

# YSA

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## DISCUSSION BULLETIN

Vol. 10 No 7  
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The Chase, Meseke, Sherrill and  
Barzman Antiwar Resolution

20 Cents

**YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE**

**YSA, BOX 471, COOPER STATION, N.Y., N.Y. 10003**

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## MINORITY ANTIWAR RESOLUTION

Submitted by: Eloise Meseke, John Barzman, Linda Sherrill,  
and Stephan Chase.

### I. THE NATURE OF THE NEC DRAFT OF THE ANTIWAR RESOLUTION

The NEC draft of the antiwar resolution is both superficial and inadequate and lacks any serious analysis of the events and turns in the past year, or of the role played by our opponents. The resolution does not define any of the problems which will be confronting our movement in our work with the pacifists, liberals, Stalinists, and the radicalizing youth.

It also fails to define our attitude towards various parties and formations in the antiwar movement or to provide us with a direction in which to proceed. It is marked by a lack of clarity, especially in sections dealing with the organizational aspects of the movement and the United Front in particular. It stresses the importance of building the movement by operating within United Fronts, but sets down no guidelines for our functioning in such formations.

We must have a resolution which sets down a clear line of demarcation between the programs of the reformists and that of the revolutionaries for the antiwar movement, and their respective approaches to a United Front. Both these formations and the role of our opponents in them must be subjected to a critical analysis to guide our national antiwar fraction and to prevent the accomodation and tailending which has marked our past intervention.

### II. THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

It is necessary here to review the course of events since our intervention in the Thanksgiving Convention in Washington, D.C. The 1966 convention resolution analysed this period and stressed the crucial role that the YSA played both organizationally and politically in raising the consciousness of the antiwar movement. Our task was set forth: "The primitive political level of the majority of the antiwar activists means that the political basis of most disputes is often muddled and unclear. This means that we must be diligent in fereting out the political foundations of every debate and explaining it as precisely as possible."

This was the role which we played in the Thanksgiving Convention. We explained that the dispute taking place was based on the key question of withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam, and we exposed the unprincipled position which our opponents took for negotiations. A clear perspective was laid out for the formation of a left wing around the BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW NEWSLETTER to build a militant, independent antiwar movement around the slogan of withdrawal. The Newsletter was launched at a time when every major opponent

attacked us on this question and the question of the role of the independent committees to end the war.

In a YSA report on the Thanksgiving Conference, written by Kipp Dawson, the role of the political tendencies was clearly analyzed. To paraphrase and quote:

The attitudes of the Communist Party and the DuBois Clubs" . . . on the antiwar movement stem from their general line of coalition politics. They want to see the movement remain 'broad,' that is, within liberal politics and under their domination . . . where the more advanced sectors keep quiet and completely subordinate their politics to the liberal program dictated by the right wing of the movement. They abandon the historical task of politicizing the movement for the sake of unity . . . ." They fear the growth of a large independent wing which they cannot channel into support of the Democratic Party in order to carry out their line of peaceful co-existence with American Imperialism.

Further:

We saw the development of the independent committees" . . . not as a threat to the unity of the peace movement, but as a developing vanguard of the movement against the US imperialist war on the Vietnamese. We worked against attempts to channel the militants into the stagnant peace and liberal groups . . . . We supported the idea of coordinated activity among all the elements of the movement, but not at the expense of the political development of the antiwar movement and of its most advanced sectors."

All debates and events, whether at the conference or since then, are based on the opposing views of negotiations vs. immediate withdrawal.

The "radical" pacifists who are sympathetic to the liberation struggles play the role of fence sitters and mediators, but at every critical turn line up with their fellow reformists on the crucial dispute over withdrawal as a central demand, as Muste has done time after time.

Correctly analyzing SDS, Kipp reported:

The role that SDS played at that conference ". . . brought into question the weight of the New Left as a major political force. What actually happened was that they, together with the rest of the New Left, got caught in the middle of the fight over crucial issues which the antiwar movement faces and found that they had nothing to contribute and sat back confused."

It is important to realize that since the time of the Washington Conference, these other tendencies have continued to

play the same roles and have grouped and regrouped themselves against us along the same two major political disputes -- i.e., WITHDRAWAL vs. NEGOTIATIONS, and REFORMISM vs. INDEPENDENT ANTI-IMPERIALIST STAND.

### III. MARCH DAYS OF PROTEST

The Washington convention authorized the National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam to act as a national coordinating center and to call the March International Days of Protest. While the NCC held national authority at this time, our comrades were in a key position because of the strategic role we held in the independent sector of the movement gained by our correct analysis and intervention in the CEWV's. We played a major role in setting up the city-wide coordinating committees formed to organize the Days of Protest.

In the period following the Washington convention we had educated and strengthened the independent committees which were the base of support for the March Days. Even though withdrawal was still not acceptable to all the forces involved, the slogan dominated the signs on the marches. The March Days of Protest marked the high point of the independent thrust of the antiwar movement, the weight of the CEWV's, and our influence through them.

### IV. SPRING, 1966

After March, the Buddhist demonstrations strengthened our position for withdrawal and exposed the position for negotiations and many more forces were won over. The Newsletter had helped prepare for this development but failed to become the official organ speaking for the whole withdrawal section, as we had hoped it would. Due to the influence of the Stalinists, the NCC became more and more a section of the antiwar movement politically supporting peace candidates and community organizing. With such an orientation, it proved unable to coordinate antiwar opposition and declined organizationally.

### V. SUMMER, 1966

The antiwar movement then entered the crucial period of the summer months. The NCC had not become a national coordinating committee and the YSA was forced to realize that our perspective of building the Newsletter caucus into a national organization of the CEWV's had not materialized. In fact the base of support for such a development had begun to dwindle due to a sense of frustration and demoralization among the independents who felt that the demonstrations had failed.

This was shown most clearly by the dispute within the Vietnam Day Committee over the Scheer campaign, which split the most dynamic independent committee on the issue of peace

politics. The split over peace politics and community organizing vs. demonstrations occurred on a national scale and represented a continuation of the original conflict over orientation at the Washington convention. By calling the August 6-8 demonstration we hoped to find some activity to occupy the activists, to divert attention from the peace campaigns. But this demonstration became our sole answer as a radical alternative.

As revolutionary socialists the last thing we want to do is to divert attention from the key questions confronting the antiwar movement. The Newsletter contained an article in May raising the question of peace candidates, but since then contained not a word publicizing or exposing peace candidates-- not even on the minimal basis of their antiwar platforms being for or against immediate withdrawal. Why not? Because now we were to use the Newsletter to form an alliance with A.J. Muste, who ran the New York Peace Parade Committee. And A.J. Muste supported peace candidates. We chose an alliance with Muste over and above our political task of educating the movement and winning over the followers of the reformists to our program of immediate withdrawal. The Newsletter, the "voice of the CEWV's," should have taken up the question of peace candidates and related it to the question of withdrawal.

The inevitable disagreements around reformist politics and the political direction for the antiwar movement were carried into the Peace Parade Committee when our opponents called a conference in June to reverse the decision, which we had fought for and won, to call the August Days of Protest under the slogan "Bring the Troops Home Now." A few days prior to the June conference, the case of the Fort Hood Three had broken and the three servicemen came to the parade committee for help. They were invited to the conference and spoke there.

#### VI. THE FORT HOOD THREE -- "AN EXCELLENT TRADE"

If the Fort Hood Three case was to be a major turn in our antiwar work (as we were told it was to be), there should have been a change in the objective situation to warrant such a turn. If there was not such a change, there must have been another reason for the turn -- and a careful study of the case reveals that there was. The only written report sent out by the leadership on the nature of the Fort Hood Three case and our orientation to it was a "confidential memorandum" sent to organizers and NC'ers only. It should be read to fully appreciate how and why we should have made the major turn to the troops on June 30.

As already stated, there was a threatened split within the Peace Parade Committee and it is apparent that our fraction would have been in a minority if the disagreements had come to a head. The Fort Hood Three case, however, saved the day.

Throughout the development of the "major turn," our leader-

ship showed themselves to either be so apolitical as to base our antiwar work on illusions, or else they consciously miseducated the membership.

The first illusion created and doled out to both the antiwar movement and our comrades is that the Fort Hood Three are typical G.I.'s, three young conscripts who don't want to go to Vietnam. The fact is, however, that the Fort Hood Three are completely atypical. Among them is Dennis Mora, a member of the DuBois Club, whose father fought in Spain. This is unusual, not typical. Their chief attorney is Stanley Faulkner, the Stalinist, and long before June 30th they had approached the Stalinist NCC and the DuBois Club (Stalinist) Convention to solicit support. This also must be considered atypical. Our last clue came when they supported Herbert Aptheker and only Herbert Aptheker in the November elections. Already the glitter of this case, as a vehicle for reaching the troops, shows itself to be other than gold.

It is one thing to omit certain details from our public press, but quite another to delude ourselves. This was billed as a major turn of the antiwar movement -- a method of reaching the troops -- of establishing "a dialogue" with the soldiers, "an answer to all the frustrations." Previously there had been no discussion in our movement of a turn to the G.I.'s, but suddenly this case became the basis for a major political turn "within our movement and the antiwar movement." There had been no corresponding change in the political consciousness of the troops. We had always maintained that turning petty-bourgeois elements to the working class before a real radicalization had occurred would not tend to alleviate their frustrations but only increase them. There is nothing wrong with leafletting G.I.'s or any other section of the population if we do it on a correct basis, but there was no justification for a major turn in our orientation at this time.

Due to our efforts, a defense committee was set up led by A.J. Miste and Staughton Lynd. And the slogans "Defend the G.I.'s right not to go to Vietnam" and "Free Speech for G.I.'s" were popularized. Logically, the dominant slogan of the case became "Defend the G.I.'s Right Not to Go to Vietnam." This was a civil liberties case to begin with, one that we should obviously support within the organized antiwar movement. But because a "we won't go" position is inherent in the slogan "Defend the G.I.'s right not to go to Vietnam", we should not have pushed this case as a major turn to the troops.

Because we seized on this case as it was, and pushed it, we did not go to the troops as a Bring the Troops Home Now movement, or even the Bring the Troops Home Now section of the movement. We went with all our opponents organized in the catch-all Parade Committee on a case with a "we won't go" position. The reason that we could not approach the troops with our slogan was that we had traded it in a maneuver in the Parade Committee for unity around the Fort Hood Three.

As the confidential memo states:

"The unity appears not only around supporting the three G.I.'s, but around all the other activities in connection with August 6. We had previously anticipated -- and there could have been -- serious arguments at various points over many questions. These arguments have not occurred on some questions because we specifically chose not to fight on them. Precisely because we considered the case of the G.I.'s and the turn it made possible for the movement to be of such transcendent character that our tactics required a little adjustment."

"For example, the slogan 'Bring the Troops Home Now' was supposed to be the major theme of August 6. We have ended up with that slogan as one of nine. However, on the call leaflet it says in the most prominent place: 'In solidarity with American youth, G.I.'s and those facing the draft, who do not want to be involved in this immoral war.' We consider that an excellent trade. An excellent trade."

An excellent trade. Political clarity, then was subordinated to "unity." That is the meaning of the Fort Hood Three case -- a maneuver, "an excellent trade."

Our leadership was influenced by the frustrations of the petty-bourgeois movement and saw in the case a gimmick which could overcome the frustrations and the differences. They were so carried away by their impressions and wishful thinking that they began to believe their own illusions. They misdirected our cadre from our central task of building a Bring the Troops Home Now movement as the only way to reach the troops, and instead proclaimed that "we raised the level of the antiwar movement" to the point where it was ready to accept this great case.

The events in the Defense Committee followed a logical development given the nature of the Fort Hood Three case. The Stalinists had wanted nothing to do with the case until we seized upon it and made it a big issue. When they saw that they could get something out of it, they moved to take over the committee and Muste quite naturally complied, appointing Carl Griffler -- the Stalinist -- as its chief administrator. As both Muste and the Stalinists agreed on their approach to the draft question, they proceeded to turn the defense committee into a means to promote antidraft activities following the logic of the "Defend the G.I.'s Right Not to Go to Vietnam" slogan. The "G.I.'s," of course, being pro-Stalinist, did not object.

This case -- our major turn in the antiwar movement -- was then dropped like a hot potato, by our press and by our antiwar fraction. Our leadership had been out-manuevered by the master maneuverers.



## VII. THE NEWSLETTER

The evolution of the Newsletter offers more evidence of adaption to the petty-bourgeois antiwar movement. From an organ of a caucus within the NCC with the anti-imperialist line for the antiwar movement, the Newsletter evolved into an organ of the Peace Parade Committee, showing Muste just how "cooperative" we could be, so cooperative, as stated before, that we did not write in the Newsletter any programmatic disagreements with him.

The Newsletter was supposed to be our major propaganda organ in the antiwar movement, clarifying issues and educating activists. While it is true that a national organization based on withdrawal had not materialized, the Newsletter should have carried an independent line against imperialism, stressing the need for a movement based on immediate withdrawal -- the perspective set down at our last convention.

If this perspective was no longer correct, the leadership should have reported why not, and what a new perspective should be. However, there have been no reports and the Newsletter subsequently evolved into an organ for the Fort Hood Three, at which time it subordinated propaganda for withdrawal to carry the line of our new "major turn." The line soon became, as stated above, "Defend the G.I.'s Right Not to Go to Vietnam."

Finally, still with no official reports, the Newsletter was suddenly dropped, after an acceleration of its apolitical course during the fall.

## VIII. CLEVELAND CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1966

During the summer a group of professors who had been involved in teach-ins held a conference on their own initiative in Cleveland. They decided that a large action was needed in the fall, that it should be organized on the basis of non-exclusion, and that they should call for withdrawal and self-determination.

A joint conference was called by this group and the New York Parade Committee for the fall. Using Muste's authority a number of peace groups were invited. The attendance was overwhelmingly comprised of the more liberal and conservative adult groups. The student wing was noticeably absent with our comrades comprising the bulk of the youth who attended.

By this time almost every major opponent had given lip service to the slogan of withdrawal. This position had been clearly adopted by the previous Cleveland conference on its own initiative. Yet our fraction did not even attempt to have this statement re-affirmed officially by this conference. The reason given was that the raising of the slogan question would be "divisive." This is the position that the Stalinists had used to attack our comrades for the fight we waged the previous fall. Not raising questions of political program always

strengthens the reformists. It is to their advantage alone and to our disadvantage to submerge political issues with the cry for "unity" -- in this case around a vague, muddled-headed, catch-all slogan or program such as "Sick of the War," which came out of the September Cleveland Conference.

The NEC saw the November Mobilization as a means ". . . for sustaining the movement by getting it through rough periods like the November elections." However, the November Mobilization was seen by the liberals as a vehicle through which to support peace candidates! Muste stated that one of the purposes of the Mobilizations was to support peace candidates or conduct write-in campaigns.

At the September Cleveland conference there were no large numbers of youth or independents to win away from the influence of our opponents. The relationship of forces was overwhelmingly against us; therefore, our tactics were quite correctly different from those in Washington, 1965, because there was nothing to be gained by pushing our differences to a fight. Nevertheless, we should have simply made the record clear on what our differences were on the question of community organizing, peace candidates, and the draft; and should have stated that since there could be no agreement on these issues that the only thing we could unite on is a call for a national demonstration. It is not important that we win the vote for our entire line at a conference of this nature, but that we set forward our program so that we can attack our opponents on political issues in our press. By merely raising a motion that the central slogan be "Bring the Troops Home Now" we would have exposed all those who would vote against it.

And this is the key to our opponents position on the question of withdrawal. They cannot argue with us on this position so they have to give verbal support to it. However, they have never agreed that Bring the Troops Home Now should be the central demand of any demonstration. They cannot agree to this because its adoption as the central demand will bring the antiwar movement to irreconcilable opposition to American imperialism and the bourgeois liberals who speak for it. This is the reason that the slogan "Sick of the War" was adopted by the steering committee. In the previous convention document it was clearly stated as one of our major tasks, "to articulate and explain why the antiwar movement should base itself on Vietnam's right to self-determination and immediate withdrawal of US troops; and to expose and fight all formulations and approaches that settle for less than this." However, this slogan "Sick of the War" was uncritically accepted by our movement and left us with no basis to clarify the role of our opponents or to differentiate ourselves from our opponents in the eyes of the more advanced sectors of the movement.

The Newsletter should have stepped up propaganda for immediate withdrawal. But it was used as a means of gaining "respectability" in the eyes of our "allies." We gained no

political advantage from the tours that our comrades went on in support of the Mobilization Committee. We were put in the position of doing the legwork for the Mobilization but gained nothing from the tours and our intervention but positions on the November 5-8 Mobilization staff.

Our opponents, however, were not so foolish. When Emspak toured for the November Mobilization Committee he used it as an opportunity to push the NCC line for the antiwar movement. We were the only ones who gave up anything, because we adapted ourselves to their slogans, and failed to differentiate ourselves for fear of losing our maneuverability within the upper circles of the "peace" movement.

#### IX. THANKSGIVING CLEVELAND CONFERENCE

At the Thanksgiving Cleveland Conference the composition was narrower than the first. The only ones present were the "politicals" and no attempt was made to draw in the youth or new layers. We wanted to get the conference to come out with a call for a spring action in April and since this orientation was not in conflict with the traditional idea of a spring peace march and peace campaigns, we had little trouble. Each group saw it to their own advantage. The conservatives wanted to bring in broader layers and turn it into a March-on-Washington type affair. According to the NEC document we had no differences on this question.

It was obvious that the CP decided to intervene in this formation to gain influence in the organized antiwar movement before that fall and the 1968 elections. Their hopes in the NCC had been smashed so they decided to try to get a stronger footing with the pacifists. The Fort Hood Three case had already facilitated their doing so. We again turned the choice of slogans over to the steering committee and the result was "End Mass Murder," a pacifist slogan. This is a far cry from Bring the Troops Home Now. Again, we uncritically accepted this slogan.

The CP really did not represent a change from their basic policy of channeling the movement into a "large, liberal peace movement which unites everyone opposed to the war around a minimal liberal program (in this case, pacifist)." Withdrawal is incorporated in the call but again is not the central demand. As the movement broadens to the right we can expect attempts to drop this demand. This direction has already appeared in Muste's backsliding into the negotiations position in the initial call he sent out.

#### X. STUDENT MOBILIZATION COMMITTEE

Before the November Conference in Cleveland the CP had decided that it could not circumvent the Mobilization Committee as it had hoped. It had initiated the call for the Student

Strike Conference in order to do this, but when it decided to intervene in the Mobilization Committee it changed its tactics for the Student Conference and went along with our proposals to tie it to the Spring Mobilization.

However, their reasons for entering the Student Mobilization Committee, which came out of the Chicago conference, are diametrically opposed to ours. The NEC draft states, "With the formation of the Student Mobilization Committee the opportunity projected by the Newsletter for so long of building a broad militant campus-based formation is close to reality." The draft then states, "They (CP) are becoming involved in the movement now in the hopes that they can help channel it into liberal capitalist politics as the 1968 elections draw near."

We want the Student Mobilization Committee to become a left wing based on withdrawal, yet the major "ally" in this coalition is using it as a vehicle to turn the movement over to the Democratic Party. This basic conflict makes the future development of this formation highly questionable. We should not develop any illusions about this temporary alliance with the Stalinists. If the Fort Hood Three is not enough, there are many other experiences to warn us to be on guard when the CP "cooperates" in an organization.

The only hope we have for the success of the Student Mobilization Committee is to try to strengthen the links which it provides with SDS so that it will include allies other than the CP. The only basis on which the Student Mobilization Committee can differentiate itself to attract left wing independents and SDSers is for it to represent the left wing of the youth fighting for withdrawal.

In reality this formation is not based on the demand for withdrawal. Again, as in the Spring Mobilization Committee, withdrawal is just one of the three demands which are subordinated to the central task of building the mobilization. There is no clear differentiation between it and the Spring Mobilization Committee except that it is younger. If it becomes a left-wing of the campus-based youth the CP will drop it when it comes time to prove their devotion to the bourgeois liberals in the elections.

## XI. WHERE WE STAND

Our past intervention has been to uncritically support this alliance with the pacifists and the liberals. We have subordinated our long range goals for temporary positions and respectability. We have not made clear the differences between the reformists and ourselves. The differences must be made clear in order to build an anti-imperialist base free from control by the reformists, a base around which we can rally militant youth and any newly radicalizing layers. We should have recognized the change in the relationship of forces

which began to show itself toward the end of the summer. The emergence of the liberals and pacifists in the leadership at this point required that we differentiate ourselves on certain issues to build a left wing around us. Now that the more conservative forces have consolidated their position and have re-introduced the questions of exclusion and negotiations, we are at a definite disadvantage. More important, the best elements of the antiwar movement are those who have been educated by our press and our comrades. If we fail to influence and educate the most advanced sectors outside (as well as) ourselves, and unless we make a break from the tail-ending of the past year, our entire intervention will accomplish nothing but legwork for the reformists, and miseducation.

We must foster no illusions which miseducate and subsequently demoralize the petty-bourgeois elements of the antiwar movement. Furthermore, to confine ourselves to finding activities which divert their attention away from political conflicts, conflicts which would threaten the alliances between us and petty-bourgeois organizations, is to throw away the lessons of the revolutionary working class tendency in the united front.

## XII. THE UNITED FRONT

It is correct and our responsibility to unite for action with anyone, no matter what his political position, against the policies of the government in Vietnam, as long as the joint action does not stifle our attacks against imperialism.

It is incorrect to not fight for our program on the grounds of maintaining organizational unity with petty-bourgeois tendencies. We must fight even if it means merely "making the record" or isolating ourselves from the petty-bourgeois organizations we oppose. Given different compositions of the organized sector of the antiwar movement, we will, from time to time, win more, or less, of our demands for united actions. There is nothing unprincipled in compromising when we are forced to, as long as the compromise for unity does not hamper our functioning in opposition to those with whom we compromise.

As new forces such as Bevel and trade-union bureaucrats enter the movement, pressures will increase to drop withdrawal and non-exclusion. The NEC draft states the opportunities to be gained from this development, but fails to look into the dangers from it. If a substantial section of the right wing leadership of the labor movement comes into a united front, such as the Spring Mobilization Committee, we must gird ourselves for even more setbacks for our programmatic influence on broad united action.

## XIII. TRADE UNIONS

In recent months there has been some movement within the trade union leadership towards a stand against the war. However, the NEC does not approach this subject correctly. First

of all, it is incorrect to claim that SANE created a trade union division in an attempt to broaden the movement. What actually occurred was that the Social Democrats and ex-Stalinists in the trade union bureaucracy chose SANE as the vehicle for the expression of their antiwar sentiment. It is true that the antiwar movement had facilitated the expression of these views, but more important influence on them is the rift in the capitalist class over the war, and the pressure of antiwar sentiment among the petty-bourgeois strata in which these officials move. They are looking to a realignment within the Democratic Party and hope to channel the antiwar movement into a block with the liberal politicians of the Kennedy variety.

The real importance of the expression of antiwar sentiment by the trade union officials is that it will facilitate the expression of antiwar sentiment among the rank and file. However, we still have no indication that large numbers of rank and file trade unionists will be entering the movement in the coming period.

The NEC draft fails to mention the most important economic by-product of the war is not inflation and wage freezes, but the unparalleled prosperity that American capitalism is experiencing. There is full employment, overtime, and a shortage of skilled labor. Every worker recognizes that it is the war which is under-pinning this prosperity. There has been no real attempt to freeze wages because of super profits and because labor has learned the lessons of WWII and Korea. Most strikes have been offensive rather than defensive as the draft implies.

Still, while the war has not yet decreased the living standards of the majority of American workers, the issue of the war and the antiwar movement has affected their consciousness. There is definitely no enthusiasm for the war, a general uneasiness about it, and an awareness of the opposition to it among the middle class. They are also aware that since the advent of the Cold War, the US has become more and more isolated from its allies and world opinion is generally against US policy in Vietnam.

These factors point to possibilities that exist of workers opposing the war in the future and joining the antiwar movement. When this occurs our tactics for intervention will necessarily differ from our present intervention in a highly politicized antiwar movement.

#### XIV. FUTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

It does not necessarily follow that because the working class is not involved that the movement is on a low political level. While the organizational form and methods of struggle of the antiwar movement are still on a primitive level because of its petty-bourgeois composition, the political level of many activists is actually quite high. There is a widespread

feeling of solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution. Therefore it is inexcusable that we have not been playing more of a left wing role in our past intervention.

It appears that the pacifist leadership in the Spring Mobilization Committee are sympathetic to the Vietnamese revolution and agree with us on this level. But it must be remembered that they continually waver on the key questions of withdrawal and self-determination, and generally will fail to side with us at any critical conjuncture.

Because the pacifists agree with the more conservative peace groups on the question of coalition politics, their bond with them on this question will dominate their sympathy for the struggle of the Vietnamese. If the conservative elements such as SANE and the trade union bureaucrats continue to become more active, the leadership of the Spring Mobilization Committee will seek to make more concessions to these anti-communist, pro-capitalist elements. In order to do so they will have to water down their already shaking militancy, drop their present non-exclusion policy, and orient more towards coalition politics. The pressures from this orientation will necessitate an attack on withdrawal and its inherent anti-imperialism.

We will have to look to new layers of radicalizing youth to offset this development.

#### XV. CONCLUSION

During the epoch of imperialism the most crucial political struggle is around the question of war. "A correct policy is composed of two elements: an uncompromising attitude on imperialism and its wars, and the ability to base one's program on the experience of the masses themselves." (Transitional Program)

The two elements are incorporated in the tactically correct slogan for this period, Bring the Troops Home Now. (1) It is the only principled basis for opposition to US imperialist war. (2) It brings the thrust of the movement into uncompromising conflict with American imperialism. (3) All other slogans leave the door open for the government to absorb the movement by appearing to fulfill its demand without recognizing the right of Vietnam to self-determination.

Therefore it is our main task to build an organizational form in the antiwar movement which can adopt this slogan as its central demand. If the Student Mobilization Committee cannot fulfill this task then we are forced to group a left wing around ourselves and the independent committees. We must put more stress on the educational role of the YS to facilitate us in this work.

Such a conscious anti-imperialist wing around the slogan Bring the Troops Home Now could be an area for education and

recruitment and such a base would give us real leverage in the united front formations.

We support coordinated activity with any elements opposed to the war in Vietnam in order to build opposition to the war. However, we view these alliances as temporary agreements which we are ready to break the moment they begin to impede the political development of the struggle against the war, and our own independence in the struggle.

We can ally with other elements but not rely on them. We can only rely on our program to build the movement and we must maintain our organizational independence and freedom to criticize in order to advance our program.

If we fail to maintain our freedom to criticize we maintain the united front at the expense of subordinating our slogans and program, which are the only means by which we elevate the political consciousness of the movement.

We realize that betrayal of the struggle is inherent in the reformist policies of our "allies." But if we conduct our intervention properly their betrayal will weaken them and strengthen us. The united front is not a partnership with the reformists but a form of struggle against them. We must not rely on them but mistrust them.

Our task is to win over the anti-war militants from the influence of the pacifists and reformists to conscious anti-imperialism.

The YSA must make a clean break from the policies of the leadership in the past year -- the policies of maneuvering, tail-ending, and subordinating our program for the antiwar movement to that of the reformists. The opposition to the war offers a situation in which the YSA can educate itself politically and organizationally in principled politics.

To offset the poor organizational functioning within our own fraction this past year, we must have adequate reports, especially where major turns may be envisaged. The NEC document is typical of the reports received from the leadership in the past year; our tactics and the objective situation have been prettied up so as to condone the policies of the leadership.

We should adopt this resolution as the general line on which to carry out antiwar work in the coming year.