

NEC Report on the High School Student Mobilization Committee
Conference by Dave C., and Lew J., December 12, 1967

Over 100 high school students gathered at the University of Chicago high school over the Thanksgiving weekend, November 24-26, for a conference of High School Student Mobilization Committees. The conference was called to discuss the national development and perspectives of the various high school committees.

The size of the conference alone revealed the potential for antiwar activity among high school students. Prior to the conference minimal publicity had been put out, and the organizers expected only half the actual attendance.

Most of the participants were independent of any political group. Members of the YSA, SDS, PLP, and Chicago Area Draft Resistance (CADRE), however, were present. There were no CP or DuBois Club members present.

The mood of the participants was radical. Che's writings and our sticker were popular. The YSA literature table sold over \$44 worth of literature, mostly on Che, Malcolm, Vietnam, or Latin America.

The YSA was accepted as a leader of the antiwar movement even more readily than at other antiwar conferences. While only two comrades were able to attend and participate, these comrades played leading roles, and the YSA was frequently mentioned by non-YSAers in the course of discussions. Three new high school members joined the YSA during the conference -- two from Chicago and one from Minneapolis.

138 people registered. Twenty were observers, 73 were high school students from Chicago, 12 from the Chicago area, 12 from Madison, 10 from the Detroit area, and another dozen from areas like New York and Boston.

Workshops were held on civil liberties, national action, local organization, nonviolence and noncooperation, student rights, human rights, educational reform, the draft, and Vietnam.

The concluding plenary voted to increase communication between areas, support and attend the Chicago SMC conference in January, and to maintain a single-issue orientation. A major debate had earlier occurred over "multi-issue" versus "single-issue" approach. Because of a lack of experience, a lack of written resolutions, and a rushed schedule the debate polarized while actual political differences were minimal. Most of the high school students simply wished to find a way to relate the fight against the war to the fight for rights and privileges in the schools, a legitimate concern since one depends upon the other.

Rennie Davis of JOIN Community Union gave a keynote speech to the conference on his recent trip to North Vietnam. He called for the participants to make special efforts to build the antiwar movement.

Another conference is planned for late May or early June.