

NEC Report on Hugo Blanco Defense, June 23, 1967, by Doug

At the YSA convention a number of comrades discussed the importance of Hugo Blanco defense work and it was agreed that this was an important task for the YSA. The urgency of the task is underlined by the fact that the possibility of execution hangs over Blanco's head.

Besides the elementary obligation that we have to defend comrades and co-thinkers in this country and abroad, the defense of Blanco and his comrades gives us excellent opportunities to take advantage of the heightened interest in Latin America among students. It gives us a chance to discuss our ideas about the Latin American revolution and the accomplishments of the Cuban revolution, while at the same time publicly identifying the YSA with Blanco, a mass leader among the Peruvian peasants.

Committees to defend Hugo Blanco have been set up in a number of countries and have met with surprising success in rallying support for the defense effort. In this country most of the Blanco defense work has been carried out by the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Prisoners. Due to the fact that the USLA is a general defense committee for Latin American prisoners and is limited to some extent on how much it can do on Blanco defense work, the YSA is initiating a number of activities that can be carried out nationally.

(1) We are putting out a button ("Free Hugo Blanco") that can be sold widely at high schools and on campuses. We will advertize that the button is printed and distributed by the YSA but that the proceeds after cost will be turned over to the defense effort of Blanco. The button will be available in approximately three weeks and local organizers should place their orders with the YSA office now. It should be a good seller and will help to publicize the case.

(2) The YSA is planning to publish a pamphlet on the life of Hugo Blanco. A draft is being prepared and hopefully it will be ready before school starts. This will be an important piece of literature for explaining who Blanco is, how he became a socialist, what kind of organizing he did among the peasants, etc.

(3) A fact sheet or brochure giving the facts about the case and listing the significant support that exists around the world is planned.

(4) A petition is being prepared for circulation among professors, lawyers, writers, artists, etc. We can take advantage of the fact that we have made numerous contacts among professors in the past four or five years as well as the fact that many distinguished people in Europe and Canada have already given their support to the case. The goal is to obtain three or four thousand signatures and then publicize this in press releases, articles, etc., in order to maximize

the impact. If it is successful it could be the most important publicity action done yet in this country on behalf of Blanco. The details of the petition have to be worked out yet and more information on this will follow later.

(5) The USLA has a list of speakers who are willing to speak on the defense of Latin American prisoners. It is not likely that any of these will be able to make a national tour but they are available for week-end or one or two day trips. If locals want to take advantage of this opportunity for meetings on campuses, etc., they should write to the USLA, P.O. Box 2303, New York, N.Y. 10001.

(6) Since most locals have already done some Blanco defense work, it would be helpful to the NO if we could receive reports on what has been done. It is suggested that locals assign someone to handle Blanco work and to send us regular reports.

The coming issue of the YS has a special report on a visit that one of our comrades had with Hugo Blanco about a week ago at El Fronton. It is a very inspiring report and will be an important addition to our propaganda material in the defense work.