



# YSA

# DISCUSSION BULLETIN

VOL. 7 NO. 1  
July, 1963

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35¢

## Young Socialist Alliance

P.O. Box 471, Cooper Station, New York 3, New York



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# Young Socialist Alliance

P.O. Box 471, Cooper Station, New York 3, New York

## WHERE WE STAND

(NEC Draft Resolution)

1. The Young Socialist Alliance is a nation-wide revolutionary socialist youth organization, uniting young workers and students around the banner of socialism, and dedicated to the building of a revolutionary movement which can lead the working people to socialism. The YSA bases itself on the principles of Marxism as developed by Lenin and Trotsky, and on the traditions of the American people represented by such leaders as Sam Adams, Frederick Douglass, Wendell Phillips, and Eugene V. Debs. We believe that socialism can be initiated only as the result of struggle of the working class and its allies against the capitalist exploiters, which culminates in the creation of a new type of state, a workers' state. Socialism will mean that for the first time in history man will control his own creation -- society -- rather than be controlled by it. The dynamic of socialism involves a continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life.

2. The YSA stands for independent socialist electoral opposition to the capitalist parties. The next step for the American working class, which has achieved industrial trade union organization, is to form its own political party. We advocate that all fighters for peace, civil rights, and democracy break with the capitalist parties. We urge the formation of a labor party based on the unions to fight for full employment, decent wages, union rights, full equality for the Negro people and other minorities, and peace. The existence of a labor party would immediately raise the question of workers' political power. The YSA would urge the adoption of a socialist program by such a party.

3. The YSA gives unconditional backing to every struggle of the Negro people and other oppressed minorities in their fight for freedom and equality. We are for Freedom Now and support every effort of the Negro people to assert their rights and independence. Since full equality cannot be achieved under capitalism, we believe the struggle of the Negro people will inevitably become part of and a spur to the struggle of the whole working class against capitalism.

4. The YSA is opposed to the witch-hunt and fights for freedom of speech, association, and the right to hold and propagate any idea. The YSA focuses especially on the witch-hunt against youth -- on campus, on the job, and in the military service. The only long-term guarantee against the capitalist drive toward military dictatorship and fascism is workers' power.

5. The YSA is opposed to all aspects of the imperialist drive toward war and unconditionally defends all workers' states against the attempts by the imperialists to re-introduce capitalism in those areas. The disarming of the imperialists and the creation of socialist economies in the advanced capitalist countries, above all the United States, are prerequisites for permanent peace. As immediate steps toward peace the YSA advocates:

1. Support to all actions against the war drive.
2. Take the warmaking power out of the hands of the imperialist government; let the people vote on war.
3. Non-interference by the imperialists in the affairs of other nations; remove all U.S. troops from foreign soil.
4. Take the profits out of the war industries.
5. Opposition to nuclear arms testing, manufacture and stockpiling.

6. We support the struggle of the colonial peoples for liberation from imperialism. The colonial revolution must become socialist in character in order to achieve real independence, as the Cuban Revolution demonstrates. Every such victory of the socialist revolution weakens the imperialists' ability to wage war and is a step toward peace.

7. The YSA defends the essential gains of the Russian Revolution, the expropriation of the capitalist class, the nationalized and planned economy, and the monopoly of foreign trade. The preservation and development of the property forms set up by the workers' revolution of 1917 demonstrates that the USSR is basically a workers' state, transitional between capitalism and socialism. Socialism and democracy are inseparable, however, and the YSA is resolutely opposed to the privileged bureaucracy and dictatorial regime which, under Stalin, usurped the political power from the Soviet people and which, under Khrushchev, continues to take special economic and social

privileges for itself which are denied the workers.

In the wake of World War II the essential economic foundations of workers' states were extended into Eastern Europe and North Korea by the Kremlin. In China, Yugoslavia, and North Viet Nam, worker-peasant revolutions, led by parties trained in Stalinism, set up workers' states. Thus the workers' states in Eastern Europe and Asia were deformed by Stalinism from birth.

We believe that workers' democracy can be established or restored in those states only through a political revolution by the workers. The example has been given by the 1956 Hungarian workers' uprising, which demanded democratization of the government and economy, removal of the bureaucratic regime, and national self-determination while preserving and developing the socialized property forms.

8. A workers' state has been established by the revolutionary workers and peasants in Cuba with a profound democratic thrust which is still asserting its power. It is headed by a leadership independent of Stalinism and waging a conscious struggle against privilege and bureaucratism.

9. The Young Socialist Alliance came into being as the result of a political process which began in 1956 with a crisis which rocked the then existing radical youth groups. A left wing formed in the Young Socialist League in opposition to the dissolution of that organization and its entry into the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation on the basis of the reformist views of the SP-SDF. Under the impact of the Khrushchev revelations and the Hungarian revolution the Communist Party was forced to dissolve its youth organization, the Labor Youth League. Some people from the LYL and other organizations around the CP joined with the YSL left wing, young members of the Socialist Workers Party and independents to publish the YOUNG SOCIALIST. In December, 1958, the Young Socialist Supporters organized themselves in the National Committee of Young Socialist Supporters as preparation for the formation of a national organization. The Supporters grew in strength to the point where in April, 1960, the Young Socialist Alliance was founded.

10. The present policies of the Young Peoples Socialist League, youth affiliate of the SP-SDF, and the young followers of the CP line both flow from the rejection by their parent movements of an international socialist perspective and a class struggle program. Since 1914 the parties of the Second International have become defenders of the capitalist system. In theory they have rejected the concept of socialist revolution and put in its place the improvement of capitalism by social reform. In practice the Social Democrats have consistently taken government posts to aid the capitalists in surviving revolutionary upheavals. After the first World War the Social Democratic parties were the main props under the collapsing capitalist system and after the second World War performed the same function with the aid of the Communist parties of Western Europe.

11. Similarly the Communist parties since the rise of Stalin have abandoned their original Leninist program of revolutionary socialism. Following out the logical consequences of the theory of "Socialism in One Country," the Communist parties in one country after another gave up their revolutionary perspective and were transformed into servile tools of Soviet foreign policy. In practice the Stalinists along with the Social Democrats have engaged in class collaboration with the capitalist regimes. Notable exceptions are the Yugoslav and Chinese Communist Parties, which, under the impact of immense worker-peasant uprisings, and in the face of the unrelenting military opposition of the decaying native bourgeois-feudal governments, broke from the class collaborationist policies of the Kremlin in their countries and organized and led victorious revolutions.

12. The Young Peoples Socialist League is not a Marxist organization. It and its parent affiliate are not only incapable of leading a socialist transformation of society, they are not even capable of promoting basic socialist education. In the cold war, under the guise of loyalty to a non-existent "third camp" between the workers and capitalists, the YPSL lines up as a left critic but essential supporter of American State Department policy. Searching for "respectability," the YPSL has forfeited any claim to represent socialism before American youth.

13. The young supporters of the Communist Party line are likewise incapable of bringing a revolutionary program to American youth. They are engaged in the class collaborationist policies of support to the Democratic Party. The CP-oriented youth are apologists for the bureaucratic dictatorship that rules the Soviet bloc countries and as such are compromised before inquiring youth.

14. The revolutionary youth are well aware that by themselves youth cannot lead the American working class to power. That is the historic task of the working class revolutionary party. The YSA recognizes that only the Socialist Workers Party, of all existing parties, is capable of providing the U.S. working class with political leadership on class struggle principles. The YSA finds itself in basic political solidarity, on the principles of revolutionary socialism, with the SWP.

15. The YSA is an independent organization which elects its own officers and works out its own political views. The YSA bases itself on the principle of the organizational independence of the revolutionary youth organization and opens its doors to all young people -- regardless of other affiliation -- who agree with its socialist positions and accept its program.

16. The YSA will, to the best of its ability, bring Marxian socialism to American youth. But this is not enough. The only socialism which deserves the name is international in outlook. The YSA declares its solidarity with revolutionary youth in all countries. The present Social Democratic International Union of Socialist Youth and the non-socialist successor to the Young Communist International, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, are travesties of socialist internationalism. The YSA advocates the creation of a revolutionary youth international which will represent the political solidarity of socialist youth.

WHERE WE STAND

Founding Declaration of The "Young Socialist Alliance"

1. The "Young Socialist Alliance" is founded in response to the need for a nation-wide youth organization capable of bringing revolutionary socialist ideas to a new generation. This is necessary for building a revolutionary movement which can lead the working class to socialism. The YSA bases itself on the traditions of Marxian socialism as developed by Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht. We believe that socialism can be initiated only as a result of struggle, international in scope, of the working class against the capitalist class and its allies -- the struggle culminating in the creation of a new type of state, a worker's state. Socialism means that for the first time in history man will control his own creation -- society -- rather than be controlled by it. The dynamic of socialism is of a continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life.

2. In December, 1958, the National Conference of Young Socialist Supporters, which is now superceded by the "Young Socialist Alliance", issued an eight point political statement:

- (1) For a labor party by the union movement. As an immediate goal, for independent political action through united and independent socialist electoral opposition to the two capitalist parties.
- (2) Unconditional backing of the fight for full equality by the Negro people and other minorities.
- (3) Militant opposition to the entire witch-hunt with special focus on the witch-hunt on the campus and the political screening of youth in connection with military service.
- (4) Support to the colonial peoples' struggles for freedom and independence. For the withdrawal of all imperialist troops from foreign soil.
- (5) Advocacy of workers' power as the only progressive alternative to the capitalist drive toward military dictatorship and fascism, a drive recently illustrated by General DeGaulle's placement in power in France.
- (6) Support to struggles for workers' democracy in the Soviet Union and Peoples Republics such as the Polish and Hungarian workers' revolutions. Opposition to attempts of imperialism to reestablish domination over this section of the world.



(7) Against further nuclear tests and the build-up of the U.S. war machine, the success of the struggle against the capitalist war danger and for world peace depends upon the success of the struggle for international socialism.

(8) For the regroupment of revolutionary youth into an independent, broad and militant national youth organization based on the editorial policy of the Young Socialist.

This earlier statement, which is based upon the principles outlined in this declaration, illustrates the general political views upon which the Young Socialist Alliance is founded. In other resolutions at this conference and at later conferences a fuller political program will be elaborated.

### ORIGIN OF YSA

3. The Young Socialist Alliance is the result of a political process which began in 1956 with a crisis which rocked the then existing radical youth groups. A left wing was formed in the Young Socialist League in opposition to the dissolution of that organization and its entrance ~~into~~ the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation on the basis of the reformist views of the SP-SDF. Under the impact of the crisis of Stalinism the Communist Party was forced to dissolve its youth organization, the Labor Youth League. Some young people from the LYL and other organizations peripheral to the CP joined with the YSL left wing, young members of the Socialist Workers Party and independents to publish the Young Socialist. In December, 1958, in Detroit, the Young Socialist Supporters organized themselves into the National Committee of Young Socialist Supporters as a step toward the formation of a national "Young Socialist Alliance". Since that time the YS Supporters have grown in strength to the point where they can accomplish the national organization of a revolutionary youth movement.

4. The present policies of the Young People's Socialist League, youth affiliate of the SP-SDF, and the Communist Party youth flow historically from the rejection by their parent movements internationally of a socialist perspective. Since 1914 the parties of the Second **International** have become allies and defenders of the capitalist system. In theory they have rejected the concept of socialist revolution and put in its place the improvement of capitalism by social reform. In practice the Social-Democrats have consistently taken government posts to aid the capitalists in surviving revolutionary upheavals. After the First World War the Social-Democratic parties were the main props under the collapsing capitalist system and after the Second World War performed the same function with the aid of the Communist parties.

Similarly the Communist International since the rise of Stalin has abandoned its heritage of revolutionary socialism. Under the theory of "socialism in one country", the Communist parties everywhere were transformed into servile tools of the Russian bureaucracy. In practice the Stalinists have played a role fundamentally identical to that of the Social-Democracy. On orders from the Kremlin Stalinist parties in country after country have helped to stave off revolution, to help capitalism to survive.

5. The Social Democracy and the Communist International support in one fashion or another the continued existence of the capitalist system and fear a frontal conflict between the contending class forces. We, as revolutionary socialists, reject completely the concept that socialism can be brought into existence piecemeal. Socialism can only come through the complete overturn of the present capitalist states and their replacement with a workers' state. Such a revolutionary development is the end result of an irrepressible struggle between the capitalist class and the working class. We give our full support to the working class in this struggle.

6. The Young People's Socialist League is not a Marxian socialist organization. It and its parent affiliate are not only incapable of leading a socialist transformation of society, they are not even capable of promoting basic socialist education. Today, for example, they favor working within the capitalist Democratic Party rather than supporting independent socialist political action. The leadership of the SP-SDF lines up with the American State Department and the YPSL refuses to disavow this policy. Searching for "respectability" the YPSL has forfeited any claim to represent Socialism before American youth.

#### CP YOUTH INCAPABLE

7. The young supporters of the Communist Party (as yet not nationally organized) are likewise incapable of bringing a revolutionary program to American youth. They, even more than the YPSL, are engaged in the class collaborationist policies of support to the Democratic Party. The Communist Party youth are apologists for the bureaucratic dictatorship that rules the USSR and other Soviet bloc countries and as such are compromised before inquiring youth.

8. In addition to the Communist Party youth, the YPSL and the YSA there exists a numerically significant grouping of young socialists who have **no national affiliation**. **Any number of these belong to campus socialist clubs and carry on organized socialist activity on a local basis.** Politically, these people may be new to socialism, having not yet made up their minds as to which of the

national youth groups they support, or they may be sympathetic in in one way or another with one of these three national bodies. While these campus groups are important and should be supported as a way of reaching larger numbers of youth with socialist ideas, they can be no substitute for national organization. It is only through national organization that it is possible to publish a paper, send out speakers on tour, really educate socialist youth through organizational responsibility and participation in working out the political views of a national group, and carry out concerted national activity for socialism. In fact, one of the functions of a nation-wide youth organization is to aid in the establishment, stabilization and extension of broad socialist campus clubs.

9. The revolutionary socialist youth are well aware that by themselves youth cannot lead the working class to power. That is the historic task of a working class revolutionary party. The revolutionary youth played a very active role in the regroupment process in the hope that a regrouped and enlarged revolutionary party with which the YS could establish close relationship would emerge. The YS participated in the American Forum for Socialist Education, local forum groups, and the Independent-Socialist Party in New York State.

#### REGROUPMENT TALLY

10. The regroupment process did not result in the formation of a new united revolutionary party. On the contrary, older political formations such as the Independent Socialist League and its youth organization, the Young Socialist League, and the American Socialist magazine disappeared. Most of the individuals who supported the CP left politics rather than try to discover a new but difficult path.

The right-wing socialist groups, the SP, SDF, and ISL, conducted their own regroupment into the SP-SDF, with its reformist, pro-State Department, anti-class struggle views. The Communist Party suffered a precipitous decline through the regroupment process. Having lost all its influence in working class politics it remains simply an apologist for the Kremlin. The Socialist Labor Party simply ignored the regroupment process and was ignored by it. The Socialist Workers Party conducted a campaign for a regroupment of revolutionary socialists, attracting to itself from all groupings individuals who still wished to struggle for revolutionary socialism.

11. The Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party are the only revolutionary socialist groups in the United States today. The YSA recognizes that only the SWP of all existing political parties is capable of providing the working class with political leadership on class struggle principles. As a result of its three year development the supporters of the Young Socialist have

come into basic political solidarity, on the principles of revolutionary socialism, with the SWP.

12. The Young Socialist Alliance is an independent organization which elects its own officers and works out its own political views. The YSA bases itself on the principles of the organizational independence of the revolutionary youth organization and opens its doors to all young people -- regardless of other affiliation -- who agree with its socialist principles and accept its program.

13. The Young Socialist Alliance will, to the best of its ability, bring Marxian socialism to American youth. But this is not enough. The only socialism which deserves the name is international socialism. The YSA declares its political solidarity with revolutionary youth in all countries. The present Social-Democratic "International Union of Socialist Youth" and the non-socialist successor to the Young Communist International, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, are travesties on the concept of socialist internationalism. The YSA will work with others toward the creation of a new revolutionary socialist youth international which will represent organizationally the political solidarity of socialist youth.

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(Lynne indicated that she would submit a motion to the conference to retain the 'Where We Stand' document as it was adopted at the Founding Conference.)

WHY WE NEED A NEW "WHERE WE STAND"

by Barry Sheppard

The NEC draft resolution "Where We Stand" corrects a deficiency in the Founding Declaration and fills out and makes more explicit the general line of the Founding Declaration.

The original "Where We Stand" correctly placed us in the Marxist tradition of Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht, but neglected to identify the YSA with the class struggle in America. Of course, both concepts must be included in an accurate outline of where the YSA stands.

The "Where We Stand" is not just an abstract statement of principles, of use only to define the YSA. It is our "official" document, our official statement of position. As such it will be used not only to explain our position to potential recruits, but also to represent the YSA to the general public. It may be used, for or against us, in court cases like the Bloomington case.

The original version, with its foreign ring to it, was used by Prosecutor Hoadley to smear us as un-American Russian-Cuban-Chinese agents in the All-American City. It certainly would have helped if we could have pointed to a phrase about Indiana's own Eugene V. Debs in our statement of principles.

There is another aspect of the "Americanization" of the "Where We Stand". We do not want to appear as a study circle of Marxist intellectuals oriented primarily to movements in other lands. Our goal of world socialism, and our main task of establishing a workers' state in America, must be crystal clear. As Marxists we base ourselves upon the class struggle, are participants in that struggle.

The Founding Declaration was useful in that it outlined the general points upon which the YSA is based, and went into our origins in some detail, drawing the lessons of the regroupment process, etc. But the actual program of the YSA today, as reflected in our press and actions, and to which we actually recruit, is much closer to the full Trotskyist program than it is to the Founding Declaration. Consequently, the statement of principles needs to be brought up level with our actual program. The draft attempts to do this.

If the national conference adopts the line of the NEC draft, that will not mean that the Founding Declaration is invalidated. It will stand as just that: the Founding Declaration of the YSA. The new "Where We Stand" will become our official statement of principles.

Any short statement of principles, as the "Where We Stand" necessarily is, is insufficient in itself for general propaganda purposes. I think we need a pamphlet explaining the program of the YSA, with the "Where We Stand" added as an appendix, as one of our basic propaganda weapons.

THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

by George Carlton

Introduction

Originally this document was given as a report during 1962. I have put it through several revisions since then in order to integrate the material in a more comprehensible manner. I'm sure we all realize the importance of the civil rights struggle, and our unfortunate lack of deep participation in it, and therefore the necessity of gaining the most from the limited experiences we have with this movement.

In this document I attempt, from my experiences, however limited, to give a balanced picture of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. I realize that this document is limited. There is much to be added and much must be more thoroughly discussed, such as how whites approach the movement, how white revolutionary socialists approach the movement, how black revolutionary socialists approach the movement, our day to day tactics, etc. Only through a continuing discussion on a nationwide level can we pool our experiences so that we may intervene effectively.

It is important that we know SNCC's weaknesses as well as its strengths if we are to be able to place it in perspective with the whole developing civil rights struggle and if we are to be able to judge our role effectively. In my participation with SNCC I developed the deepest respect for that organization and what it is doing. I know that it is playing an increasingly important role, and I know that it has great potential. I also know that a SNCC person would be the last one to tell you that SNCC is perfect. Of course this same person who will criticize SNCC for its weaknesses, is probably fiercely proud of it as well. He has every right to be. However, it would be suicide for SNCC not to look at its weaknesses in perspective. If we view ourselves as a segment of this struggle and aim to do as effective work as possible in helping the civil rights struggle we can do no less.

Again I would like to say that, though this document is several months old, the points raised in it have not been changed decidedly; the problems that I discuss are, on the whole, long term problems and will be worked out only in the course of a longer period of struggle. There are many questions and points that have been modified by events, such

as the SNCC Nashville conference, but I have seen no need to revise this general informational report.

G.C.

Feb. 16, 1963

Today we are faced with the opening up of a vast arena of political activity. An area of this country, the South, is opening up with an oppressed people finding new strength in their unity. Several comrades, including myself, have gone into the South and explored this territory which is so new to us. We were to attempt to gain an understanding of the movement that is centered around the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. I would like to divide my report into four major parts: 1) SNCC, Its Ideology and Its Operation; 2) Its Relation to Other Organizations; 3) Summation; 4) Our Perspective and Role in the Civil Rights Movement.

#### I) SNCC, Its Ideology and Its Operation

The one thing that sets SNCC apart from any of the other organizations in the civil rights movement is its orientation to the Negro community. SNCC goes into an area, develops contacts, lives with the people, and has its people face danger, builds a leadership out of the local people, attempts to gain mass support and action, orients towards the poorer, the working class elements. There is no other organization that is so close to the aspirations of the Negro people. This is the real strength of the SNCC leadership. However, SNCC, while being the militant, vital organization that is demanded by the nature of the struggle, is at the same time tied to some of the illusions of the student, middle-class milieu from which it originally arose. These are illusions which of course exist, to one degree or another among the black masses as well. Such illusions are disorienting and in the long run, if not corrected, dangerous. I will give specifics in the course of this document. SNCC is learning and developing in a leftward direction. However, it must be understood that it is not homogeneous and that it has many internal contradictions, problems and struggles.

One of the first ideological questions that comes to mind is the question of nonviolence. SNCC essentially is an organization committed to nonviolence. A good portion of the leadership, if not a majority, believe in it as a philosophy. SNCC teaches nonviolence as a way of approaching the civil rights movement wherever it contacts people, whether in the



movement or outside of it. However SNCC contains those who consider nonviolence primarily a tactic. This organization does not exclude serious people of any ideology as long as they show their willingness to adhere to discipline and show dedication. It must be indicated, however, that although SNCC adheres to nonviolence, on the battle lines it tacitly supports self defense. Armed self defense is a traditional right in the rural South. Correspondingly, it exists concretely in every Negro community in the Southern civil rights movement, most commonly in the rural areas. This seemingly contradictory attitude of SNCC is recognized as a problem by all SNCC people and has yet to be fully resolved.

In discussing the important question of non-exclusion I would like to quote a letter that I wrote to a comrade while in the South. "They (SNCC) reflect very closely the attitudes of the most militant elements of the Negro people. Forman, (national secretary of SNCC) wanted a policy of non-exclusion (he felt that it was necessary) yet he didn't want to get involved in what he referred to as New York politics, i.e., the political squabbles of the various radical groups. Also he indicated that SNCC was not really in a position to put up a fight against a red-baiting campaign, or as it was phrased, SNCC was not in a position to fight the battle of the first amendment. At the same time, he recognized the growing necessity for a Northern base. He generally felt that such organizations would have to be on a non-exclusive policy. He feels that he is in a fix, a dilemma. It will take a lot of thought and discussion with the other SNCC people." Through all of this it must be kept in mind that many and even most of the SNCC people have expressed an attitude that the movement goes beyond the civil rights struggle. They will often express that this movement is part of a struggle to change evils in society that go far beyond the racial question alone.

None-the-less, there seems to be a general lack of clarity on the role of radicals in the movement. The student movement has developed in an atmosphere which generally looks down on red-baiting and other forms of capitulations to the powers-that-be. At the same time SNCC does not want to be identified with the radical elements. It has a close relationship to the government in many ways. Also, there is the problem of SNCC's relation to the "respectable" civil rights organizations. SNCC obtains legal aid from other organizations and works together with them.

The most important point is the question of the attitude of the Negro community in the South. The Southern Negro is

generally extremely conservative in his attitude towards radicals and towards the federal government. Even with the objectively revolutionary nature of the civil rights struggle, the Southern Negro has a long road to travel as far as class consciousness goes.

(The Negro people of course have a certain class consciousness. They recognize their different position in society, but don't yet have a clear idea of its economic and political ramifications, and of what they must do to gain freedom from exploitation. They have yet to realize that their battle is, in the long run, also the battle of the white working class. They will not see this unity of interests until the white working class begins to move again.)

Summed up, the problems of effective functioning in SNCC is tied up with the degree of consciousness the movement has developed, which itself is dependent upon the stage of the class struggle. There still exist many illusions about the federal government and a certain dependency upon it. This stems, at least partially, from a lack of from the labor movement. Obviously, SNCC is not prepared to depend solely upon its own heavily taxed resources. SNCC has not worked out a program on the participation of radicals. This dilemma has never really presented itself, before. At the coming meeting of the general open conference this Thanksgiving this question will undoubtedly be discussed. This is going to be a difficult problem for SNCC; how to keep its necessary policy of non-exclusion and still be able to maintain its position of placing, in the eyes of the Negro people, the Negro struggle first. It must be recognized that SNCC will not and cannot come closer to the revolutionary socialist movement while that movement is isolated from the struggle, and offers nothing but an abstract program, and not the vital day-to-day involvement, direction and just plain hard work which make up a struggle. It is in these struggles that the correctness of our program is proven.

As a final note on non-exclusion, I would like to relate an incident which occurred in Detroit. In July, 1962, one of the leaders of the Nashville Freedom Riders came to Detroit to speak before a rally to raise money for SNCC. A comrade asked her for an interview for the paper. She was happy to give it. However, prior to when the interview was to take place she backed down. She was not at all hostile. It was simply that she had talked with SNCC Field Secretary in Detroit, (also a Nashville Freedom Rider) and was told the nature of the paper. She indicated that when she is not representing SNCC officially she would be more than happy to give an interview. However, she stated that the question of radicals had arisen before in SNCC

but had never really been resolved.

Within the context of the grass roots base of SNCC, there has been a debate going on within the organization. The question revolves around the issue of the importance of the office, or the central organization, as opposed to the importance of the field, that is, the actual organizing and working in the communities. Those who support the field feel that too much money is being used for the office, that the money coming in should be used primarily for the field. Concretely, they feel that less time should be spent by field secretaries in fund raising. Also, those who oppose the office feel that less time and money should be put into such things as propagandizing, office equipment and other things done and needed by the central organization. There exists a strong feeling against a powerful centralized authority. There is a great deal of fear that SNCC will be cut off from the people. For instance, with money, the field representatives would no longer have to depend on the people of the community for support and could act above as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) does. This is what SNCC knows it must fight. Also, with money, it is felt that individuals might be attracted more for the money than for the movement. The great fear of SNCC is that it might become like the opportunistic SCLC.

Some undoubtedly realize the importance of organization, of communication and of propagandization, in short centralization. It seems to me that although the attitude towards the central organization is incorrect, it is an extremely healthy and important reaction against opportunism, and leads the way towards democratic-centralism of a sort.

Another attitude which seems prevalent in SNCC is the attitude that SNCC must remain a student-based organization, that if it changes its base it will become ossified like SCLC or any of the other adult organizations. Despite this approach, SNCC is, in practice, developing a class approach to the movement. Its member organizations in the local communities are oriented more and more not just towards students, but towards the working class also. Because of SNCC's militancy, it is finding it necessary to approach the working class and poor farmer elements. As time goes on I believe that it will find the necessity of expanding beyond the "student only" stage consciously, something it has already begun to do in practice.

An important orientation of SNCC is that of consciously keeping the organization and movement under the control of Negroes. This approach is good and necessary; for the movement which struggles for the emancipation of an exploited people must be under the control of the oppressed themselves. Still, whites have

somewhat of a role to play in the South. One of the big problems of the movement is the scarcity of dedicated people to help organize. Sometimes whites have to be used. Also, whites give the movement an integrated character. Another important function fulfilled by whites is agitation and propagandization in the white community. For example, a white field secretary has been going around to various white campuses getting support for the movement.

At the same time, the intervention of whites has caused important problems for the Southern movement. They make it more difficult to work in the Negro communities of South because of the great mistrust of whites. The situation in the rural communities is made no easier by the increased wrath of the white power structure upon a section of the movement where whites are working.

Besides this, there is a great degree of tension, even within the movement. Liberal whites, with little knowledge or contact with the Negro community, constantly go through the SNCC office. Over a period of time many had gone to Albany, Georgia, during the mass demonstrations and arrests to "see what's happening" and some expected the Negro community to feed and house them for their great liberalism. This annoyed many people in the movement, and in the Albany Negro community. Moreover, SNCC has come into contact with this attitude from its inception. This same type of person often tries to become involved in the activities of SNCC. SNCC, of course, cannot allow these untried whites to jump into the struggle. Even those who have been involved and are considered fairly reliable have demonstrated the reality that whites are too often insufficiently sensitive to the needs of the movement and of the southern Negro. An example of this comes from the involvement of a number of whites in the voter registration drive in southwest Georgia:

The use of whites in the rural South in relatively high numbers (half a dozen or so) was new, an experiment. The whites involved in the project when it began were pushing for action, involvement. Negro leaders from the South who are veterans in the movement, had to keep the whites from tromping out into the Negro community and digging in. The great fear of whites in the community had to be overcome gradually. The whites kept pushing hard, causing high tension. In spite of this, the Negro leaders first laid the groundwork -- by getting the people of the community aware of the movement, by letting them know about the whites, by organizing mass meetings, etc. The whites were slowly introduced at the mass meetings and became more or less accepted. The attitude of the white, by their impatience,

displayed the adventuristic, half serious spirit which tends to typify the Northern, white, liberal type that goes South. This is not to say that these people are not courageous and sincere, for some have shown their dedication on the front lines of the battlefield. Rather it shows a lack of political maturity and understanding of what the movement needs.

The extremely suspicious attitude that the SNCC leadership takes towards whites comes out of these experiences and out of the general experiences which a black person has with whites in this country. Any white, even if he has gone to hell and back for the movement, must continue to prove himself time and again. He must continually prove that he is an ally. He must always watch that he doesn't step too far, so that he doesn't seem to be imposing his own ideas and person, which are both white to many in the SNCC leadership, upon that organization.

All of this suspicion is natural and to an unfortunate extent justified by reality, as I've attempted to point out above. The only time that this animosity will break down is - when the white working class joins that battle against the oppressor. Until that time this problem cannot be resolved, but the conflict can and must be softened.

A white revolutionary socialist has a hundred times the pressures upon him that another white might have. He must leave no doubt of his willingness to do whatever is necessary, to show his dedication and sincerity. He must be ready to go out on the battle line, to be completely disciplined in his attitude and his actions to the civil rights movement. He should attempt to establish personal relations which will tend to break down animosity and tension. An important part of this is being careful not to arouse ire by poorly chosen emotional and physical entanglements across the color line. Above all of this, he must always remember that he is white. Never can he forget himself and cross the line of demarcation. This line is not something that I can clearly explain. It is a line that is determined by the relationships built in the process of working together. The line is most restricting in the beginning, but begins to loosen slowly; it may take a few weeks or a few months. Sometimes in the course of involvement in a struggle, it may only take a few days. But it is never gone. This must be understood. It may seem to disappear, but it does not, for it cannot.

Negro revolutionary socialists, because of the limitations on whites, have an extremely important role to play in our becoming a part of the civil rights struggle in the South. This is difficult, of course, because of the relatively small percentage of Negroes in our ranks. However, I must repeat, to the

degree that we become involved it is necessary that they play a prominent, if possible, predominate role.

Just as SNCC doesn't want the civil rights movement to come under the domination of whites, it also demands that SNCC be southern based. In the constitution of SNCC there is a provision for northern associates. However, the northern associates have only voice in the coordinating committee. They have no vote. This approach is necessary if the struggle is to be directed by those who are struggling.

One point of contention within SNCC which should be noted is the conflict of work in voter registration versus direct action. (Direct action refers to picketing, boycotting, sitting-in, and other activities which are specifically aimed at involving people physically in the struggle.) For a period this question was debated back and forth. The final decision was to work something along this line: a combination of voter registration and direct action. Funds allotted for voter registration by other organizations would be used to register Negroes in sections of the deep South. Of necessity community organization of a civil rights character had to be developed in the process. SNCC then would be involved in organizing the Negro community which from there could and would involve itself in direct action. There has been no strict division between these two areas of work up to date, although those registering voters cannot involve themselves in direct action where voter registration funds are helping to support them.

Finally, in order to get a full picture of SNCC and its operation, one must know its projected financial arrangement. The following budget is from a mimeographed sheet used in fund-raising: for the fiscal year from Sept. 1, 1962 to Sept. 1, 1963 a total budget of \$120,000 is projected. This includes subsistence for some 30 persons on the staff which together with a few miscellaneous items, runs \$76,620. Office Maintenance, which includes \$7,500 for telephone bills and \$3,600 for four field offices, runs about \$15,800. Publicity and promotion runs to \$11,300. Summer projects for next summer, which are subheaded "4 intensive community-based local programs," runs to \$13,000. Emergency expenses runs to \$3,280.

## II) SNCC: Its Relation to Other Organizations

The first "organization". I would like to deal with is

the government.

One person that I talked with stated that SNCC must maintain good relations with the Justice Department because the Negroes of the rural South have "almost a religious awe" of it. I have gained no further information on this point, and I tend to be rather skeptical of the formulation.

There is a degree of illusion among the various SNCC leaders about the government. For instance, in Cairo, Illinois during the demonstrations there last summer, a leading officer came into conflict with the local leadership and the SNCC field secretaries over this question. He suggested that the Cairo Movement turn the rest of the desegregation struggle over to the State Civil Rights Commission. (Illinois has a public accommodations act.) The Movement would not hear of such a thing for they didn't trust the state government. The demonstrations were continued.

I would like to take up briefly the NAACP and the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. These are separate organizations which jostle for power between each other. However, SNCC has used them both extensively for legal aid. Various groups that the NAACP has throughout the South have found new militant youth sections arising, often affiliating with SNCC. Also regular branches have affiliated with SNCC.

CORE does not seem to have close relations with SNCC, probably because it tends to view SNCC as a threatening rival. They did request and received SNCC's aid in getting people for their Freedom Highways campaign that CORE carried on last summer. There is a section of CORE in the South, in Kentucky or Tennessee, which was affiliated with SNCC. I don't know if it still is. Several SNCC people expressed doubts as to whether national CORE would allow them to remain in CORE as a SNCC affiliate.

In Detroit, in the past, CORE has expressed great hostility to attempts to raise funds for SNCC and to any attempt to acquaint people with SNCC. They have, at times, been very crude in their snubbing techniques.

The Southern Regional Council, an organization which is a moderate integrationist body financially supported by foundations such as the Ford Foundation, is in charge of distributing the funds for the voter registration projects. Its normal function is to collect information and to write bulletins on the question of civil rights in the South.

SNCC generally is on good terms with this group, as the SRC works closely with SNCC on voter registration, and as the people there have great sympathy with the work of SNCC. Since the SRC is on a different level than any of the other civil rights organizations, i.e., it is purely an information gathering agency, it is not involved in the struggle between the different groups, but has at times arranged bail for SNCC people.

An important organization in the movement in the South and an organization that has close fraternal ties to SNCC is the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF). This organization has been branded "red" by the respectable movement and is avoided. It has contact, though, with a good number of local civil rights organizations throughout the South. SCEF has maintained an attitude of non-exclusion from the civil rights movement. It has often supplied SNCC with bail money and is depended upon by SNCC in an emergency.

The National Student Association has given support to SNCC in a number of ways. On its summer projects, it works closely with SNCC. It had a voter registration project going in Raleigh, North Carolina during this summer. Every year NSA holds a civil rights seminar where it takes Southerners (mostly white) and introduces them into the civil rights movement. SNCC works very closely with this project and gains supporters and workers from it. NSA has at times been involved in fund raising projects for the civil rights movement, SNCC in particular, on its member campuses.

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) has had close connections with SNCC for a good period of time. It is a conglomeration of politically right-wing social-democratic, Gatesite, ADA types and gets its real strength from its rather contradictory involvement in the militant southern civil rights struggle. (The Gatesites are a tendency which left the CP a number of years ago, flirted with the YS Supporters groups for a short time and then progressively moved further right. SDS is tied to the League for Industrial Democracy - LID - which is an SP-SDF front. LID has been kicking about the Gatesites being in SDS. SDS is quite involved in Democratic party politics, especially in the Reform Democrats around New York.)

A number of SNCC people are members of SDS. SDS has put out a number of pieces of propaganda for SNCC including a jointly sponsored issue of the Student Voice, the official



publication of SNCC. An SDS leader was involved to some extent in the events around McComb, Mississippi last year, where SNCC began its first community based project. He wrote a very worthwhile pamphlet on the events that occurred there called Revolution in Mississippi. It was printed by SDS.

It should be noted that SDS people are active in NSA. Liberal Study papers, put out by SDS officially, are distributed by NSA. Also, a past vice-president of NSA is a leading member of SDS and has been involved this past summer in a SNCC voter registration project in Mississippi.

Another group which should be indicated is the Northern Student Movement (NSM). The Northern Student Movement arose out of the sympathy of some students in New England towards SNCC. It originated at a conference of the New England Student Christian Movement in June of 1961, a conference which a number of SNCC people attended. According to an information brochure, NSM is in contact with groups at the University of Rhode Island, Amherst, Wesleyan, University of Massachusetts, Mt. Holyoke and Cornell, and has helped to create groups at Trinity, Connecticut College, Brown-Pembroke, Tufts, Harvard, the University of Connecticut, Yale, and Manhattanville. All together NSM has (according to the brochure) six coordinating committees encompassing close to 30 campus groups.

This group really started organizing in the fall of 1961. During the spring of 1962, NSM went on a fund raising campaign for SNCC and raised possibly as much as \$10,000-\$12,000, \$4,000 of which was raised in the Boston area.

However, NSM began shifting its orientation from fund-raising for SNCC to involvement in its own actions, still keeping close ties with SNCC. As of May, NSM was planning tutoring and social work projects in Harlem; Baltimore (possibly voter registration here); Philadelphia, Prince Edward, Virginia; Eastern Shore, Maryland (Cambridge). As far as I know they did have projects going in Philadelphia, in Prince Edward, and in Eastern Shore (where I believe they participated in demonstrations and voter registration). In Cambridge SNCC has a very strong group and of course it was working extremely closely with NSM. It seems that NSM is now primarily raising funds for its own projects more than for SNCC.

SNCC's relation to the union movement is important. In the South the character of many of the unions is racist and the Negro community has developed a general mistrust of trade

unions. However, SNCC does have some ties with the trade union movement. It has, for example, gotten some \$3,000 from the Packinghouse Workers in Chicago and has received smaller contributions from other unions. Harry Bridges proposed that SNCC send a person down to Portland to help organize Negroes into an all-white union. In Washington, D.C., the Nonviolent Action Group, an affiliate of SNCC, helped organize the garbage collectors.

A report on SCLC will be forthcoming in the form of either an addenda or a separate report by another comrade.

### III) SNCC and The Building of a Leadership: A Summation

To understand SNCC, one must understand its development up to the present and how it must develop if it is to become the leadership, or part of the leadership, of the rising black masses.

It must be understood that many, no, most of those involved in the movement do not look upon it as more than a temporary period in their lives. This is not to say that these students, who put their lives on the firing line, are not serious about what they are doing. Yet it must be recognized that a great number of them are transitory in the movement, that this is how they view it, and that their actions are tempered by this view.

SNCC is not held together by a solid ideological base. Its basic attitudes and approaches are still of a nebulous character; they have not been worked out. The students in it know that Freedom is what they want and that the Negro people can wait no longer for it to be given to them; organization and militant action are what they strive for. But what more is there that holds together this movement? Certainly it is finding it necessary to shift leftward in order to continue the fight on a militant level, in order to prevent any rise of opportunism in its ranks. But it must be understood that this is a movement that is just beginning to clarify its ideology; it must be remembered that it has tendencies all the way from the Students for a Democratic Society, to ardent pacifists, to militant nationalists, to students who have a future among the black bourgeoisie, to any mixture of the previous. Therefore, to a great extent one finds that the discipline of an individual to the organization is very much dependent on the individual's

perspective for himself in the movement, which is itself dependent upon his general orientation in life.

SNCC has a deep-going, anti-bureaucratic, anti-opportunist, tradition. However, it is still a coordinating committee of the southern student movement and other militant civil rights organizations, and, correspondingly, it has the unclear ideology of a newly developing movement.

From time to time, one finds SNCC leaders leaving SNCC and joining other civil rights organizations, usually for power, prestige or simply for financial reasons.

The lack of discipline found among whites functioning in the field has already been discussed.

Altogether, one must realize that SNCC has not a clearly defined ideology, and those connected with it are not bound by a dedication to the hard, clear revolutionary theory and practice. Far from it. As I've indicated before, even some of the best leaders have a confused approach to the relation of the fight for freedom to the state.

While there is a lack of theoretical solidity in the organization, there is a good degree of discipline stemming from the struggles the movement has gone through. This shows itself in the increased power of the central office. The field depends upon the office to get out national publicity, to obtain bail and lawyers. Also, there is constant contact between the field and the office by way of regular reports, and in a tight situation by way of phone calls. Finally the central office supplies a subsistence of sorts for some full time people.

I've indicated that some of the anti-centralist tendencies are healthy essentially, yet, still, strong among many of the students is a reaction based upon "individualism" of the petty bourgeois, anti-discipline variety.

The essence of the ability of SNCC to maintain itself lies primarily, not in the organizational and legal measures that the central organization takes (often, through other civil rights groups, anyway), but in its increasing student and community base among the anti-opportunist militants of the movement. The structure of SNCC is more or less dependent on the adherence of the militants to SNCC as opposed to the opportunism and conservatism of the major civil rights organizations, SCLC and NAACP. The rising needs of the

movement, however, demand much more than this; they demand the curtailment of the individualism of the petty bourgeois, adventurist kind. SNCC must push for the anti-opportunist consciousness to the point where the militants realize the need of centralism, under the control of the movement, of course, and do not blindly reject it. Eventually, when the movement is strong enough, it will no longer be tolerant of the adventurists, whom it must accept in lieu of a more mature leadership. I would like to stress here that I am not condemning these people, who are extremely courageous. Rather I am simply trying to point out the need for development, and those who don't develop with the movement will be forced out.

In short, SNCC must build a dedicated, conscious, disciplined cadre with a long-term perspective in the movement. The process has begun, but only begun. The success of SNCC in leading the rising black masses depends upon this development.

#### IV) Our Perspective and Role in the Civil Rights Movement

With a picture, not complete, but a start, of this newly developing left of the civil rights movement, the question then arises: what is our role, our relationship to it? First let's glimpse at the problems which are coming to the forefront in the South and in the North.

In the South today a crisis is arising. The major weapons of the movement until recently have been filling the jails, sitting-in, and most important, boycotting. These weapons are reaching grave limitations. The movement cannot cut away the deep roots of segregation by opening up lunch counters; nor can it win its victory by having thousands of people go to jail, no matter how effective it is in organizing and arousing the public. The economic boycott often has only a limited effect because of the relatively little purchasing power of the Negro community. The answer, then, lies in the realm of economic organization on a different level, unionization and political action. SNCC today is moving in this direction; it is a direction which leads directly into working class consciousness. This is nascent at present in SNCC, but in the background of almost everything it does.

The question of union organization in the South incorporates a problem peculiar to this region. Of course, there

is a growing industrialization in the South, but also there are large numbers of sharecroppers and farmers. I doubt if there are many in our movement who have dealt with this problem, and it is a problem that we assuredly will have to deal with.

SNCC will have to have increasing contact with the trade-union movement. It seems to me that it will be through the trade unions to a large extent that the white workers will be reached. This question will have to be very deeply explored.

As the movement searches for means of fighting oppression it finds itself more and more faced with the need for political action. The first step is gaining the right to vote; and concomitant with this is the welding of the Negro community into an army prepared for battle. The process has begun. But where will it go from there? Will it turn to a major political party, in order to work independently through the established primary structure? This might be necessary for technical reasons (tax and legal restrictions). We ourselves have yet to deal with this important political question.

The next part of the question of the South (which SNCC has not yet really dealt with adequately) is the question of self-defense. As the Negro community becomes more organized it will be faced with an organized reign of terror that has not been seen in this country since the years of darkness after the Reconstruction Period. I have tried to indicate that SNCC shows every sign of healthiness on this question but has not fully faced the problem.

In the North, we are facing somewhat of a different problem in building a movement. Unlike the South, there are usually not the dramatic surface indications of discrimination which can be easily organized around and dealt with. The questions are much more subtle and are very deeply rooted. I feel that it is virtually impossible to maintain a movement in the North on the basis of local actions patterned on the movement in the South. I believe that we must attempt to bring the independent student groups that develop closer to where the problems in the North -- employment, housing, police brutality -- will be dealt with. That is, these groups should seek to work with the trade union movement, the Negro American Labor Council, block clubs and tenants leagues, and also, with the various civil rights and community organizations. These are problems which are generally

impossible for a relatively small student movement to deal with alone.

The Northern organizations would of course hold demonstrations in support of the actions of the Southern movement. Also they should have as an important function fund-raising for the South. But these are not sufficient to hold a movement in the North together.

It should be noted that raising funds for the South while being involved in the fight against employment discrimination (to whatever extent possible) would enable the Northern groups to establish invaluable contacts with the trade unions for the Southern movement.

I have put forth what I consider the areas and questions of prime importance. I have no answers to many of the problems. Nowhere can I give a complete answer. We must learn and educate ourselves. Our tasks are just beginning to unfold. But, this much I do know, we will be defeated before the battle if we, and our ideas, do not become a recognized part of this powerful, rising new movement.

(October, 1962)