



YSA

DISCUSSION BULLETIN

Vol. 7
August

No. 3
1963

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25¢

Young Socialist Alliance

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



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ORGANIZATION REPORT

by Pete Camejo

Introduction

The NEC draft Tasks and Perspectives resolution outlines the objective situation facing us in the next immediate period. This report is aimed at dealing with organizational steps needed to carry out the tasks set forth in the T&P.

In determining our organizational orientation for the next period we need to draw on the results of our work since the last conference. We have learned enough from our successes and failures since that time to place our organizational orientation on a more conscious level, and to adjust it realistically to the present objective situation.

Building Cadre

We have been in general agreement since the last conference that the major task we face in this period is to build solid YSA cadres. We place as our main objective the strengthening of the revolutionary movement. The development of a solid cadre of revolutionists now will place us in the best possible position when the objective conditions permit a general turn toward the mass working class movement. We have the opportunity to establish hegemony over radicalized youth, and thereby to establish a new relationship between revolutionary socialism, stalinism, and social democracy. A solid inch gained today can turn into miles in the future.

We have seen a general solidification of our cadre since the last conference. This has been supplemented by recruitment, although the past school year was marked by a lull in the student movement which prevented us from making major headway in terms of recruitment.

The experience of the last twenty months clearly indicates that in the larger student centers where a healthy YSA exists we have the optimum conditions for solid cadre growth and general recruitment. The best example of what can be done in the large centers has been Chicago. In September 1962 there were about 8 solid cadre in Chicago, most of them not recruited in Chicago. Since that time they have solidified a local that is rapidly approaching 30 in membership, continuously developing high level cadre, and have reached the point where they are able to act as an organizing base for the surrounding areas.

This extremely important breakthrough in the Midwest, where we used to be very weak, took place right during the lull in the student movement.

The reason why Chicago was able to make such headway even during the lull is its correct emphasis on building cadre through careful education, and its systematic contact work and recruitment. This orientation has placed them on the best possible footing for outward activity and has not been in conflict with it.

Boston, New York, Chicago, and the Bay Area are the four key centers in the student movement and for us. We have more than half of the YSA in these four locals, and the financial and organizational backbone of the YSA rests in these key areas. We should aim at repeating and extending the Chicago experience in these cities, developing large YSA locals in each of them in order to begin expansion from a solid basis. Although there may be various campuses where conditions exist for establishing a YSA local we must be very careful before we transfer cadre from our large locals to establish new locals at this time.

In most of the areas where there is a lack of continuity in older revolutionary socialists from previous periods of radicalization and where there is no solid base of support from a large and healthy local we have found it very difficult to recruit and train new cadre. Examples of this situation are Baltimore, Providence, and almost all at-large members. In general, areas where there are older revolutionary socialists but no YSA should take precedence over isolated campuses.

An exception to this rule has been the new local in Madison. However, even here we have managed to establish a local because of the constant help and ties Madison has received from the solid Chicago local. From our stronger locals we can reach out and help surrounding weaker locals, at all times being careful not to leap into organizational adventures, but to build on a solid, well-constructed base.

We should continue having a Midwest organizer functioning out of Chicago to help keep close contact between the locals. The Midwest organizer should be essentially freed from all other obligations to concentrate his work on continuing the excellent start made last year. In the same way the N.O. should act as an East Coast organizer, and help the West Coast locals develop. Along these same lines, we should continue the practice of regional educational conferences like the Midwest and East Coast New Years conferences.

The smaller locals, while they don't face the same kind of objective possibilities as the central locals, do have the opportunity for solid growth. They, too, can learn from the

Chicago experience and orient toward recruitment and hardening of the cadre through consistent education. Only on the basis of solid cadre building can the weaker locals strengthen themselves.

National Organization

The national office has not been functioning at the level it should be, and can be. There are two main reasons for this: personnel and money. The conference should take steps to strengthen the center in terms of the central staff, and to increase the national income to permit increased national functioning.

We have certain basic national expenses. We need our public face, the YOUNG SOCIALIST; we need our national office and it must have full time personnel; and we need national tours in the name of the YSA to help maintain our national orientation and morale. These factors account almost completely for our expenditures. In addition, we are in need of a set of basic YSA pamphlets, which should be published soon after the conference.

The present level of our budget is not yet large enough to carry out these tasks in the manner called for. We are, however, developed to the point where there is sufficient consciousness and strength to increase our budget by raising our income level. Financial regularization on the part of every local is important to maintain the national financial structure. The conference should take the necessary steps to strengthen the national finances.

The Young Socialist and Other Propaganda

The YOUNG SOCIALIST is the public face of the YSA, and represents the YSA to our contacts and to the student movement as a whole. We are the only national radical youth organization that functions as such, and the YS is the concrete manifestation of our national orientation.

We have two other powerful propaganda weapons available to us: the MILITANT and the INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW. We should try to use all three media as complimentary weapons serving overlapping but distinct functions. The MILITANT is the newspaper of our movement, in a political sense. It is most useful when the reader reads it week by week and gets the impact of its analysis of world events and national news. Our orientation with the MILITANT should be to secure subscriptions from all our contacts and on the campus generally. Likewise, our best use of the ISR is to get subscriptions right on the campus, to get as wide a circulation of it as possible. Both the MILITANT and ISR should be put on newsstands, especially

around the campus.

Our best use for the YS is as a general propaganda weapon in the student movement , giving our line in detail on student events. Since it is a monthly, subscriptions to it do not have the impact that MILITANT subscriptions do. The YS has its broadest appeal, and can be used by us most effectively, in street sales on the campus. Every local should regularize YS street sales as our chief means of getting the YS out onto the campus.

In the Negro movement our chief weapon is the MILITANT, and street sales in Negro neighborhoods, at Negro demonstrations, etc. have proven to be effective in some cities.

We have suffered because of a lack of YSA pamphlets on socialism, peace, and the Negro struggle. The incoming leadership should see to it that these basic propaganda weapons are published so that the locals can use them to more effectively get our ideas out onto the campus and further solidify our national organization. The basic pamphlets of Pioneer Publishers have been put to excellent use both in education and sales by the Chicago local, and this should be stressed more in every local.

We are in a period where our chief tasks are propagandistic. We have a growing audience for our ideas, and we will have to take the necessary organizational steps to get our ideas, newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets into the hands and minds of this growing audience.

Sales and Finances for the YOUNG SOCIALIST

(Appendix to Organizational Report)

If each local had a policy of consistent YS sales we could increase the number of YS's sold each month by a large factor. Every meeting of a political nature in your local area should be covered for YS sales as automatically as payment of dues, etc. Every campus in the vicinity of a local should be hit at least once every issue.

It is not necessary to have a campaign on YS sales to increase our circulation but we must make a real effort at consistency in sales work. The YS continues to reach thousands of students and has acquired the reputation of being the socialist youth paper in the USA. All other student publications of a socialist character are limited to a socialist conscious and non-activist audience.

The financial problems in getting the YS out regularly could be overcome if through consistent sales we had a consistent income from sales. Below is a rough idea of the number of YS's each local would have to sell per issue to make the YS self-sufficient financially.

BOSTON	400
NEW YORK	450
CHICAGO	500
BERKELEY	300
DETROIT	150
MADISON	200
MINNEAPOLIS	150
BALTIMORE	50
SAN FRANCISCO	150
LOS ANGELES	100
SEATTLE	50
OTHERS (Antioch, Bloom- ington, Philly, etc.)	<u>200</u>
	2,600

FINANCIAL REPORT

(Appendix to Organizational Report)

January - June 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	\$ 141.00
Bundle Payments	819.57
Dues	573.75
Registration	37.00
Fund Drive	2,232.20
Donations	200.00
Tours	164.00
N.O. Rent	300.00
Others	<u>318.22</u>
	4,785.72

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	1,778.08	
Printer 1,413.12		
Mailing 302.41		
Equip. <u>62.55</u>		
	1,778.08	
EDIT	1,156.00	
TOUR	895.54	
NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>1,333.48</u>	
Garbage 41.00		
Stamps 96.60	5,163.10	TOTAL
Rent 600.00		
Phone 294.08		
Supplies 226.90		
Con Ed 46.55		
Forum 7.60		
Other <u>21.75</u>		
	1,333.48	

Finances Continued

REPORT FOR 1962

INCOME

Subscriptions	\$ 363.25
Bundles	761.83
Dues	721.81
Registration	93.00
Fund Drive	3,879.35
Donations	1,510.44
Tours	530.00
Others	473.75
N.O. Rent	<u>300.00</u>
TOTAL	8,633.43

EXPENDITURES

Young Socialist	2,085.19
Tours	1,459.69
Edit	1,950.00
Nat. Office	1,352.28
Others	<u>1,793.47</u>
TOTAL	8,640.63

Total Real Expenditures	8,640.63
Total Real Income	<u>8,633.43</u>
Deficit for 1962	7.20

FINANCES CONTINUED

(Break down from Jan. to June 1963)

JANUARY 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	48.00
Bundles	38.80
Dues	100.00
Registration	14.00
Fund Drive	42.50
Rent (NY)	50.00
Donation	200.00
Pamphlets to PP	50.00
<u>Other</u>	<u>36.40</u>
TOTAL	579.70

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	230.05
Printer 190.05	
Mailing 40.00	
Equip. <u>.00</u>	
	<u>230.05</u>

EDIT	140.00
TOUR	48.00

NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>250.25</u>	
Garbage 9.00		
Postage 8.25	668.30	TOTAL
Rent 100.00		
Phone 50.80		
Supplies 18.77		
Con Ed 15.68		
Paper 29.14		
PO Box 4.50		
Petty Cash 5.86		
<u>Repair 8.25</u>		
	<u>250.25</u>	

FEBRUARY 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	21.50
Bundle Payments	60.00
Dues	148.50
Registration	3.00
Fund Drive	15.00
Rent (N.Y. Local)	50.00
Tour	41.00
<u>Other</u>	<u>1.98</u>
TOTAL	\$341.98

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	229.56
Printer 206.00	
Mailing 22.36	
Equip. <u>1.20</u>	
	<u>229.56</u>

EDIT	190.00
TOUR	249.80

NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>248.86</u>	
Garbage 8.00		
Stamps 25.29	918.22	TOTAL
Rent 100.00		
Phone 35.04		
Con Ed 6.85		
Supplies 64.18		
Militant 9.20		
<u>Missing .30</u>		
	<u>248.86</u>	

FINANCES CONTINUED

(Break down from Jan. to June 1963)

MARCH 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	10.50
Bundle Payments	131.50
Dues	92.00
Registration	1.00
Fund Drive	491.40
Rent (NY Local)	50.00
Tour	36.50
Forum	20.69
<u>Other</u>	<u>44.30</u>
TOTAL	\$877.89

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	277.87
Printer 221.45	
Mailing 56.42	
Equip. .00	
	<u>277.87</u>
EDIT	126.00
TOUR	140.30
NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>193.64</u>
Garbage 8.00	
Stamps 18.05	
Rent 100.00	
Phone 44.92	
Supplies 15.34	
Con Ed 6.33	
Forum 1.00	
	<u>193.64</u>
	737.81 TOTAL

APRIL 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	21.50
Bundle Payments	77.36
Dues	92.50
Registration	9.00
Fund Drive	715.35
Rent (NY Local)	20.00
Tour	87.50
Forum	5.15
<u>Other</u>	<u>38.20</u>
TOTAL	1,066.56

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	290.75
Printer 206.00	
Mailing 70.50	
Equip. 14.25	
	<u>290.75</u>
EDIT	175.00
TOUR	265.79
NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>181.88</u>
Garbage 8.00	
Stamps 5.21	
Rent 100.00	
Telephone 16.94	
Supplies 37.01	
Con Ed 5.12	
Forum 6.60	
Ad 3.00	
	<u>181.88</u>
	913.42 TOTAL

FINANCES CONTINUED

(Break down from jan. to June 1963)

MAY 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	23.50
Bundle Payments	268.46
Dues	55.50
Registration	3.00
Fund Drive	656.65
Rent NY Local	80.00
<u>Forum</u>	<u>2.00</u>
TOTAL	1,099.11

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	657.66
Printer 530.00	
Mailing 106.24	
Equip. <u>21.42</u>	
	657.66
EDIT	245.00
TOUR	108.00
NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>237.66</u>
Garbage 6.00	
Stamps 27.85	
Rent 100.00	
Phone 57.42	
Supplies 42.20	
Con Ed <u>4.19</u>	
	237.66
	1,248.32 TOTAL

JUNE 1963

INCOME

Subscriptions	16.00
Bundle Payments	243.45
Dues	85.25
Registration	7.00
Fund Drive	281.80
Rent NY Local	50.00
<u>Other</u>	<u>119.50</u>
TOTAL	803.00

EXPENDITURES

YOUNG SOCIALIST	102.19
Printer 69.62	
Mailing 6.89	
Equip. <u>25.68</u>	
	102.19
EDIT	280.00
TOUR	83.65
NATIONAL OFFICE	<u>221.19</u>
Garbage 2.00	
Stamps 11.95	
Rent 100.00	
Phone 88.96	
Supplies 8.90	
Con Ed 8.38	
Missing <u>1.00</u>	
	221.19
	687.03 TOTAL

IDEOLOGY AND TRADITION

(to retain the original "Where We Stand")

by Peter Friedlander

History is determined by the development of the means of production and by the relationships of social classes to the latter. Out of these relationships have grown the ideologies of past and present; "men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their ethical ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based -- from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange." (Engles, Anti-Duhring, p. 130)

It is with the development of capitalism, of the bourgeoisie and its antithesis, the proletariat, that the material basis of Marxism was prepared. We, as proletarian revolutionists, as Marxists, derive from this stage in the development of the material foundations of society the roots of our proletarian consciousness.

This must be kept clearly in mind, for now, in the search for "respectability", some comrades, having discovered "the traditions of the American people," seek to graft them onto the tradition of the vanguard party of the proletariat. Their argument -- that we are in the traditions of all the progressive struggles of the past -- is entirely irrelevant to the cause of the modern proletariat. At a time when he was still a Marxist, and not the renegade that he became, Kautsky wrote: "No matter how I regarded the proletarians of the (Roman) Empire, whatever their efforts and results may have been, they were totally different from the modern proletariat, which struggles and works in a quite different situation and with quite different methods. Whatever mighty deeds and successes, whatever miseries and defeats those proletarians may have had, they could not give any testimony as to the nature and the outlook of the modern proletariat, either favorable or unfavorable." (Foundations of Christianity, Author's Forward, pp. xvii-xviii)

It is mere empty rhetoric, and certainly non-Marxist, to ask oneself, with a view to acquiring some "tradition," to take sides in the past struggles between the bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy, or between the latter and the slave holders, even though in the past the alien classes played a progressive role.

It is non-Marxist because we ourselves are very specific products of bourgeois society -- it must never be forgotten that Marxism itself is a product of bourgeois society; that it arose with the development of modern class society; that Marxism is the only philosophy of the modern proletariat; that all else is alien to the nature of the modern proletariat; and finally, that the tradition of Marxism-Leninism is the only tradition that truly represents the nature and needs of the modern proletariat. Marx long ago conquered that confusing ailment, philosophical atavism. We, as Marxists, are rooted exclusively in the independent struggle of the proletariat to accomplish its dictatorship.

As Bolsheviks we find our philosophical roots (not "traditions") in the struggle of the proletariat for its dictatorship, beginning with Marx and Engels and the International Workingmen's Association. As communists we have no eclectic plurality of "traditions"; only a single unbroken tradition: Marxian socialism. The brighter lights of that tradition are Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht. Others, who were subjectively leaders of the (embryonic) proletariat, such as Sam Adams, but who objectively served the bourgeoisie, even if the latter played a progressive role at the time --*have no place in our tradition: the Marxist tradition, the tradition of the vanguard of the proletariat, of the class conscious workers whose conscious goal is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The search for the "traditions of the American people," once begun, tends to pass over into the absurd. Some comrades claim to be in the tradition of Susan B. Anthony, who in 1852 organized the first women's state temperance society in America. Some tradition! But on her more famous struggle for women's rights (bourgeois rights), I will yield the floor to Lenin: "The resolution on the question of women's suffrage was also passed unanimously. Only one Englishwoman from the semi-bourgeois "Fabian Society" defended the admissibility of a struggle for women's suffrage which was to be limited to those possessing property, instead of a struggle for full women's suffrage. The congress absolutely rejected this and declared in favor of working women conducting the struggle for the franchise, not in conjunction with the bourgeois partisans of women's rights, but in conjunction with the class parties of the proletariat. The

* these men may have been great and courageous leaders, but they

congress recognized that in the campaign for women's suffrage it was necessary to uphold fully the principles of socialism and equal rights for men and women without distorting these principles for the sake of expediency." (Lenin, The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart (1907), Selected Works, Vol. IV, pp. 319-320. Emphasis added.)

The working class, and in this particular instance, the working women, has no tradition that is not alien to itself except that of the "class parties of the proletariat," the tradition of Marxian socialism.

To speak of being in the "traditions of the American people" is to accommodate to bourgeois ideology. Which "people"? Hasn't America, since the invasion of the Europeans, been a class society? Yet, even if "American people" were to be changed to "American workers," we would remain almost as embroiled in bourgeois ideology as before. There is only one tradition that the proletariat can lay sole claim to, there is only one tradition that is not influenced by the ideology of alien classes: the tradition of Marxian socialism. Particularly here in America, where the consciousness of the working class has been influenced, distorted and perverted by bourgeois ideology more than elsewhere; and hence, where the traditions of the proletariat are, more than elsewhere, inimical to the cause of the proletariat, we must be aware that the relative backwardness of the American proletariat is precisely (in one sense) the expression of its lack of a healthy proletarian tradition, the lack of true consciousness, the consciousness that has sprung from the very essence of its material existence: Marxism, and nothing else!

"Only the philosophic materialism of Marx showed the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have languished up to the present. Only the economic system of Marx explained the real position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism." (Lenin, The Sources and Component Parts of Marxism p. 59 in Marx, Selected Works, Vol. 1)

We are of the vanguard of the proletariat in this country, and it is in us that the great tradition that is the exclusive possession of the international working class finds its expression today. It is not for us to prostrate ourselves before the "traditions of the American people"; to acquiesce in the face of the perversions forced upon the American working class; and finally, to begin adopting them for our own. On the contrary, we are the repository of the one great tradition, of the proletariat, Marxian socialism and we must do our best to bring that tradition to the American working class.

Of what interest to us, then, are the "traditions of the American people"? I will let Kautsky, who was still a Marxist when he wrote the following have the last word: "In order to bring the proletariat to social insight, to self-consciousness and political maturity, to large-scale thinking, it is indispensable to study the historical process with the aid of the materialist conception of history. In this way the study of the past, far from being mere dilettante antiquarianism, will become a powerful weapon in the struggles of the present, in order to hasten the attainment of a better future." (Foundations of Christianity, Author's Forward (1903), p. xx.)

A NOTE ON AMERICANIZATION

by David Konstan

In the history of the Trotskyist Party, Americanization must be understood in a particular context: the young Communist Party of America was dominated by Europeans organized in foreign language federations, who had their eyes focused on their homelands and deliberately ignored the special conditions and needs of the American working class. Comrade Cannon insisted that a native leadership, which understood and was responsive to the American proletariat, must be established, or else the Party would be oblivious to the mood and problems of the class. That this Americanization has nothing to do with the vulgar "Americanization" in the new "Where We Stand" document, is clearly demonstrated by the experience the Party had with Budenz of the Musteite American Workers Party (see pp. 207-209 in James P. Cannon's History of American Trotskyism.) Budenz, the Stalinist agent, opposing the fusion of the two parties, opportunistically attempted to brand the Communist League of America as "un-American" in its approach, taking advantage of the internationalism for which we have always stood, and which is reflected in all our literature. The Party in no way compromised its internationalism by chauvinistic efforts at lauding American petty-bourgeois heroes, but explained the difference between attentiveness to the psychology and habits of the American working class, and the contamination of our international Marxist tradition; we yield nothing to opportunists like Budenz, or class enemies like Hoadley.

OUR SECTARIAN MINORITY

by Barry Sheppard

The documents by Peter Friedlander and David Konstan proving that the majority is "embroiled in bourgeois ideology," because we propose one phrase in one sentence of the NEC draft "Where We Stand" to place us in the class struggle traditions of the American people, are written from the viewpoint of the dead-end factionalists of the minority we have had in the YSA since the last conference. For the benefit of new comrades, a brief history of this minority is in order.

At the last conference, there was a minority over the question of the class character of the Cuban state. The majority held that Cuba had become a workers state, with a democratic content but as yet lacking fully developed forms of democratic proletarian rule. The minority claimed Cuba was not a workers state, and managed to muster 20% of the vote for its viewpoint.

Since that time the minority has split into two wings. Differences developed within both wings as to the class character of the Cuban state, although all members and wings of the minority have held firm to their bitter opposition to the YSA leadership and the majority. Jim Petras, the member of the minority who gave their viewpoint on Cuba at the last conference, became inactive and began working for the YPSL. He was expelled by the Berkeley local. Other minorityites quit the YSA and joined YPSL, and still others just drifted away. The result of this process of disintegration is that the minority is now much smaller than it was at the last conference.

We are now presented with the latest example of minorityite sectarian thinking in the form of a polemic against the draft "Where We Stand". The favorite method of these sectarians is to quote. So we are quoted at to prove that the proletarians of the Roman Empire are different from modern proletarians, and that the socialist movement is a product of the modern proletariat's struggle. Also, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were internationalists, we are informed. All this is true and very good. Friedlander could have amassed many more excellent quotes on internationalism -- he could have even gotten a few from the NEC draft "Where We Stand."

In between some quotes lies a paragraph which contains the heart of their argument, around which no quote signs appear, and which, I therefore assume, is due wholly to Comrade Friedlander: "It is merely empty rhetoric, and certainly non-Marxist, to ask oneself, with a view to acquiring some 'tradition,' to take sides in the past struggles between the bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy, or between the latter

and the slave holders, even though in the past the alien classes played a progressive role."

Friedlander didn't mention the "alien" slave class, and its struggle against the slave holders, but we must assume that we cannot side with the slaves either, for he is against including Frederick Douglas and Wendell Phillips in the tradition we identify with. As a matter of fact, the majority not only "takes sides" with the slaves, we support the side of Northern capitalism against the Southern slaveholders.

Two can play the quoting game. Marx and Engles not only "took sides" in the American civil war, they followed events closely, with analysis and advice to their side, the North. Weydemeyer, an early American Marxist who was in close touch with Marx, joined the Union army, and later supported the Radical wing of the Republican Party. Marx drafted a letter, published in early 1864, in the name of the International Workingmen's Association, which said, in part:

"To Abraham Lincoln,
"President of the United States of America.
"Sir:

"We congratulate the American people upon your re-election by a large majority. If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant war-cry of your re-election is, Death to Slavery.

"From the commencement of the titantic American strife the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner (sic) carried the destiny of their class....

"When an oligarchy of 300,000 slaveholders dared to inscribe, for the first time in the annals of the world, 'slavery' on the banner of armed revolt; when on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great democratic republic had first sprung up, whence the first declaration of the Rights of Man was issued,... the working classes of Europe understood at once ... that for the men of labor, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic..."

(Letters to Americans, pp. 65-66)

As the minority well knows, Trotsky is always good for a quote. Here's one where Trotsky is describing nationalism in Lenin: "Lenin embodies in himself the Russian proletariat, a youthful class, that is politically scarcely older than Lenin himself, withal a deeply national class.... Lenin reflects in himself the Russian workmen's class, not only in its political present but also in its rustic past which is so recent." (Lenin, pp. 191-192)

As Marxists we certainly do take sides in all the class struggles of the past; we certainly do stand upon, defend, support, and learn from past struggles and accomplishments. We defend the Bill of Rights and every other "bourgeois right" that Friedlander scoffs at which were the gains of the First American Revolution. We take sides with the American revolutionaries against the British, and we are inspired by Sam Adams, the chief organizer of the lower classes in the First Revolution. We take sides with the Abolitionists and slaves (those "alien" non-working class slaves!) against the slave masters. Like Marx we take sides with the Northern alien capitalists against the Southern slavocracy.

Friedlander's argument gets even worse. He tells us even if we concede to him that Marx shouldn't have taken sides in the American Civil War, and if we place ourselves only in the tradition of the American workers (I assume we could then leave in Debs' name), we are still filthy bourgeois! The American workers, you see, are not Marxist-Leninist-Robertsonites -- and anything less than such simon pure people must be avoided like the plague lest one become bourgeoisified.

Friedlander speaks for the minority. The YSA as a whole stands foursquare on the traditions of the American workers. We stand proudly in the great struggle traditions of our working class -- with every manifestation of their struggle. We are in the tradition of the early Western Federation of Miners, the IWW, the early Socialist Party. We are part of, supporters of, defenders of, every single gain of the American workers, no matter how partial, just as we stand with them in every defeat. We learn from past leaders like Big Bill Haywood, Vincent St. John, and Debs. We are in the tradition of the Sit-down strikes, the Minneapolis Teamster strikes, the Toledo strike and the other great struggles which produced the CIO. The class struggle traditions of the American workers symbolized by the figure of Debs are our traditions; we seek to become the highest expression of these traditions and to carry them forward to the victory of the working class.

Comrades of the minority! Do you really believe that the YSA cannot hold firm to its revolutionary principles while at the same time identifying itself with the American proletariat. -- this impure, imperfect, backward proletariat destined to carry out the greatest of all revolutions in the not too distant future? We intend to do just that!

What the minority is really after is not the one offensive phrase in the one sentence of the new draft. They don't propose to strike this one phrase, they want to dump the whole draft. What is really bugging them about the draft is not the national question but the international question: the majority's characterization of Cuba contained in the new draft, and the majority's analysis of what a workers state is. But on these real disagreements the minority is so far silent.

THE AMERICAN LIE VS. THE AMERICAN TRADITION

by Tony Turner

The discussion in the New York YSA local on the NEC Draft Resolution "Where We Stand" revealed not only the minority's opposition to the "Americanization" of the "Founding Declaration" but also the absence of knowledge within the YSA on the history of class struggle in America.

The position of the minority is derived from lack of knowledge and their political disagreement with other sections of the draft resolution. They dismiss the Americans who are mentioned in the draft resolution as bourgeois heroes. They also present the outrageous contention that our roots are only in Europe because the theories of Socialism came from this part of the globe.

Dismissal of the Americans who allied with the oppressed classes in our early history is failure to view the struggle and its leaders in their historical context. The absence of Socialist theory did not prevent this struggle nor does it discredit it.

For most class struggles in the history of the world there was no Marxist theory for the rebellors to become familiar with. It might be hard to swallow for some romantic socialists, but Marx came a bit too late to aid theoretically in the American Revolution of 1776.

Maybe the minority feels that the root of struggle is theory alone, but a person who views history as class struggle and not as philosophy, namely a Marxist, recognizes the objective conditions as the root and the struggle as the tree arising from that root, and the theory as the nutrition that determines the health of that tree to an extent.

The nutrition of the American labor struggles did come from Europe and Russia but it was synthesized by Americans and grew from objective conditions within this country. The militancy of the workers in the 30's was not pulled out of a hat. It was continuous with the spirit of the slave rebellions, the Abolitionist movement, the struggle for the Bill of Rights, the first American Revolution, the IWW and many others. These struggles were class struggles and many ended in failure, others in token victory. But we as socialists can see these as the training, the accumulation of understanding, and the tests which will aid the American working class in bringing their final struggle to a successful end.

The practice of viewing American history in a hit-torical mis-terial manner is not peculiar to the minority for it is practiced and has always been practiced by the brainwashers and apologizers of the American capitalist class. One can complain of their distortion of Russian history but at least we are in our teens before we are battered with these lies about the USSR. The capitalist class of America tries to prevent us from learning the truth about our own history. This can be easily seen by an evaluation of our grammar school education. We are indoctrinated in the George Washington Cherry Tree Myth and the P.T. Boat Hero in kindergarden and this continues through every history book (no matter how much sophistication is added) that is given to us by our so-called educators. Our task is to present the true tradition of the American people along with and part of our presentation of international history, but we must first educate ourselves in our history from the historical materialist perspective.

A few facts relating to the Americans mentioned in the second paragraph of the NEC draft resolution will be presented not to defend them against the position of the minority but to explain a little American History so that we may become acquainted with them and be motivated to begin an education to destroy our miseducation.

Samuel Adams was a Bostonian who organized the common man in the effort both to free the colonies and to protect their own class interests after the yoke of Britain had been cast off. He was the key figure in Radical politics and dedicated his energies completely to this cause. To him, we as YSAers owe a great deal of respect for he was the main force that insured the Bill of Rights against the plotting and plans of the rising aristocracy. I am sure our Bloomington defendants do not dismiss his as a "bourgeois hero."

Wendell Phillips, the renowned Abolitionist; who proved himself a true radical by not halting after the civil war, proceeded to involve himself in the struggle of labor. Becoming an unpopular man did not deter him from identifying himself with the laboring class.

A runaway slave from Maryland exerted all his efforts to the fight for freedom of his people. Frederick Douglass, working within the Abolitionist movement was instrumental in attaining emancipation but also in recruiting the energies and pocketbooks of Northerners to the cause. He too did not lie down after the war but continued to protest the failure of the government to provide the now economically helpless freed slave with his due.

Fortunately most young radicals know of Eugene V. Debs, one of the greatest labor leaders the American people have

produced. If only the names of the many other American radicals could come to our consciousness as clearly and quickly as his does we would be well equipped American radicals.

Although the draft resolution could not include all radicals the exclusion of Harriet Tubman is very hard to overlook. This Negro woman who had succeeded in building the underground railroad became known as "Moses" due to the tremendous number of slaves she had provided with a means of escape. The simplicity of her character yet the courage of her convictions is shown in the statement from one of her public speeches: "Missa Linkum he great man, and I'se poor nigger; but dis nigger can tell Missa Linkum how to save de money and de men. He do it by setting de niggers free." She might not have had the education of a Martin Luther King, but she had the interests of her people at heart, and proved herself a great leader in action.

The next time you become demoralized at the sleepy unconscious working class of America of today just pick up a book about their struggles and confidence in them will be regained. You will become aware of the tremendous amount of power they have been brewing up during this short period of rest and you may even run to your window for fear the revolution is starting without you.