

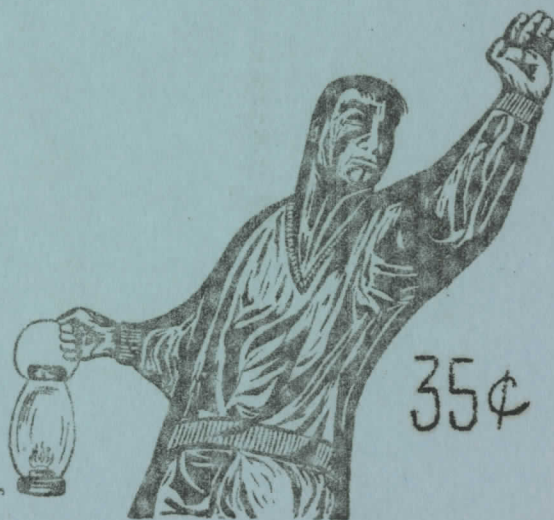
Barbara

YOUNG SOCIALIST FORUM

SEPTEMBER
1960

PRE-PLENUM DISCUSSION MATERIAL

Volume III - Number 5
(Whole Number 11)



35¢

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MEMORANDUM ON OUR TACTICS IN THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT

3.

Introduction

We have received requests for a clarification of our line in relation to the antiwar groups, marches, demonstrations, etc., from a number of areas including New York City, Boston and Los Angeles. Such requests themselves are a reflection of the growth of the antiwar sentiments on campus as well as our at least partial involvement in these. It also expresses a certain confusion -- or at least lack of complete confidence -- over our tactics when working in antiwar groups whose leaderships have considerable differences with us. This memorandum aims to clarify this situation.

The New Mood

All the comrades have been aware of the startling change of mood on the American campus that has come to a head this Spring. This has found expression in a series of student actions whose scope and militancy go quite beyond anything the campus has seen since the immediate postwar period. Our deepest experience with this mood has been in the Northern supporting movement to the sit-ins in the South. However, this mood has also found expression in the civil-liberties field with the unprecedented anti-HAUC demonstrations in San Francisco which reached its peak in a mobilization of 5,000 students. Just as important -- possibly of increasing importance in the future -- has been the antiwar actions. These include the anti-ROTC movements which have spread to up-to-now unpolitical campuses and are largely made up of raw students; the civil defense protest movement which in New York City mobilized 2,000 students; the Student SANE and Student Peace Union groups which this Spring have started to again become active; the Canadian antimissile base demonstrations initiated by our people; and a scattering of other "Peace Marches," and the like, organized by pacifists and in some cases the Stalinists.

Many of our comrades have observed that the same faces show up at each of the different actions in these fields and this is a reflection of the growth of a substantial body of students throughout the country who have reached a level of consciousness of themselves as rebels against the injustice in capitalist society (though many are not yet socialist in ideology).

It is our task in the coming period to recruit the best of this new layer of student rebels to the revolutionary movement.

The Nature of the Leadership

At the present time the leadership of the antiwar movement is in the hands of some of the worst petty-bourgeois elements on the current scene. In general the program of the movement reflects this and is more distant from ours than is the case of the program of the Negro leadership or the leadership of the civil-liberties groupings. We should enter these movements with a clear understanding of this -- but enter we must!

The most important antiwar groupings are either in control of the liberals (SANE) or in control of the pacifist-social democratic gang (Civil Defense Protest Committee, Action for Peace, etc.). The SANE

grouping is the most political of the two and is largely a Democratic party outfit. Its program is little different from Eisenhower's putting its emphasis on negotiated test cessation and disarmament (see attached report). The pacifist-social democratic gang has a better program in many ways (unilateral disarmament, etc.) than the SANE group looking upon itself as the "left wing" of the peace movement. However, its doctrinaire pacifist program is at least as dangerous -- possibly more dangerous because of its attractiveness to good militants -- than the SANE liberal program.

The Stalinists occasionally carry on "peace" activity under their own leadership through front groups whose programs are as bad as the above mentioned groups. However, it is much more common to see them working in other groups carrying out a line of capitulation to the leadership of the group and sometimes even vying with the YPSL to be the policemen of the left.

The YPSL has been quite active in the past in SANE. Presently it does not seem to be active in SANE but is one of the initiators of the Student Peace Union which is organized on a few campuses in the mid-west. The current line of the SP-SDF of opposition to unilateral disarmament should do the YPSL a lot of harm though the "left wingers" in the organization may in fact increase their action in the antiwar field to spite their leadership.

All these organizations have been able to attract students who are seeking some way to oppose America's war policies. These students are neither doctrinaire liberals or doctrinaire pacifists. They are attracted to those organizations because they are the only ones in the field that oppose -- in some fashion -- the prowar orthodoxy in this country.

In addition many students have acted outside of these organizations especially on the anti-ROTC issue. It is our task to reach the students both inside these organizations and those who are acting in these independently organized movements.

The Crisis in SANE

As can be seen by the accompanying detailed report on SANE, there is presently raging a deep crisis in that organization brought to a head by the recent failure of the summit and the concomitant cold war tensions. The liberals are caving into witch-hunting attacks and are trying to force out of the organization allegedly radical elements. The Student SANE has so far stood up to this and in the course of opposition is showing signs of leftward movement.

This immediate crisis in SANE adds to the general picture a certain sense of urgency which should compel our comrades to pay special attention to Student SANE in the immediate period.

Our Tactics

Our first task is the most important: DESPITE PROGRAMMATIC DIFFERENCES OF THE MOST SERIOUS NATURE WE MUST ENTER EVERY ORGANIZA-

TION AND PARTICIPATE IN EVERY ACTION WHICH OBJECTIVELY OPPOSES THE PROWAR POLICIES OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS. Unless we carry through this task there is no sense in working out tactics for they cannot be implemented. Our present contact with the antiwar movement is spotty at best. It can be likened to our contact with the Negro movement two years ago. Our task is to do in the antiwar movement in a few months what we did in the Negro movement in two years! Hard as it may seem the current turmoil among youth makes this task quite possible.

We enter the antiwar movement with a full understanding of the treacherous program the present leadership has foisted on to the students. We therefore enter as revolutionary socialists -- as YSA members and act accordingly.

We cannot prescribe any formula here that will fit every situation and the comrades will have to use their own judgment in feeling their way in this type of movement. When we can do so, marching under our own signs in "Peace Marches" is quite effective. Selling the YS at all such occasions should be a matter of course. Participation on committees set up to organize such events by official YS representatives is the best. But under some conditions we may not be able to do any of these for fear of being forced out of the organization or action. But even under these extreme conditions we can openly talk to other participants about our views and gain contacts for the YSA.

Our Line

It is quite important that we operate in these organizations on the basis of a realistic political line which will make it possible for us to coalesce a broad left wing of militants in these organizations. We should therefore emphasize those points which can make possible the differentiation with the organization of a left wing.

Our goal should be the creation of an independent student action movement of militant opposition to the U.S. military establishment and the war policies of our government. The minimum program for such an organization would include: abolition of compulsory and finally voluntary ROTC; end to conscription; permanent cessation of nuclear tests by our government unilaterally; end to civil-defense tests; end to witch-hunting of dissident views as the aim of the witch-hunt is to prepare the population ideologically for war. Additional points of a more transitional nature (that is, only a socialist government could implement them though those advocating them may not yet realize this) such as: abandon all foreign bases, unilateral disarmament, and a peaceful foreign policy should also be advocated though not insisted on in a minimum program.

Such a group would be open to all who agreed on these concrete issues whether or not they are pacifists and whether or not they are socialists. In this sense we would be proposing in the antiwar field what we have partially achieved in the integration field -- a united front of militants around an action program.

Concretely when functioning in Student SANE groups we should urge them not to fear expulsion by the adult SANE and to look upon

their organization as a possible rallying point for a regrouped, broadened antiwar action organization of students. When participating in a civil-defense protest or a "Peace March" (yes, comrades, we should participate in all such events!) we should suggest that this action is not enough -- an organization of antiwar militants is needed.

Of course we should also discuss issues such as socialism and the class-struggle road to peace; peaceful coexistence; the U.N., etc. However, we should not raise these as programmatic issues upon which there must be agreement before there can be common action. Rather we seek within a common action organization to discuss informally with others about such issues.

And finally

All the above is so much wind unless we get into these "peace" groups. Further, our tactic in relation to all sections of the student protest movement will be hindered unless we develop deeper roots on the campuses. Every effort must be made by local areas to build effective campus fractions. Nothing is more urgent than this in the present period.

-- Presented by Tim Wohlforth,
National Chairman YSA;
adopted unanimously by the NEC.

by Tim Wohlforth

A much needed discussion on our tactics in the antiwar movement has begun in both the YSA and in the party. That the original impetus for the discussion should be a YSA memorandum on the question is in itself significant, for it is only on the American campus that we find any new forces that have come into being around this question. For this reason I will confine myself largely to tactics related to the youth movement though recognizing that the political questions involved are important to both party and youth.

The basic aim of the memorandum was to develop a tactic for our intervention into this field. It had become increasingly clear by late spring that significant new forces were becoming involved in various antiwar activities. It was no longer simply a matter of a few pacifists or some worn out Stalinists pretending to be pacifists. The new generation of campus radicals who had played such an important part in the northern demonstrations in support of the southern sit-ins and in the anti-HUAC demonstrations in San Francisco was also becoming active in various antiwar actions.

This can be seen most clearly in the civil-defense protests in New York City. Last year only a handful of pacifists took part in a protest demonstration. This year some 2,000 students were involved. I personally was caught unawares by this development and had originally taken a slightly cautious attitude on our participation in this demonstration, fearing that we would become involved in a pacifist individual protest type of deal. It so happened that the quantitative change in turnout changed qualitatively the nature of the event from a pacifist to a nonpacifist demonstration. This the pacifists themselves have recognized. For instance, the Peacemaker comments: "It appeared that about two or three score might be pacifists, a similar number were mothers and most of the remainder college students. This demonstration, although 'anti-war,' was not organized on a pacifist basis, and there was a certain amount of kicking and thrashing against the police during the arrests."

There have been many other antiwar actions during the school year including widespread anti-ROTC agitation, various peace marches (some attracting far larger numbers than previously for these events) and similar activities. All these demonstrations were aimed in one fashion or another at the cold-war policies of the U.S. government. While there was a wide range of ideological understanding among the participants all were at least to some degree disenchanted with the prowar direction of the U.S. government. Further, they had resolved to do something about it and were not to be frightened by the "communist menace" from taking action against the policies of their own government.

True, there were pacifist illusions among some of the students. Others held liberal biases, and still another small but active group was influenced by Stalinist views. But the movement was and is a fresh and new movement -- not a conglomeration of pacifist and Stalinist hacks as it had tended to be just a short while ago. The presence of confused ideology makes it all the more important for revolutionaries to intervene.

Our Immediate Tasks

The task which these events placed before the YSA was not a simple one. We did not have much contact with this milieu and our small forces were tied up in many other projects. But it seemed imperative to awaken our members to this new

development and to work out a tactic for intervention -- a tactic aimed at wresting from the pacifists and cohorts their control over the antiwar forces in the country.

We felt that only revolutionists could lead the fight against war -- not only to its successful conclusion, but even to the winning of a few of its partial demands. For revolutionists to turn their backs on this new movement for fear of a taint on their purity would be in effect to hand this new generation of antiwar fighters over to an alien social class. Such an act would be a disservice to revolutionary socialism comparable to what the Ohlerites attempted (and the Marcyites after them).

It was clearly impossible to implement any antiwar policy as long as we remained isolated from the actual movement we were trying to influence. This is why the memorandum puts such stress on entry. It is important to swing our people around and to get them into contact with the actual antiwar movement as it is presently constituted before we can ever hope to have any influence on its future direction. In addition to gaining contact with the ranks of the antiwar movement we must build a reputation in their eyes as active fighters for peace -- just as we have done in the integration field.

The proposal to enter Student SAWE must be taken in this light. I was not proposing any exclusive orientation toward Student SAWE as I am not at all convinced that the future development of the antiwar movement will necessarily confine itself to this organization. But it was important for us to get into every antiwar organization -- civil-defense protest groups, ad hoc anti-ROTC groupings, etc. Student SAWE groups are found on many campuses and entrance into them is quite easy. I do not feel such an entry is in principle excluded. But it should be clear that in any entry we enter as revolutionists, keeping our criticisms and in fact intensifying them in our press, and in every other way bringing to the fore our revolutionary critique of liberalism and pacifism.

Towards A Student Antiwar Movement

We must do more than enter these organizations. If our entry is to be effective we must carry it through on the basis of a general strategic orientation which deals with our basic task -- to win the leadership of the antiwar movement away from the pacifists and cohorts. Any antiwar policy which does not offer a way to do this is doomed to failure and would be an abdication of our revolutionary responsibility.

The section of the memorandum which formulates a program of immediate and transitional demands for the antiwar movement and which projects the conception of a student antiwar movement founded on the basis of them is an attempt to grapple with this problem.

There are basically two ways we can intervene in this movement. One is to enter with our full program only and carry on agitation to win recruits directly to the Trotskyist position.

This is the most ineffective way to intervene into any movement. Missing is the whole conception of transitional forms and transitional demands. No attempt is made to form bridges from the present level of consciousness in the movement to our full revolutionary program. Such an approach is characteristic of the SIP but has been repudiated by our movement. In every field of work,

whether it be the trade unions, the Negro struggle, the student milieu, we operate on the basis of another approach. We seek to find ways to coalesce a militant left wing around the more immediate aspects of our program so as to bring the largest section of the ranks of that movement into conflict with its false leadership. While doing this we also press our full program in an educational way on the militants we are working in common with. It was this approach that gained for us such successes in our recent integration work.

I propose that we apply this approach to the antiwar movement. We enter the movement seeking not only to win adherents directly to our full program, we also seek to coalesce a broad militant left wing in opposition to the false leadership of the pacifist-liberal-Stalinist complex. The issues around which such a left wing could be formed cannot be outlined in detail ahead of time. Perhaps the section of the memorandum where I attempt to do this is too rigidly constructed. The basic concept, though, is quite valid.

It is likely that the differentiation between the militants and the present leadership will occur around two closely related axes. First, the concept of unilateral disarmament -- that is, aiming the antiwar movement at our own capitalist class rather than "at all governments." This issue has already played a prominent role in the antiwar movement even without our intervention. Second, the failure of the pacifists to effectively carry out the fight for even those immediate demands that they are in agreement with us on. Just as in the Negro struggle the pacifists will fear really effective struggle against capitalism.

Some question has been raised as to whether it would be proper for us, after successfully conducting such a struggle as outlined above, to assume the leadership of the antiwar movement on less than a full Trotskyist program. The question is posed incorrectly, for as formulated the answer is simply -- NO, we cannot assume full leadership of anything on less than the full Trotskyist program. But that is not what is at issue. The real question is: can we assume the leadership of an antiwar movement in coalition with militants who agree with us on an immediate and possibly even transitional program but are not as yet Trotskyist? I am not referring here to isolated individuals but to leaders who represent significant forces. My answer is, YES, just as we have done in the integration field and will do many, many times again in different fields. No front groups formed by us on less than our full program, but real coalitions, yes.

Will such an independent student antiwar movement come to pass? I do not know. The antiwar sentiments of students will take some independent form, possibly only through scattered groups devoted to specific antiwar issues; possibly through a federation of such groups; then again it may occur through a general student organization, most of whose main planks and activities relate to the antiwar struggle. Whichever form it takes it does not matter for the political content and our tasks remain the same. There is no principled differences between a student antiwar organization and a general student organization whose main work is in the antiwar field.

Can such an antiwar student movement achieve its goal on its own -- i.e., bring peace? Obviously not! Peace can come only through the socialist revolution. Such a movement can, however, win on some of its immediate demands (such as abolish compulsory ROTC, stop nuclear testing and even end conscription)

but to win the long range goal it must ally itself with the working class and its struggle for power. Our task in the antiwar movement is to make this clear. Under no circumstance can we subscribe to a program which implies that peace can be achieved other than through the above way. But we can support a program for the achievement of the lesser antiwar goals through the militant action of the students and through our alliance with the working class.

And What About the Proletarian Military Policy?

Quite naturally this memorandum did not deal with the Proletarian Military Policy question. The YSA is an independent youth movement. While in basic agreement with the SWP and looking to the SWP for political leadership it does not subscribe to any position of the SWP unless that position is introduced into the YSA, discussed there, and decided on by the youth themselves. We have never had occasion to treat the Proletarian Military Policy in such a fashion, for this policy has never been brought up by anyone in the YSA. Furthermore during the period of my association with the SWP, the SWP has not activated this policy, and one hears of it only by reference to a position once held during World War II.

However, now that we are entering a period of increased activity in the antiwar field it is quite proper that we consciously bring this policy up once more, discuss it thoroughly, and see to what extent and through what concrete slogans it is applicable in the present period.

Perhaps the greatest danger in the present attitude current in the party on this question is that some comrades have allowed themselves to fall into a rather bad political formulation. On the one hand they reject raising the slogan "End Conscription, End ROTC" for fear that such a position will contradict our traditional position on Proletarian Military Policy. But on the other hand, they do not raise as an alternative to capitalist conscription the slogan of conscription under trade-union control because such a slogan has no basis in the present reality. Such a position creates the impression that we favor capitalist militarism and can thereby severely damage us in the eyes of young antiwar militants on the campus who we might otherwise be able to win to our program.

Should there be any doubt as to our opposition to capitalist militarism and therefore our opposition to capitalist conscription let me quote from the 1940 Resolution on Proletarian Military Policy: "The imperialist war is not our war and the militarism of the capitalist state is not our militarism. We do not support the war and militarism of the imperialists any more than we support the capitalist exploitation of workers in the factories. We are against the war as a whole just as we are against the rule of the class that conducts it and never under any circumstances vote to give them any confidence in their conduct of the war or preparation for it -- not a man, not a cent, not a gun with our support. Our war is the war of the working class against the capitalist order."

The current 1960 election platform of the party makes this position explicit so that there should be no doubt that we support wholeheartedly the struggle of American youth against being yanked out of their civilian lives, put under the control of reactionary elements and martialled into support of American imperialism. It is now the duty of the YSA to utilize the SWP election campaign as a way of intervening on this question.

The question still arises as to the relevance of the Proletarian Military Policy to our antiwar work today. It is first necessary to distinguish between the essence of this policy and the particular slogan form it took in 1940. The particular agitational slogan of trade-union control of the army was never utilized by Lenin, to my knowledge, and was only worked out by Trotsky during the last year or two of his life. This only goes to prove that the slogan was a tactical formulation of a traditional Leninist view on militarism which distinguishes the revolutionary movement from the pacifist movement.

It is clear to me at least that the agitational slogan "Trade Union control of the Army" is not a relevant one today. A trade-union movement which can barely conduct a strike and in which there no longer exists any really organized rank-and-file movement is not likely to respond to a demand that it take over the army. The concept of an army run by Meany and Hoffa is not likely to inspire anyone! Nor does there exist a sentiment within the working class with which we can at least partially solidarize ourselves as was the case of the antifascist sentiment in 1940. "This militarization has wide support among the workers. They bear a sentimental hatred of Hitler mixed with confused class sentiments. They have a hatred against the victorious brigands" (Discussion with Lund, August 1940). It will be difficult for us to solidarize ourselves with the prowar sentiments among the workers today which is motivated by the "fight communism" propaganda.

If this slogan has no relevance today how then do we apply our Proletarian Military Policy concepts so as to differentiate ourselves from the pacifists? As Trotsky pointed out in 1940, basing himself on the whole tradition of Leninism, the essential difference between us and the pacifists is that we are serious about revolution and that they are not. Their antiwar policy is an antiwar policy designed only for peacetime and leads to either capitulation in time of war or useless individual martyrdom. Our antiwar policy is most effective precisely on the eve of and during war.

For instance we reject wholeheartedly at all times and in all periods the pacifist concept of "conscientious objection." While we oppose the draft as an instrument of capitalist militarism the revolutionist does not separate himself from his fellow workers. Just as in the factory the revolutionist strives to be the best worker so in the army he strives to be the best soldier.

Within the army the revolutionist seeks to convince his fellow soldiers of his views but he does not separate himself from them. He also supports the desires of the soldiers to democratically control their officers and to have some influence over policies that may mean the soldier's life or death.

The essence of the Proletarian Military Policy -- and the only form it ever took in Lenin's writings -- can be seen most clearly in the actual unfolding of the Russian Revolution. It was the ability of the Bolsheviks to neutralize or win over the army which made the Russian Revolution possible. A pacifist policy of abstention would have been disastrous.

Thus we can see the following general approach to this question on our propaganda. During a period of relative international stability as at the present time our slogans calling for an end to conscription come to the fore and dominate our agitational work. Our understanding of the necessity to grapple

with the existence of the army in a revolutionary way becomes an important part of our propaganda work. As the crisis deepens and war becomes imminent we shift the emphasis on the agitational level from an anticonscription campaign to demands for the democratization of the army and any other particular slogan which will help to give a working-class orientation to the armed forces. While doing this we do not throw out our opposition to capitalist conscription but it tends to play a more propagandistic role than an agitational one.

The Pacifist Menace

A lot of the resistance to my memorandum was motivated by some sort of suspicion that somehow the YSA was coming under pacifist influence. This is absurd. If anything our comrades have a reputation for being rather bellicose. It takes effort to get them to try to convince a pacifist first and slug him later rather than the other way around.

But in all seriousness, we have carried and will continue to carry on a propaganda offensive against the pacifists. There is no question on this. However, no matter how fine our propaganda campaign is it will not amount to a hill of beans unless we actually get it to the pacifists and those influenced by them and carry on a struggle with them for control of the antiwar movement. Those who abstain from that struggle are the ones who aid and abet pacifism.

The incorrectness of those who launch a full propaganda offensive on the war question but isolate themselves from the real antiwar movement was epitomized for me by a single issue of the old Young Spartacus. In the issue that was published following the first nationwide peace strike during which 25,000 students went out on strike, Young Spartacus devoted over a full page to a general propaganda article on war. It heralded this momentous strike with a small box on page four! This is one "tradition" we could do well not to emulate!

June 1960

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Jim Lambrecht

How We Control Movements

Something should be said, at the start of our discussion, about the meaning of the word "control" in relations between revolutionary socialists and other movements. To revolutionary socialists, only programs control movements -- organizational influence within movements flows from this. Any other conception of the word is alien, or should be made alien, to our movement.

In the horrible miasma that passes for revolutionary science among the Stalinists there is a discernable example of another conception of control. That is, that the chief goal of the revolutionist should be the attainment of organizational posts, and after that is the time to bring forward your program, providing of course that such a step will not lead to losing office, which is the chief goal. On what program do you win office? Why, the program that will win -- within certain limits (these limits shift, with the Stalinists, for reasons not germane to this document; but it is germane to note that the overall direction of shift over the past forty years has been to the right).

The view that underlies this subordination of program to the fight for posts -- in the case of both the Social Democrats and the Stalinists -- is that the mechanism of social change is the apparatus, the machine. Whoever has more seats in Parliament, or controls more posts in the unions, peace organizations, war organizations, etc., etc. -- can change history.

Revolutionary socialists take a different view altogether. For us, it is the psychology and consciousness of the masses that changes history. As this consciousness changes, so finally all organizations change including the organization of society as a whole. A small but very important example of this process has been the development of the YSA itself. It would have been impossible to arbitrarily impose our present organizational forms on the early IBM clubs, or even on the later YS Supporter groups until the membership had gone through several stages of a process of study, discussion and experience that increased our consciousness of revolutionary socialism. At this point we need and want the present organization of the YSA, and would find anything less to be intolerable.

Therefore we put our emphasis on program and not on the capture of posts. Our task is to teach the revolutionary program to the masses. To fulfill it we may be forced to do many things -- in order to reach the masses at their present level of consciousness -- but one thing we do not do is fight for someone else's program or fail to fight for our own. If we do not falter in this task we will ultimately "control" the youth in the antiwar movement, because they will be solidly behind the program of revolutionary socialism.

Antiwar Programs: transitional or minimum?

The antiwar program of revolutionary socialists has a transitional character. It includes concrete demands that sections of the antiwar movement are already conscious enough to act on -- demands aimed at the government and its war preparations, such as unilateral disarmament, no war treaties with other capitalist nations, cessation of nuclear tests, etc. In the struggle for these demands the antiwar movement learns the "worthiness" of its pacifist, bourgeois-liberal or reformist leadership; it learns something of the nature of the bourgeois state. Revolutionary socialists participate in these struggles alongside the antiwar militants -- in the course of the struggle they raise further demands based on the increased consciousness of these militants, pushing forward the struggle and heightening the consciousness of the movement at the same time. There is no limit to this process, from the revolutionary socialist point of view. At each stage of the struggle, and at each stage of the mass learning process that flows from the experience of the struggle, revolutionary socialists press for programmatic advance -- at all times basing themselves on the current level of consciousness of the antiwar movement, but at all times seeking to propel the movement into struggles that will raise that level. Since the cause of war is the continued rule of the capitalist class, the ultimate demands of our transitional antiwar program cross over to the socialist program itself -- for a labor party, a workers' government and finally for the overthrow of the capitalist class. The program is transitional for this reason.

But the program called for by the "Memorandum" has a minimum character, that is, it posits a series of concrete demands as our minimum program in the antiwar movement. This is a schematic and false way to approach the problem of the learning process of the masses -- both inside and outside the antiwar movement. It cuts off not just the transitional aspect of the antiwar program in a formal sense, but also ignores the transitional character of the mass learning process. The New York Student Peace Union, for example, already calls for unilateral disarmament. What, then, should a YSA fraction in SPU do to increase the consciousness of its membership? Even assuming that the presently existing peace movement is not yet capable of our minimum program, and that it will therefore be of some use to us in educating people through discussion and struggle, it is wrong for us to assume that that learning process will proceed at an even tempo nationally, that some areas will not leap out ahead of others because of previous experiences or a thousand other factors, and that therefore the YSA fractions or units will not need to have the full freedom of our transitional antiwar program, including very advanced programmatic demands, in order to do their job of raising consciousness.

Finally, by falling short of, or cutting off, our full transitional antiwar program, our minimum antiwar program is implicitly pacifist in character, that is, it implies by omission of our more advanced political and class demands that a program of "immediate" demands aimed at armaments and war preparations can halt war.

Pacifism holds that peace is a question "above classes", achievable at a point short of the destruction of the rule of the capitalist class. Their program, logically, consists of nothing but action demands in opposition to all war preparations with the ultimate enemy being war itself, ie, an abstract evil that "all men" can be brought to repudiate.

I think that this error was made in the "Memorandum" because of an overly formal distinction between propaganda, agitation and action slogans. Our transitional program may contain only a few points that match the consciousness of the antiwar movement at present, only a few points that right now can be taken up as action slogans. But the transition between those slogans that we only include in our propaganda work -- to slogans of agitation and action, can be very swift. They must be included in our transitional antiwar program as the YSA cadre understand it. Otherwise we simply repeat the experience of the Social Democrats and Stalinists who "enter" the peace movement only to fight "on the issues" -- they therefore have no way to develop an educational struggle against the program of pacifism, within the antiwar movement, they confuse and miseducate their own people about the nature of the antiwar struggle and often lose them to the pacifists or bourgeois liberals.

Programs and Organizations

We do not see an "independent" antiwar organization -- independent of the revolutionary socialist organization -- as a desirable goal for YSA cadres to struggle for in their work with the antiwar militants. Our attitude toward organizations flows from our attitude toward programs. If we refuse to struggle for an antiwar program independent of our antiwar program, then we must also reject the idea of an antiwar organization independent of our organization. Again, our antiwar program has a transitional character, allowing us to link ourselves to the antiwar militants at their present level of consciousness -- but we do this in order to introduce new demands to raise this consciousness to a higher level, and we see no "cutting off" of this process short of the revolutionary socialist program to end capitalist rule.

Does this mean that we do not participate in antiwar organizations that do not accept our full program? Of course not -- we participate and raise those sections of our transitional program that are appropriate. If we are successful in our work inside of and in united fronts with these organizations, however, then that means we have successfully raised the consciousness of the antiwar movement to a level equal to our own -- at this point there is no programmatic purpose in the "independence" of the antiwar movement from our own. Short of this point, we obviously cannot accept the antiwar program as adequate, we must continue to apply our transitional program in an effort to heighten consciousness. We do not have any sort of minimum program to halt war, but a transitional one. If we constitute the majority in such an "independent" antiwar organization we would do far better to conduct concrete actions against war preparations in our own name, as the YSA, and make use of the united front tactic, in all its forms, in order to continue the education process of the antiwar militants on our transitional antiwar program.

Entry, Opponents Work and The United Front

The "Memorandum" does not define our formal relations to the existing bourgeois-liberal and pacifist peace organizations, beyond the repeated and undefined use of the work "entry". At best this term is used imprecisely; at worst its use -- in conjunction with the political errors already noted -- tends to build up a logic that badly confuses our approach to the peace movement.

"Entry" has a definite meaning in the history of relations between revolutionary socialists and other organizations. It is, in a sense, synonymous with the meaning of the work "fusion." There is an assumption in a call for "entry" that the other organization is beginning to develop toward revolutionary socialism and that, consequently, revolutionary socialists should not allow their own organization to get in the way of unity, or the "entry." Subordination of the needs of their own organization to the needs of the entry is justified by the judgment that the result of the entry will be a new and larger revolutionary socialist organization, program and all.

For this reason, a necessary condition for entry has always been that the other organization already be within the working class camp, and that it already be a political movement. Once that point is assured the question of entry and the form of entry can be settled by an estimation of more concrete circumstances. In the past revolutionary socialists have entered many organizations of this type -- the S.P., labor parties, etc.

But there has never been a call for entry into liberal bourgeois or pacifist peace organizations. This is excluded by the non-class character of their programs, the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois character of the organizations and tendencies themselves, and by their stated or implicit antagonism to politics. Just as we do not bypass our transitional antiwar program for their program of "immediate action demands", so we do not ignore the needs of our own organization for the sake of building theirs.

A different concept altogether is that of "fraction" work. YSA fractions a part of the whole -- can be sent into particular locals of Sane, Student Peace Union, etc., where the quantity of potential contacts justifies it. In deciding to launch such fractional work it goes without saying that the independent socialist activity of the parent YSA unit must continue as the focal point of the energy of its members. Otherwise the fraction itself will be hampered, forced to raise only those points with the organization that will not lead to its immediate expulsion, with no external arm to raise further demands, criticisms, etc.

Implicit in the concept of fractional work, as opposed to the concept of "entry", is the idea that these existing peace organizations are opponent organizations, from our viewpoint. Although we work with the antiwar militants that presently accept their leadership, we begin to develop our transitional antiwar program in order to expose that leadership and heighten the consciousness of the militants through struggle -- with the ultimate perspective of replacing that leadership and organization with our own, and their program with our program. From the point of view of "entry" as opposed to "fractional work", the logic of our opposition to "independent" antiwar organizations is again made clear. All antiwar organizations that are not revolutionary socialist organizations are our opponents.

The United Front and The Current Stage of The Student Movement

In addition to the errors noted so far, there is another error implicit in the stress that the "Memorandum" lays on getting into the various peace organizations on and around the campus. The error is in misestimation of the current stage of the student movement as a whole. It is not true that the young militants that went into action on civil rights, civil liberties and antiwar protests last semester have already reached the stage of organizational

membership in any of the standing organizations that focus on these questions, including peace organizations. That is certainly not true on a national scale, but even locale by locale the overwhelming evidence is that the various actions had a somewhat spontaneous character. Hundreds or thousands would mobilize for a single action or series of actions without affiliating themselves to the organizations that called for the actions.

The error derived from this misestimation -- sending YSA fractions into the peace organizations, conceived of as a national tactic -- would lead to many dull meetings with really not very young people, in many cases. As a national tactic, based on a more realistic estimation of the level of consciousness of the young student militants, the united front is far more suitable. This would allow the YSA to participate in the struggles of the antiwar movement as well as other struggles, without tying up its slim forces in a national "entry" in the -- in many cases -- stale, memberless, letter-head peace organizations. The movement so far shows up for actions, not meetings. That observation should guide our organizational approach to it. In some cities -- N.Y. Student Dane, for example -- there actually is a reason for sending in YSA fractions, ie, several hundred youth belong to it. But even in N.Y. the emphasis should be on the united front rather than fraction work -- much bigger than anything done by N.Y. Student Dane was the demonstration of over 1,000 in City Hall park, called by the Committee to Protest Civil Defense -- adad hoc committee that had many of the essential features of the united front. And the several thousand youth that protested civil defense alerts in high schools and colleges all over the city were led, often, by no organization at all. The united front should also be one of the points that our fractions should demand within the peace movement, therefore, on the ground that no single organization, or even collection of organizations, as yet controls the antiwar movement. And the YSA should emphasize this tactic above all others, in the current period.

COMMENTS ON THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN RELATION TO THE 1960 ELECTION CAMPAIGN

-- by Barbara Doritty and Sherry Finer

We feel that it is necessary to pause at this point in our discussion on the nature of YSA participation in the antiwar movement to consider the question of this movement in relation to the election campaign.

This election campaign will be fought on international questions rather than domestic policy. It is absolutely clear that the main issue in this campaign -- for the Democratic, Republican and Socialist Workers Party -- is the question of war or peace. There are a number of questions we must ask ourselves. Why is the antiwar movement gaining momentum? Why is the question of peace so much more crucial and evident in this election campaign? What and who are the motivating forces at work?

Basically on the international scene two connected forces are operative. First there is the accelerated United States war drive, the conduct of which is making the role of American imperialism as the aggressor nation more and more obvious. The U-2 incident and the collapse of the summit further exposed the war mongering role of both major parties. The second major force which comes into play is that of the widespread demonstrations across the world -- notably the Japanese -- which have further shaken the hold of American imperialism and brought the struggle against it to a new level.

The 1960 election campaign will be fought on a new and higher level of consciousness for while it is not yet patently obvious to the American people that our imperialist government is the aggressor, there is no longer that blind confidence in our peace mongers. There is at the least confusion as to who the aggressor is, ever stronger doubt about the ability of either major party to maintain peace, and awareness that the grim reality of a nuclear war is total destruction. This is no small thing.

It is within this framework of a developing consciousness on the part of the American people, and to an even greater degree in the student milieu, that the election campaign will be conducted. The YSA must be very conscious of both this fact and the tool we have for reaching the student, antiwar and other related milieus. That tool is our support of the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket. The election campaign will be the question of the hour this fall and the struggle against war will be central to that campaign. We not only have our theoretical understanding of the causes of war and the necessary program for peace. We have our very concrete support of Dobbs and Weiss as an alternative to the capitalist war mongers, as a means of increasing the consciousness of American youth and speeding up their disillusionment with capitalist ideology, & thus bring the struggle another step further.

We are writing this because we feel it is important to point out once again the importance and urgency of our local units building Students for Dobbs and Weiss Committees, using them as a link to students in the existing antiwar movements, as a means of approach to these movements, and as an introduction to those many students who will be seriously looking for an alternative to Kennedy and Johnson.

ON TILTING WINDMILLS

by Martha Curti

The Background

The NEC minutes of the past two months must appear, to those not present at the meetings, as a bewildering series of motions, counter-motions, votes to table, to reconsider, to delete, to reinforce, to jump over the moon, et cetera. Even the best minutes (as I am sure ours are) can convey only a bare outline of what occurred at an actual meeting. What lies behind this apparent chaos?

At the first NEC meeting where the antiwar movement was discussed (approximately June 1; the minutes of this meeting are not available), a line was worked out upon which there was unanimous agreement. The essence of the line was twofold: that we enter all existing student antiwar organizations which offer possibilities, and that we favor the building of an independent student antiwar movement which may not necessarily have a socialist program. No one raised the slightest question of "capitulation to pacifism" or of "throwing tradition out the window." The proposal was nothing vastly different from anything we have done before; it was designed merely to focus the attention of the YSA on an important field of work in which new possibilities are opening up. The tactics proposed were in no way different from what we have already been doing in a limited way in this field; in now way did they differ from the approach we have taken toward other movements such as the civil rights movement.

During the next two or three weeks, Comrades Jim Lambrecht and Nora Roberts, after first "having doubts," definitively changed their minds on the question, holding now that it was in principle wrong to favor an independent student antiwar movement or to enter the existing movements.

It is, of course, quite all right for an NEC member to change his mind on a question, even after the question has come to a vote. He is perfectly free, once having changed his mind, to try to re-introduce the question on the NEC, and also to attempt to convince the entire membership of the YSA that the NEC is wrong. I have nothing against that.

One assumes, however, that an NEC member changes his mind on the basis of rational considerations. On studying Comrade Lambrecht's document, "A Criticism of the 'Memorandum on the Antiwar Movement,'" I am forced to conclude that reason played no part in Lambrecht's switch, for 80 per cent of the document is devoted to flaying at positions on which there is no disagreement; the one real difference which Comrade Lambrecht does present is supported by not one shred of logical argument. After an examination of Lambrecht's arguments, perhaps we can try to explain this peculiar political behaviour.

Four Windmills

The first section of Lambrecht's article is entitled "How We Control Movements." It is a fine defense of the idea that we abhor and detest and fight to the death the concept that when working in outside organizations it is posts and organizational control that surpass in importance

program or the winning of anyone to our ideas. The sentiments expressed are laudable; one merely wonders what they are doing in this article. I was under the impression that a political "Criticism" of an article bore some relationship to the article being criticised; but dutifully and minutely as I could, I searched the two Wohlforth documents for some advocacy -- even implied -- of Stalinist-type control, and no such demon could I discover.

Following this is a section devoted to program, minimum demands and transitional demands, and the like. Lambrecht writes, "One thing we do not do is fight for someone else's program or fail to fight for our own." Bravo, Comrade Lambrecht! Later he writes, "At each stage of the struggle ... revolutionary socialists press for programmatic advance -- at all times basing themselves on the current level of consciousness of the antiwar movement, but at all times seeking to propel the movement into struggles that will raise that level. Since the cause of war is the continued rule of the capitalist class, the ultimate demands of our transitional antiwar program cross over to the socialist program itself." Well said, comrade!

A reader not familiar with the Wohlforth documents, however, would assume that the MEC majority was merely for putting forward a "minimum" program, and for forgetting about all the rest. It is quite true, as Lambrecht remarks, that such a tactic would imply that the "minimum" program was sufficient to end war. But has Wohlforth or anyone else proposed that? Has there been any proposal to stick the rest of our program in our pockets and forget about it? Has anyone suggested that the YS suspend publication, or that it restrict itself to discussing that "minimum" program on which liberals, pacifists and ourselves can all agree?

No one has proposed this, and no one will. Never. Not even Hardly Ever. We propose a few programmatic points (and I assume that intelligent comrades will regard the ones in the Wohlforth Memorandum as suggestions, to be added to or subtracted from depending on the situation in the particular organization they are working in) NOT because we think these are the Only Road to peace; NOT because we wish to obtain a mechanical "control" of some poor unsuspecting student antiwar group on the basis of these precise points. We propose them for the same reasons that we proposed other series of points to the IBM clubs of yesteryear; to the ISP; to the ad hoc integration committees we have been working with -- as a means of working on a set of actions in common with people who are not ready to accept -- in fact in some cases may be quite hostile to -- our full program. We seek to convince them of our entire program, not by 99 and 44/100 pure lectures from a distant podium, invisible in its loftiness, but by means of common action. But we do not demand, in SLP fashion, that they accept our whole program before we will even condescend to work with them. That is not how revolutionary socialists "base themselves on the current level of consciousness of the antiwar movement."

The Bogey of "Entry"

Now Our Saviour Comrade Lambrecht warns us about the most terrible danger of all -- Wohlforth and the MEC majority have up their sleeve (by implication, at any rate) a devious plot to destroy the YSA, the

for
 very organization they fought for and sacrificed/and built! To be fair, Lambrecht does not make this accusation openly. He merely treats us to a didactic paragraph or two on the precise meaning of the term "entry," which is -- of course -- what the two Wohlforth documents frankly and openly advocate. "Entry is, in a sense, [what sense?] synonymous with the meaning of the word 'fusion.'" ... "Revolutionary socialists should not allow their own organization to get in the way of unity, or the 'entry.'"

To the concept of "entry" Lambrecht opposes "fraction work." "In deciding to launch such fractional work it goes without saying that the independent socialist activity of the parent YSA unit must continue as the focal point of the energy of its members. Otherwise the fraction itself will be hampered ... with no external arm to raise further demands, criticisms, etc." (Emphasis added.)

The unfortunate comrade who relies on Lambrecht's articles alone will be grateful indeed to him for warning of the plan of the NEC majority to liquidate his organization. Did Comrade Lambrecht read the Wohlforth articles? If he did, sentences such as the following must by some weird psychological mechanism have escaped his eye: "We ... enter as revolutionary socialists -- as YSA members and act accordingly."

The NEC majority proposes, not that "The YSA dissolve itself and enter Sane," or even that "We consider work in antiwar organizations to be our primary task, to which all else shall be subordinated," thus involving directly every member, like the priority that the SWP gave to regroupment activity. The proposal is, as I understand it, that everyone who can possibly get on campus should do so (this is nothing new, but our weakness on campus necessitates its repetition again and again) and that every student join whatever antiwar organizations are doing anything, just as he should join NAACP, just as he should join a liberal student party like Slate, etc. The proposal is based on 1) the new wave of student activity in the antiwar struggle and 2) our disproportionate weakness in this field. In New York City, for example, we have not one YSA member in student Sane, only a few contacts. We have not one YSAer in the Civil Defense Protest Committee, which organized the massive City Hall demonstration, plans a continuing campaign in the high schools against monthly drills, and a campaign against Gov. Rockefeller's bomb shelters. A similar weakness exists nationally. It is against this background that the proposal is made.

But Comrade Lambrecht's sudden revelation on the importance of scientifically precise terminology, coming at this particular time, is peculiar. That is, Wohlforth used the term "entry" as it is often used in the radical movement. He meant the term in the same way that Comrade Murry Weiss used it in a letter to James P. Cannon, Feb. 19, 1957. Describing activities of the YSL Left-Wing Caucus in New York, Weiss wrote: "At the Columbia fraction ... a move is being made to enter the student chapter of the NAACP." At the time I thought this was a somewhat grandiose way to describe what was actually occurring, namely that Dan Freeman was planning to join the campus NAACP. Never did I suspect that Murry Weiss was in favor of dissolving the Left-Wing Caucus into the NAACP!

However, Jim may be right. Maybe the term "entry" really applies

only to tactics such as the French Turn, and maybe it has been too loosely used for the past several years. Whether or not this be the case, I think Jim knows as well as anyone else that we are not proposing dissolution-and-entry or political-subordination-to-the-rotten-liberal-pacifists or anything of the kind. This sudden enlightenment concerning correct terminology; Comrade Lambrecht's impassioned plea at a recent NEC meeting for conducting this discussion on a "high plane;" are -- to use a most charitable term -- hypocritical.

To banish all doubts, I propose, if comrades desire it, that wherever the word "entry" occurs in the Wohlforth documents it be replaced with "do fraction work in."

Yet Another Windmill

One more windmill must be dealt with -- the united front. Lambrecht counterposes a proposal for united fronts in the antiwar movement to our proposal for working towards an independent student antiwar movement. He states, correctly, that most of the students involved in the actions of the past year are not organized; he then proposes that we seek united fronts. But with whom? With these as yet unorganized militants? How is that possible? How can we have a united front with a non-existent organization? Precisely by the means we have proposed -- by building that organization or rather (because we alone cannot build it) by pushing for the creation of that organization. Whether it develops out of existing groups or whether it will be a combination of them or a new, separate organization, it will have the character of a united front. That is, it will if it allows revolutionary socialists to participate in it.

Having examined the non-existent "differences" of Comrade Lambrecht, I can come to only one conclusion as to why he has written this truly remarkable document. Between the time Lambrecht first voted with the majority of the NEC on this question and the time he wrote his document, Comrade Lambrecht somehow became seized, gripped, consumed with an all-encompassing idea. The idea was conceived a priori, bearing no relationship to anything in the Wohlforth articles, and thus making it unnecessary to read or answer the arguments in those articles. This idea which Lambrecht has embraced with fervor, indeed frenzy, is that the YSA is plunging headlong and blindly into outright capitulation toward pacifism. The role Lambrecht has cut out for himself is to rescue the YSA from this disastrous course. He seems to conceive of this struggle as a life and death matter, to which all else must be subordinated.

Thus Comrade Lambrecht seeks to create differences where they do not exist. We have no interest in that; I have made clear that what Lambrecht attacks as "differences" do not exist at all; the unfortunate thing is that Lambrecht himself knows they do not exist.

What We Mean by "Independent"

The one real difference gets very little attention in Lambrecht's document. We are for the building of an independent student antiwar movement. It may take the form of "scattered groups devoted to specific antiwar issues; possibly through a federation of such groups; then again it may occur through a general student organization, most of whose main

planks and activities relate to the antiwar struggle." Lambrecht states: "We do not see an 'independent' antiwar organization — independent of the revolutionary socialist organization — as a desirable goal for YSA cadres to struggle for" This is the essence of the difference.

The difference is important. It is the difference between sectarianism and revolutionary flexibility; it is the difference between a dilletantish, academic "struggle" against liberal-pacifist illusions in the antiwar movement and a real struggle. It is the difference between convincing tens and convincing hundreds. A powerful wave of antiwar sentiment is building up, especially among youth who are the potential cannon-fodder. We can turn our backs to this wave, standing near the shore. It will then knock us over and drag us, bruised and bleeding, over the rocks to the shore. Or we can face the wave, wade out to meet it, and at the right time reach out to embrace it, and ride in on its crest.

What we propose is essentially the same tactic we have practiced in the civil rights field. Lambrecht must show how the antiwar struggle is different from the integration struggle and other struggles we have been a part of. Otherwise, to be consistent, he should have opposed building ad hoc integration committees (in which we were the leading element, mind you) unless all those in the committees agreed to state in their platforms that "Integration cannot be achieved short of the socialist revolution."

How in the world can we expect to gain any influence, convince anyone to our point of view in the antiwar organizations, if we join them with the attitude "We join you only in order to destroy you." With what authority can we then speak? Yet that is the meaning of Lambrecht's statement that the only antiwar organization that we can possibly favor is the revolutionary movement itself.

This attitude of Comrade Lambrecht would, if carried out, be a serious blow to the YSA. The YSA would survive; but it would be confronted with a sizeable and potentially powerful student movement in which it had no influence; and which would probably be firmly under the control of the pacifist-peaceful coexistence crowd. If the YSA took this attitude in all its work, as does the SLP, it would be done for as a serious revolutionary organization.

Lambrecht does not distinguish between SAME, the Civil Defense Protest Committee, and other organizations that already exist, and the independent student organization we expect to help build. We enter the existing organizations to build them, not to destroy them. Yes, to build them, comrades — up to a certain point — the point where a coalition of YSAers and other militants will not be allowed to struggle for a decent antiwar program. This point may never be reached; it may be that the existing groups will take on the independent, militant character we favor. It is too early now to predict what form the movement will take. But the existing groups, as such, are not our opponents; rather our opponents are their liberal-pacifist-Stalinist-social-democratic leaderships. In these groups we will push for an independent student antiwar movement. Independent of the liberal, Stalinist, and social-democratic ideologies and organizations; organizationally independent of

the YSA; but broad enough to allow non-socialists to participate. Indeed, if non-socialists are the majority, so much the better.

The movement we favor, in other words, is a student movement in which students, not some outside adult organization, call the shots. Only revolutionists are capable of building and leading such a movement, in the long run. Only they can tolerate allowing the militant students to make up their own minds. That a student antiwar movement cannot survive, no matter how militant, no matter how large, without the leadership of revolutionists, can be seen by the sabotage of the student movements of the 1930's by the liberal, Stalinist and social democratic leadership.

Who is for Fighting Pacifism?

It is a mistake to speak of the existing organizations as pacifist. The way to struggle against pacifism is not to ignore it. The way to win the students away from pacifism is not to prematurely label embryonic organizations as definitively and decisively pacifist as an excuse to ignore them and hand their leadership over to the pacifists without a struggle. As an analogy, I do not think that the leading influence of YPSL in the Youth March or in Slate was inevitable. Our vociferous presence there, as builders of those organizations, not their opponents, in the early stages of their existence could have, I believe, neutralized or at least greatly lessened YPSL's influence. It is a foregone conclusion that once we did not enter these organizations in a serious way, we ended up trying to influence them from the outside. I do not want to see this happen now in the budding student antiwar movement. We must, for once, take the initiative and act with an eye to the future, rather than waiting until our pacifist-liberal opponents have things nicely sewed up — for themselves. It is the NEC majority which wishes to conduct a real life struggle against the pacifists. Comrade Lambrecht wishes they would just go away.

To be sure, the whole activity of our movement, from election campaigns to putting out the press to aiding in a strike, aids the workers in the class struggle, thereby helping to weaken the capitalist class, bringing closer the victory of the workers and the end of all war. All revolutionary activity is antiwar activity. By the same token, all revolutionary activity is civil rights activity. Everything is related. Everything is transitional. Fine. But unless you can demonstrate how the antiwar movement is qualitatively different from other movements, or unless you can demonstrate that all the students interested in struggling against war (and many more) are ready now to accept our whole program, then you have made no proposal toward reaching and convincing the militant liberal student. All your fine phrases about "heightening consciousness" and "linking ourselves to the antiwar militants at their present level of consciousness" are just — words. The student has heard enough lectures. From us he expects something more.

The main point of difference in the discussion in the NEC on the anti-war movement revolves around the question of our leadership (in coalition with other militants) of a militant student organization which is protesting the militarist and imperialist policies of our capitalist government.

We, as revolutionary socialists, recognize that only the final victory of world socialism can bring about the end of war -- just as only the dictatorship of the proletariat can hope to end the oppression of minorities in this country. Yet, our comrades, in the best situations in the country, were in the leadership of organizations which sought to abolish discrimination in Woolworths. This is certainly a "minimum" and immediate action program. The NAACP is set up explicitly for the purpose of abolishing segregation and discrimination, in Woolworths as well. The Stalinists, Social-Democrats, Pacifists and Liberals will all vie to be considered the best fighters for Negro Rights. Why then did we set up our own organizations which supported the Southern students' Sit-Ins?

Did we stop being revolutionary socialists while we were leading these groups? We didn't take organizational "control" of these students. We also did not demand that "All who wish to fight discrimination and oppression may fight with us by becoming revolutionary socialists." BUT WE HELD UP OUR OWN BANNERS -- "If you really mean to fight effectively, don't trust your Pacifist, Liberal, Do-gooder leaders. They kowtow to the righteous and respectable officials of the status quo. They have and will call off the fight so as not to embarrass their friends in the Democratic Party at election time." I'm sure no one can say that we "liquidated" the YSA or went soft on Pacifism, or Non-Violent Action, or any number of things we had to contend with. We were able to win leadership in these actions because we are the only ones whose politics allow for consistent struggle against the powers-that-be. Now we must expand and unite these activities to meet the demands of developing movement.

At one NEC meeting, Comrade Lambrecht was asked if in his opinion the War Question was uniquely different from the Civil Rights Question or the Civil Liberties Question. He replied with a simple, unambiguous "No". Yet his document seems to be based on the proposition that it is. Comrade Lambrecht also says that if we fight for, win, and lead the militant youth on their current immediate demands of an end to ROTC, conscription, A & H bombs, etc., then we are negating the YSA and a revolutionary socialist program. But comrades, if we expect the YSA to become a significant revolutionary movement among youth, then we must be in the leadership of the growing, militant, student movement.

Everyone agrees that the students are moving in a more militant direction; taking on the House Un-American Activities Committee as in San Francisco, or defying the civil defence drills as in New York City, or the response to the Sit-Ins. The slogans change as the issues come up, the leadership tends to be a motly crew from issue to issue and from area to area, but the students involved are usually the same individuals. What could be more natural, if we play our cards right, then to be contending leaders for a national federation of militant student organizations (such as SLATE and PLATFORM in Calif.) struggling against the school administrations as well as the bomb; against the Frats, and conscription; against ROTC, and discrimination; against civil defence drills, and red-bating. Such an organization is definitely on the agenda in the coming period, but our role in it will make the difference for this movement and especially for the radicalization of the working class as a whole in the near future.

Okey, so where do we begin? How do we create in the minds of these students the identifying link between their struggles and our politics?

First of all, I think it is important to find the unifying qualities of their struggles. In fighting for civil rights, the Negro students are encouraged by the Colonial Revolution, the Colonial Revolutions have caused the American Imperialists to give a few concessions to the American Negroes in order to show the world that it is a "democratic" imperialism which is being shoved down their throats. And these processes, interacting, have inspired the militant youth in the country to struggle for civil rights.

The demonstration against the HUAC and for civil liberties on and off campus also has a base as part of the fight against Imperialism. The amount of civil liberties the bourgeoisie will allow in its country is subordinated to the needs of its foreign policy (as well as the strength of the workers' movements at home). The protests against ROTC, civil defense drills, A & H bombs tests and fallout, is a protest against militarism in general, and is obviously directly related to the fight against imperialism.

The sum of these struggles -- for civil rights, civil liberties, against militarism and imperialism -- is the fight against war. These struggles are also a very significant part of the development of revolutionary consciousness leading to the overthrow of Capitalism. Whether these students realize this or not, they are fighting war, American Imperialism, and capitalism. It is our job to struggle with these students and educate them to the political facts of life.

So we must become more deeply involved with these students we hope to win and lead. We must expose their respectable leaders for what they are. It is up to us to prove to them in action that we not only support their fight, but because of our politics, class approach, and revolutionary perspective, we can better frustrate the war drive (as the Japanese students have done). And eventually with our politics we can destroy American Imperialism and with it, war.

We involve ourselves with militant students by joining organizations they are in, if these organizations afford us an opportunity to struggle for our ideas. We can set up any form of organization, if necessary, which is appropriate in the particular situation. Where students are in the peace movements, we go their. Where there is a SLATE, that's where we should be. The civil rights struggles are also our struggles. We seek to form united fronts in actions (where we are often not the initiators) and on issues as a matter of course. We set up ad-hoc committees, or join them, or established organizations, or form united fronts with any of these. The organizational set up is a form through which we educate the students, by action as well as by discussion. There is no religious formula to follow. At any given time or place of the developing student movement, we could be involved in any number of organizational forms. In this process, we keep in mind that we are revolutionary socialists and are seeking to create as militant and effective a protest against American capitalism as we are able to. We are the catalyst which will make many a militant into a revolutionary socialist.

Rose Jersawitz
August 12, 1960

An Anti-Critique: The Lambrecht Criticism of the Antiwar Memorandum

The Lambrecht criticism of Tim Wohlforth's "Memorandum On Our Tactics In The Antiwar Movement" is a hodge-podge of Marxist truisms, half truthful and incomplete analogys, and straw men that lead him into opposition to the main and central thesis of the memorandum which is Young Socialist Alliance participation in the Antiwar movement with our main objective being "...the creation of an independant student action movement...." in that arena.

The first part of the Lambrecht document is given over to presenting what is by and large a revolutionary socialist view-point of how we gain control of mass movements. The main point Comrade Lambrecht makes is that revolutionary socialists do not attempt to gain control of movements in the manner of the Stalinists, that is, thru mechanical means or the concealment of our own revolutionary class struggle program. Instead he points out "...for us it is the...consciousness of the masses that changes history. As this consciousness changes, so finally all organizations change, including the organization of society as a whole...."

Comrade Lambrecht goes on to point out the development of the YSA as a "...small but very important example of this process...." He says "It would have been impossible to arbitrarily impose our present organizational forms on the early IBM clubs, or even on the later YS supporter groups until the membership had gone thru several stages of a process of study, discussion and experience, that increased our consciousness of revolutionary socialism "

The only error Lambrecht makes in that statement is one of omission. What Lambrecht fails to point out is that a coalition of revolutionary socialist youth, both from the SWP and the left wing of the YSL, deliberately set out to build such clubs on a minimal program of a committment to socialism, vague as that committment may have been in some instances, and in the case of campus clubs a minimal basis (I hesitate to call it a program) of discussion of the ideas of socialism.

Some may think that this omission was only an oversight on Lambrechts part or that such a statement is unnecessary, but examination of later sections of the "Criticism" will show that this oversight is part of a consistent sectarian approach to the question of goals for our proposed participation in the Antiwar movement

In view of this omission and for an understanding of Lambrechts errors I think that it will be of value to review the process of building the YSA, at least in the broad general outline of that process. I am sure that all will recognize and agree that the construction of the YSA was a very uneven process; in some places dragging slowly, in other places leaping ahead, and in still others taking the combined and dual nature of regroupment and campus activity. But wherever it started, and whatever the milieu in which it started, it started with the same form IBM clubs

The IBM clubs were supposed to be just that...Independant, Broad, and Militant. These terms were themselves vague and relative, with many clubs being more "broad" than "militant " Indeed the basic program of most of these clubs consisted of a loose committal to socialism and little else Their main purpose was one of discussion and examination of socialist ideas.

At the same time that this fusion group (SWP and YSL left wing youth) acted as the motivating force for the IBM's they were also, as I point out earlier, sparking the formation of campus clubs committed solely to the discussion of socialist ideas. It was only after more than a years existence in these clubs that we were able to polarize out a group of youth who were tending toward the ides of revolutionary socialism and as a result were ready and willing to take on the support of the revolutionary socialist YOUNG SOCIALIST newspaper. that the fusion group had been publishing on an independant basis.

At that point, with some variance in timing, depending on the area, we either won support in the IBM's for transforming them into YS supporter groups, with those not in agreement dropping out, or else in some cases pulled all these elements in agreement with us and left the IBM to die while establishing a YS supporter group. At that approximate time we held the Detroit Conference and formally established the skeleton and basic eight point program of the national YS supporter groups. Only much later, in the early part of this year, did we finally establish the full blown youth organization known to us today as the Young Socialist Alliance.

Now some may ask; "Why was it necessary for us to begin at such a low level with a minimal and not even a transitional program? Shouldn't revolutionary socialists recruit to their full program, to the only program capable of realizing the overthrow of capitalism? Isn't it unprincipled to build organizations on a program less than your own?"

And we must answer "No Comrade. It is not unprincipled to build organizations that adopt political programs less than our own just so long as such minimal programs do not conflict with, or create illusions that are contrary to our full program of revolutionary socialism. That is why comrade it is possible for us to participate in and build such organizations as the NAACP, the Fair Play For Cuba Committees, and many other organizations of that sort.

The problem for us revolutionary socialists is to create a bridge between our full blown ideas on the creation of a socialist revolution and the first stirrings of those whom we seek to recruit to our point of view. If the people we are trying to reach are still too backward to accept our transitional program as their own, then we are faced with the problem of extending our bridge a little farther and so we drop to the level of minimal demands. The fact that we have a program of transitional demands should not preclude our building of organizations on still lower levels, when the situation demands, even on the level of discussion groups or the simple one point program of ~~all inclusiveness~~ if that happens to be the level of those who are first waking to political awareness.

While we may call for the formation of groups on such a low programmatic level we don't hide the nature of our own politics as Lambrecht tries to imply in his first paragraphs which are in reality a hoax and a straw man. Instead we discuss politics as we see it with those people who are seeking answers to the problems with which capitalism besets them.

This problem of bridging the gap, between us and those who are first questioning was solved in one instance by the creation of the IBM's. Now the YSA, offspring of those IBM's, faces the same bridging problem in relation to the Antiwar movement. Are we, as Lambrecht would have us do, going to deny to this offspring the same tools and methods that proved so valuable in the construction of that self-same YSA?

On page two of his "Criticism" comrade Lambrecht writes "But the program called for by the 'Memorandum' has a minimum character, that is, it posits a series of concrete demands as our (my emphasis) minimum program in the Antiwar movement."

From there he goes on to pose a veritable hodge - podge of arguments against program. Irregardless of that hodge - podge the main thing to recognize is that the above quoted statement is another of the Lambrecht straw men and in order to set a torch to it we must examine what Tim really wrote, not the false view attributed to him.

In speaking of our objectives in the Antiwar movement comrade Tim wrote in the memorandum on page three "Our goal should be the creation of an independant student action movement of militant opposition to the U.S. military establishment

and the war policies of our government. The minimum program for such (my emphasis) would include...." Thus we see that what Lambrecht says is Tim's programmatic proposal for our own adoption is indeed only the minimal program on which Tim thinks an "independent student Antiwar movement" could and should be built. Obviously this is the same tactic we applied in the building of IBM's and to this day continue its use in the building of campus clubs. Essentially it is a tactic of gathering together those interested persons with whom we can agree on a minimal program into clubs for the purpose of discussion and action within the boundaries of the aforementioned minimal program.

No where has Tim proposed that we water down our ideas and enter the Antiwar movement with this minimal program as our minimal program. On the contrary he states in numerous places just the opposite. On page three of the memorandum Tim states: "We enter the Antiwar movement with a full understanding of the treacherous program the present leadership has foisted on the students. We therefore enter as revolutionary socialists--as YSA members and act accordingly." (my emphasis)

Again in the next paragraph "When we can do so, marching under our own signs in 'Peace Marches' is quite effective. [my emphasis...It should be noted, that in the NY YSA, Lambrecht vehemently opposed a proposal of this sort, that of carrying our own banners, in a recent Sane march to the U.N....J.A.] Selling the YS (my emphasis) at all such occasions should be a matter of course."

It is I feel unnecessary to go into the mass of erroneous arguments that flow from this false understanding of Tim's memorandum. Nonetheless this error and the earlier error of omission do lead to the point in which Lambrecht states his main conclusion on the main body, entry into the Antiwar movement based on a broad minimum program, of the memorandum.

On page three of his document under the head Programs and Organizations, Lambrecht insists that "We [meaning himself....J.A.] do not see an 'independent' Antiwar organization--independent of the revolutionary socialist organization--as a desirable goal for YSA cadres to struggle for in their work with the Antiwar militants. Our attitude toward organizations flows from our attitude toward programs. If we refuse to struggle for an Antiwar program independent of our Antiwar program, then we must also reject the ideas of an Antiwar organization independent of our organization. Again, our Antiwar program has a transitional character, allowing us to link ourselves to the Antiwar militants at their present level of consciousness--but we do this in order to introduce new demands to raise this consciousness to a higher level, and we see no 'cutting off' of this process short of the revolutionary socialist program to end capitalist rule."

In the first sentence Lambrecht sets himself against the main goal outlined in the memorandum. In dealing with this basic opposition let me first point out that the memorandum, quite correctly, assumes that the Antiwar struggle amongst youth will take place and be organized from the American campus. In reality, all of those things that students in the last period have been struggling over are connected, in one sense or another, with the war question. For instance the student campaign against the witch-hunters and loyalty oaths is a struggle against the policemen of political thinking who desire to turn the cold war into a hot one and in order to achieve this must first silence those who can oppose and point out to the American people that such a war is not in their interests.

The struggle against ROTC is a more obvious part of the struggle against war and is directed against those who enter directly onto the campus and force the student to participate in the preparations for war all the time trying to convince them that such a war would be in their interests and failing that try to

bribe them by offering a softer ride than the common draftee gets.

The fight of organizations such as Slate with the campus administrations is directed against the representatives of industry, embodied in the businessman type administrators, who wish to see and use the educational system used to turn out skilled technicians, engineers, and administrators in order to develop the weapons and industrial power to sustain all out war. Those men who know how to get industry to make grants to the universities for labs and other things of that sort are the men that get administrators jobs on the campus's. Of course in order to get grants you can't have a bunch of leftist or left-liberal students running campus affairs, hence the crackdown on student groups such as Slate.

Those students who have participated in any one of the above mentioned struggles are likely to have participated in the others. At this stage few students see the common links between these supposedly separate issues, but sooner or later they will, and the most natural thing in the world to them will be a unified single organization. Those politicals who are present on the American campus and are prepared to help build this organization without extreme programatic demands upon those students involved in such a project will be in a strong position to influence those selfsame students with their political ideology. For that reason I am in favor of the main points of the Wohlforth memorandum.

Instead of seeing the logic of such a development Lambrecht seems to be interested in handing out platitudes and erecting straw men that he can attack and demolish in order to say to Tim "See you were wrong." It's all very well to state after trying to scare us with the bogey-man of Stalinism in his first paragraphs that "Our attitude toward organizations flows from our attitude toward programs." But what does that term mean in the real world? What does it mean in a perspective of working in the Antiwar movement, a perspective that Lambrecht says he supports. For Lambrecht it means the sectarian attitude of standing in the midst of the Antiwar stream holding his skirts aloft so as not to muddy them in an "...organization independant of our Antiwar program." Any attempts to operate strictly within the present "Peace" organizations will lead to our eventual isolation from the Antiwar movement unless we enter with a perspective of building an independant broad Antiwar movement out of the split or expulsions that are likely to occur Surely Lambrecht doesn't think that the leadership of the present "Peace" outfits will tolerate our opposition for ever or even very long.

Lambrecht errs in thinking that that raising the consciousness of the Antiwar movement is a straight-line operation. He should know by now that such developments are achieved thru a series of polarizations and splits. He also knows that the first split will very likely take place over the question of whether or not people like ourselves, socialists, communists, or other left wingers have a right to participate in the movement. Where does Comrade Lambrecht propose to bring those who are ready to split over this question but will not yet accept the of socialism. Perhaps he intends to keep them in a deep freeze, removing them from their chilly repository every now and then for another lecture in dialectics. Those who understand such problems will recognize the correctness of the memorandum, just as they recognized the correctness of IBM clubs and non-programatic campus discussion clubs.

Then of course there is the question of "If we refuse to struggle for an Antiwar program independant of our Antiwar program, then we must also reject the idea of an Antiwar organization independant of our organization." I'm tempted to use the IBM clubs again as an example but for the sake of a little variety let's look at the NAACP. Perhaps Comrade Lambrecht can point out for us how the Anti-Segregation program of the NAACP compares with our program. I think he will admit that the program of the NAACP is a reformist and not a revolutionary socialist one. Although it has a program independant of ours, it certainly is an organization that we do not urge people to destroy or abandon, and even go so far as to help build it in

whatever small way we can even as we oppose the rotten policies of its leadership.

There is one final point that demands attention. Under the heading Entry, Opponents Work and the United Front Comrade Lambrecht sets up his most serious (at least from the viewpoint of implications) straw man and all purpose bug-a-boo. The content of this section complains that the memorandum does not "...define our formal relations to the bourgeois-liberal and pacifist peace organizations...." and then goes on to give us a lecture about the meaning of "entry." What I want to hear from Comrade Lambrecht is an answer as to the reasons for this lecture. If he is trying to say that Tim in his memorandum is proposing the liquidation of the YS into the "Peace" movement I think it should be said in no uncertain terms, for that would be a serious matter indeed. If he is not trying to imply that then he should be soundly condemned for trying to swing comrades to his point of view with the inclusion of such straw men. In reality the question of organizational "entry", in terms of liquidating the YSA does not arise at any point in the memorandum. Certainly it should not be necessary to preface every tactical statement with an avowal of the fact that a liquidation proposal is not being made or intended. Such loyalty oaths we can do without.

Jack Arnold
August 23, 1960

Typographical Corrections

On page 29 the first line should readThe minimum program for such an organization.....

On page 30 the fourth line should readwho wish to see the educational system used to turn out skilled....