaders, civil rights organizations and so on to accompany our demonstrations and rallies on the issue. Comrades in labor unions should introduce resolutions exposing the racist offensive and calling for support for the undocumented workers; comrades on campus can play a similar role in regard to student governments and campus organizations. CLUW, of course, is a major channel for such efforts.

4. WOMEN'S STRUGGLE

At present, the major work of our women comrades has been centered around the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). Other areas of concern regarding the women's struggle include other trade union work, the Equal Rights Amendment and relations with women's liberation groups.

Coalition of Labor Union Women

CLUW is no longer a "fragile flower"; it has established itself in a number of areas across the country and it is vital for us to delineate very clearly our orientation toward CLUW and our goals within it.

Our prime task in CLUW is not a fight against the bureaucracy just because the bureaucracy exists; rather, our task in CLUW is to fight to have it carry out its stated goals as outlined in the statement of purpose. In this context, it is necessary to overturn the cumbersome membership procedures set up specifically to keep CLUW under the control of Olga Madar and company. This is an important fight to the extent that the top bureaucrats (aided on occasion by the Communist Party) oppose it. There is a need to unite as

broad a bloc of rank-and-file unionists as possible to make CLUW accessible to union women militants. Otherwise, there is little prospect for CLUW except as a meeting ground for the secondary and tertiary union bureaucrats and the various organizations of the left -- a most dreary prospect.

Concretely, then, we need to take on the absurdly complex screening procedures set up for joining CLUW -- procedures intended to ensure that only those women certified as "good" and "loyal" can join. All women affiliated with a trade union, all women members of union organizing committees, and all women retired former trade unionists must be able to join on the same basis as their attendance at the founding conference of CLUW. At this time, proposals to drop the requirement for some sort of union affiliation would mean in the concrete that CLUW would be inundated with middle-class and professional women from NOW and the National Women's Political Caucus, tearing it from its working-class base. This was the fate of most previous organizations of trade-union women; it must not occur to CLUW.

Beyond this, we must take the initiative in ensuring that CLUW fulfill its original goal of spearheading union organization among women. In the words of the CLUW Statement of Purpose, "The Coalition of Labor Union Women seeks to promote unionism and encourage unions to be more aggressive in their efforts to bring unorganized women under collective bargaining agreements, particularly in those areas where there are large numbers of unorganized and/or minority women." Local CLUW chapters can play a key role in both initiating organizing campaigns and helping in strike support work. That they have not done so to date has been due to the efforts of top bureaucrats to stave off such efforts and as usual the complete ineptitude of the sectarians to build anything with real rank-and-file women.

Other Struggles of Working Women

In all our work, there is a need to orient to the demands and interests of working women. Women's caucuses and committees exist in numerous unions in varying forms; it is necessary to not only participate in such caucuses, but to give them scope and direction. This involves engaging them in an active fight around issues such as equal pay for equal work; no discrimination in hiring, firing or promotion; paid maternity leaves and so on. Where no women's caucuses or committees exist in unions where we have comrades, we must seek ourselves to initiate fights around these issues.

On many campuses, union organizing focuses on the unionization of workers such as clericals and kitchen staff who are predominantly composed of women. We have already discussed ways in which the YSA can be of aid in regard to campus unionization drives.

Equal Rights Amendment

The YSA should extend critical support to the ERA; we are, of course, in favor of the extension of the bourgeois-democratic principles of legal equality, to eliminate legal discrimination against Blacks, women and all oppressed groups.

We should not aid in fostering the illusion that enactment of the ERA will result in any genuine equality of women in capitalist society. The United States is actually an exception among capitalist states in not having a formal constitutional guarantee of legal equality of men and women. West Germany, for example, has such a provision in its constitution, as do such "egalitarian" states as Taiwan and South Korea.

A prime necessity in our propaganda is stressing (on a par with our support for the ERA) the need to extend genuine protective legislation to men. In our press, we have frequently asserted that a campaign strong enough to pass the ERA nationwide is strong enough to ensure that protective legislation will not be nullified for women, but rather extended to all workers. This is misleading. Important sectors of the pro-ERA coalition -- such as business and professional women, bourgeois legislators and so on -- could hardly care less about the extension of protective legislation. Indeed, in the case of businesswomen (as but one example) it is not at all in their vital interest to extend such legislation to male workers. The experience with Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act has already demonstrated concretely that extension of protective legislation is not automatically posed, that the striking down of such laws is a very real possibility. (After all, equal exploitation is also "equality before the law" to most bourgeois courts.)

General Women's Liberation Work

After 1971, the YSA tended in practice to counterpose WONAAC affiliates to general women's liberation struggles; in many areas, YSA women attended women's liberation meetings solely to announce abortion meetings. Following the demise of WONAAC as an active organization, CLUW became the new focus for women comrades. Women's liberation work per se was downplayed; women's fractions were dissolved in most areas.

While CLUW work is an important sphere of activity, we must not abstain in a sectarian manner from the broad women's liberation struggle. Women's liberation coalitions are, of course, extremely varied from locality to locality. Many are thoroughly reformist; some are separatist. Most have an ingrained hostility to Leninist organizations. But an interest in general socialist ideas, while not a dominant trend in these groups, continues as a significant current. We must be ready to work with these groups in common campaigns wherever possible; the defense of Inez Garcia, for example, has attracted a broad layer of women in many areas. As the leaderships of these organizations will in most cases attempt to develop hostility against us because of our disciplined structure, we must always be aware of this and sensitive to the tone, form and goals of our interventions to avoid needless friction.

5. Anti-Imperialist Campaigns

Under the general heading of anti-imperialist struggles are involved a whole series of present and potential solidarity campaigns with liberation movements around the world; these include African liberation movements, solidarity campaigns with the workers and peasants of Chile and other Latin American countries (Uruguay, Bolivia, quite possibly Argentina), struggles around the Middle East and the Palestinian (and Arab) Revolution and actions centered around the continuing Indochinese Revolution. The question of ROTC has become an issue again and can also be dealt with here, along with amnesty.

African Liberation Movements

The victory of the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, coupled with the partial victory of FRELIMO in Mozambique have pushed the African revolution to the fore. The coming year will see the consolidation of power by FRELIMO in Mozambique and the very real possibility of civil war in Angola between the MPLA and open or disguised neocolonial forces. Victory in the former Portuguese colonies will in turn spur the resistance struggles in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa itself.

What are the tasks of the YSA in regard to these struggles? There are three prime goals: 1) We must launch an extensive educational campaign -- through forums, through pamphlets, through the Young Socialist -- concerning the origins, history and nature of the African liberation movements. Concretely, we must solidarize with the liberation organizations, expose the role of groups such as FLING in Guinea and the FNLA in Angola which objectively serve as neocolonial agents in these countries and expose

the role of the United States in the suppression of African revolutionary movements. We should actively support activities such as the Gulf Boycott -- not because they are sufficient in any sense, but as educational vehicles for exposure of U.S. government and business interests. 2) We must explain the necessity for the revolutionary movements to carry the struggle to its logical conclusion -- the complete liquidation of capitalist and imperialist oppression, a socialist revolution. We must -- alongside our complete solidarity with the PAIGC, FRELIMO, the MPLA, etc., in the fights be prepared to criticize in a comradely fashion actions of these movements which delay or sidetrack the achievement of this final goal. 3) We must be prepared for the real possibility of intervention of South African/Rhodesian troops into the former Portuguese colonies, either on their own or in support of rightist uprisings by white settlers in Mozambique and/or Angola. In such an eventuality, we must be prepared to build as broad and militant a movement in support of the peoples of Angola and Mozambique as possible. We must also, in such an eventuality, work to raise funds and supplies for the support of the resistance, in company with the whole Fourth International and revolutionary and progressive forces around the world.

Much as in the case of the Puerto Rican independence movement, the question of support for the African liberation movements has a special dimension in the United States in that it speaks to the special concerns of an oppressed minority in the U.S. -- the Afro-American people. We can expect that Black groups and activists in the United States will play a vanguard role in solidarity campaigns with the African revolutionary struggle. But the movements in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and elsewhere are not solely a "Black thing" any more than the Indochinese Revolution is the exclusive concern of Asian peoples; they are a vital part of the world revolution and are the concern of all revolutionaries. The best aid which we can render to the African revolutionaries is to build as broad and nonexclusionist a support campaign as possible, including all of those who solidarize with their struggle

Chile and Latin America

In the absence of sustained resistance in Chile, the Chile solidarity movement has inevitably tapered off considerably from its peak in the winter of 1973-74. A continued lull in Chile can only further weaken the support campaign here. The real possibility of renewed resistance, however, can galvanize the support move-

ment at its previous peak level or higher. The rising tension in Argentina and the inability of the bourgeois regime to achieve any sort of economic, political, or social stability have led to a governmental witch-hunt and fascist-like attacks on the left.

In each and every one of those cases, we must build a broad-based support campaign -- again in company with the rest of the world Trotskyist movement. We must solidarize with the struggle and expose the role of the U.S. government. (The exposure of the role of the CIA in overthrowing the Allende regime in Chile already opens an opportunity for us in this regard.) We must simultaneously build support for the release of all political prisoners, the legalization of trade unions, etc., and work to expose the role of the Stalinist parties which are attempting to divert the struggle toward the re-establishment of bourgeois democracy.

The U.S. Committee for Justice for Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) has played an important role in mobilizing support for Chilean political prisoners; the Edelstam tour was a particularly important step in this regard. But the narrow scope of USLA's activities has proven too limited for the full extent of our tasks. Actually, USLA has been forced to go beyond political prisoner work, in regard to embargoes on Chilean goods and so on, but it has done so on an ad hoc and piecemeal basis and without redefining the scope of USLA activities. Further, we have incorrectly viewed USLA as though it were a mass organization (such as NPAC or the SMC), rather than essentially a non-membership coordinating body largely staffed by the SWP and YSA, originally intended to mobilize support for Hugo Blanco. This has led us to counterpose USLA to the broader Chile and Latin American support movement and to attempt to impose USLA slogans on the entire movement even where (as in Washington D.C. in September 1973) this served to isolate us from the bulk of the Chile support movement.

Does this mean USLA should be dissolved? No, it has played a very useful role in its own sphere and can continue to play such a role in the future. We can, however, under our own name, engage in support work and solidarity action which necessarily goes beyond the civil libertarian limits of USLA. We must seek to build a left wing in support activity which opposes the CP's reformist slogans. This does not mean a new NPAC for Latin American support; there is no objective base for such a group. But there is a base within the broader support activity, for cooperation with independents and

groups such as NACLA in terms of militant support and solidarity activities.

Middle East

Two possible variants appear to be the most likely in the Middle East. One is a renewed war between Israel and the more militant Arab regimes (Syria, Iraq, perhaps Egypt and Libya). Faced with a serious economic/political crisis at home and an inexorable erosion of support internationally, the Israeli government may well seek to quell internal discontent and simultaneously shift the balance of power in its favor by striking out in an unprovoked attack. In this case, the YSA must -- as it did in the last Arab-Israeli war -- give unconditional support to the Arab struggle, while emphasizing that we place no confidence in the bourgeois Arab governments.

The second possibility involves the growing pressure on both the Palestinian masses and the Israeli government to set up a rump Palestine on the West Bank and perhaps in Gaza. In this case, we must discuss our response and particularly the appropriateness of our slogan "For a democratic, secular Palestine." This slogan, which failed to open the road to the Arab workers and peasants of the Middle East in the past, is even more deleterious at this juncture, if only because it does not delineate which "Palestine" we mean and thus opens the door to Arafat's rump "Palestinian state." Further, it is entirely clear that any such rump state, whether dominated by Fateh or not, will not be a workers' state (however "democratic" and/or "secular" it may be), but an unambiguously bourgeois state. Taking into account the new developments, we must explain that a rump Palestinian state constitutes a blind alley for the masses. In all likelihood, in the ensuing retreat, we would have to defend all the revolutionaries and internationalists in such a state against the combined repression of all the powers that be. Our call should be: "For a Socialist Palestine in a Socialist Middle East!"

Indochina

Last year's NEC Political Resolution stressed that, whenever possible, we would build actions, demonstrations, etc., regarding the continuing struggle in Indochina. Unfortunately, this has not been the case, rather, except for sporadic articles in our press, we have more or less ignored the Indochinese Revolution. In the next year, the question of final victory for the struggle will be posed in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in view of the decaying position of Thieu in Saigon, a new offen-

sive by the NLF and DRV forces appears to be only a matter of time. The YSA must be ready to focus its press and other materials on these events and publicize them; in the event of a major offensive, we must be aggressive in building demonstrations and other actions in support of final victory. Indochina remains the key revolutionary struggle in this period, and we must be prepared to act in its defense at all times to build the maximum possible support.

ROTC

In the aftermath of the decline in student activism, ROTC units have re-established themselves on campus after campus. While we should not overestimate our ability to build mass support for an anti-ROTC campaign at this juncture, a struggle to oust ROTC from campus retains an important role in educating students to the role of U.S. imperialism around the world. That we have waged numerous such campaigns before is immaterial; most of the current student bodies on campuses around the country were never exposed to such campaigns or heard of them only through the bourgeois media.

Amnesty

In response to the fraudulent "amnesty" program of the Ford administration, an important struggle has developed for full, unconditional and universal amnesty. The YSA has, of course, announced support for this fight; in general, however, it has not participated in it on a national scale. For example, there was virtually no participation of the YSA in the major VVAW-WSO demonstrations called around the issue of impeachment, freedom for Vietnamese political prisoners and amnesty. We should participate in local amnesty coalitions in an aggressive manner, using the campaign to further educate on the nature of American aggression in Indochina and around the world. Such work can also aid us in developing ties with antiwar veterans -- ties which are, unfortunately, almost nonexistent at the moment -- and with the organizations of exiled Americans in Canada, Sweden and elsewhere. These circles contain a high percentage of politicized and radicalized young people who are receptive to socialist ideas and whom we could recruit to Trotskyism.

VI. SOLIDARITY WITH COMRADES AROUND THE WORLD

In a number of countries, Trotskyist organizations are either under attack or have before them important possibilities for recruitment and implantation which necessitate support from all sectors of the world Trotskyist movement.

At the moment, the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) is under an increasingly savage assault from reactionary and neo-fascist forces spearheaded by the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (AAA). PST comrades have been murdered even in their party halls, often after being mutilated beyond recognition. The AAA has also struck out at other leaders of the left and the labor movement, murdering members of the Communist Party, the FRIP and the Peronist left. The government has launched several "extermination campaigns" aimed at the major guerrilla groups, notably the Montoneros and the Peoples' Revolutionary Army. It is in this context that the Fourth International has launched a major defensive campaign. The November 14, 1974 issue of Inprecor, the organ of the United Secretariat, stated that "The workers' movement throughout the world must organize solidarity with the victims of fascist violence in Argentina and with the struggle of the Argentine workers movement for the socialist revolution." It put forward the slogans "Solidarity with the PST and all victims of fascist terror!" and "Answer the fascist gangsters and the government that supports them with armed self-defense!"

We would be remiss if we did not state that we think the inadequate understanding by the PST comrades of armed self-defense has weakened their ability to respond to the fascist terror; so has reliance on verbal "defense" by bourgeois parties and politicians. Nor can we support the inexcusable linking by the PST leadership of the fascist AAA and the guerrilla organizations as "mirror images." (See I.P., "PST Statement on the 'Multisectoral,'" Oct. 28, 1974, p. 1421.) Regardless of any differences with the PST comrades, however, the duty of all Trotskyist to defend the PST -- and the Argentine revolutionary Trotskyist groups such as the LCR and the GOR -- is both clear and pressing.

Similarly, whatever differences the majority of YSA comrades may have (or think they have) with the Spanish and Basque comrades of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi Ta Azkatasuna, 6th Congress (LCR-ETA VI), the fact is that they have been the subject of intense repression by the Franco government; more than 70 comrades (primarily in Barcelona and Seville) are in Spanish prisons. The International has organized a worldwide solidarity drive with the Spanish and Basque comrades; the YSA's duty in this is clear.

In Chile, Luis Vitale and other comrades of the Partido Socialista Revolucionario and the Liga Comunista Chilena remain in prison and subject to torture

and possible execution. The YSA has receded in its defense of our Chilean comrades; it is only necessary to contrast our defense of Hugo Blanco in the 1960s with the much lower level of activity around our Chilean comrades to appreciate the difference.

In Portugal, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI) has been carrying out an exemplary campaign to galvanize the Portuguese left against the reactionary policies of the Communist and Socialist parties. The FI has launched a major campaign to raise funds for the LCI; the YSA has yet to contribute a penny to aid the LCI. This is completely inexcusable; the YSA should contribute to the campaign in proportion to its income.

In general, the YSA has tended to pick and choose which comrades it would defend and to what extent such defense would take place, rather than coordinating its activities and campaigns with the priorities and needs set by the world Trotskyist movement. Such a situation must be corrected.

Finally, the United Secretariat has initiated an English-language official journal, Inprecor. To survive, the English-language Inprecor requires a stable sub base in every English-speaking country. The YSA in conjunction with the SWP should launch a subscription drive for Inprecor immediately following the convention, to obtain at least 1,000 subs.

VII. OTHER CAMPAIGNS AND ACTIVITIES

There are other areas in which the YSA can participate in the next period. These include the gay movement and election campaigns.

The Gay Struggle

The YSA has performed a pendulum swing in regard to the gay movement. For most of its history, the YSA formally banned gays from membership altogether and rendered no support whatever to gay struggles. Following the (totally correct) overturning of this ban, the "probe" authorized into the gay movement rapidly grew into a de facto sector of intervention equal in importance to the Black and women's struggles. A reaction developed against this, and an official position crystallized around a democratic approach to the gay struggle. The probe was terminated rather ruthlessly; the discussion more or less trickled off into oblivion. Unfortunately, since that time gay work in most locals has in turn been relegated to the shelf. The YSA has, in short, taken every stance in regard to the gay movement except a rational and well-considered involvement in it.

It is unfortunate that the YSA has ignored the work being done in this sector of activity by our comrades around the world. Our French comrades in particular have engaged in joint work with the Anti-Norm Sexpol group for a considerable period; Anti-Norm Sexpol supported the Presidential campaign of Comrade Alain Krivine. Similarly, the GIM has worked with Homosexual Action in Berlin, the IMG has participated in gay work for years (and has had an interesting internal discussion on the question), while even a cursory glance at the Old Mole would indicate the Canadian RMG's activity in this sphere. The question is: 1) the priority of such intervention, and 2) the program for it. The YSA exaggerated the breadth and import of the struggle at the outset; then it negated the import altogether, relegating the gay struggle to a cursory one-sentence endorsement in most documents and platforms. Many of the comrades in the "probe" adapted to the concepts and ideology prevalent within the gay movement; when the YSA rejected these concepts (without anything but the most minimal discussion), the comrades felt betrayed and many left the YSA altogether. The YSA should regard the gay movement as the genuine struggle of an oppressed sector of the population -- though one which lacks the cohesiveness, the breadth and the ultimate historical import of the Black and women's struggles. It should support fights for gay rights wherever possible, acquaint gay activists with Marxist analysis of sexuality, and seek to recruit them on that basis. It might be useful for the YSA to reprint excerpts from the internal discussions of other Trotskyist organizations around the world to acquaint comrades with the method and concepts evolved in them.

Election Campaigns

A major means of getting out our ideas will continue to be election campaigns. One aspect of this will be support for the campaigns of the Socialist Workers Party; wherever possible, in addition, YSA comrades in regional areas should run as candidates in local and statewide elections. These campaigns open a whole gamut of opportunities for us: petitioning for ballot status involves contact with hundreds of thousands of independents; achievement of ballot status gets our candidates coverage in the media and exposure to thousands of other voters; through campaign brochures and other material we can reach yet another level of the public. As national dissatisfaction with the Democrats and Republicans intensifies, the number of persons who will be receptive to socialist ideas will grow and we can expect corresponding gains. We can utilize this discontent to propagandize for a labor

party.

We must always keep in mind the fact that major changes in society will not and cannot come about through electoral campaigns. In the past, by our one-sided emphasis on such factors as "what a socialist would do in congress," this struggle against parliamentary illusions has been obscured. The recent election campaign of our comrades in the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) in Canada provides an example for us here. On the one hand, the RMG put forward a whole series of concrete proposals speaking to the needs of workers and others in their struggles, coupling this with an explanation of the need for and nature of a socialist society. On the other, the RMG emphasized that actual progress in these struggles would be achieved not primarily through votes or parliamentary means but through the mobilization and active struggle of the masses. The RMG slogan here was, "Struggle decides!"

YSA student government campaigns are another matter. On many campuses, comrades have recently done little more than go through the motions in these activities, producing sterile rehashes of former platforms and plodding their way along with such slogans as "Make student government an agency for social change." A basic problem in most of these cases has been that the student "government" no longer represents much of anything, that students by and large neither participate in or even pay attention to it or its electoral farces. In such cases, a campaign may be little more than an attempt to breathe life into a mouldy corpse; YSA locals should not run campaigns simply because we always run campaigns. In each case we must examine the situation in the concrete and determine whether we should: 1) run an electoral campaign, either alone or in coalition, or 2) focus on alternative means of reaching and mobilizing students. This latter may mean launching a struggle to create a new student representative body -- a student union, a co-ordinating council, or whatever -- to replace the moribund student government. It may mean simply aiding student struggles as they exist, ignoring student government altogether. In either case, the decision must be based on the actual situation on the campus in question and not the abstract desire to "get our ideas out"; we can hardly get them out if no one is listening to the campaign at all.

VIII. THE AMERICAN LEFT

Among our opponents in this period are the divided social democratic groups, the CP/YWLL, the "Trotskyist" sects and the Maoists. It is necessary to examine the nature and practice of such groups.

Social Democrats

Social democracy has never been a major force in the United States, as it has been in Europe. From the 1950s on, the American social democrats moved steadily to the right, to the point where they were significantly more reactionary than the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. The SP and YPSL (Young Peoples' Socialist League) gave unqualified support to American aggression in Vietnam, campaigned for Bella Abzug's Republican opponent on the grounds that the liberal Abzug was "a tool of the Communists," and enthusiastically identified with the dominant right wing (Meany, Abel) of the AFL-CIO. As a result of dissatisfaction caused by these stands, the social democrats disintegrated into three groups: the Social Democrats USA, and YPSL; the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC); and the Socialist Party (SP).

The SDUSA/YPSL wing, centered around the newspaper New America, carries on the reactionary evolution of the former united social democratic grouping with a vengeance. Their major activity of the moment consists of aiding the Humphrey-Jackson wing of the Democratic Party in taking back control from the McGovernites. Their blatantly rightist stance has embarrassed even the majority of the Socialist International, which has swung to support for DSOC. Indeed, SDUSA is scarcely to be defined as a part of the left at all except in terms of its historical origins. While it has some leaders of prominence (such as Albert Shanker of the AFT), it is the least significant of the three groupings in terms of base, scope of activities and so on.

DSOC, headed jointly by Michael Harrington and Victor Reuther, is a more important phenomenon. It both supports and to a certain extent represents the "reform" wing of the labor bureaucracy (Reuther, Abe Feinglass of the Meatcutters, Wurf of AFSCME) and a stratum of intellectuals (such as Christopher Lasch). It is not hampered by the archaic anti-communism of SDUSA; though it shares with the former the utopian goal of converting the Democratic Party into an anti-monopoly "peoples' party" based on the working class, Blacks, etc., it sides with the McGovern-Abzug-Dellums forces rather than the old guard backers of Humphrey and Jackson. Unlike SDUSA, which is bitterly hostile to the women's movement (as shown by Midge Decter's The New Chastity), the student movement (as shown by Steve Kelman's Push Comes to Shove) and every Black group even marginally to the left of the Urban League and NAACP, DSOC generally "supports" these struggles in an opportunistic fashion, linking up with the moderate, reformist wing of each. At the moment DSOC is

scarcely more than a skeleton of reformist labor leaders and vaguely radical academics; but given a workers' upsurge, DSOC will have ample opportunity to flesh out its cadre groups and utilize the prominence of its leaders to develop a base.

The Socialist Party, which puts out Socialist Tribune is the former "left" Debs Caucus of the undivided SP of the 1960s. The SP is the most active of the three social democratic groups at the moment in many areas; its current goal is the amalgamation of itself, the New American Movement, the small National Interim Committee for a Mass People's Party, Dr. Spock's People's Party and such local groups as the Wisconsin Alliance, the Human Rights Party in Michigan, etc., into a united "democratic socialist" organization. (Spock's People's Party voted at its last convention by a narrow margin that it was a "socialist" party. This was vigorously opposed by the minority "libertarian" wing, which supports the bizarre corporate anarchist theories of Ayn Rand.) Reports of the negotiations printed in New American Movement and Grass Roots (the People's Party organ) seem to indicate some progress toward this goal; in some areas, the SP and NAM have run joint campaigns for city and local offices.

Far more important than DSOC, the loose SP-NAM-PP bloc is a product of the 1960s radicalization. NAM, for example, is a conscious attempt to recreate SDS as a broad, all-inclusive radical grouping; the People's Party (especially such local affiliates as the Peace and Freedom Party) is largely made up of supporters of the 1968 McCarthy campaign who became disillusioned with the Democratic Party; many of the groups (NAM especially) contain a number of women's activists. In general, the members of these groups have recognized that capitalism is an oppressive system and that only "socialism" provides a way forward; their concepts of "socialism" range from welfare state capitalism (a la Sweden) to "peaceful road" illusions on the model of Allende's Chile. The groups are sufficiently broad that there exist a number of subjectively revolutionary elements whom we should relate to on the level of discussions of revolutionary strategy and Leninist organization. In certain areas, it will be possible to work with groups such as DSOC, the SP, NAM and others -- strike support, civil liberties campaigns and so on. Particularly in regard to organizations such as NAM, the loose organization and extreme heterogeneity of their membership (both within local chapters and between different chapters) will make it possible to win over a number of their best members. This can only come about, however, through the combination of joint activity with an ongoing,

vigorous criticism of the reformist and parliamentary illusions of the organizations and their memberships.

Communist Party/Young Workers Liberation League

The CP and YWLL have moved into vigorous action in a whole variety of areas. In CLUW, CPers and their close sympathizers hold important posts at every level. In the trade unions, an intensive effort is being undertaken to revive TUAD as an active force, by establishing or linking up with rank-and-file committees in almost every major union. The CP and YWLL are running electoral campaigns in a growing number of areas. In election propaganda they urge the formation of neighborhood and work-place committees to fight for democratic rights.

A major goal of all this activity is a new effort to form an "anti-monopoly" coalition as the basis for a new political party; in their words, "Communists encourage and want to work with all movements and candidates independent of the Big Money Machines of the old parties, who are committed to the people and not monopoly profits. Such forces must unite with labor, Black people, white people, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans and other minorities, men and women, Communists, Socialists, and rank-and-file Democrats and Republicans." The goal of such a party is to "replace the Big Money party" in government with "trade unionists, women, Black people and other minorities" and "curb the abuses of Big Business" as "the first step" toward socialism.

Such a campaign is not, of course, a new one for the CP. When the National Coalition Against War, Racism and Repression (later the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice) was established, it was viewed as a nucleus for a new political party. The abortive attempt to create Student Unions for Peace and Justice on several California campuses was also a part of such an effort. The intensity of the CP campaign, however, demonstrates clearly that they feel that a real potential for such a party in the near future.

As a part of the campaign, the CP has stepped up its attacks upon the Democratic Party. A recent article in the Daily World stated, "As the second party of monopoly, the Democratic Party establishment rejects the anti-monopoly mandate of the people.... The very fact that the Democratic Party Establishment produced no program on inflation, Watergate, military spending or other vital issues during the election campaign is not proof of its bankruptcy but of its role as the second party of monopoly."

It concluded, "The role of the independent voter is rapidly increasing, and with it, the time for a third, anti-monopoly party is coming closer." ("U.S. at Midweek," DW, Nov. 14, 1974.) (The attack here, it should be noted, is not on the Democrats per se, but on the party "establishment," a particularly vague term which enables the CP to back "independent" Democrats such as the Black Democrat Metcalfe in the Chicago mayoralty race.)

Even more than before, the projected "anti-monopoly party" sounds very close to our own call for a Labor Party. It should be remembered, however, that these are precisely the terms with which the CP supported Henry Wallace's Progressive Party in 1948. While the CP might accept a genuine labor party as the realization of its call, it would also accept a third capitalist party with a populist overlay. (Even in the event of the establishment of a labor party, the CP could be counted upon to work to "broaden" such a party to include non-worker "anti-monopolists," including small and medium capitalists.)

The effect of the current CP campaign upon certain sectors of the working class and Black and other minority movements in the coming period cannot be underestimated, however. The CP has used its "left face" effectively in calling for militant actions against racist and neo-Nazi groups in different cities, by organizing tough-sounding rank-and-file committees in the unions and by stressing in its press in recent issues that "U.S. labor history shows that no major legislative gains were ever made without supplementing action at the ballot box by 'extra-parliamentary' mass movements." This left turn, however, is limited by the CP's ties to Moscow's American policy, and will no doubt provoke a crisis when that policy is modified.

It is important for the YSA to seek to engage the YWLL in united front activities whenever and wherever possible, especially in such fields as the fight against racism and political prisoner work, where the Stalinists have a broad periphery. The YWLL remains (in spite of CP efforts) a fairly loose organization containing a large percentage of young people who joined it because they wanted to support "communism" or because of first hand work with the YWLL in a union situation, in defense of Angela Davis or other political prisoners, and so on. Many of its members are far from hardened Stalinists; they are rather naive, inexperienced, and badly misinformed about Trotskyism. We can best win over these militants by intervening in a major way to support anti-racist and political prisoner support campaigns, and by thus demonstrating in practice that we are not "counterrevolutionaries," "splitters,"

etc. It will then be easier to combat in a systematic way the specific slanders and distortions regarding our positions and the history of the Trotskyist movement.

"Trotskyist" Opponents

The majority of the self-proclaimed "Trotskyist" groups in the United States have only further confirmed their total irrelevance to the real world. The Spartacists -- who remain the largest of the professional anti-Pabloite sects -- have begun to couple their ultra-left posturing with a thoroughly rightist stance in regard to a whole series of issues including Ireland (where they argue that reunification should not take place until the South has undergone a revolution and where they have taken to repeating British Army slanders of the IRA), the Middle East (where they called for a defeatist position in regard to the Arab states in the last war and used Ma'alot to read the DPFLP out of the left), and so on. Their major task remains "exposing" the "reformist" SWP and intervening to attempt to smash any real movement or struggle. The Workers League has suffered from the resignation of a number of its top leadership. Its ghetto recruitment drives have resulted in few stable cadre, while its quixotic Labor Party campaign involves little more than tiny rallies and regular visits to state and local AFL-CIO offices. Gerry Healy ultimately was forced to step in and oust Wohlforth, replacing him as National Secretary by Fred Mazelis. All in all, its chances are dim for anything but continued disintegration. The Revolutionary Socialist League (a left split from IS) has replaced the Spartacist League as the most sectarian sect; it regards even the Spartacists as "Pabloite." The Class Struggle League remains a tiny hodge-podge of miscellaneous outcasts from the other groupings, unable to establish a niche for itself in an already crowded field.

Only two avowedly Trotskyist formations have experienced significant growth in terms of size and periphery; the International Socialists (IS) and the Workers World Party/Youth Against War and Fascism (WWP/YAWF). IS has survived both right and left splits (the now-defunct "Third Camp Tendency" and what is now the RSL) to stabilize itself and significantly add to its Black cadre through a merger with the all-Black Socialist Collective (SC). It has done so by systematically liquidating its politics in favor of low-level economist union work and increasingly vague rhapsodies to socialism. Its "third camp" hostility to the workers states and conservative politics have placed IS in the left-social-democratic camp; the affiliation of the SC (whose

leader believes the October Revolution was a "mistake") does not alter this fact.

YAWF -- whose "Trotskyism" has re-emerged from the closet in recent months -- has grown to over 300 members and supporters of varying degrees of experience and allegiance to the Marcy cult. The growth has come about primarily because of militant YAWF campaigns against racist and fascist groups and involvement in consumer and workers' struggles through its Center for United Labor Action (CULA). Particularly in the last year -- a period of consolidation of already-politicized militants -- the militant character of YAWF interventions, coupled with the diffuse revolutionism of YAWF's ideology, has enabled them to make significant gains. YAWF's tail-endist attitude toward the leadership of various liberation movements in the Third World and bureaucratic leaderships of workers states is deeply engrained. Ultimately, however, the looseness of the group and the vagueness of its frequently-shifting line can make it possible for a section of its cadre to break away in the direction of revolutionary Marxism.

The Maoists

For a period, the Maoist groups appeared to be on the verge of a major breakthrough. Meetings cosponsored by the various groups attracted fairly large and generally enthusiastic audiences of independent militants who viewed the proposal for a "new Marxist-Leninist Communist Party" as the beginning of a new period in the U.S. left. The project eventually fell afoul of the growing rivalry of the Revolutionary Union and October League (Marxist-Leninist) for hegemony within the new party. The sectarian wrangling which ensued alienated a large number of independents; those who remained sympathetic to Maoism affiliated with one of the existing groups. If such a new party does emerge, it will most likely be built around either the RU, or OL, but not both. The most probable variant is a formation including the OL, supporters of the Guardian, the Black Workers Congress, the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization and various independent groups and collectives.

The RU is the largest of the Maoist formations. It is also one of the most sectarian and the most prone to engage in physical assaults against other groups on the left. Its youth group, the Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB, formerly the Attica Brigade) has attracted a certain sector of former SDSers, Mayday activists, and others unready for a disciplined party but eager to engage in militant anti-imperialist work. The RU recently suffered from the secession of the bulk of its Black cadre, however, and has had severe difficulties in form-

ulating a line on the Black question. (Its "nationalism of a new type" line has been attacked -- properly -- by other Maoist groups as an idealist conception which further suffers from the fact that it doesn't make very much sense.) Its line on Boston has further served to isolate it from many activists; it has furiously backpedaled on the more repellent aspects of its original line, while maintaining the basic conceptions intact. It withdrew its "Stop Busing" leaflets when it was pointed out that the symbol in question was identical with that employed by the white racists; but the use of the symbol in the first place is an example of its appalling isolation from the Black community and the struggle in question.

The October League (Marxist-Leninist) has emerged as a "softer" rival to the RU -- less apt to engage in violence against the rest of the left, less dogmatic in both tone and substance. It is also politically to the right of the RU, serving as a de facto tail for the CP in most areas where it is active. It was the OL which intervened in Iranian student groups in favor of the Shah, the "anti-imperialist leader." (It was denounced for this by the RU.)

Other Maoist groups are of less significance. The Guardian represents a constituency in search of the organizational home it has lacked since Henry Wallace returned to the Democrats in 1952. It has a wide readership, but no substance to back up its prestige. The BWC, PRRWO, and even I Wor Kuen are important to the Maoists less for their actual membership and periphery -- which is quite small -- than for the constituencies (Black, Puerto Ricans, Asian-Americans) which they attempt to represent. The Communist Labor Party (formerly the Communist League) represents the Maoist lunatic fringe; it remained totally apart from the regroupment campaign, proclaiming that it is the new Communist Party. It is notable for its view that Canada is part of the U.S. (hence its term "United States of North America") and its position of calling for a "Negro nation" in the former Black Belt region (in which both Blacks and whites would be "Negroes").

The view asserted by some YSA comrades that American (and other) Maoist groups represent counterrevolutionary Stalinist formations is incredibly simplistic. Maoist groups in the U.S. have recruited cadre on the basis of militant, class-struggle politics opposed to the reformist CP. Subjectively, they are absolutely loyal to the goal of world revolution; objectively, they vacillate between correct criticisms of CP practice and near-duplications of that practice. They are trapped in a real contradiction between their own revolutionism and the actions of the Chinese bureaucrats; Chinese support for Bandara-

naike against the JVP and Yahya Khan against the Bengali people were acutely embarrassing for many Maoists and afforded an opportunity to win over some of their cadre.

The ambiguous nature of Maoism in the United States is exemplified by the case of the development of the Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU). For a considerable period, the YSA upheld YOBU as an exemplary, militant organization of Black youth. But the YSA, viewing YOBU as a "mass organization," failed to perceive the inevitable development of a group such as YOBU toward some sort of ideological framework for its activities; like SDS, YOBU could not remain indefinitely a nondescript recruiting-ground for other groups. The failure of the YSA to intervene aggressively to win YOBU toward a Trotskyist perspective ensured that YOBU would turn elsewhere. Their gravitation toward China reflects the tremendous influence which the victory of the Chinese Revolution over imperialism and capitalism continues to exert over Black and other Third World peoples around the world; the ringing public statements of the Chinese leaders and the aid which the Chinese provide to African and Asian liberation movements bolster this attraction. African World, the YOBU organ, began to take on a Maoist flavor; YOBU as a whole began to utilize Maoist political concepts. The response of the YSA was simply to drop all references to YOBU from its documents.

Did YOBU -- in one step -- go from a healthy organization of Black youth to a Stalinist organization, "counterrevolutionary through and through"? Or did the turn of YOBU represent, rather, an attempt -- however faltering and error-prone -- to move toward revolutionary Marxism? Do we respond by denouncing YOBU, or by praising those aspects of its turn which are correct and progressive, while criticizing in a comradely manner the incorrect views and concepts which accompany them? The young militants of YOBU are scarcely hardened "counterrevolutionaries"; they are, rather, revolutionary-minded activists who have made mistakes in their ideological evolution and practice, and we must tailor our approach to them accordingly.

A final point is necessary in regard to Maoism: the nature of the struggle to win over Maoist cadre to Trotskyist positions, in terms of the form and content of our polemics. The comrades of the International Majority were entirely correct last year when they referred to the use (by the LTF as a whole) of "peremptory, apodictic and scarcely convincing arguments in regard to Maoism." They added: "We were and we remain of the opinion that the struggle against Maoism requires

powerful and precise analyses, and that its success will depend on the seriousness of these analyses. Experiences in the countries where the international minority leads Trotskyist organizations demonstrates...that its seemingly more 'trenchant' (in reality, more simplistic) style of polemicizing against the Maoists has in no way reduced the extent of their influence against the youth." ("The Differences in Interpretation of the 'Cultural Revolution' at the Last World Congress and Their Theoretical Implications," IIDB, Vol. 10, No. 22, November 1973, pp. 26). The YSA has two duties in regard to China and other workers states: to defend the gains made by the masses, while opposing their bureaucratic misrulers. In the past, we have paid insufficient attention to the first of these, focusing instead on criticisms of the Chinese bureaucracy. Even the article by Tony Thomas in The Militant defending China's existence as a workers state against PL's state capitalist position focuses on the negative aspects of China. Given the current level of political consciousness in the United States -- with the most vituperative anti-communism still rampant among large sectors of the population -- this approach must be regarded as a serious mistake. Further, as the IMT comrades point out, our polemics are often so crude and so false as to make them worthless. We must not prettify the ugly aspects of the Chinese regime; but neither should we yield to Stalinophobic hostility which only serves to weaken our case.

Conclusions

The period ahead offers opportunities which the YSA has never had before. It is for this reason that it is crucial to have a full and open discussion of all aspects of our orientation, line and practice, to ensure the fullest possible preparation for the tasks we will have to face.

If for no other reason, the reintegration of the comrades of the Internationalist Tendency would be required by this aspect of the situation. The arbitrary and bureaucratic expulsion of supporters of the majority of the Fourth International cannot help but hamper the YSA in the determination of the correct method, line and practice. It also represents an ominous step away from adherence to the principles of democratic-centralism codified in the statutes of the FI and the YSA constitution. This expulsion should be rescinded immediately.

The way is open for solid and significant growth for the YSA, in terms of size, periphery and influence. The opportunity is there; we hope that the YSA has the courage and determination to take it.

December 10, 1974