the organizer

Building a Campus Base in Brooklyn

The Brooklyn YSA is less than a year old. After the YSA convention, a priority for the local was the establishment of a campus base in Brooklyn. Brooklyn College is part of the New York City University system and has a student body of 30,000. Since it is the largest and most politically significant university in Brooklyn, the YSA decided to concentrate on building a base on that campus.

Although there had been a couple of YSAers on the Brooklyn College campus for a while, there had never been an organized campus fraction. After the convention, we began with five YSAers on campus, two as part-time students, and assigned the local antiwar and YSJP directors to the fraction.

The fraction's task was to propel the YSA into the center of life on the campus through the vehicles of the SWP campaign and the mass movements. Establishing ourselves at Brooklyn College would also provide a base in Brooklyn from which to launch antiwar and abortion law repeal activity.

The most significant problem facing us was the predominence of Zionist ideology. The vast majority of students are supporters of Israel and Zionism. There are dozens of Zionist organizations on campus ranging from the "left-Zionist" to the terrorist Jewish Defense League (JDL). The most active is the JDL.

There are about 8,000 Black and Puerto Rican students at Brooklyn College. A large number are organized in nationalist organizations and clubs that are concerned primarily with cultural activities, although in the past they have formed coalitions with political tendencies. There is also a Maoist grouping called the "People's Road," several Stalinist professors that do not do much, and a few members of the Workers League. In the absence of the YSA, it was easy for the JDL and pro-Zionist forces to isolate the collection of ineffectual left groups from the nationalist organizations and the bulk of students and to dominate the political scene.

The Workers League had made some headway in our absence, however, and had sown political confusion through their sectarianism and their reformist approach to the Black and Puerto Rican struggles. Their "critical support" to the Jenness-Pulley campaign and presence as the "Young Socialists" made it difficult for us to differentiate ourselves. The confusion was further exploited by the JDL, since they excercised a good deal of control over the school government and newspapers and would consciously obscure the dif-

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ferences between the YSA and the Workers League. The student government election campaign gave the YSA a chance to clear the air. We emphasized the Jenness-Pulley campaign and tied our campus campaign closely to it. The campaign gave us the opportunity to present the YSA publicly and to build our organizational authority. YSJP tables were set up almost daily. The entire fraction participated in Militant sales on the campus and we let everyone know who we were. We consciously went after the Workers League. putting them on the defensive by bringing our politics into the open. For example, we pasted up posters all over campus that had slogans such as "Young Socialists Support Black Nationalism" and "Young Socialists Support Women's Liberation."

We also wanted to begin helping to build the mass movements. We knew that the presence of the antiwar and women's liberation movements, together with our election campaign work would begin to break up the stultifying political atmosphere the Zionists had cultivated.

Because the JDL is a terrorist organization with a history of attacks on left organizations we needed to build a defense of the YSA's rights. Our persepctives for building a defense went handin-hand with our general perspective of building a campus base. We recognized that Zionists are by no means a homogeneous political group. However, until the YSA broke onto campus, the JDL would be able to rally much of the pro-Zionist support behind them. In the absence of a revolutionary alternative, the JDL has tricked many potential radicals into their camp by attacking the administration (from the right) and by presenting themselves as the defenders of the Jewish people.

We outlined our approach to the JDL on two levels. First, we wanted to deepen the divisions in the Zionist camp. By drawing antiwar and pro-abortion forces into constructive activity, we felt we could weaken the hold that the JDL had on these layers and that the JDL's reactionary interior beneath its radical facade would begin to show.

Second, we wanted to take on the JDL directly. We began raising the question of the YSA's democratic rights and explaining the history and character of the JDL. We also explained the YSA's views on the Palestinian revolution and anti-

Semitism in the form of a literary discussion in the main school paper. In the running discusion, the JDL was forced publicly to acknowlege the YSA twice by responding to our articles. Through directly confronting the JDL, the YSA has greatly enhanced its political authority on campus and somewhat discredited the JDL, and we have solidarized ourselves with the Black and Puerto Rican students that have often been the victims of the JDL's racist attacks.

Our success in building a campus base can be seen from an overview of our main areas of work.

In the election campaign early this spring, the YSA succeeded in getting out its views on the mass movements and introducing the campaign of Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley to Brooklyn College students. A meeting for Pulley on the campus drew 90 students, many of whom endorsed the campaign. One student joined the YSA as a result of the tour. (See The YS Organizer, March 31, 1972.) The Brooklyn SWP senatorial and congressional campaigns have been focused around Brooklyn College. A press conference on campus led to an article in the $New\ York$ Post and an interview with a candidate in the school paper. We are now building a student government election campaign focusing attention on the SWP national campaign and the Brooklyn senatorial races. There are over 50 campaign supporters on campus.

From tiny antiwar meetings that only the sectarians attended, there were meetings of 45 students to build the April 22 demonstration. An emergency antiwar rally held on campus April 19 had the endorsement of the Puerto Rican Alliance, the Third World Federation, and Youth for McGovern, among other campus groups. Several student government figures agreed to speak at the rally, including some Zionists. The rally also attracted a number of local politicians.

Women's liberation work has centered around the Brooklyn Women's Abortion Coalition (BWAC). Many activists have attended recent meetings, although it took a while for the work to get off the ground this spring. BWAC is planning a film on abortion to build Abortion Action Week and has scheduled a debate with the "Voices for Innocent Victims of Abortion" on May

Through consistent activity, the YSA is making headway in becoming established as a major political force at Brooklyn College. This work is seen as a central focus of the development of the Brooklyn local. Not only is it becoming a focus for antiwar and women's liberation work, but YSAers that are not on campus have played a role in establishing the YSA by activity such

Developing a campus base has also been helpful financially for the entire local. Used book sales on the campus have raised a considerable amount of money and have helped stabilize the local finances and put us on schedule in payments to the national fund drive.

as sales on the campus.

The work of the fraction is thought out by the entire local leadership. There are regular Brooklyn College reports to the executive committee and to the local as a whole. Both internally and externally, the Brooklyn College fraction has been an important step in developing the Brooklyn YSA.

JIM LITTLE Brooklyn YSA

Help Put the SWP on the Ballot

As announced in the April 14 *Militant*, the Socialist Workers Party has decided to seek ballot status in Massachusetts. This will require collecting over 56,000 valid signatures, the largest petitioning effort ever undertaken by the SWP. Because of the experience we gained in Florida, where we got 51,000 signatures in three weeks, and the strength of the support that the SWP campaign already has in Boston and the New England region, the campaign committee is confident that we can go well over the required 56,000 signatures. We will be aiming for 90-100,000 total signatures.

The attention that the petition drive has already received in the New England press indicates that this project will generate a great deal of publicity for the Jenness and Pulley campaign in New England. Because the SWP is petitioning for ballot status, the reputation of the YSA and the SWP in Massachusetts as a *serious* socialist alternative to the Democratic and Republican Parties will be strengthened. The petitioning activities will be an important part of the ongoing process of establishing the YSA and the SWP as a significant force in Massachusetts politics.

Ballot status for our candidates will greatly increase the impact of the campaign in Massachusetts during the summer and fall. The opportunities that ballot status provides to counterpose our campaign directly to those of the capitalist politicians will place us far ahead of our

opponents, including the Communist Party, in our ability to reach people that are looking for a serious alternative to capitalist politics. We expect that involving campaign supporters in the petitioning, along with other campaign activities, will result in recruitment to the YSA and in strengthening the organization of the campaign in the New England region.

The Boston SWP Campaign Committee is organizing the petition drive, but the task of collecting 56,000 valid signatures on nominating petitions is so large that they will require outside help. In addition to the petitioning itself there are many other things that must be done, including neighborhood canvassing, leafleting, counting and sorting the petitions, checking signatures, and other organizational tasks that an effort of this size requires. The National Campaign Committee is asking YSAers and Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley from New England and the eastern United States to volunteer up to three weeks of their time to come to Boston to put Jenness and Pulley on the ballot in Massachusetts.

Petitioning will begin in April, but the dates for the concentrated effort that will be needed to get the required number of signatures are May 27 through June 17. Although people that come from other areas may miss part of the Socialist Summer School in their region, their socialist education will not be neglected in Boston.

In addition to petitioning during the three-week mobilization, campaign supporters will be participating in a special educational series that will be taught by some of the leading educators of our movement. These classes, combined with the valuable experience of working with YSAers and party members in Boston on a national effort to enable the socialist campaign to take a major step forward, will make the trip to Boston worthwhile for everyone that goes.

YSAers and Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley that might be available from May 27 to June 17, or any part of that time, and would like to volunteer for the Massachusetts petition drive should immediately contact their regional campaign office.

TOM VERNIER
YSJP National Coordinator

Austin School Board Campaign Evaluation

The following is an edited report on the Austin School Board election campaign.

The Austin campaign for school board ran from the filing of the candidates on February 29, to the general election April 1. It was a "nonpartisan" election, but our candidates were publicly indentified as the Socialist Workers Party candidates throughout the campaign.

The school board elections are staggered, sixyear terms with elections held every two years. Three positions were open this year and the Austin campaign committee decided to run candidates for all three.

ORIGINAL PROJECTIONS

During March, tours were scheduled for Linda Jenness; Evelyn Reed, a national SWP campaign spokeswoman; and Richard Garcia, the Texas Socialist Workers Party senatorial candidate. Besides helping to arrange these tours, the YSA and YSJP were also helping to build Impact '72 (a local presidential preference poll), a regional abortion conference, and a local antiwar demonstration. Because of the level of activity during March, we did not feel the school board campaign could be a particularly large area of work. The campaign committee projected holding meetings in most of the high schools, putting out one or two pieces of campaign literature, and having campaign spokespeople speak to a few community groups. We wanted each candidate to have at least one opportunity to speak for the campaign.

ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Campaign activities far exceeded the campaign committee's projections; in fact, the Socialist Workers candidates ended up dominating the election, mainly through our challenge of the loyalty

The school board campaign provided our first opportunity to speak in the high schools. Previously, the campaign had been restricted to holding meetings off school grounds after classes. During the campaign the candidates were able to address several classes in Lanier High School and Reagon High School.

The candidates were also able to speak to a number of community groups, including the Travis High School PTA, Women's Association of University Graduates, St. John's Methodist Church, Bethany Lutheran Church, Austin Teachers Association, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and a meeting sponsored by the Texas Union at the University of Texas. A number of the meetings included all the school board candidates and we clearly were able to counterpose the Socialist Workers campaign to the others. At meetings where the Socialist Workers candidates were not allowed to speak, we carried out campaign interventions from the floor. Altogether, the campaign committee estimated that over 1000 people heard the candidates during a total speaking time of over 12 hours.

Press coverage of the campaign was excellent. Over 60 minutes of TV time from the three Austin stations and 175 minutes of radio time were received. There were over 170 column inches just on the socialist candidates in the two Austin newspapers. There were another 170 column inches dealing with both the Socialist Workers and opponent candidates. The other candidates received almost no coverage besides a few paid ads.

LOYALTY OATH

The campaign's greatest impact probably came from the challenge to the loyalty oath. The Texas SWP had challenged the same oath previously and we were still waiting for the decision by a three judge federal panel.

The challenge got off to a late start because of problems in finding a lawyer, but the ACLU finally agreed to sponsor the case. We found that we could appeal either through the state courts or through the one federal judge in the MIKE ALEWITZ Austin district, who was unlikely to grant a re-

straining order. After discussions with our lawyer, we decided to appeal for a temporary injunction from the state district court. Later, the appeal was denied.

After further consultation with our lawyer, we decided that rather than challenging the oath through the state courts, we should wait for the federal court's ruling.

We feel that a local CoDEL would have been a great help in this fight. As it was, we got off to a late start in launching a legal battle.

EVALUATION

The school board campaign was successful in getting the SWP recognized as a political force in Austin. A number of YSAers gained experience as public spokespeople during the campaign and all three candidates are slated for other positions in the upcoming elections.

Both the national and statewide campaigns were integrated into the school board campaign. For instance, Garcia, the senatorial candidate, participated with the local candidates in high school leafleting that was covered by the press. Also, national campaign information was on our campaign literature.

In addition, the campaign was very inexpensive. The total cost was about \$10, the cost of our one piece of printed campaign material.

Speaking engagements in the schools and before community groups provided an opportunity to get out our ideas on busing, school discipline. and community control. The campaign's impact was revealed when the election results were announced on the front page of the newspaper under the headline "Socialists Defeated."

Austin YSA

Recruitment Roundup

Tentative figures on YSA recruitment for March, compiled from the reports sent in by locals, indicate a faster rate of recruitment than in January and February.

In March, 67 new members joined the YSA in the 36 locals reporting. (Fourteen locals did not report.) In addition, 15 new members joined in at-large areas. In order for the National Office to have complete figures, it is important that locals send in their recruitment report forms each week.

Classes on socialist ideas have been successful in helping convince people to join the YSA. Maryanne Rafferty from the Washington D.C. YSA reports:

"A recently concluded seminar series entitled 'Sisters in Struggle' that was held in Washington D. C. was very successful in bringing women around to our ideas and in recruitment. Conducting such a series provided us with a way to attract women who were around the YSA to come to our headquarters to discuss ideas that we knew they were interested in, since for the most part we met them initially through the feminist movement and the abortion law repeal cam-

"The classes were held every Wednesday evening and all women in the local were encouraged to attend. Each class was led by a different

"We are convinced that critical to the success of the classes was the informal tone and the questioning nature in which the topics were presented, which encouraged women who were unsure and women with different ideas to participate. Such a setting allowed maximum discussion. This attitude paid off.

"The discussion was on a very high level and often women who were not in the YSA themselves initiated discussion around the relationship of the feminist movement to the current radicalization and the development of a socialist revolution.

We were able to point out that to be a consistent have had a landslide in the last one and a half feminist one should join the revolutionary socialist movement, and a number of them did so."

The seminar topics were —

- 1) The Roots of the Oppression of Women: An Historical Approach
- 2) The Family: Reactionary or Progressive? 3) Women in the Russian Revolution
- 4) The First Wave of Feminism: 1848-1920 5) Current Trends in the Feminist Movement:

A study of The Dialectic of Sex, by S. Firestone (The reading list used in the seminar is available from the D. C. YSA.)

"To wrap up the series we held a Friday night Militant Forum, to which men were invited, on 'Women and the '72 Elections,' featuring Laura Miller and a representative from Shirley Chisholm's campaign office."

The last recruitment report included the Seattle YSA local's projections for two series of classes on socialist ideas for new YSAers and prospective members - one on campus and one at the local headquarters on Saturdays. Seattle organizer Lisa Potash reports that five interested high school students, including three Asian-Americans, attended the first Saturday class, and 11 non-YSAers attended the first campus class. She expects that several of these people will join the YSA this spring.

Philadelphia's successful socialist conference on April 8-9 resulted in three people joining the YSA on April 10. Commenting on the recruitment, Philadelphia organizer Rose Ogden explained that the conference included a talk aimed at convincing people to join the YSA, a showing of the YSA film, and lots of individual discussions with those that attended. She expects several more people that attended the conference to join before long.

San Antonio YSA organizer Ann Wilcox reports that "Largely through Linda Jenness's tour we weeks." Six people joined the YSA in that period, and two more have joined since.

The Houston YSA sent a letter to all Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley in their area explaining why they should join the YSA and inviting them to a special meeting for people interested in joining and to a YSA party. The letter explained that "The Young Socialist Alliance is the revolutionary socialist youth organization that puts the program of Jenness and Pulley into action - not only during the election period, but on a year round basis to build the independent mass movements that alone have the power to challenge the rulers of this country.

"Joining the Young Socialist Alliance is the most important step supporters of Jenness and Pulley can take in implementing the ideas of the socialist campaign. . . . "

ANDY ROSE YSA National Chairman

YSA Financial Evaluation

Editor's Note: The following article is based on a report and discussion in the National Executive Committee on April 11.

Now that the fund drive is more than half over, it is necessary to assess its progress in the context of the overall financial situation of the locals. Often national reports on finances, whether to the National Executive Committee or in *The Young Socialist Organizer*, deal only with the fund drive. Doing so can give a one-sided view of YSA finances, of which the fund drive is only one aspect.

During the spring, the National Office has been able to get a much more well-rounded picture of local finances. This report is intended to put the progress of the fund drive in the context of a broader picture of YSA finances. The report will deal mainly with regional center locals.

The national fund drive is lagging by 30 percentage points. Through discussions with locals we have been able to get a feel for the reasons for this, and the reasons are important to our discussion of the fund drive. They indicate that YSA finances are doing better than it may seem by looking at the fund drive in isolation.

As was mentioned in the national financial tour report to the NEC, there was a rather significant time lag in organizing the work of the locals after the last convention. The expansion of the campaigns in which the YSA is involved required considerable reorganization of personnel over the spring. The YSJP activities and renewal campaigns were two major areas of work that locals had not been involved in last fall to the degree that they are now. Consequently, there were many shifts in assignments in the locals as a whole, and in finances in particular. The result was a slow start in organizing and thinking out local finances. During the first six weeks of the fund drive, payments on the fund drive fell behind at an average of five percentage points each week. It has not been until the last three weeks that this situation has begun to be reversed.

Also, during this period, locals and our move-

ment as a whole have extended fund raising to include the SWP election campaign. The YSA has been instrumental in raising thousands of dollars for local, statewide, and national SWP campaigns. Such activities as socials, rummage sales, and speaking engagements are divided with the campaign and this division obviously decreases the amount that might otherwise go to the YSA. To a lesser degree, internal financing from campaign pledges and levies has had an effect on YSA finances. However, we can say without a doubt that our movement is raising more money than ever before. This shift in our resources is not reflected in the score board figures.

One of the most important factors in YSA finances is the process of stabilizing local operating expenses. This is something with which we are trying to keep in very close contact in the National Office, because it is one of the most important steps recently raken in the locals' functioning. That is, locals are beginning to get more exact ideas of what is financially necessary to function. Most locals are in the process of becoming self-sustaining—having full-time organizers, paying a larger portion of headquarters rent and phone expenses, etc.—in essence, establishing a solid financial base of their own.

Local finances were on a sound footing in the past when the YSA was a much smaller organization. In the last four or five years the growth and influence of the YSA has reached a very different level. The activity now carried out by locals requires expenses double and even triple the size they were previously. This huge expansion, coupled with the tremendous expansion of our national apparatus and fund drives, has occurred at a rapid pace.

Meeting both increased local expenses and larger fund drive quotas proved to be a difficult task for YSA locals that were funded, at the time, totally through sustainers from the memberhsip. In many cases, locals were building up back debts to various departments of our movement. There was also a tendency to orient the entire—membership toward fund raising on an emergency

basis near the end of the fund drives in order to catch up with and meet their quotas. These experiences left both local and national finances on a less than solid footing. We concluded that we must evaluate, in advance of the fund drive, the potential for various external fund-raising activities.

Locals have made tremendous progress in initiating external fund raising. However, it should be remembered that many projects are still in an experimental stage. For example, speakers bureaus are in the process of becoming established. Campus YSAs have made some headway in getting funded from student government budgets, but many have not yet applied for funding. Other activities are still in the formulative stage.

Involved in this process of stabilizing local finances has been the establishment of an ongoing discussion on finances in locals at a decidedly higher level than in the past. When several locals had to lower their quotas this spring, most locals made a thorough evaluation of their total financial picture. The result has been a much keener understanding of all the expenses of locals on the part of the executive committees and financial committees during these past weeks.

As the score board shows, the payments to the fund drive at this point are very far behind schedule.

The "Should Be" figure in the score board is based on where the fund drive would be if locals sent in the same percentage of their quotas each week from the very beginning of the fund drive. As the YSA carries out more and more external fund raising, large amounts of money are raised by locals at various intervals and depend on many variables. Many of the projects, such as the speakers bureaus, organized at the start of the fund drive may not receive returns until late in the fund drive. Large fund-raising projects may render significant amounts of money in lump sums, necessitating one large fund drive payment rather than several smaller weekly payments. It may

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never be possible for all locals to be exactly on schedule. However, these guidlines are very important measurements for locals to guage themselves by.

National finances necessitate that we come as close as possible to making these regular payments. Before large fund drive payments came in this spring the National Office functioning was severely restricted. Such basic necessities as rent payment, paper supplies and postage could not be met. It is clear from this experience that regular fund drive payments remain a crucial goal of YSA finances, both locally and nationally.

All locals now have arrived at spring fund drive quotas that are entirely realistic, and more importantly, they have detailed plans for meeting them. While large portions of these quotas are to be met in the remaining six weeks, thorough discussions with locals indicate that their plans are well laid out. These projections for meeting the fund drive quotas are taken in the context of the other financial obligations of the locals.

What we have seen over the first part of the spring has been a calculated and deliberate progress in organizing finances. The process is slow and the fund drive is a reflection of this. Nevertheless, funds are being raised on much less of

a "crisis footing" basis and much more through well thought out fund-raising procedures.

In preparing for the fall fund drive, it is clear that several steps should be taken this spring. The most important advance preparation is to prepare a budget for June through December, anticipating the needs of the local and the possible fall fund drive quotas. We have learned that careful advance planning of various projects enabled YSA locals to raise significantly more money. For instance, the New England area speakers bureau is printing its new fall brochure in April to send to campuses this spring. Most schools allocate funds in the spring for honoraria the following fall. Several campus YSAs have already submitted budgets for student government funds, which are also usually decided on during April and May for the fall term.

All locals should be discussing fund-raising possibilities for the summer. With the level of activity projected for the summer, including the socialist summer schools and the conferences, advance planning will be necessary. Making payments during June, July, and August has two important functions. The major advantage is to the National Office, which requires income for its normal functioning during a period when there is no fund drive. Also, locals will be better prepared to meet their fall quotas if money has already been raised and sent in before the rush of activities begins in the fall.

the organizer

A WEEKLY ACTION PUBLICATION OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE, A MULTINATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST YOUTH ORGANIZATION.

EDITOR: MARK UGOLINI MANAGING EDITOR: LESLIE DORK

BUSINESS MANAGER: CAROLINE FOWLKES EDITORIAL BOARD: LESLIE DORK, CARO-LINE FOWLKES, MALIK MIAH, LAURA MIL-LER, GEOFF MIRELOWITZ, ANDY ROSE, PAULA SAVICH, MARK UGOLINI, MIRTA VI-

DAL, DELPFINE WELCH

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CAROLINE FOWLKES
YSA Financial Director