

Report on Continuations Committee Meeting of the Student Mobilization Committee

On January 28, about 50 people gathered in New York for the Continuations Committee meeting of the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC). The Continuations Committee is a loose steering committee of representatives from national organizations, local antiwar committees, and local united fronts.

Present at this meeting were representatives from the YSA, SWP, Communist Party, DuBois Clubs, Youth Against War and Fascism, Student Peace Union, two local National Student Association groups, Southern Student Organizing Committee, the Bring the Troops Home Now Newsletter, New York City Student Mobilization Committee, and leaders from local organizations in Cleveland, Detroit, Seattle, Berkeley, Minneapolis, Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and New York. The composition of the meeting was weighted heavily toward representatives from local antiwar groups.

The purpose of this meeting was to review the past month's work of the Student Mobilization Committee, provide an opportunity for presenting new ideas, and define more clearly the decision making process.

The major points that were discussed and decided upon were:

- A) The smear attack on the SMC by Rep. Edwin Willis, Chairman of HUAC. It was decided to issue a press release and hold a press conference to enunciate clearly the student committee's policy of non-exclusion and its refusal to be intimidated. The general sentiment was to use the attack to publicize April 8-15.
- B) It was decided to publish the call by February 15. About 100 student leaders and professors will be included as sponsors, representative of organizations involved in the SMC of the antiwar movement.
- C) Bettina Aptheker suggested that April 12th be set as a special focal date for the student mobilization. This was rejected on the grounds that it would diffuse the energies of the Student Mobilization Committee which should be directed principally toward April 15th.
- D) The national office of the SMC will be in New York. Furthermore it was agreed that the present staff -- Paul Friedman (CP), Linda Dannenberg (New York Parade Committee), Gus Horowitz, and Bill Snyder (SDS) -- will be the official spokesmen, make day to day decisions, and meet frequently with representatives from the organizations supporting the committee in New York. Linda Dannenberg will be Executive Director. Additional members of the staff will be added as they are needed and as other organizations furnish them.

E) It was decided that the Continuations Committee would be composed of representatives from local and national organizations that support the call. Furthermore the meeting authorized the staff to develop a 'key list' of individuals around the country. Each local area was urged to hold a local or regional conference involving all who support Vietnam Week to plan April 8-15 and to elect co-ordinators for that area, who would then become the key persons for that area.

The meeting was fruitful and indicates the possibility of significant success for the Spring Mobilization and National Student Vietnam Week. The issuance of the student call, to be followed shortly by the Spring Mobilization Committee call, will spur the activities on. The task that remains on a national scale is the organizing of large forces to take part in the week's events.

The Spring Mobilization Committee is receiving significant support. James Bevel's addition to the staff as Executive Director brings a new wing into the mobilization. On the West Coast a strong unity has developed and Kipp Dawson and Ed Keating, the two officers of the West Coast action, will be touring the western states in the next couple of months to rally support. Conferences for the Spring Mobilization Committee and the Student Mobilization Committee were held in San Francisco February 4 and 5. A brief report will be sent out in a few days.

It has been decided by the Spring Mobilization Committee that on both coasts a large scale march will take place. In New York this will be a long march that will end at the United Nations; in San Francisco at the Cow Palace. In deciding on these sites it has been made clear that the orientation is to go to the UN as Malcolm planned to do. That is, to go there to scandalize the United States for its intervention in Vietnam; to go over the head of the United States government; to go there to stress the international aspect of this protest. To this point, the contrary orientation of appealing to U Thant and negotiations has not carried any weight.

The Students for a Democratic Society continue to shy away from the Spring Mobilization and Vietnam Week, and did not have any official representative at the SMC meeting. This attitude is part of their national slide to the right politically. New Left Notes has carried several articles recently attacking the mobilization, the coalition that exists, and the YSA-SWP's role in it. These articles stress that SDS is the radical force and what we are doing is 'liberal'. When pseudo-radical verbiage, such as this, starts to fly, it only further confirms the national SDS rightward drift.

At the same time that the leadership of SDS is expressing this sentiment, many different locals report that there is considerable feeling within the ranks of SDS in various areas to take part in the mobilization. The Spring and Student Com-

mittees should take the opportunity now to increase their efforts to involve SDS, nationally and locally. We, as a significant portion of this coalition, should also attempt to draw SDS in, as well as present serious SDS'ers our ideas.

The student united front which was formed in Chicago has functioned to this point with a minimum of friction. Involving primarily the CP youth and the YSA, its major weakness is the absence of SDS. If SDS and other forces can be involved in the Vietnam Week this united front can serve as the basis for a representative and authoritative national coordinating body in the future. And it could be an arena of significant recruitment and influence for us.

The student united front has also been carried successfully to local areas. These local groupings are quite important, and we must make every effort to broaden them, which will simultaneously strengthen them and give us additional milieus to present our ideas to. Additionally, we should take the initiative in seeing that the local and regional conferences take place. If these conferences take place in a real way, they can go a long way toward making April 15 a success.

The YSA is playing a major role in building the Spring Mobilization, with many YSA'ers taking leading roles, both nationally and locally. It has become even more clear that no other socialist youth organization has the strength or 'roots' to match these efforts. This situation gives us increased opportunities for recruitment to our ideas.

Our job now is to campaign to build the April 15 action, and at the same time present our ideas to those we are or will be working with. With these aims in mind the national office has planned two national speaking tours, will give the mobilization coverage in the YS, and has prepared three brochures on critical questions in the antiwar movement for wide scale distribution. In addition, the YS in conjunction with the Militant will be offering a special joint subscription price between now and April 15, which we should utilize to obtain many new readers to our ideas.

There are several other tasks involved in the campaign for April 15:

- 1) Establish local student united fronts on each campus and if necessary on a city-wide basis. Some areas have already done this and other areas have meetings scheduled after the semester examinations. This is very important because it is the formation of these local groups that will provide the nation-wide grass-roots substance for the Student Mobilization Committee.

- 2) Local and regional conferences to build April 8-15 should be held if at all possible. Besides the very important job of setting up the machinery for bringing people to New

York and San Francisco, the conferences can serve an educational function. We should go out of our way to stress the importance of campus organizing, anti campus complicity activity, and so on, as a means of drawing SDS into the action at such conferences.

3) City-wide or campus united fronts should send out campus organizers in their areas to set up activities where none now exist.

4) The calls will be ready February 15 and should be ordered. in large quantities and distributed widely. A place will be provided for the local address.

5) Posters and buttons are also forthcoming from the student committee and should be utilized extensively.

6) Regular reports describing the building efforts in each area are very important for the Student Mobilizer. The Student Mobilizer is planning to become a photo-offset tabloid and can use pictures of local activities.

Lew Jones
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