

Activists Panels

Vol. 1 No. 2

November 1970

Contents

Page

ARTICLE WORK AND THE TRADE UNIONS 4

FIREFIGHTERS PANEL 10

EDUCATION PANEL 20

1970 Socialist Activists and Educational Conference

REPORTS

vol1 no.2 .50

Blank

- 2 -

Vol. I No. 2

November 1970

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
ANTIWAR WORK AND THE TRADE UNIONS	4
FINANCES PANEL	10
FORUM PANEL	20
<u>MILITANT</u> PANEL	25

ANTIWAR WORK AND THE TRADE UNIONS

[The following are excerpts from the discussion of antiwar work and the trade unions at Oberlin, August 12, 1970, made from transcripts of tapes without benefit of correction by the participants.]

* * *

T. Bird, Connecticut: Our antiwar committee in New Haven included auto workers, machinists, as well as some students from Wesleyan University, who during the campus upsurge, turned toward labor. Our general objective has been to get into local union meetings to raise the issue of the war.

We also had a few people from the Workers League who tried to get us oriented immediately towards their line of calling for a labor party. Our proposal, drawn up along the lines of PAC, was accepted by the overwhelming majority with the Workers League all by themselves. They are now gradually drifting away.

We're preparing now for the upcoming state AFL-CIO convention in September. We want that convention to pass a resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from S.E. Asia. Some of the older trade unionists we're working with are very skeptical about our chances for success. But they see this as a means by which we can raise the antiwar issues in the labor movement, get a lot of publicity and get other people in the labor movement thinking about the war at the same time. If it passes, it will put the Connecticut AFL-CIO on record favoring this resolution at the national AFL-CIO convention, which I think is sometime around February.

We're sending out mailings to all the locals announcing our presence, saying that we're willing to speak at any local meetings. Out of this, we hope to establish a number of contacts and gain support for building mass actions. Now we haven't come out with a formal endorsement of October 31 yet. A lot of the people involved have a wait and see attitude. They've heard about the New Move and really don't want to take sides. We're going to have to fight to project October 31, but basically we have a very healthy orientation; we will be participating in October 31, and this will be a vehicle by which we can reach labor unions throughout the state.

Laura Dertz, San Francisco: I'll just go very briefly into two very recent successful experiences that we had in the labor movement in San Francisco. First was with the post office wildcat strike, which the union leadership didn't support until later. Before that happened, though,

through the SMC and the local adult antiwar coalition we were able to go to the strike lines, and offer our assistance in getting community support and marching on the lines. Through this intervention, the strikers saw what we were saying. The actual strike headquarters were located at our antiwar office, which was very good, and through that relationship, we'll be able to develop things for the future, like going to them for support of October 31 and other things.

The other experience which I want to go into more in depth, was the seven month old International Typographical Union strike at the Independent Journal in San Rafael. The basic issue there is that the Independent Journal newspaper is trying to break the union. There are also a number of other demands, but that's the main thing -- they've even refused to negotiate. That paper has even refused mediation. It's been a very long strike, and very wearing on the printers themselves.

Before we got in touch with them, they had had some demonstrations in front of different companies that were still advertising in the Journal. Our initial contact with the union was on the basis that we could help build their demonstration, but we couldn't pass any leaflets out there. This union had already come out with a very strong statement against the Cambodian invasion and is one of the few unions that tried very hard to help the farm workers. Cesar Chavez for example was speaking at this rally. We got in further contact with the vice-president of the union, and he actually came down to our antiwar office and we talked for about two hours about how we could help. It's very important to realize that he wasn't doing it out of the kindness of his heart. He realized that the union had to reach other people, organized groups in society, and he knew SMC was the most effective youth organization, and that he would have to come to us and ask us for help. We negotiated on that basis. That is we wouldn't ask the SMC to help build the demonstration unless they took some stand to show to us in the SMC that they were an antiwar union and that they would help to build antiwar demonstrations.

The vice-president gave a ten dollar donation himself, and we worked out of their strike headquarters. They gave us some material, and banners, and the day of the demonstration we had a very large banner, "SMC supports the Independent Journal strike." There were about two thousand people there -- about 500 were students and the rest rank and file young workers who were very militant.

Future negotiating with this union

looks very promising. We couldn't get union endorsement for the Hiroshima Day demonstration, because they didn't meet, but we have been in further contact. They've been taking the position that they can't do too much to help build October 31 because they're very hard up for money, and the workers are very busy with the strike. But I think that if they want further help from SMC, which I'm sure they do, they'll ease up on that position, and they'll come forward with some active help for October 31.

John Benson, Detroit: Detroit is probably a little different from most cities that we're working in. First of all, it's not an AFL-CIO town. And in fact, the AFL-CIO officialdom there comes out of the UAW. The whole town is dominated by the UAW, by Solidarity House. So they sort of had their break with the AFL-CIO bureaucracy a few years ago and split. And the union movement has a little bit different character than much of the union movement throughout the rest of the country because of that. Now it seems that the local union bureaucracy or officialdom is solidly, in its top layers, opposed to the war. How far they'll actually carry this out in terms of actual work, we can't tell yet. We have had their representatives speaking at our rallies and activities such as the State Chairman of the AFL-CIO, the Wayne County Chairman of the AFL-CIO, and local presidents from some of the UAW shops. Our work with the officialdom began to expand after the May period, with the developments of preparations for the Cleveland conference and for the Hiroshima Day meeting that we held.

The participation of Paul Silver, a retired International Representative of the UAW is very significant. He is actually participating, coming to union meetings, discussing and helping to plan some of the activities. Silver himself, I believe, was previously in the Socialist Party or at least his background is Social-Democrat. He is a part of the bureaucracy of the UAW which is a well organized, well functioning machine. He has never done a thing on his own, without extensive consultation throughout Solidarity House. When he comes to a coalition meeting and participates in it, it means it's a decision somehow, however formally or informally made, by the UAW bureaucracy. He was at the NPAC steering committee meeting in Detroit along with representatives from AFSCME.

However none of these figures has even mentioned October 31 yet. They talk about building the peace movement within the union movement, but we'll have to initiate a whole campaign around the 31, and the building of the SMC, to get them involved in building these actions.

Silver did another significant thing. He arranged for Brandon Sexton, the Educational Director of the UAW, to speak at the Hiroshima Day rally. Sexton's speech aimed at the students, telling them what kind of image to project to the working class. He was trying to give advice. It was a carefully prepared speech.

Another thing I wanted to comment on is the attitude people in the antiwar movement take towards union officials. They go into meetings with some union official sitting there talking about how it's good to have the union officials joining the movement and they'll refer to union bureaucrats, and things like this. These union officials react very strongly to that. They will stand up and explain -- Silver does this every meeting -- he gets up and says how they've been here for a long time and how it's important in our approach to these people not to act as though they're joining us. We shouldn't say "we're glad to see you joining us" and "things like that. We should call them "officials," and talk about the "merging of forces."

Frank Grinnon, Atlanta: I want to talk about the possibilities for getting funds from different unions, for the antiwar movement. In Atlanta, we recently had contact with the Alliance for Labor Action leadership in the South. We approached them through the SMC and a broader antiwar group on the Georgia State campus, called Faculty and Students Against the War. With this support, we approached William Genovese, the head of the ALA in the South. The ALA has a Committee for Social Action, which contributes funds to different social movements. We submitted a budget for the fall, roughly around \$300.00. Genovese is very sympathetic to it. It still has to be checked through the national Teamster office.

If you're going to work through the UAW or the Teamsters it is important to try to get faculty participation in your antiwar committees, broaden it out. I don't think we could have gotten Teamster support just through SMC. We should also remember that these people want to recruit students from campus to do research and take staff jobs organizing for the ALA. They see the antiwar movement as a powerful force.

Genovese was extremely sympathetic. He wants to be kept informed. It's very important that comrades in the different coalitions have regular minutes sent to these different contacts, as well as personally keeping in contact with them, so they know what's happening, even though they're not participating in the coalition. In other words, keep the links open. Try to get them included on the National Peace Action Council mailings. It's possible

sometimes to get funds, particularly through the ALA, if you sit down and talk it out, work out some sort of budget, and have some faculty cover, particularly with student antiwar formations.

The other thing I wanted to talk about was our contact with AFSCME Local 1644 in Atlanta, the one that was on strike. Through our support actions, building student and community support for the strike, we made a lot of contacts with the union. We were able to get the union's endorsement and participation for a number of antiwar actions. They endorsed the Cleveland conference and they endorsed the big march against Repression and the War we had in Atlanta. I was in a position after the Cambodia invasion to call the president of 1644, and I said I wanted to speak about Cambodia and the upcoming protest actions in Atlanta.

In other words, take an aggressive attitude, call them up, and you're able to speak in the union meetings. I got endorsement for an action and was very well received. Particularly in the AFSCME unions there are very good opportunities. Building student strike support actions for instance gives you a lot of contacts for the antiwar movement. By participating in these actions and talking to these people, you're able to get a lot of openings for the antiwar movement.

Jean Anderson, Chicago: I'm a teacher in the AFL-CIO. Our orientation is to bring the whole union out against the war. Because of the weakness of our forces, we were obliged to work with the CP. What we did with our small number of people was to put out leaflets, to tell teachers to come out to antiwar demonstrations, like for instance, the Moratorium. Until we made that initial thrust into the movement, they hadn't done anything.

From there we decided to work with them and to put out a newsletter to talk to teachers about the war. We wanted to get them to unite as an antiwar group. When the U.S. invaded Cambodia we went down to the University of Illinois Circle Campus. We announced that if there were teachers in the body, we would like to organize a teacher group against the war too. We ended up getting, during the last couple of months of the term, about 125 names and meetings with about 40-50 people.

We also put through the union's House of Representatives, in the second to last meeting, a call for a referendum. We had also made a motion that the House come out against the war. There is a referendum which we're campaigning for.

Lund, Berkeley: I think Frank Grinnon made a really important point, when he said we cannot just welcome these labor officials into the movement with open arms and

leave it at that.

I think the key to getting unions involved in this type of thing is audacity and aggressiveness. We must make personal visits, try and get money from them and work them into our actions.

Bill Massey, Seattle: Just prior to the regional conference in Seattle, the SMC came in with an October 31st proposal. It had the endorsement and support of the president of the retail clerks union, the teachers union president and vice-president, the musicians union and a representative of the United Farm Workers Union. It had also the endorsement of the AFSCME local social workers union, and their delegate, Debby Leonard, spoke at the conference.

That conference wound up in a split with our forces, the SMC and a number of independents on one side and on the other side the ultralefts -- like the Seattle Liberation Front, the CP, the Socialist Party, the IS and so on.

We adjourned with all those who were interested in holding an October 31 demonstration. The CP contingent, under various and sundry names tried to get people that had been in the trade union movement to act like they were rank and file members and to attack the student and antiwar movement. They concentrated on telling students and youth that they did not really know how to talk to working people, and that they should get themselves straightened out before going in that direction, a completely paternalistic attitude.

As a result of the conference, we held a meeting with the various individuals. Many wanted to wait until the dust settled, remain friendly but they didn't at that time want to inject themselves, except for the Retail Clerks Union, which is a large union in the Seattle area. We held a News Conference announcing the October 31 demonstration, and the Retail Clerks sent their Education and Communications Director to the conference to announce that he was supporting it and that the Union's President would be supporting it. We intend to use that in order to raise money, and to get out with as much force as possible to the plant gates to build the demonstration.

One other thing that we will be working on is that in Seattle, there's 20 to 25 per cent unemployment, and a lot of workers are not at the plant gates -- they're at the unemployment office. We will be utilizing that to relate their unemployment to the question of the war -- the lack of funds that are getting to them, while Boeing which has made a lot of money and laid them off, has plenty of money in the bank. We have also touched on the idea of having some sort of contingent of unemployed on the demonstration October 31.

Derrel Myers, Twin Cities: I just want to briefly report on a development in Minneapolis, which is an antiwar development in labor, outside the trade unions, and since there's nothing unique about our antiwar trade union work in Minnesota, I want to limit myself to this area. We cannot assume that workers have to be in unions before we can organize them against the war. We organized a group in Minneapolis called Labor Against War last fall, but it was a little ahead of the time, and we were only able to attract about 25 people to it. Most of these were already radicals and we couldn't draw new people into it.

The new development is at Pillsbury Corp. which employs 8,000 or 10,000 at one plant. A fellow went to the executives and asked to have use of one of the Executive lunchrooms to have an antiwar meeting in the plant at lunch time, and he got one of the Executive lunchrooms to use. And to the surprise of the people who organized it, 90 people showed up to this first meeting and 75 of them signed up to be actual members of the group that calls itself Pillsbury Employees Against the War in Indochina.

Most of them are white collar people and non-union. They're newly radicalized and have never yet been involved in any radical movement. However, they represent a layer that I think we have to pay attention to. Most of them have college degrees, are young and have been affected by the campus radicalization.

Just to run through what they've done, the corporation permitted them to get an inter-office credit account number and they now have use of the corporation's mimeograph machine, Xerox machine, inter-department communications, lunchrooms for meetings, etc. It's like we've dreamed about on the campuses for a long time. We call it the Red Factory.

The press picked it up and as a result of the publicity, there was an enthusiastic response from many employees at other corporations, banks and factories throughout the Twin Cities. They are now organizing other groups, inter-factory antiwar committees. A group of bank tellers went to the bank president and asked him why he was using bank money to invest in Dow Chemical.

A city-wide coalition of these groups at plants, factories, corporations and banks was formed and held a lunch hour meeting at the city library. One hundred and fifty people came to the first one and it was a very enthusiastic meeting. They're going to have a three day peace fair in downtown Minneapolis and they've invited all the antiwar groups to have speakers, to set up literature tables and the idea is to draw in downtown employees and shoppers.

They're sold on the idea of October 31st. They're going to help build it, they think it will help build them, and they're part now of the coalition that's developing in Minneapolis. And this layer can be very helpful in putting the pressure on the trade union officials, to come into the antiwar movement. We can't do this type of organizing from the outside, but three or four people from inside who are opposed to the war, with the help of a citywide coalition with literature can get things off the ground.

Debbie Notkin, Chicago: In Chicago, we had a very bad coalition situation, with the old Chicago Peace Action Coalition, but we've been in a position where we've started building for the 31st and starting to build the new coalition. In doing this, we started reaching out to the labor unions, and we've gotten quite a significant amount of support from them. We started with about nine contacts and now have about 50.

The biggest breakthrough we made was when we got Pat Gorman, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, AFL-CIO and we not only got his endorsement and \$400.00 but he had Abe Feinglass, vice-president of the International call up the local fur and leather officials, as well.

We'll have a chance to have either a student, a vet or a GI speak at all of these locals, build support for the 31st, and try to get an endorsement. One individual who's playing a very key role in the coalition now is Bill Banta, an international representative of AFSCME. We've also been able to involve an AFSCME local. We had our initial meeting where we involved some of these trade unionists, and we brought in the president of this AFSCME local. A UAW local has endorsed it already, a predominantly Black local, and these people haven't just endorsed. The locals are actively involved in the coalition. Some of the unionists are a little bit hesitant to endorse the 31st now, because Emil Mazey has reservations, but we've made a lot of contacts.

What we've been trying to do is get endorsement, get money and, most importantly, try to get an opportunity to speak in front of the various locals. In some cases that's just not possible. Some of the people with their local situations just aren't ready yet, and there's not much we can do. So the endorsements are important but the openings are just amazing. We've only had one person that we've gotten in touch with this summer who was unfriendly to the 31st. He was heading up one of the fur workers locals in Chicago, and that's all reversed now, since he got a call from Abe Feinglass. Our first

Usually what we do is send out a letter and when you send out letters to trade unions be sure they are addressed to specific people, or you'll never be able to track down who got the letter and they won't be a bit of good. It is important to get an endorsement for the political authority it lends. One problem we've found is that several of the major unions in our area have been having trouble getting any quorums for meetings. So you're not going to reach the masses or rank and

file by going to the meetings. You have to find a more direct route. You should leaflet a plant or get in touch with some of the Rank and File caucuses.

We can't depend simply on sending out notices to come to a coalition meeting. We have to have actions and formations which have some basis in the trade unions themselves and which have a kind of legitimacy to trade unionists that the antiwar coalitions won't always have.

FINANCES PANEL

Judy White, New York: I would like to open this panel by saying that financing our movement is one of the most important political responsibilities for each and every member of the SWP and YSA. Without money, all the correct political ideas we have won't be very useful, because without money we won't be able to get those ideas out effectively to the mass of radicalizing students, women, Third World people, and others that we're trying to win over to a revolutionary perspective.

And unlike the other radical tendencies that have been on the scene throughout American history -- unlike the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, for example -- the Trotskyist movement does not rely on angels to finance the day-to-day work of building the revolutionary party and youth organization. It is true that we have had a few contributions from wealthy friends who make possible our big expansion projects, and without them expansions like the one for the print shop that we are working toward would be very very difficult. But, for the day-to-day work of building the revolutionary movement, things like subsidizing the paper and the magazine, for running election campaigns, setting up and maintaining an open Trotskyist center in every center where there's a party branch, paying functionaries in each area so we can take maximum advantage of each political opening that we have -- for all of these day-to-day needs and many others, the party and YSA depend on the political consciousness of each member to finance our work.

That requires regular sizable contributions from the membership, from all the members. And because we are serious about making the American revolution we have to be serious about raising the money to make it possible.

However there are some very difficult obstacles in the way of educating on this political necessity. Marx and Engels wrote about the fetishism attached to money, how people living in capitalist society tend to become extraordinarily attached to money. And Masters and Johnson in their book, Human Sexual Inadequacy, point out that there are two areas of experience in this society where people are most unwilling to tell the truth and face facts. They are sex and money. And Masters and Johnson claim that people are more willing to tell the truth about their personal sex life than they are about their financial situation. So this makes it even more difficult for the leadership of our movement to raise the consciousness on the need to give money to finance the party and the YSA. And it makes it all the more vital for each YSA local and party branch to assign one of the respected

and conscious comrades in the branch or local to head up this area of party work.

* * *

The purpose of this panel is to examine in detail the day-to-day functioning of the party branches. We're going to start it off with four short reports zeroing in on some of the most fundamental aspects of internal party financing: 1) how to function efficiently, 2) the responsibilities of the branch and local leadership to have an accurate idea of what's going on financially in the branches, 3) how to educate on party finances centering on implementing the sustainer system, 4) special problems of financing new branches and the relation between branch financial functioning and national functioning.

You'll notice that we haven't scheduled a separate report on fund raising activities, other than the sustainer system. Fund raising is an increasingly important area of financing for our movement and it has great potential in YSA finances, but it is our feeling that unless a branch has a solid system of internal financing, other fund raising activities can become a substitute for the sustainer system. However we'd like to encourage people from branches to discuss the question of outside fund raising during the discussion period. There are a lot of good ideas on how to do this, by the way, in the first issue of the Party Builder. (Vol. VI, No. I)

We also didn't schedule a report on how to raise large chunks of money that we need for expansion projects. Earlier in the conference, George Novack explained some of our needs in this area and the only thing that I think should be added to it is that it is a responsibility of branch leadership to keep the national office informed on comrades joining our movement who do have this special contribution that they can make to the coming American revolution. We'll take it from there.

The first report will be by Peggy Brundy, who up until recently was financial director of the Los Angeles branch. Los Angeles is the branch with the highest per capita sustainer pledge to the national office and the most consistent record of financial functioning of any branch.

Peggy Brundy, New York: When Judy first asked me to give this report I started thinking about what special thing there was about Los Angeles that would be a contribution to all the branches around the country. And I concluded that the most unique thing was that we don't have

periodic crises in our finances in Los Angeles. That is, in January 1969, we made a \$15.00 per member per month pledge to the national office, and from then until now we've never been more than one week behind. We've never racked up any big debt to the national office. We've never had an internal fund drive, and only twice have we asked our members to raise their sustainers to the branch. And it's not because Los Angeles is a particularly rich branch that we had that success.

I want to go over what we consider the key to breaking out of the "crisis cycle" that tends to perpetually exist in branch finances. I don't think that this possibility should particularly surprise us in this kind of a period. I want to draw a very strained analogy to make my point. We expect we can organize a planned economy without crises and starvation, then plenty and boom, and then bust. So in a period of radicalization we should certainly be able to do it in our own branch if we plan it out ahead. The basic way we did it is through having a collective decision on the part of the branch on exactly how the money is going to be spent and exactly where it's going to come from. Then the branch treasurer has the responsibility of following up on that collective decision and implementing it.

The process starts, of course, with the budget. I'm sure that almost every branch and YSA local draws up a budget. From discussing with other branches I've discovered two differences in L.A.'s system of budgeting. First, it's a very accurate and realistic analysis of the past and projection of what is possible in the future. And second, it is a working budget. A projection must be based on actual performance in the past, not on the idea of what should be done. For example, if a branch has been losing money during the past period on The Militant, that trend must be projected into the future. If we do a budget in January, we figure that in February we'll have certain expenses; we'll have to send an organizer to the plenum; send the organizer to the antiwar conference; or any other major and minor expenses that are going to be coming up in the next three month period, leaving nothing out. Then we average it out and figure out what our deficit is each month during that period. Then we present a concrete solution to the branch. If we want to do these things in the coming period, we need exactly this much money. In order to get that much money, we propose, for example, a 30% overall raise in sustainers to the branch or some other solution. And we follow up on the sustainer raise just like we follow up on a subscription drive; that is printing lists of every member in the branch with exactly what they're pledging; every week as it progresses toward the goal of the 30% raise, printing a new list showing how

much is raised. In the two sustainer drives we did in Los Angeles, the organizer and the financial director talked to almost every single person in the branch about their financial situation and what kind of contribution they could make to the branch finances in order to meet the projection that was made.

Our budget was a working budget because we stuck to it. The treasurer referred to it sometimes on a daily basis when unexpected expenses came up, and and certainly on a monthly basis to make sure that the income and expenses were in line with the projected income and expenses.

The reason we could stick to the budget basically is that political priorities were reflected in our budget projection. It was discussed with the branch and the branch gave its concrete political agreement. Then the whole branch takes responsibility for the finances. It's no longer the sole responsibility of the treasurer to chase down somebody that isn't paying his or her sustainer. A whole attitude and approach develops whereby people pay their sustainers; people will come up and say I'm going to raise my sustainer as soon as I get these debts paid off and so forth. If it's the collective responsibility of the branch and there's general agreement on how to solve the problem, it cuts across a lot of the problems that Judy mentioned from Masters and Johnson. It's no longer the individual treasurer pitted against the individual comrade.

It also solves other problems that very often crop up in finances. For example, you sometimes get disagreements on charging for socials or for the summer school. The way it worked in LA was that the branch is very aware that in order to have a full-time organizer, in order to send the organizer to the plenum, to have a headquarters and pay the national office, we must charge money at summer schools; we must very carefully charge money at socials and so forth. That's no longer a problem.

There is a small technical arrangement that can make a big difference in a branch's sticking to a budget or not. The treasurer should be consulted on all expenditures over say, \$40.00, and there should be only two or at the most three comrades who can sign checks. This will, of course, cause some inconvenience. But the treasurer, working daily with the branch's money, has the best idea of how much money we have and how spending it affects the budget projection. If people who are not familiar with the overall branch financial picture write checks, a perfectly accurate budget projection can in short time be reduced to an irrelevant academic exercise.

Now, I want to deal with several things about sustainers. First of all, the question of asking for sustainer raises. There are two ways that it can be done. One is an appeal to the branch as a whole for a specific amount of sustainer raise. It's my opinion that we should avoid doing that very often -- maybe once or twice a year with a specific amount of money in mind. Otherwise comrades just lose confidence in the ability of the sustainer system to solve the problem of comrades being perpetually asked for more money. There has to be a concrete projection for money that solves the problem. And conversely, under the sustainer system, the executive committee can't be constantly coming to the branch and the YSA asking for more money or an internal fund drive for this or that purpose because then comrades figure, well we have to give to the internal fund drive, so we won't raise our sustainers as high as we could. The membership loses confidence in the whole financial system.

And, of course, the point's been made innumerable times that harangues are not the way to motivate a sustainer drive. The best way to do it is simply show that the branch has decided to carry out these political priority activities. In order to do that, we will need so much money exactly. And then if the branch decides not to raise the money we have to decide where to cut back on our activity.

I also want to emphasize the importance of putting out printed lists showing what individual comrades' pledges are. We don't hide or feel ashamed about a comrade's Militant sales record or about assigning people to antiwar work and so forth. However, there's some kind of very uneasy squeamishness about putting out lists of the comrades' financial pledges to the branch. But it's the same kind of thing. It's a certain kind of political contribution that comrades make to the branch. It's no different from Militant sales. This kind of sustainer raise should be viewed as a campaign, and carried out as such, with an energetic beginning, regular reports, and a conclusive finish.

The second way of raising sustainers -- it has to be done continually -- is that the financial director has to keep in touch with the personal and job situation of every comrade in the branch. This can get to be a pretty big job when you have a branch of over 60 as we have had in Los Angeles, but you have to know when somebody gets a raise, when somebody is fired or gets laid off, so that you can make adjustments in the projected budget. For example, we had a comrade transferred out who had a pledge of \$35.00 a week to the branch. And losing that, of course, was a rather severe blow to our finances. But immediately, the same meeting that he left, we took steps to correct

this. We mimeographed up the budget that we projected in January. We said losing this \$35.00 will create this kind of an imbalance in our budget and we projected a sustainer raise to make that up.

It's important that the treasurers and the organizers realize that the sustainers and contributions aren't their money to spend. I don't mean that in the sense that the treasurers or organizers are going to go to Bermuda or anything. But often times a perfectly legitimate expense comes up, like we have to send \$240.00 to the state campaign committee to keep them going. Well, the way to do that is not just to write a check and send it off to wherever it's going. The way to do it is the treasurer has to figure out how this is going to unbalance the budget because that's an expense that wasn't included in the projection. This would mean that when you got to the end of that three month period you'd be out of money. And what would inevitably happen is that the branch would get behind in its sustainer to the national office. That's always where the buck stops -- the sustainer to the national office. And I think we can see at this conference that that means things like we may not be able to have a twenty-page Militant this fall. The only way to avoid this situation is when expenses that aren't included in the budget come up, you have to decide how you are going to make it up. Maybe you can cut that expense some; maybe you can have an extra social. So in that sense it is important that the organizer check with the treasurer on every unexpected expense, that the treasurer check with the budget and then it be presented to the branch as a proposal because this changes the collective decision on how the branch's money was going to be spent.

The proposal to the branch can't be just a formal thing, like the organizer comes in: "I make a proposal that we send \$230.00 to this or that." And in the branch everyone is in favor of it; there really isn't any discussion. It had to be a concrete motivation of what this does to the budget, what this does to the priorities we've set, and how it's going to be made up so that the branch can make an informed decision on how to proceed. I consider that to be the backbone of the success that we had in Los Angeles on finances. Organizers and treasurers should be very hard on the question of staying within the budget, or deciding how to make up any deficit that comes from any necessary political expense that is not included.

Our method of organizing finances runs directly counter to everything that we've been trained in since we were little kids. We've been trained that we're competing with every other person for money, to get it, to hold on to it. We're trained to spend money in a consumer society on

work that they're doing. People who are in charge of The Militant should present reports that include the financial aspect of our sales. The sales director can't just report, "We don't have any Militants in the hall so we assume we must have sold them all." The approach is also an excellent educational device. It brings home the fact that the movement can't function without money. You just can't have Militants in the hall and never turn any money in and so forth.

On giving financial directors other important assignments: it takes a lot of time -- especially the kind of system that I've gone over -- and organizers should be very conscious about allowing the financial director the time to do the job right.

And finally, a word about the organizer. The organizer has to be very conscious about the branch finances because the organizer is the one on a day-to-day basis that runs into the situations where the money can be spent. There's always some political opportunity that we run into that requires money. And it's the job of the leadership of the branch, the organizer, the financial director, to weigh these new political opportunities that are coming up against the whole priorities of the party nationally and make a conscious decision based on the concrete financial and political situation of the party nationally and locally.

Helen Scheer, Twin Cities: I'd like to make a few observations to start with that I think are very important for both the YSA and party. First of all, we always balance our books, we pay our rent, we pay our local bills, lights and the rest of it. But the key to what we're really doing in branch finances is what we're doing for the national office. And until we make that norm of \$15.00 per member sustainer to the national office then the branch finances are really not in that good shape.

Branch finances are a concrete picture in dollars and cents of the political activity and the organizational strengths of a branch. Financial reports are in many cases a political evaluation of where we've been, where we're at and where we're going.

But in this report I'm going to discuss that aspect of branch finances dealing with analysis of bookkeeping and that kind of thing. When we say we're making an analysis in branch finances, we're abstracting a particular area or category of branch finances and doing an in-depth study, trying to get a better understanding of what's happening. From there we present this to the executive committee and the branch membership. This is very important to do many times in order to locate just what a problem is and/or to go about solving it.

I'll illustrate what I've done just to give you an example: in Twin Cities in the last four months we've made three different types of analysis. From one we did, it became very obvious that we were spending too much money just in operating a branch headquarters, so I made an analysis taking in all the factors that go into running a branch headquarters. That includes the guy that picks up the trash, the phones, the lights, the paper supplies and all that sort of thing. And I just laid out how much we were spending over the period from January to May. Because these expenses were on the increase and we have to alert the comrades in the leadership that expenses are going up and we're going to have to economize. The whole purpose of this type of analysis is to come up with economy and it's to raise the consciousness of people who just take things like lights for granted. The analysis shows that that costs money and brings it home very concretely. For instance you can run up long distance phone bills, and comrades often are not conscious of what this means in dollars and cents. Try to tighten up. Tightening up is part of the business of making the budget work.

Another kind of analysis we've done is relating to party departments. Actually we haven't quite gotten to the point in Twin Cities where the heads of different areas of work are keeping track of their finances. For instance, The Militant director organizes sales but he doesn't know anything about the finances of the sales. I think the suggestions Peggy has made in her report are very valuable to all of us in organizing things better. This kind of analysis deals with party departments. I took the categories of Militant sales, forums, classes, socials and the kitty which is what we call our coffee and things like that we sell in the headquarters. I took four months: January, February, March and April to give us a picture month-by-month. It shows in dollars and cents what happened with Militants in January -- how much income, how much expenses, in February the same. When we did this, we found that February was a terrible month. It turns out that at least one week of sales was cancelled. That just goes to show that if you cancel one week of Militant sales, then you've got a whole bundle of Militants and no money. It really hurts. Another thing that happened that month was money was left around the headquarters. We had a lot of money piled up, and somebody just took it because it was just sitting there. You've got to be very careful about leaving change in cans sitting around the headquarters. It's irresponsible in a sense; it's sitting there and it's tempting.

Then on forums, the same thing happened. For instance, we had a high profit on forums for the month of April of \$165.00, but the month of March we cleared only

\$15.00. So what's happened here with the forums? We look into these kinds of things to see what happened, if we cancelled a forum or two. It's a very serious decision to cancel any kind of a meeting or activity. Cancel one forum or one branch meeting, it's very serious for party finances. Another thing, it turns out we lost money on one of our tours and that is really pretty inexcusable not to make money on a tour. One month can go wrong for more or less accidental reasons, so it's a mistake to panic on one month's report. The value of analysis is that you take a particular category for about three months and then you get a clear picture. Because you can have a down month once in a while.

On the kitty I just want to make this point. It's always good to use the headquarters in a financial way so it helps pay the rent, pay the lights, telephone and that sort of thing, and this is what we do in terms of refreshments to help bring in money. We have the kitty and it has to be organized. If it's not organized you can lose money. Our standard on this over many years of experience is that the profit off of the kitty should equal the expense paid out for the coffee, etc. In other words, if we spend \$20.00 a month on pop, etc., we should clear twenty. And if it's not doing that then we're slipping up on our organization.

Finally, an analysis that is taking these areas of income and areas of expenses over a three month or four month period of time is the way that you can come up with estimations and projections for the budget. In other words you don't know how to estimate any expenses unless you see what's happening and then you can project.

The final analysis I want to relate is the one we did to raise our sustainer base. We make a list dealing with income, and precisely income on the sustainer, and how that relates to the expenses in the branch. We list each comrade here in the branch, the weekly pledge. Then we total up what the branch income is on sustainer per week. Then right down below are basic branch expenses which the sustainer should cover, that is, national office sustainer, organizer's pay, the headquarters rent and utilities and maintenance of the headquarters. It gives every comrade in the branch a very graphic picture of the importance of each sustainer pledge. We found out for instance that our total weekly income from sustainers was \$74.00 short of what we needed to cover basic expenses.

What I did in addition to that was I broke down what it costs for each comrade. I divided the total income by our total membership to show what it costs each comrade, how it averages out, to support the national office, to pay the organizer, to pay what his portion is on

the rent and on the utilities, etc. And this came up to a figure that for each comrade the average cost was \$6.75 a week. And this we figure has got to be the minimum pledge, at least it's the standard to shoot for. I present the idea that \$7.00 per week is \$1.00 per day and that is really very small, you know, for the party. Every working comrade should consider a minimum of a dollar a day to the party. I also pointed out that for a comrade who gets \$2.00 per hour on the job he's working at, that just represents 1/2 hour labor time out of the whole day that goes to the party. It sort of brings the thing down to cases.

The other thing I want to deal with concerns bookkeeping. Accurate accounts are absolutely necessary. We can all appreciate that money is the real power in our organization. It's the motive force. When you stop to think about it, it's the money that gives the party its freedom, independence, its mobility, its possibilities for moving ahead. It's just like the gas in the car. On the mechanics of bookkeeping, it should be very simple because most of us are not bookkeepers. We learn practically everything in the party. So the bookkeeping should be simple enough that any comrade can keep books. I'll just show you an example of what we do and of course everyone has to adapt it to their own uses.

There are four things that I work with in keeping books -- the checkbook is one. That's a record of all expenditures. Then there's your receipt book -- every single penny of money, every bit of party income goes into the receipt books and is receipted. Then there is the ledger. In the ledger one sheet goes to all our income, and out of the receipt book you just simply transfer over to the ledger into categories like sustainers, dues, Militant sales, etc. what the income is. You do expenses the same way. Everything that is spent out of petty cash or the check book goes in categories, like headquarters expenses, election campaigns, Militant bundle, things like this. By posting from your receipt book into the ledger you've got a permanent record. At the end of the month you total up and you've got all the information for the financial report to the national office. It's from this ledger that you can work out your analysis of the branch finances.

The other thing of course is a membership record. In Minneapolis we use 3 x 5 cards, in other places they use a ledger. It's very important to have it, to keep really straight with the comrades, and have accurate records on what they're paying in pledges, what they're paying in on dues.

The final thing I want to mention is the importance of reports to the national office. First of all, let me say

this, the national office needs money; we're very conscious of that, but we can get a lot of help from the national office on finances, not in terms of money but in terms of giving leadership to us. A lot of times the comrades there can spot weaknesses or strengths. They can see what your problem is. You can just really start going around in circles trying to deal with debts; sometimes you really can't come to grips with it. Many times the national financial director can see something you don't see, because she is looking at it from the outside and offer suggestions that are extremely helpful. So by us getting our monthly financial reports in, we can get some help. Likewise from looking at reports from around the country the national office is in a better position to give us help.

Doug Jenness, Atlanta: First of all, we've talked a lot about the considerable geographic expansion of the party and the formation of new branches and the revitalization of some older branches. New branches that are beginning on the path of trying to deal with the financial problems have a particular set of problems that other, more-established branches don't necessarily have. I'd like to just briefly go over a few of the things that we've learned in the last year and a half or so since our branch was formed in Atlanta. Some of the experience we learned a negative way, some a positive way.

A small branch just starting has to build up a certain basic apparatus. That is, if the purpose of the branch is to try and become the political center in a given area then it must establish some kind of an apparatus -- get a headquarters, get a certain minimum amount of office equipment, build up a certain basic stock of literature and so on -- things that older established branches already have. This takes a little bit of money to get going, put the deposits down for the utilities and so on.

Secondly, new branches often don't have an outside money periphery established over a long period of time, either sympathizers or former comrades. We have no former comrades in Atlanta and we had no real good contacts. We even had trouble raising money for the antiwar movement, let alone for the party from outside periphery. And so that means that there are certain initial limiting factors there.

You have to establish the party's name by running election campaigns and so on, i.e. build the party's public image. That costs a little bit of money too, although this shouldn't be emphasized too much. We were able to successfully get out quite a bit of publicity about the party through our election campaigns at minimal expense. That is on our first

election campaign for mayor we spent \$90.00. And for the governor's campaign we've spent so far about \$300.00. So it shows that you can run a campaign that gets quite a bit of publicity and become a factor in the politics of a new area on a relatively minimal amount of money if you work at it. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't do more if you have access to more money, that you shouldn't try to get out more literature and reach more people. But it shows you can run a good campaign even if you're small and don't have many financial resources. So money should never, never be the reason for not running an election campaign on the part of the branch.

What being in a new branch means concretely is that the percentage of the sustainer that the branch takes in from its membership that can go to the national office is necessarily going to be smaller than for a branch that has already established its basic apparatus. Our individual per capita income to the branch for July is \$29.95. That's the highest in the country right now, but our per capita to the national office is mediocre, \$7.50. And we have no immediate prospect of raising that, at least for the next three months, because we still are in a process of trying to just establish ourselves even after a year and a half. Rather than try and give a real high per capita sustainer all at once, we'd rather try and gradually work up to it. First establish ourselves, be able to get a fulltime organizer on the branch payroll and be able to have a regional organizer paid by the Trotskyist movement in Atlanta. Then we'll be in a position where we can gradually raise it. In the long run it's better to give more consistent financial commitment to the national office than it is to raise the pledge high and then have to put it down low again when you're not able to make it.

Now one problem that we had -- I assume that not only small branches but periodically large branches have this problem and it often can be the result of one of the periodic crises that Peggy described -- that's if for some reason it develops that a lot of comrades aren't working, don't have jobs and start to develop an attitude that it's justifiable on the basis of the labor time that they're putting in in voluntary work around the headquarters, in the antiwar movement, and so on. It's believed that this is the real important political work, and therefore getting a job is not that pressing. This view has all the priorities turned around backwards because the most important thing is getting a job and making a financial commitment unless the branch has made a collective decision to the contrary.

When we had this problem, we made it a central part of our Tasks and

Perspectives report and explained it as a political assignment to financially contribute and sustain the branch and the national apparatus, press and campaigns. We were quite successful in being able to turn around the situation that we had inadvertently gotten into on that score. The other thing we pointed out was that the question of who's on fulltime and when they're on fulltime is a collective decision of the branch and not one that individual comrades make up at their own discretion. Generally speaking the comrades that you would want to ask to be on fulltime or take on fulltime assignments are precisely those who have demonstrated their political consciousness and political commitment through their financial commitment and through other kinds of commitments. Those that don't have a financial-political consciousness usually aren't the ones politically that will be assigned to fulltime assignments in the party.

One little thing that we learned, and I think this also applies to larger branches, but it's especially acute in smaller branches is that just watching your expenses and income very closely is crucially important because if you spend a little too much, you've had it. When outside organizations like the antiwar committees use your machines, paper, and ink or ad hoc coalitions that have no money come and make long distance phone calls -- all these things add up and the financial director has to be very clear on getting a record of that. These organizations have to pay for everything they use, pay not only cost, but pay a little more than cost just to pay for the depreciation of the machines, the extra labor and all those things that go into it. The mass movements can't be parasites on our branches.

Another thing that must be avoided is for the branch to make personal loans to comrades. It's not a very good practice. If comrades are in a crisis and need to borrow money they should borrow it from other comrades but not from the branch. It sets a bad policy, because if you do it for one comrade, then why can't other comrades borrow money from the branch? This can create a bad situation. Also it doesn't help the branch finances any. That should be a very strict policy. It's a very tempting thing for new branches and you've got to be very hard-nosed. It's got to be a collective decision that it's a policy and everyone knows that it's a policy and not just the financial director. Then the financial director has to be very firm in carrying out that decision.

I think it goes without saying that the treasurer should be one of the branch leaders. He or she should definitely be on the executive committee. He or she should be one of the most respected lead-

ing comrades in the branch. The post of financial director should be viewed as one of the key political assignments in the branch. If it isn't looked at that way, then it's very hard to develop any kind of serious financial commitment or responsibility on the part of comrades.

Working closely with the heads of other departments in the branch is very important. If this isn't done, sometimes a forum director or a campaign director can commit the party to a few expenses that the branch treasurer or the executive committee may not know about and it may upset your budget. It's a very close cooperation on a day-to-day, week-to-week basis, not waiting for the executive committee to act, just regularly consulting about various expenses. That is functioning as a team on the question of finances.

We make what Helen described as "regular analyses" and do it on a monthly basis. We do it on Militants. We were very careful, especially in the beginning stages, of just watching every week how much money we were losing or making on The Militant. We wanted to know at the end of the month whether we were losing money or making a little. We had it all marked out -- what the break-even point was -- and we aimed to make sure that we were going to sell more Militants than that break-even point every week. We calculated our bundle accordingly so we would not lose money on The Militant, so that the Militant sales would not become a drag on the party. I think most of the time throughout last year we were very close to the margin, but we didn't lose money. The same is true on the forums. Even for a small branch just beginning a forum series, this can become a source of income. Even a relatively small forum can make money, if you don't bring in speakers from faraway and you keep the publicity used for building the forum to a minimum expense. We were able to bring in an average profit of about \$50.00 per month in forums which was half of the rent that the branch had to pay.

On little things like Helen described what Minneapolis called the kitty. We try to make a little money for example off our soda pop. Internal bulletins -- there's a place where we lose money a little bit. It's a hard kind of thing to get organized where we get just the right amount of internal bulletins coming in and the comrades buying them. It's a very hard thing to just keep regular so that all the comrades that order them buy the right amount. We always have a pile of them and so we tend to lose a little money on those.

The final thing is the relationship to the YSA. That is, a new small branch will often have a YSA group in the same city that has more comrades that are giving money and the YSA expenses might be

much smaller. The YSA wouldn't be in the process of attempting to set up an apparatus, bookstore, headquarters, utility expenses and so on. So they can be called upon to assume certain responsibilities, like paying a good share of the headquarters expenses. In Atlanta the YSA pays 1/3. And in our case, the YSA has assumed all costs for regional work. That's not necessarily a principle. It just happens to be a good division of labor in terms of finances in our particular situation and the YSA budget has been able to handle that up until this time. So we shouldn't just look at the branch finances but at the total financial picture for the Trotskyist movement in a given city.

Judy White, New York: I'd like to make a few remarks on the relation of branch financial functioning to national functioning. We've had some reports on what the party branch is as a financial unit, how it functions, ways we can improve that functioning and deal with some of our problems. What remains is to see how this fits into the national picture and the needs of the party as a whole.

To put the whole thing into perspective, I think we should start out with a clear idea of what the national office is in financial terms. This might sound funny, but we get indications about once a week that there are comrades that haven't really thought out completely what the answer to this question is. The national office is in no way an autonomous unit financially. Concretely, that means that when a branch or a comrade asks the national office to pay for something they are doing, what they are really doing is asking the party as a whole to finance their particular need. We have to remember that the functioning of the national office on a financial level depends on financial support of every branch of the party. Almost all of the income of the party for day-to-day work comes directly from the branches -- the sustainers and dues.

The national office decides its financial priorities in a very similar way that branches do. We present overall budget projections to the National Committee at plenums for approval and implicit in the approval of those projections is the commitment to raise the necessary money for our day-to-day functioning from the members of the party. And, of course, agreement with the broad outlines of how the money will be spent.

Let's look next at some of the things that we projected at the plenum and how we've done on them.

We have made some definite steps forward since the plenum when we set our most recent financial goals: 1) a number of branches have increased their per capi-

ta sustainer pledge to the national office, 2) one party branch that had a large long-standing debt to the national office not only paid that off but also was able to raise its sustainer after the debt was paid, 3) by and large there are more financial reports and correspondence coming in to the national office and this has given us a more complete picture of what's happening in the branches and 4) there has been more consideration given to the question of finances in most branches and teamwork in this area of party building is beginning to become more widespread. A number of branches have set up financial committees, have had more frequent executive committee discussions on finances and so on.

On the other hand, if we look at the figures on the charts, we have to face the hard facts that we haven't met the goals we set at the last party plenum. We're still about \$415.00 short of the pledge we projected for July 1. These projections on sustainer pledges were to make it possible for us to carry out the plans that we projected at the last plenum.

Understanding what the national office is in financial terms gives us an idea of what happens to party functioning when a branch falls a month or more behind in its financial commitment to the party as a whole. If it's a sizable branch, falling behind even a month or so can have a serious impact on our national functioning.

The same thing happens when a branch decides to lower its sustainer pledge to the national office. Of course there are often special circumstances which make this kind of temporary step necessary, but we should shoot for building a strong enough structure in the branches so even if a crisis occurs, we will be able to proceed without any major dislocation. I just want to reiterate the point that Peggy made, because it's the perfect example of the kind of thing that we want to aim at. In Los Angeles, despite bombings and burning of the headquarters, they have not lowered their sustainer per capita to the national office nor have they fallen more than a few days behind in sending in a regular weekly payment on their sustainer. That's the kind of financial functioning we want to shoot for.

As I mentioned in my introductory remarks to this panel, we're not dependent on a few angels for the day-to-day functioning of the party. The rock bottom base of the party finances is dependent on the collective effort of each branch leadership to inspire the comrades in their area to make a financial commitment to the party which goes along with the other commitments a member makes to our movement.

We have special expansion projects where we do ask comrades with access to large chunks of money to give it to the party. But this is completely separate and distinct from the way we finance the day-to-day functioning of the party. Distinct from the solid basis of branch and national functioning that we're talking about here.

One of the ways to make clear the needs of the party nationally is by making it concrete to each comrade where the national office sustainer goes. When we're doing a budget projection and trying to get sustainer increases where the portion of the comrades' pledge goes that is going to be used for branch functions. But we also should spell out where the portion that goes to the national office is going to be used. We should spell out the fact that right now over 50% of the sustainer income to the national office goes directly to subsidize the paper. This is where the national office spends the largest single chunk of its monthly income, for example.

One of the things that is discussed often is the relation of so-called national needs to branch needs financially. There's really no meaningful dichotomy to be made here, since the national apparatus is useless unless it's relating to financially healthy branches and vice-versa. What the national office tries to do on finances is help the branch leadership and especially the financial directors to improve the financial functioning of the branches. We hope that the Monthly Financial Notes can serve as tools in the hands of the branch leadership to discuss national progress and problems, to get ideas on comparative performance of different branches, to be able to apply techniques that have worked successfully in one branch to other branches, and so on. Branch experiences on things to do with finances should be sent in regularly to the national office so that we can pass on these experiences to other branches through the Notes.

The national office tries to follow the financial situation in each branch closely and discuss problems that arise with the branch leadership. Sometimes the fact that we're removed from the particular problem makes it easier for us to spot the

source of the difficulty and help the local leadership nip it in the bud before it gets out of hand. Of course, this is only possible if we get regular communication from the branches on their finances, like the Monthly Financial Reports. Often more extensive reports, letters, and so on should be sent in.

In addition the monthly reports from the branches help the national office get a better idea of how our budget is going to work out, since our budget is directly tied into branch functioning. We can tell from the monthly reports how close we're going to come to carrying out the plans we have projected for the party as a whole.

On the other side there are some things the branches have to work towards which will help us to have a smooth functioning of the national apparatus of the party. Basically this comes down to two things: -- 1) regularity in sending in dues and sustainer payments along with the reports and promptness in making payment, and 2) where it applies working out schedules in paying off arrears.

What we have to keep in mind in general on the relation of branch financial functioning to national financial functioning is their close interconnection. The center can't carry out the plans voted on by the members if the members don't make it possible financially. In turn these plans -- like the plans we have made and carried out on the monthly ISR -- make it more possible for the comrades in the branches to get out our ideas more effectively. This in turn helps us to strengthen our movement politically and financially.

The national functioning of the party can be expanded as fast as the financial contribution from the members increases, just as branch functioning can. At least, we don't see any danger in the coming period that we're going to accumulate more money than we're going to be able to use. And it's the job of the branch leadership, especially the financial directors, to keep the consciousness up on the needs of our movement and to work as closely as necessary with the national office to try to improve the situation.

FORUM PANEL

Doug Jenness: What is the purpose of forums, why do we run them? We want to help establish the Socialist Workers Party, the Trotskyist movement, as a political factor in whatever cities we're operating in. That is, we want to make it a factor in the political life of the cities that we work in. We do this in other ways too, election campaigns, our Militant sales, etc., but forums are a way of consistently, on a week-to-week basis helping the party to develop as a political force.

We use forums as a means of propaganda, an additional means for getting our ideas out and involving new people in discussing these ideas.

Forums also serve to help build other areas of work in which we're involved: the antiwar movement, Black and Chicano work, election campaign work, women's liberation work, and so on. The kinds of forums we have, the topics we select, the kinds of speakers we involve from outside the party, and the areas in which we leaflet for a given forum are all different ways that we can use to help build movements we're involved in. For example in New York last year they held one forum a month on women's liberation. They had the concept of having a regular women's liberation forum as part of the work the comrades were doing in the women's liberation movement.

Geoff is going to go into this in a little more detail, particularly in relation to high school work and how the forums were used in Chicago as a means of trying to draw high school contacts closer, and recruiting them to the YSA. This idea of using the forums to intervene in other movements, is oriented to using them as a means of contact work, and trying to draw contacts we know from these other areas of work to the forums, in order to talk with them. Before the antiwar movement developed and before this new radicalization emerged, forums were almost the only place that many branches had to do any contact work at all. Forums were the place where contact work was done regularly on a week-to-week basis. Contacts would be invited to the forums, and that was the main recruiting evening for the week.

Forums are also a money raiser. This is very modest monetarily, and is certainly not the primary reason we run forums, but it does provide almost any branch that runs a regular forum series an additional source of income. Even small branches can net \$50.00 to \$100.00 a month regularly which can go a long way to help pay rent.

There are other benefits that come as a result of running forums. One is the

educational advantage, not only for the periphery and contacts that we're trying to recruit, but also for the comrades who attend and participate in the forums.

Also where we have bookstores in the same place as the forums, we can sell a large amount of literature, including Militant subs.

Forums can also provide a semi-social function for our movement, and for the periphery we have around us. Branches sometimes have banquets and similar types of activities as part of the forums, which serve a certain social function. Even when there aren't banquets, the fact that contacts and periphery come together once a week with comrades to hear a talk, sit around afterwards, talk about it, and have coffee and refreshments, plays a social role as well.

The ability to maintain on a regular basis a weekly forum series shows people in whatever city we're working in the stability and strength of our movement, and enhances the prestige of our movement. It becomes known that in many cities in the country we are the only movement that runs weekly forums on a systematic basis.

These are the main purposes for running forums, but how about the character of forums? What do we really mean when we're talking about a forum? How does it differ from any other party institution, like classes and educationals? We sometimes talk about not making forums routine. We want to use them creatively and in a lively fashion. That's true, but on the other hand we do want to have a certain amount of routine for our forums. We want them to be regular with an almost automatic approach to expecting them to be built on a weekly basis. People in any given city who are familiar with the radical movement should expect that there's going to be a forum once a week at a regularly scheduled time. People who regularly attend forums shouldn't even have to get a leaflet to know that there's going to be a forum. We want to establish the forum as a very regular institution in our cities in order to develop the benefits that forums can have.

However, where we don't want to be routine is on the question of topics, the areas where we publicize forums, the types of speakers. On these we want to be creative. We want to be able to adjust to new situations and new opportunities. For example, if a given branch has three or four forums lined up in advance and some new development breaks, we should not get into the rut of thinking we can't cancel the forum or change it. There may be some new event that's important for the party to take a stand on or a new opportunity to have a really lively and

large forum. On this aspect we don't want any kind of routinism.

Publicity is something a lot of areas have been experimenting with. Where should we leaflet? How often? What kinds of leaflets? What kinds of ads? And on this we also don't want to be routine. It is important to remember that forums aren't mass meetings. Sometimes on campuses and sometimes at our own headquarters we do try to organize mass meetings -- large meetings for a political purpose. We have large mobilizations, and get a lot of leaflets out. Forums usually aren't of that character. If they were we couldn't do it on a regular weekly basis. We couldn't keep up the pace in the branch and the YSA. The ways forums are built have to be so that they become a routinized and regularized normal operating procedure of the branch and the YSA and not some sort of special mobilization every week.

Forums aren't educationals or classes. Although forums often have educational benefits for the comrades that give the forums or come and listen to them, the main function of forums is not for internal educational work. We have educationals and special classes to educate the comrades.

We have to make a deliberate, conscious attempt to try to draw people outside of the YSA and the party into our forums. In this sense, the forum should not be publicly projected as a party institution. It's not just another name for the Socialist Workers Party or the YSA to get up and give its line every week on every question. Sometimes comrades are disturbed if we have an outside speaker give a forum, and he or she doesn't give our line on some question. The forum, these comrades may feel, is being compromised. However, that should not be our point of view at all. The forums are not formally a party institution -- that's why we have a different name for them; that's why we call them forums where various ideas can be discussed. In some forums, we do want to have a position taken by the SWP or the YSA on a particular question. However, it is important to remember that the way all forums are conducted flows from the idea that forums are not simply another name for the SWP. It is very important to have a non-sectarian attitude. Comrades should not sit around in little groups, telling in-groupish jokes, holding in-groupish discussions, or attempting to do all kinds of internal work, before and after the forums. The comrade who is speaker or chairman or woman should not refer to "comrades." People present at the forum should be made to feel comfortable and that they aren't outsiders.

It is also important that comrades who participate in the discussion conduct

themselves likewise.

There are times when it is important for the YSA, or the party, or the campaign committees not just to have a speaker at the forum, but to sponsor meetings in their own names. So occasionally what is done is to hold a co-sponsored meeting between the forum and the YSA, the SWP, or the campaign committee on the regular forum night; or the chairman or woman might introduce the forum by saying, "Tonight, the Militant Forum has turned over the meeting to the Young Socialist Alliance for a special program." This should be done only if there is some special reason for it and should not serve to confuse the party or the YSA with the forum. People who are political or close contacts will understand that the forum is run by the SWP and that it is a party institution. At the same time, we have to project it more openly in order to encourage new people to come.

With our strong orientation toward campus work comrades sometimes think it would be best if we held our forums on the campus where we'd be able to reach students a little easier. Sometimes, it is suggested that we just run YSA forums. In my opinion this is a wrong concept and a misunderstanding of what our forums are all about. If we operate from the assumption that forums are another means like our election campaigns of helping to establish the party as a political factor in the cities where we're operating, then we want to have a forum that relates not only to this or that campus in the city, but also can draw in high school students, people we meet on the job, contacts from the Black and Chicano communities and from women's liberation groups. In other words, we want to have a center in the city where we can draw in contacts who are not necessarily on the campus, or necessarily on one campus. This doesn't mean that we don't want to have public YSA meetings as part of our work on campus but that's another whole question.

Briefly on the question of speakers. Sara Johnston in her article for the Party Builder went over three categories of forums. They are forums where we have party speakers, non-party speakers, and symposiums or panels involving both party and non-party speakers. The suggestion of the New York Forum Committee is to try to strike a balance between these three types of forums which I think is a good suggestion.

With the formation of a number of new branches many of them being relatively small, there is a tendency to say: "We don't have enough speakers. Our town is too small and there aren't enough other radical speakers we can get. We don't have enough good party speakers." On this point it's very important to take the attitude that

we must train party speakers, and the best way of doing that is assigning comrades to give a forum. Most branches don't have any experts who can teach the arts of public speaking, so the best way for people to learn is to jump in and try it. In some branches, like New York, it's very difficult because there are so many comrades, and there are only so many forums per year. But in smaller branches giving forums is a tremendous way for people to learn how to speak and we should take advantage of this opportunity. Also, along this line, it's very important to remember that forums can become extremely expensive and become a real burden on a branch, particularly a small, new branch, if it begins to import good speakers, or prominent names from out of town. We don't have to have some big name to build every forum and to make our forum series a success. If we have an interesting topic, a comrade prepares it well, and we have some good publicity, we can build the forum without relying on big names.

On the publicity for forums. One of the most important, but unfortunately one of the most neglected, means of publicizing forums is The Militant Calendar. If a reader of The Militant read the Calendar each week, he or she would conclude that only a few branches run regular weekly forums. This is not true. There are more branches that run weekly forums, but nobody in the country knows it. A reader of The Militant would never guess that this was the case. There are two good reasons for using The Militant Calendar. One reason is that in any given city there are Militant subscribers and people who buy The Militant on the street, or on the campus. It's a good way of publicizing forums to Militant readers, who are a very likely audience to attend forums. The second reason is that if all the branches who run forums were to regularly put them in The Militant, we would have quite an impressive array of public meetings advertised each week. This is very powerful nationally for the party, for our movement to be able to show the whole radical movement that we have regular, public, weekly forums, throughout the country, in many cities. Comrades sometimes argue that it is too expensive. Actually it's relatively inexpensive advertising, and if the forums are making money as they should, this becomes an almost insignificant expense. It's just a question of getting the forums planned in time, and getting the Calendar listing in before the deadline. This is something we really want to urge, for branches to start using The Militant Calendar. We can also attempt to get free calendar listings in underground and campus newspapers.

Another important means of publicity are forum leaflets. I would like to make just one comment on the question of leaf-

lets. It is not too common, but there are a few instances of forum leaflets that I have noticed that sometimes add extra decorations like hammers and sickles. I remember one leaflet in particular advertising a symposium involving non-comrades who had been involved in an important strike. They weren't revolutionary socialists or anything like that. They were just people involved in a strike, and were invited to speak at a forum. The leaflet, however, included a hammer and sickle, which I don't think is a good way of establishing good relations with people we invite to speak at our forum, nor does it help get across the idea of what the forums are.

Geoff Mirelowitz: I want to go into the relation of our forums in Chicago to contact work. Particularly high school recruitment.

One of the things we did in my high school, and throughout the high school fraction in Chicago was to make a really conscious effort to build our forums in the high schools. In the high schools there's a whole layer of students who are just becoming radicalized, haven't had experiences with any other organizations, and are looking for a place where they can sit down and discuss radical ideas. Our forums are the best place to do that. We had a situation where every Friday in the school lunchroom, we were trying to figure out how we were going to get 17 students from four different locations down to the hall in one Volkswagen. That's a very good situation to have. What we were able to do was to gather a whole layer of students around us. Initially they were brought down around a forum on high schools. We feel it's important, where we have situations like that, to work with the fractions engaged in a particular area of work. Forums around the areas of work that comrades are involved in can draw people from the external work we're doing, and involve them in a discussion of some of the broader issues.

The students enjoyed the forum on high schools. They found people there who wanted to talk with them about the radical movement, and they continued to come down. The forums turned out to be a consummation of the recruiting process. After a couple of months of students coming down every week and talking about radical ideas, we had a May Day forum where Clifton DeBerry spoke and gave a real recruiting pitch. The process of drawing this layer of students around us was consummated, and after that forum five or six of them decided to join.

There are two types of contacts that we bring to forums. One is the layer of contacts we involve through our own external work; and it's important that after we work with them in one area

to talk to them about joining our movement. In addition to these people, there's also a certain layer who just wander into the hall -- who have seen a leaflet someplace and haven't been involved in anything before. They're just becoming interested in radical ideas and are waiting for someone to talk with them. They hear a good talk, but after the forum, unfortunately, comrades sometimes sit with other comrades and discuss how good the talk was instead of with the contacts who came to talk to us.

On the whole question of working with the fractions and using the forum to help build the fractions, it's important that a forum committee keep in mind what the whole local is doing and what areas of work we're involved in. This is how we can draw in a layer of contacts and begin to start a successful recruiting process through the forums.

Sara Johnston: In New York we have been experimenting with the idea of a functioning forum committee which is going to be the basis of my report.

At times in the past, the committee that functioned in New York City was basically an idea committee where a number of older, experienced comrades, and a few younger comrades got together and discussed ideas that they thought would be interesting topics. They drew up a tentative schedule, and then following that, the forum director would run around madly, trying to line everything up, and get the leaflets out. Sometimes other comrades would help to build them, and they would be big -- but it couldn't be done consistently on a long-term basis.

We decided to change this and build the type of committee that would involve more people in both the planning and building of forums. A few experienced comrades who played an important role in assisting with ideas and directing the discussion and representatives of different fractions, like women's liberation, antiwar, high school and Third World, would meet. The fraction representatives played a key role in bringing in ideas of what was going on in their particular area of work. We also had two comrades on the committee who played a role in helping with leaflet composition. It is very important that our leaflets are very clear, look nice, and present the perspective of a very professional organization.

The fraction representatives not only came in with ideas, and gave us a feel for what was going on in their area of work, but also went back into their fractions and geared them towards the building of the forum.

The forum director, coming out of the meeting with these ideas and a tentative

schedule, has the task of pulling all of this together, bringing it into the branch executive committee, where it is discussed thoroughly, then before the branch as a whole. The person in charge of the forum arrangements makes sure that the speakers show up, the hall is in shape, and that every other aspect is carried out.

The role of the YSA forum director is also very important. The YSA forum director in New York is playing a key role in motivating YSAers, and giving them an understanding of what the forums are about, why they should be coming, what will be going on in the coming week, and why comrades should be leafletting and building the forum, as a regular part of our work.

Before we had the forum committee the attendance of comrades at forums was poor. The weekly political motivations played a key role in getting comrades to attend. In New York we had been getting three or four times as many independents coming as comrades, and as a result, they would be wandering around, looking at our hall, because there were not enough comrades to talk to them. Now this is beginning to be turned around. Within the last month we've had over 100% increase in comrades coming to the forum.

Because of the effectiveness of the forum committee, even though it is just in its initial stages, our publicity has increased immensely. We've been able to get into more areas, use the New York Free Press more regularly, get an announcement on the front page of the Village Voice, which is a widely read newspaper in New York City. The fractions also make additional mailings of key contacts in their area of work.

At first I thought it would be good to have a big mailing list, but exactly the opposite is the case. Every few weeks we now go through the mailing list, weed out people who no longer come, and send little messages out saying if you still want to be on the mailing list, fill out the form and mail it in. Also, people who come around a lot don't need mailings because they know about it from other sources.

Discussion

George Bouse, Detroit: We should keep a careful record of the financial budgets for forums. This might help us save money that can be used to bring outside speakers and obtain films. A campaign table should be set up at the forums wherever possible. If the branch has regular contact classes, the forums are excellent opportunities to build these classes. It is also very important to have the forum leaflet for the next week's forum ready at the current forum. We should consider having our forum speakers make their talks available to

other branches, and be available to speak to forums in other cities. A Canadian co-thinker, who went to Northern Ireland, gave a talk in Detroit and Cleveland. This, plus having uniform publicity, can also cut down on the cost if locals or branches use some of the same speakers.

Summary - Doug Jenness: I'd just like to make some summary points now:

In areas outside of the big branches like New York, there are often no comrades you can rely on who are major experts in certain subjects. So the branches have to train comrades to be experts in certain fields. Assign comrades to follow particular areas like Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Northern Ireland. Keep clippings and folders so that as the situation develops, we have someone who's prepared and knowledgeable when we need them.

Sending our forum mailings to other branches is very important. In Atlanta we only get forum leaflets from about five other branches. Receiving these

mailings helps to exchange ideas on different kinds of forums and ways of publicizing them.

One other thing. Sometimes it's absolutely necessary to use the forum period for summer school classes. But this should be avoided if possible because it destroys the whole idea of what the forum is. I know that sometimes a tight schedule creates pressures, but the forum should be kept more open. On the question of possible ideas for leaflets: the Detroit branch for many years used a standard format leaflet. The leaflet, printed or electro-stenciled, included the name of the forum and a little description. Then every week the publicity for each current forum could be stenciled onto this standard format leaflet. One advantage of this form is that it helps the forums appear as a regularized institution, but still allows leeway for a new attractive layout each week. The description of what the forum is can help lay the basis for educating people as to what the character of the forum is.

MILITANT PANEL

Mary-Alice Waters: The main question we want to discuss this afternoon is the big Militant fall subscription drive. Before I go into that question, there are a few general comments that I want to make on the nature of the revolutionary socialist newspaper and about the division of labor between The Militant and our other publications -- the ISR, the Intercontinental Press and the Young Socialist Organizer.

To begin, I want to read a letter that appeared in that publication which calls itself an "independent radical weekly," from a person who is probably quite typical of The Guardian's readers. I was quite amused when I saw this letter because it seemed to me that it offered a very good example of the kind of person for whom The Militant is not written. This reader from Berkeley starts out by saying, "I want to explain my needs as a reader and make a few suggestions -- which is quite legitimate and a good idea -- "To begin with, I do not read any establishment newspapers. I do not watch television. I read some of the local underground papers. I read a number of radical journals on occasion, and of course The Guardian. Occasionally I listen to the news on the KPFA radio, and sometimes when I'm in the car, I listen to the local fascist affiliate radio station. About once every two months, I may go to a movie. Which is all to say I'm not exposed by the media to what's happening outside Berkeley."

If a man or woman in the United States is so uninterested in the real political life of this country that he or she never reads a newspaper, never watches television, never goes to a movie and never listens to the radio, The Militant cannot compensate for such colossal and proudly displayed ignorance. (It seems quite appropriate that such readers belong to The Guardian.) But for anyone who displays even a spark of interest in what's going on in this country outside of Berkeley, The Militant has a formidable job to do.

Most of us tend to take The Militant for granted. We all have ideas for making it better, for the kinds of articles we'd like to see in it and what we'd like to do with it. But we tend to take for granted the whole basic concept of the paper. I must say that I did this too until I started editing the paper. And I found that the more you edit it, the more you think about what the paper actually is. When you get down to that last page, as Harry Ring explained last night, and you have five articles sitting in front of you, each of which is important, and there is space for only one of them, you have to figure out exactly why you're going to pick one over the others.

Perhaps the easiest way to think about what The Militant is and the different functions that it performs is to think about the different kinds of publications we would be putting out if our party were today a mass party. First of all, we would be putting out not one, but dozens of daily newspapers. These, along with radio and television, would be prime sources of actual news coverage. The Militant is not really a newspaper. The very idea of a weekly newspaper today is an anomaly, because international and national developments occur so rapidly. The Militant is not even a weekly news-magazine in the sense that say, Time or any of the other bourgeois newsweeklies are. These magazines cover all the important developments during a particular week, and give background stories in addition to weekly features. The Militant is probably less of a newspaper than anything else, at this point, although the news aspect of the paper is vitally important. Of course The Militant does carry more news than any other publication about what's going on of importance in the radical movement. But even there, we're very selective. That is, we're not a "movement" newspaper; and we don't make any pretext of being one, the way The Guardian often pretends to be one. The Guardian claims to give impartial coverage of everything going on in the movement. (Of course they don't cover everything, and what they do report on, they give their own slant to.) We report the important developments in the radical movement. We report on those we support and want to build. We use the paper as a campaign newspaper to build these things. We also report on lots of other things we want to draw political lessons from. In this way, much more than a "movement" newspaper, The Militant is a weapon in the movement. It is our most effective means of intervening in the radical movement in this country, of getting our ideas out to tens of thousands of people. As I said, there is an awful lot of news in The Militant.

But it's only in a very limited sense that we can think of The Militant as a newspaper.

Now what are some of the other publications we would be putting out if we had the resources and personnel to do it? There are all kinds of things. We'd be putting out a publication directed specifically at the women's movement, covering all types of developments and carrying articles that would be of interest in the women's movement. In addition to the news publications for the Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian American and Native American movements, we would publish special journals that would be directed towards these different areas of struggle. We

would be putting out special publications directed at the student movement, towards junior high school, high school and university students. And we would have publications directed primarily at the labor movement. In addition to news we would have weekly or more frequent news commentary, analysis, reviews and political explanation and education. We would have regular internal publications aimed at keeping the party members up to date with what's happening in every area and internal reports and education. We would have a cultural magazine and a historical review. We would contribute to scholarly journals in every scientific field. And we would use these as a way of getting our ideas across to broader and broader layers of people.

This list of the kinds of publications that we would like to be able to put out could go on for quite a while. But at the present time the functions of all these types of publications are fulfilled every week, by one 16 or 20-page newspaper, supplemented by the other publications that we put out.

This takes me directly into the next point, which is the obvious problem of trying to accomplish all of this in the limited space we have available. We have to weigh very carefully each and every issue, each word and sentence and article that is printed in terms of the overall balance of what we're trying to do. And we must accomplish as many of those things as possible within the space limitations we have in the weekly Militant. As the radicalization deepens, and our movement grows, and as newer layers join the struggle, it compounds the number of topics and areas we should be writing about, discussing, analyzing and giving direction to.

This places a real political premium on the expansion of the paper in the coming period. I want to discuss the problems we face in doing this. As it stands now, we're projecting a 16-page paper as the norm this fall. We may be able to publish a 20-page paper only about once a month. Most weeks, it will be 16 pages. There are two specific reasons for this. One is the question of the new high speed web press. Until we're able to get the web press, it will be very difficult for us to go beyond 16 pages because of the amount of time it takes in the shop to print the paper. (The comrades in the shop have been willing, as you know, during the spring and summer to put out the extra effort to enable us to have the 20 pagers and the special issues that were so valuable and necessary to us in the past year. But that kind of work schedule cannot be sustained as the norm.)

The second problem comes down very specifically to the fact that, at this point, we don't have the regular financial base to be able to sustain 20 pages with our current circulation. We have to take

some big steps forward in this area before we're able to solve this problem.

As we go into the fall, we're going to have a very difficult space problem in the paper. We have enough copy each week to put out a 24-page quality newspaper. We simply have to pick and choose, and decide what's the best balance for what we're trying to accomplish in any particular week. And we will have to make decisions on what gets printed which in some cases have to be arbitrary.

Now, we don't want people to stop writing or stop sending in material -- not by any means. The high quality and increasing amount of material that we're getting in from the field have made a huge difference in The Militant. We want that to continue; it must continue. But we also want you to understand that sometimes if articles which are sent in don't get printed, it is in all likelihood not because they're poor articles or unimportant, or because they have the wrong political line. It is simply because we have to decide, on the basis of all the material on hand, the balance of a particular issue and other factors that we must consider, that we simply don't have the space to print it.

We all got a little taste of what the 20 pager was like this past spring: what it meant in terms of a more balanced and rounded paper, the special features that we were able to carry, the more attractive layout, etc. All of these factors considered, I think everyone is going to agree that it's worth the extra effort for us to do whatever is necessary to enable us to project and begin to plan for the expansion of the paper as rapidly as possible, so that we will have an even better tool to use in the radical movement.

Now I want to discuss the division of labor between our various publications. Our three other regular publications are the Young Socialist Organizer, Intercontinental Press and the International Socialist Review.

First is the question of the Young Socialist Organizer. At the last YSA convention, the delegates decided that given the YSA's new stage of the growth and development, the YSA needed a new kind of publication. The format of the old Young Socialist simply was not adequate for many of the needs the rapidly-expanding YSA was faced with. The Young Socialist Organizer was designed to meet the needs of the YSA in this period. The YSA nationally had to deal more effectively with some of the good problems created by the tremendous growth and geographical spread, which has produced dozens of new YSA locals and at-large areas, and also a rapid growth of the established locals. It was felt that a regular publication was needed to tie together all the experiences and ideas from the locals and at-large members all over the country, and to facilitate the functioning and growth of

the national organization. Articles and reports on our experience in the antiwar, Third World, campus struggles, the women's liberation movement and organizational lessons and experiences could all be encompassed in one publication that would go to the entire YSA membership. What was needed was a publication that would enable the YSA national office to be in much closer communication with the field and give the locals a more complete picture of what was happening around the country. Previously, there existed no form in which major reports could be communicated directly to the membership. Such things as Jack Barnes' report to the expanded NEC meeting at the height of the May upsurge, as well as educational articles like Peter Camejo's history of the YSA can now be put out quickly, efficiently and in a form accessible to all YSAers.

The Young Socialist Organizer is in no way a "junior" Militant. It's oriented toward a different audience completely. The Militant has a circulation in the range of 15,000 or 16,000, only a small fraction of which is made up of party or YSA members; the overwhelming bulk of the readership is not in our movement. On the other hand, the Young Socialist Organizer is directed very specifically to the membership of the YSA -- not just the leadership of the locals or the at-largers, but every single member of the YSA.

The Young Socialist Organizer publishes internal reports, which wouldn't be appropriate in The Militant, such as internal reports on finances, educationals, recruitment and local functioning. It also provides in detail explanations of the specific role the YSA is playing in particular developments that may have been reported in a general way in The Militant. Unlike the coverage in The Militant, the Young Socialist Organizer reports specific problems the YSA runs into, external and internal, how these problems are dealt with, mistakes as well as successes.

Second, there is Intercontinental Press. This is one of the most outstanding and impressive publications in the world revolutionary movement. The only thing that can compare to it in the whole history of the revolutionary movement is INPRECORR, the International Press Correspondence that was published in the early 1920's in the Soviet Union, when Lenin and Trotsky were writing for it. Week by week, the 24-page, and occasionally 32-page, printed magazine provides news and analysis of the world revolutionary struggle from India to Peru, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway -- just about every country in the world. As a result of the joint efforts of leading Trotskyists around the world, Intercontinental Press provides invaluable documentation and analysis of the struggles that are taking place, how the world Trotskyist movement sees and analyses these developments. Unlike The Militant, which is oriented towards the United States readership, Intercontinental Press is written for an internation-

al audience. It often carries articles which are of very specialized interest to the international Trotskyist movement, but which are not written for or directed toward the general radicalizing audience in this country. Many articles in Intercontinental Press assume a great familiarity with revolutionary Marxism, and also with the world Trotskyist movement.

In some respects, however, the division of labor that has evolved between The Militant and Intercontinental Press has been one dictated by our space limitations alone. That is, there are many things that appear in Intercontinental Press every week that are precisely the kinds of things that we would like to be running in The Militant on a weekly basis. In fact one of the main weaknesses of The Militant, I feel, has been the weakness of the international coverage. This has been necessary because of the lack of space. Because this material is available in Intercontinental Press, it takes a little bit of the pressure off The Militant to run this material. But one of the primary things we will be doing, with an expanded Militant, will be to print much more of the material from Intercontinental Press, and providing much more international coverage in The Militant.

We don't really utilize IP as fully as we should and can. Only a small percentage of party and YSA members has subs to Intercontinental Press. One problem is the price of subscriptions. But the price has to be set at a level to cover at least the cost of printing and postage. Despite the price, however, it could be utilized much more widely than it is. We should be encouraging comrades to subscribe to it, to read it regularly and to use it much more fully. Also, it is especially valuable with contacts and friends that we have among the foreign students in this country. And it is an invaluable source of information on all areas of the world revolution over the last five or six years.

We should make sure that we always have it available on the literature tables and in bookstores. Branches and locals should be sure to have bundles of it; and not just bundles of just two or three copies, but bundles that are large enough to be useful.

Now on the International Socialist Review. The improvements on the International Socialist Review in the last year have been a big step forward for our movement. When we projected combining the YSA and SWP resources to enable us to put out a bigger and better magazine, one that we could get more mileage out of, we couldn't have been more correct in our estimates of what could be done. This has been reflected in the production and the sales and the distribution of the magazine. The expanded monthly gives us a form in which to publish things that we couldn't have published before. The best example of this is Myrna Lamb's "Mod Donna." Combining the

whole movement" now, and that situation can only make it easier for us to increase the circulation of The Militant. The CP of course has nothing but an albatross to sell, its Daily World, and we can realistically aim to surpass its circulation in the not too distant future. The Maoists in Progressive Labor can't even get out a biweekly paper, much less a weekly one at this point. They've cut back on their publications in the last year, getting rid of World Revolution, which they had been publishing quarterly for several years, while at the same time not expanding any of their other publications. All this means that The Militant is the most attractive and powerful paper on the left in the United States, and that's exactly what we want to go out and tell the thousands of students who are returning to their campuses or entering the campuses for the first time. If they want to know and understand what's going on in the radical movement they've got to be reading The Militant. We have no more effective way to reach out to the students than to go out there at the very beginning of the semester with the fall subscription blitz. From the very first day, we want to be out there, getting to the students The Militant, which week after week is going to carry the news, the analysis, and the orientation for the fall.

The third thing to think about in terms of the subscription drive is our own internal situation. The YSA alone has over 1,200 members. This makes it the most powerful youth organization in the country today; it has a geographical spread like never before. The comrades in the YSA national office estimate that we have YSA-ers in at least 150 cities and towns across the country, which is more than the Trotskyist movement in this country has ever had before -- at anytime in its history. Counting only the YSA, a subscription drive in the range of 15,000 breaks down to just over ten subs per member. And the party, too, of course, is stronger than before, with several new branches in areas of the country where there have never been party branches before; and the older branches are stronger and larger than they were a year ago.

The fourth consideration is the need for a larger subscription base and stronger financial footing for the paper in order to be able to sustain a larger size paper. With the web press particularly, as the size of the runs go up, the unit costs on the paper drop significantly. And this will make a big difference to us in financing the paper.

Taking into account all of these factors, we came to the conclusion that it was entirely feasible and realistic to shoot for a goal in the range of 15,000. This is about double what we shot for and got last spring, but there's another factor which we are well aware of: it's qua-

litatively easier to sell subscriptions in the fall than it is in the spring. The main factor is simply that students are settling down, looking forward to a whole year ahead of them; they're not looking forward to the fact that in a month they're going to be getting off the campus and taking off for the summer. This was one of the main lessons we learned from the fall subscription campaign last year.

Now, a few words about how we're going to get these subscriptions. I'm sure the comrades who are here today have a lot of ideas about this, and this is one of the things we're going to want to discuss a little and get your thinking on. But the last couple of campaigns have taught us a few very important things and I'd just like to mention them. Comrades who have been around for a number of years remember the type of subscription drive we conducted a few years ago. In these drives we set out over a period of months and months, slowly, bit by bit, to get a few subscriptions a week, and finally make our way to the final goal at the end of a long three-month or four-month campaign. This drive will not be one of those.

The campaign we are projecting now is like last fall's subscription blitz. The dates of this fall's campaign will be from September 15 to November 15, that is, a two-month period. But there are other things to take into account. First, all the subscriptions that are received beginning right after this conference will count towards the final quota. Second, the key is to start organizing immediately for the beginning of the fall semester in your campus and your region. That is, we're thinking in terms of a massive branch and YSA mobilization for the opening days and the opening weeks of school.

We want to totally break the back of the quota in a couple of weeks. But to do that, we've got to begin organizing now; we've got to begin organizing to cover the registration lines at every college and university in the area, to set up dormitory sales door to door in every dormitory and every college and university in the area. We will organize door to door sales in the student area, where that's feasible, street tables, campus literature tables, plastering the campuses with publicity about The Militant and the fall Militant special offer. We want any radical student who wants to know what's going on in the campuses and the world to know he or she has to get a subscription to The Militant right now, right at the beginning of the year, so he or she will know what's going on for the rest of the year. Every campus in the region has to be hit by subscription blitz teams, in the first few weeks of school. Unless this general concept is implemented, that is that we are going to break the back of this subscription campaign in the first few weeks,

it's going to be difficult to make the quotas, because as the time goes on into the fall, we immediately start getting more and more tied up in building the election campaign and the October 31st antiwar actions, and it will seem like more and more of an effort to get those subscriptions. But if we do it in this way, in the very first days of school, it will make a qualitative difference. The subscription blanks will be available by next week, and the whole momentum coming out of the conference should be a big help in getting organized early.

Now there's just one other thing, and that's on the International Socialist Review. We're not projecting in any sense a combined ISR-Militant subscription drive. We discussed this possibility and decided it was unrealistic because it would cut down significantly on our ability to maximize the sales of The Militant, which is the top priority this fall. However, we do need to put some effort into increasing the circulation of the ISR. Right now the subscription base for The ISR is somewhere around 1,500 which is quite low. We certainly have the opening to increase the circulation significantly. As it stands right now, the ISR circulation department is receiving almost 200 subscriptions a month which come in unsolicited through the mail. This is a significant number of subscriptions. Many of which are full-year subscriptions. These are not subscriptions that are being sold by comrades. This is a very good indication of its saleability.

Now the proposal we want to make on the ISR is that after selling each Militant subscription this fall, we simply ask each new Militant subscriber if she or he would also like to have an introductory subscription to the ISR, for another dollar. (Of course, all of our current Militant readers should also be encouraged to get subscriptions.) With a little bit of extra effort in this direction which will not be time-consuming we think we can pick up perhaps one new ISR subscription for each five or six new Militant subscriptions. And in this way we hope to solve this two-sided problem of the need to raise the subscription base of the ISR but not to cut into the effort we want to put into The Militant subscription drive.

What we're proposing with this fall subscription blitz is to take the spirit and ideas of what we've been discussing in this conference and to translate them into action on the campuses immediately in the fall; to take what we've been saying about the objective openings and possibilities for growth and increasing our influence, and its decisive importance for us in the coming period; and to get on to the campuses from the very first day this fall with our press, and to use it to build the revolutionary movement.

Discussion

Michael Smith, Detroit: I have a suggestion to which I would like some reaction, and I hope it would be adopted. I don't have any trouble myself selling subs. I got my training selling health and accident insurance to dairy farmers in Wisconsin; I had to brave dogs and cows and go into barns, so selling The Militant is not hard for me.

Unfortunately not all the comrades are salesmen; I think that there are some aids that the national office can provide to facilitate their selling. If any of you subscribe to bourgeois magazines, you'll know that when they are trying to increase their circulation, they always send out attractive brochures in the mail, particularly magazines like the New York Review or Harpers. They put out a brochure advertising what they are all about and they send it out to solicit new subscriptions. I think we might do the same thing, although of course, we could not send it to just any list. I hope that the national office could put out a small leaflet which motivates The Militant. It could be very attractive, and it could have a series of headlines from the last year, or a list of the various feature articles, such as how we covered Czechoslovakia, the French events, the May events here, how we covered the Chicano party and the Black struggle. It could have several small pictures or cartoons that have appeared in the paper. Comrades could take it with them when they go on sales.

I would hope that some of our main activities would be going to dormitories, where lots of people are, rather than just a one-to-one approach. And the brochure would be something that people could take with them. In addition to having a skinny sub blank and a copy of The Militant, they can have a brochure as well, and go through it with potential subscribers. That is how you sell insurance, that is how the bourgeois publishers sell, and it works.

You can give someone a picture of what The Militant has been like during the last year, and how good the coverage has been. You can motivate them in this way and then leave the brochure with them; sometimes you can get them to come back to buy a subscription later on. Perhaps in conjunction with this, a small one-page leaflet can be put out on the ISR. We can also paste them up all over campus as a way to promote our publications.

I have one other very minor suggestion, which works for me: I always keep a few Militants in my wallet and when I get into conversations with people like the mailman I pull them out of my wallet and say "Here, for a dollar."

Dave Katz, Detroit: One aspect of our movement which distinguishes us from every other radical tendency on the left in the most evident way to everyone, is our emphasis on professionalism in our external activities; and certainly a subscription drive and increasing the circulation of our press is one of our most important external activities. Our paper itself, in the way it is laid out, in the way it is printed, the paper it is printed on, the way it is written, the pictures it has in it, and so on and so forth, all exemplify professionalism. It shows the people that we are trying to reach that we are serious political people, that we mean what we say, that we are not just complaining about a society but we are actually planning out exactly how to change it.

Now, in getting 15,000 subscriptions in a two month period, I have a number of suggestions. First, one of our most important tasks is getting subscriptions by advertising the subscription drive, advertising our paper, and doing so in an extremely professional manner. I'm talking about signs that are printed, large signs that can be seen by people and can make people realize that The Militant is not New Left Notes, is not the Bulletin, or Spartacist. Radical students on the campus today who are looking for a political current to identify with are not going to look to a paper like the Bulletin, because before you can read the Bulletin, you have to have a subscription to The Militant. They are not going to look to The Daily World, which turns people off so much because of its identification with the bourgeois currents of our society; or the Spartacus East which isn't really anything; or Challenge, which doesn't make any sense unless you are a confirmed Maoist.

So in getting these subscriptions on the campuses, perhaps we can pay for advertising on the radio station and get a comrade or a contact to make up a spot announcement to explain The Militant and urge people to take advantage of this special offer. We can have someone who is good at art work make an advertisement that can be put in campus newspapers in the metropolitan and regional area -- the type of advertisements, for instance, that we see in The Guardian. We can also make large printed posters to put behind tables and by displays and put these posters especially where there are comrades who can personally encourage people to get a subscription by making them realize the worth of our paper. We are not selling something that isn't worth the money of 15,000 people. We all know that the value of a Militant subscription drive is not just to get a bigger subscription base but to extend ourselves as we have never done before to take advantage of the increasing radicalization.

Cappy Kidd, Tampa: I would to discuss a problem that we are going to face in Tampa. In the state of Florida, on the Florida campuses it is illegal to sell a newspaper called The Militant. I would like to get the advice and words of wisdom from experienced comrades on how to deal with this.

Robin Maisel, Philadelphia: The sale of The Militant is more important than simply getting the paper into someone else's hands and expanding the subscription base. Because it is not simply the paper that we are distributing here but the ideas of our movement. We can take this approach at campus literature tables. Just imagine that you are living through the most exciting period of American and world history and only one dollar is spent on something for three months, what would you spend it on? The obvious thing to spend it on is The Militant. You could spend it on other things, it's quite true, but that would not be as long lasting or valuable. So the best deal, the very best thing, for a kid who wants to buy something from the revolutionary movement at a literature table, is The Militant. It's the best deal. There's no question about it. There's nothing he could buy that would do him any more good. There is not a book, a pamphlet or a series of pamphlets that he could buy for a dollar that is better than buying a three-month subscription to The Militant. If it's approached this way and explained, it has to be explained this way to people, then of course it becomes a lot easier to sell a subscription.

I don't think there are any real short-cut gimmicks to selling subscriptions to The Militant. There are all sorts of aids to selling The Militant, but the selling of subscriptions is done by the comrades, one-to-one to individuals they come in contact with. That's exactly the way it ought to work, for that's the way people get recruited, that is the way we do something the bourgeois publications do not do. They don't particularly care to get close to their readership. Their readership is made up of people they don't particularly like. They work and things like that. They're not of the same class. They're not of the same ideas. We have a different conception. We want to get very close to our readership. We want, in fact, to talk to every single reader of The Militant, and that's the way we look at the value of The Militant in terms of our ideas: that hopefully Militant readers will become comrades or sympathizers.

So the sale of it is done one-to-one by individuals. And it's important for comrades to understand that we have to explain the value of The Militant. It's a lot easier today to explain the value of The Militant because students on the campuses have gone through, some of them in

a very telescoped fashion, a whole range of experiences and have looked around at the proliferation of groups, grouplets and sub-grouplets, all with their mimeographed sheets and little publications. And they've looked at the national publications of other organizations, and they do see them to a greater and greater degree all over the country now.

It becomes clear to them that The Militant is a serious publication while the others are not. But to convince them that they should spend that dollar is simply a matter of explaining to them that it's the most valuable thing they can do, that it's the best deal they can get. So if a kid comes up to a literature table on campus, or anywhere in your region, and says "What should I buy?" the first thing we should steer the person to is not the latest pamphlet from Pathfinder, because they'll see the ad for that in The Militant. The thing to steer him to is The Militant, to a special three-month subscription offer that's the best deal on the table. And similarly for the International Socialist Review. That's also the best deal.

These are the best deals because they are periodicals, because they come out regularly. When explained that way, people will be very quick to take you up on the offer and buy a subscription.

Frank Grinnon, Atlanta: Our election campaigns can be a prime vehicle for getting out The Militant, particularly with this subscription drive this fall. I was reading some of the campaign reports from California, where during the May upsurge their candidates spoke to 80,000 people. I think that this is a prime area where we can get a lot of Militant subscriptions if we organize ourselves correctly.

I was speaking to Linda Jenness and thinking about some of the speaking engagements we had in Georgia where we weren't quite conscious about subscriptions. After the presentation a lot of young people would gather and we'd have an hour rap session discussing various issues with the candidate. There's a prime time to sell a Militant subscription. I think it's very important that various campaign committees send one, two or three people with the candidate specifically to sell Militant subscriptions after the campaign meeting, particularly when you're speaking to a college or youth group. These people who come around have questions on our program and we have a limited amount of time available to explain our program. But if you just view a sale of The Militant as a sale of an organizer, they're in contact with our ideas for an extended period of time. And I think that if we organized ourselves more correctly we could get a lot more mileage out of our campaigns.

I've noticed through our campaign in Georgia that more and more people are aware of the Socialist Workers Party, and you can sell The Militant by saying "this is the newspaper of the socialist campaign. This is the paper that covers the campaign Linda Jenness is running."

In Atlanta, tens of thousands of people know about the campaign because of the breakthrough we made in knocking out ballot requirements. They know the fight we're waging and they identify with it. You can use the campaign that way, saying "this is the socialist campaign newspaper." Or you can use particular articles about what the campaign is doing, like supporting a strike. I think that if we're conscious during speaking engagements we can make a significant contribution to the number of subscriptions sold this fall.

Dave Wulp, Boston: We've already had some discussions on this in Boston and we think that the selling of subscriptions should not be dissociated from the rest of the work we'll be doing on the campuses in the fall. One thing that we should do is organize the entire political participation on the one-third of the student bodies that are new, the freshmen. They've been involved and they've thought about the social problems of the day. We were thinking of putting out a fact sheet that tells them what to do: "If you want to join the women's liberation movement here's the name of a group starting on campus this year and they're going to meet at such and such time and place. If you want to join the antiwar movement, here's the SMC and they're going to have a meeting thus and such. If you want to hear classes on socialism, come down to this headquarters Sunday night. X, Y and Z will be giving presentations on the fundamentals of socialism. If you want to get involved in socialist electoral activity, we have a campaign going, we're running Peter Camejo, etc. For all these things, The Militant is the best paper for coverage of the Black struggle, the women's liberation movement, the antiwar movement and it's the only paper that covers the campaign of the Socialist Workers Party correctly."

The major point I want to make is that you have to look at this in terms of a total blitz, not just for subscriptions, but for the entire new population that's going to be on campus and the students that are coming back with May of 1970 under their belts and want to get involved, want to do something. Use The Militant as the end result of a sell that says "You've got to get socially involved. If you become socially involved you have to have a subscription to The Militant. There's no other way to organize yourself on a week by week basis."

Bill Scheer, Boston: I have just a few

people is The Militant. In order to be able to get our ideas out and project our concepts of how to organize the movements that are bound to spring up in the next year, increasing the circulation of The Militant is an essential goal.

The best way to sell, and this was pointed out by several people before, is to point out the quality of the paper. It is the best newspaper, the only newspaper where people can get all the ideas that radicalizing youth want to get, and virtually every student you meet on the campus, everybody you meet on a demonstration is a youth today. So they all want to read The Militant. You have to believe in the paper. You have to understand that it is the best paper and get that across to people. When you convince them of that they'll all want to buy subscriptions to The Militant.

One of the things I think will aid getting the drive off to a good start is the fact that campuses generally open in a staggered way. Some campuses will open in the beginning of September and others will not open until the end of September. Most areas probably have comrades who go to schools that will be opening late and won't be doing much in the early part of September. These people should be mobilized to go out every day to the registration lines, the cafeterias, around campus and certainly to any demonstrations or rallies that are taking place and sell subscriptions. In that way, these comrades can be utilized to get the drive off to a tremendous start and ease the necessity for a big push at the end of the drive when October 31st and all the other activities will be coming up.

I'd also like to point out that the demonstrations October 31st will be an excellent place to sell a tremendous number of subscriptions, and thousands of subscriptions around the country could be sold that day if people are geared up for it.

For those reasons I think the goal is a reasonable one and is absolutely essential for our movement at this point.

Jim Kendrick, Bay Area: A number of comrades have talked about the fact that The Militant is the best paper on the left. I would like to make a prediction -- I don't really have to take the responsibility for prediction, I'm not a national leader of the party. I get the distinct feeling that The Militant faces the immediate prospect of not just being the best paper on the left, but being undisputably the paper on the left. I get this feeling from the work that I did on campuses for Pathfinder Press. The impression you get is that there's a tremendous, galloping appetite among youth in the United States for radical ideas.

And I think that's precisely the kind of response that we're going to run into this fall when we go out with our subscription drive. We may be very, very surprised to find 15,000 subscriptions come very quickly.

I think it is important to take into consideration the scope of the campaign. That is, instead of going through the dormitories in the campus in your town, go through the dormitories in the thirty campuses in your region. We should make a blitz of these dormitories, so that not only do you increase the number of readers in your town, but you expand out into your region in a tremendous fashion.

Also, we have a number of candidates all over the United States. Comrades should remember to take The Militant on TV with them this fall. Show The Militant. Mention The Militant. Mention 873 Broadway. We'll get a certain amount of returns on that type of thing.

I also think that the posters that the comrades have put together for display here are very excellent ideas. I suspect The Militant probably doesn't have a very large promotional budget. It really would be great if we could run off something in three colors on newsprint and just plaster a giant, attractive poster all over the campuses. But, I think the local areas should consider silk-screening these posters and paying for them themselves out of some supplementary Militant promotional budget. But do it in a big way. A very provocative way. Try to find the most imaginative possible way you can present The Militant to the students on the campus, so that it has a very lasting impression.

Another thing, too, is that a number of the universities have bookstores where they sell Playboy magazine, and a few other odious publications. But they won't take radical publications in general. I made an observation of this at about thirty or forty campuses. I think that it's very important that we begin to fight them on this question, to assert the right of the radical papers to be on display and for sale at the universities. There's a lot of prestige in that. And that'll have a lot of feedback on the sales of The Militant in other areas. And, the fact that we'll be the ones to break that barrier, and our paper will be there first, is going to pay off for us too.

Now on ads. I think it would have been really great if, during May of this year we could have run advertisements for The Militant, for example, say, in the thirty campus papers in the outlying areas of the Bay Area, right in the middle of that whole antiwar radicalization. The students would be opening up their campus newspapers to find out about the latest convocations, and there would be a good-

sized ad for The Militant, presenting The Militant in its relation to the antiwar movement. Where the locals can afford it, that's another way we can supplement The Militant's promotional budget. Campus papers have very cheap advertising rates, it's about \$2.00, \$2.50, maybe \$3.00, which is nothing. It's usually \$30.00 or \$40.00 per column inch in a daily paper. So \$2.00 or \$3.00 is not a bad investment.

We shouldn't neglect selling our paper to professors and staffs in the university, and the non-student layer of the university. We also want to get The Militant into the various departmental libraries, such as history and sociology. That has a certain amount of prestige value and feedback too. If The Militant goes into the history department library, it's going to be sitting with some pretty prestigious publications, and a lot of people will see it.

The Militant pushes everything that we're projecting to the outside world: our forum series, our bookstores and Pathfinder Press. Pathfinder has experienced a great increase in the cash customer sales as a result of its ads in The Militant. When you sell The Militant, in addition to our basic ideas, all these other things follow. Locals should keep on top of advertising their activities in The Militant in a more consistent fashion.

Melissa Singler, Austin: Putting Militants on places on campus where they sell by themselves, that is, places where they're selling other magazines, is possible. It sometimes take a lot of time to go through the bureaucracy, but I know at New York University -- I'm in Austin now -- but at New York University, we were able to get it sold with Newsweek, Time, etc. They didn't have any Playboys. And, in fact, since it was a different shape, it had to lay out on the counter and all the others were in the back. So, I would spend my lunchtime going over and straightening out The Militants so that they were on very good display. The people behind the counter, of course, didn't care about them. But it took about three months of haggling with the bureaucracy at the university. It just meant going back once a week and asking them, "How's it going?" and find out from them that they hadn't proceeded any further on their paperwork. But it is possible, and if you have someone who, for example, can do it on a lunch hour or something, so that it doesn't cut into other political work, it's well worth it.

I just wanted to bring up a couple of things that I think are worthwhile. One of them flows from one of the things Mary-Alice brought out, and that is that the school semester will be beginning instead of ending with the subscription drive, which is extremely important. You know, when kids first come on in the fall, es-

pecially this fall, they're going to be coming back, waiting for some action, very spicy and pugnacious. And they're going to be looking for radical ideas. And so it's important to do the things that were outlined by a number of speakers: that is, hit them right away, and try to break the subscription drive right at the beginning. One of the things that one of the comrades in the Austin local did I think could be done in other areas, in a lot of the universities. The University of Texas has a lot of classes on Marxism. They're the vogue now. There are several classes on Marxism, Black history, things like that which are regular classes. Maybe this is where this brochure that was mentioned could be utilized very well. For example, you could go the the class one day and hand out something, which would say something like, "You're studying Marxist though, which should include the study of what's happening today in the Marxist movement. Read The Militant. Subscribe. And then you could come the next day with a couple of people and actually have subscription blanks and pick up subscriptions from people who were interested from the leaflet that you handed out on the previous day. And I think that if you got the kids at the very beginning of the semester, where they still were interested in Marxism before the professor had dampened any interest that they had, you might actually be able to not only get the kids to buy a Militant subscription, but they might then come to some classes, and things like that.

The other thing is speakers. Someone mentioned that you should show The Militant on TV. Well, I think that's a good idea, but in Austin we don't get much TV. So at public events, where we have a speaker on an educational topic or something, he or she should constantly utilize The Militant visually and as a source for the information that he or she's giving you. That is, they can pull out The Militant and say "This issue is where you can learn more about this topic." Constantly mention The Militant in the speech. And I think then, at the end of the speech, when the comrades go around to hit up kids for Militant subscriptions, it becomes very evident to the kids that they really should have a subscription to The Militant, because this wonderful speech they've just heard was given by someone who is a regular reader of The Militant. He or she got to be that intelligent, clever and such a good socialist by reading The Militant. So they should have one too.

Another thing. People sometimes think of students as simply the individual student, about 18 years old, the freshman who's just coming on campus, who is probably the most important student to hit. But there are also a lot of campus people who are couples, who live in low cost housing areas, either dormitories that are specially provided by the university, or apartments

in the city, things like that. We had one subscription drive in some of these dormitories that was pretty successful. So in looking for places to send comrades, I think that would be good.

Some of the people who have spoken are people who sell tons of subscriptions, and they can't understand other people who can't sell a lot of subscriptions. So I think one of the things that you have to do to help everyone sell a lot of subscriptions is to provide areas for people who aren't quite as audacious to go to. If you can give them various areas where there will be the kind of people who would buy Militant subscriptions, give them those areas to go to. I think everyone in the branch will be contributing a high number of subscriptions.

Syd Stapleton, Cleveland: I just want to give comrades a little bit of a concrete idea of the power of the printed word. That may be useful in motivation of subscription sales. The reason that we have the Oberlin campus for the conference this week, can be traced back -- eventually -- to one Militant subscription. A student from Oberlin who lived in New York happened to be listening to a late night talk show one night and heard Peter Camejo. He listened to Peter for awhile and thought that it sounded fairly reasonable, and Peter, during the course of the speech, mentioned that if you're interested in these ideas and want to know about the socialist movement, then you should subscribe to The Militant, which he did. He went back to Oberlin, passed the paper around in his dormitory and a few other students bought subscriptions. After reading the paper for a period of time they decided that of course what they had to do was to form a local of the YSA. They formed a local of the YSA with eleven members. The local grew within three weeks to 15. They won three seats on the student council, and the local included the president of the senior class and the former president of the student body, which made it considerably easier to get the campus for the conference. If we can do that with one subscription, think what we can do with 15,000.

Now I think there's one other thing. There are a couple of lessons in that too, of a negative sort. And that is, that we should have done it before. Oberlin is within 35 miles of Cleveland, and the subscription drives should have hit this campus numerous times in the last year or two and a half years. We could have tremendously expanded our impact in the whole region around us. Jim Kendrick, I thought, made that point very well. That is, teams should be organized to go out to these campuses and they can have tremendous success.

Now, one of the other things is that in the course of the campaigns, usually

before every candidate goes on radio, they're told, mention the address. Paul Boutelle was on a program during the 1968 campaign and was asked a long involved question. He answered that the answer to that question is: "If you're interested in more information, write to 873 Broadway." I think that our candidates have been, at least in our own campaign, mentioning the address of our local headquarters a lot. One of the things that I think we should start doing is talking about The Militant, as Jim mentioned, and using that as a focus for the campaign. We can get the tapes of subscriptions from The Militant, so you're not losing anything, if anyone's really impressed with the campaign. One dollar is not going to be a serious obstacle to them being able to get more information about it. And when you get the tapes of the list of subscribers from The Militant, it's an invaluable source for forum mailings, and so on. Now there's one other side to that, too, which is just a little thing. For branches or YSAs that are cutting corners financially, which I'm sure most of us are in one way or another, forum mailings are usually a very expensive proposition if you have a large forum mailing list. If the people that you want to reach with forum material already have subscriptions to The Militant, then The Militant calendar can play a very important role in that regard.

Randy Furst, New York: One of the things that will be very useful in building the fall subscription drive will be the weekly reports that will be appearing in The Militant. And one of the ways that people out in the field can help these reports along in terms of being interesting and valuable, in terms of building the drive, would be to send in some of the following information: reporting on spots where subscriptions sell especially well. For example, if during a particular week you sell something like 100 subscriptions, or in several weeks, you sell 100 subscriptions on a campus, you should write us right away and tell us about it. Or, maybe you sell a lot of subscriptions in a housing project, at an antiwar demonstration, an ecology demonstration, a welfare office, or maybe somebody got into a prison and sold a half-dozen subscriptions. Or somebody went around to the various libraries in the area and sold half a dozen subscriptions to libraries or to professors, or a lot of subscriptions at a particular army base, or a rock festival. All that information should be compiled and we could report on various things on a week-to-week basis. It would be useful if comrades could send weekly reports, even if they were very brief, on some of the best examples of how the subscription campaign is going along.

In addition, if there's a really top salesperson for a particular

week, who sells a lot of subscriptions, it would be useful if that person or someone would send a brief report to The Militant on how he or she sold those subscriptions.

All of this would be useful just for building the drive as well as valuable to people who are selling subscriptions.

In addition, we'd be interested in special gimmicks that have been suggested here -- the charts, contests, a radio ad, etc. In New York City for example, on Earth Day subscriptions were sold along with a free ecology button, a poster or a black balloon that said "capitalism fouls things up." More than a hundred subscriptions were sold on that particular day.

Finally, it would be useful for people to occasionally send in photographs of people selling subscriptions that we could use in The Militant.

Chris Robinson, Seattle: We had a case at the University of Washington where an English professor got a great big bundle of Militants to show to his class along with the bourgeois press. He was kind of a radical professor, but you can work with those kinds of people, especially in journalism courses. In high school, you should get your high school fractions to hit the journalism professors at all the different high schools, and say, "You're passing out all this material, well, I thought high schools were supposed to be unbiased. Don't you think you should pass out a paper on the left, especially one as good as this." Then show our professional layout.

Also, I think Seattle probably has a problem worse than any other place in the country, and that's unemployment. We've hit the unemployment centers and we've had some success. I don't know how successful it will be selling subscriptions, especially if people don't have much money.

Also, we've gone to factory gates and sold Militants. We've made several contacts that way. You should always keep in mind that when you're selling The Militant you're also recruiting people. So you should go to the places where you really want to recruit and it should be used as a tool that way.

Judy Baumann, New York: By the time the dust had settled at the end of the last subscription drive, the May events were over and we had a chance to count, New York had sold over 1,100 subscriptions. Those 1,100 subscriptions were sold by 56% of the comrades in the New York area. So I'd like to speak for a minute on how to motivate greater participation in the subscription drive. It's already been men-

tioned that the best way to do that is the political motivation. But you have eight weeks to work with, and sometimes comrades are motivated very politically, but don't see that we have October 31st to build and everything else, and it takes time to go out and sell subscriptions. One of the best ways of motivating comrades is the use of charts that was mentioned before. There are two types, specifically, the individual chart where somebody gets a star for every five subscriptions they sell. Everybody laughs when we put up the chart. But as soon as that chart goes up, people start going up and saying "I need three more subscriptions to get a gold star" and they go out and get them.

The other thing is fraction quotas. In the New York subscription drive the women comrades sold a greater percentage of the subscriptions than the male comrades, and that's not due to the fact that women are better saleswomen, or whatever. Part of it is due to the fact that the women's fraction in New York took a very large quota and felt that they had to meet it. They also were challenged by the high school fraction and didn't want to be defeated. Little games like that can help to get comrades to take the extra hour.

The other thing is that you can do things around the hall that can help comrades out, make it just as easy as possible. One of the things that we did in New York was to put up cartoons on a board that advertised going out and selling subscriptions. We go out and we advertise The Militant, but to each other we have to advertise the idea of selling, so we had little cartoons clipped out of the New Yorker with comments changed a little, poems and things. And right next to that, we had a list of places that comrades could go to sell. Not only that, but we also had a file of how to get to these particular places, so that, when you said "Go down to Pace College," or wherever, and comrades said, "Oh, I can't go there, I don't know where it is," you grabbed the card and said, "Well, you take the IRT, the BMT and do this." It was a lot easier for people to go out and actually do things.

Now another thing which is an example of the untapped sources that we have. We have a large local in New York, but a lot of our subscriptions weren't sold by comrades, they were sold by independents. A couple of independents who were sort of close to us came into the hall and they saw our chart up on the wall. Various fractions had a fist that gradually rose as they got up to their quota. These independents came in and they said, "Wow! What's that?" So I explained it to them, and they said, "That's really great. We want to sell The Militant, and see our fists raised too." And, so they became their own "fraction" and they went out and sold subscriptions. They doubled

their quota, they doubled their quota again, and by the end of the subscription drive we had recruited a number of them. They'd sold something like 40 or 50 subscriptions. Now that's the kind of thing that I think we have to do, especially through our campaign.

Putting subscription blanks on our campaign literature is a very important source of subscriptions. When you're right down to the end of the line, you've accepted a quota and you really want to meet it, but you've got 50 more subscriptions to get, those 50 subscriptions can just come in on subscription blanks from campaign literature.

Mark Ugolini, Chicago: Mary-Alice said that we have to really put a political premium on the expansion of our press in the next period. And we really can't overlook the tremendous opportunities there are in the Black community for the expansion of our press. In Chicago there is a street corner in the heart of the Black community, and it's sort of a shopping center. We first went there during the petitioning to put the SWP on the ballot in Illinois. We sent three comrades there to petition, and in a period of seven hours they collected 1,500 signatures in the name of the Socialist Workers Party. This was nothing like, "Do you want to sign a petition to put peace candidates on the ballot?" It was to put the Socialist Workers Party on the ballot. And they got 1,500 signatures.

The next week, we had a campaign rally there and Willie Petty, who's our candidate for sheriff, spoke for an hour and 45 minutes on a chair. We sold over 50 Militants in an hour and 45 minutes. This is really very significant, considering that this is the first sale of The Militant we had there. We really have

to keep this in mind for the subscription drive and really go in a consistent way into the Black community.

As far as the subscription drive goes, there are always a few comrades in every local who have an exceptional ability for selling subscriptions. But there's one thing that they all have in common -- a tremendous amount of audacity. And this is what really has to be instilled in the local and in the branches.

Summary - Mary-Alice Waters

I just want to make one point in conclusion. There have been many very good ideas today about ways to help sell subscriptions to The Militant. I'm sure comrades found them very helpful and will be able to use some of them in the fall drive.

But we must be careful not to fall into the trap of relying on gimmicks of one kind or another. As Robin pointed out, subscriptions are sold on a one to one basis. Ours is a political newspaper sold by political people, to political people. There is no substitute for our own enthusiasm and understanding of the need to go out and sell the paper because of its key importance in the vital task of building the revolutionary party in this country.

And there is no substitute for political leadership of the subscription drive, provided by the branch and local executive committees. Aids to selling are very important, but the key to the drive is the organization and mobilization of the entire party and YSA membership, to go out with a real campaign spirit in the very first days of the drive and meet the quotas that we have collectively decided upon.