



THE RECENT ALSC MEETING INVOLVED MANY LONG HOURS OF DEBATE AND DISCUSSION before a compromise proposal was accepted.

ALSC Future Debated

After two days of intensive debate over proposals for the future of the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC), delegates from 16 local chapters united on a compromise proposal creating a Continuations Committee with responsibilities for hammering out decisions about ALSC's future.

Approximately 200 participants and voting delegates attended the two-day national meeting on Aug. 16 and 17, in Washington, D.C.

ALSC was formed in 1972, after the first African Liberation Day demonstration. The 1972 demonstration was organized by an umbrella coordinating committee which initially shied away from a permanent organizational structure.

During the summer of 1974, ALSC convened a national meeting of Black activists to debate the question of what course should the Black liberation movement take in the struggle against racism and imperialism. That meeting helped spark a year of sharp, significant debate which saw a large number of activists reevaluate and shift their ideological stance. The year also saw the emergence of several new organizational forms. Overall, the ideological debates and struggle have been healthy and have added greatly to the forward motion of the revolutionary movement in this country.

The recent national ALSC meeting was designed to deal with the question of the future of ALSC as an organization given the change in conditions since 1972.

PROPOSALS

Eight proposals concerning the ALSC's future were submitted and debated. They came from two national organizations - The Revolutionary Workers Congress, Marxist-Leninist (RWC), The Revolutionary Workers League, Marxist-Leninist (RWL), and from six local ALSC chapters - Baltimore, Atlanta, Newark, D.C., New York and Philadelphia. All other ALSC locals stated positions although they submitted no formal proposals.

The proposals were introduced after a morning session of local summations which revealed that locals differed greatly in scope and focus of work, character of membership, style of work, ideological and political unity and consistency of work.

There were three major trends among the proposals and positions with a wide variety of lines and analyses used to support the positions.

MAINTAIN ALSC WITH INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

One trend, supported in proposals from RWC, Newark, N.Y. and Baltimore, called for ALSC to continue as a national organization with primary focus on support work for African liberation movements. Proposals of this position offered a variety of supportive arguments. One argument was that disbandment of ALSC was tantamount to liquidation of the national question. Another argument was that ALSC should continue to "work along traditional lines" because such work continues to be very effective. Other delegates held that given the increasing threat of fascism and a third world war, ALSC will be an important formation to help develop "internationalism" among people in this country.

However, proposals supporting this position differed, as did most proposals generally, on other questions such as: what level of ideological unity should be maintained, whether ALSC should remain all-Black or become multi-national, what structure should be developed and should ALSC initiate domestic struggles or limit itself to support efforts.

MAINTAIN ALSC WITH A DOMESTIC FOCUS

A second trend, supported in proposals from Atlanta and one delegation from Philadelphia (there were contending delegations from both Philadelphia and Newark), called for ALSC to focus on domestic work while continuing to do international support work. One argument was that building ALSC as an organization with a black united front character was an important tactic in building the multi-national United Front against Imperialism.

Another argument was that ALSC continues to be a key formation in the revolutionary struggle in this country and is needed to bring more forces into conscious struggle against imperialism.

ALSC SHOULD DISBAND AS A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

A third trend supported in proposals from RWL and D.C., called for ALSC to disband as a national organization with each local chapter deciding the most appropriate forms for struggle and international support work, given the conditions of that local.

The D.C. proposal pointed to a variety of contradictions arising out of intensive local work in which ALSC was not the most effective form to carry out that work. D.C. is one of the largest, most active local chapters.

The RWL proposal argued that both internal and external factors have combined to make ALSC no longer the most effective formation for international support work or domestic work. The RWL noted that while ALSC has a significant international reputation, most locals are currently small and in most cases, not consistently active. It was argued that most ALSC locals are characterized by Marxist-Leninists or anti-imperialists organizations and collectives who reflect the various different lines on every major question facing the revolutionary movement. RWL argued that there is not presently enough unity among these forces to make ALSC effective on a national level. The proposal emphasized that international support work should continue, but can most effectively be carried out under ad hoc or coalition structures under current conditions.

It was also pointed out that international issues, such as Angola and Zimbabwe increasingly cannot be approached with a simplistic analysis, but rather demand an analysis of social imperialism, neo-colonialism, socialism and other questions ALSC may have been able to blur over in 1972.

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ALSC Debate

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RWL criticized those who formulated proposals based on romantic misconceptions about ALSC without a thorough examination of the present objective and subjective conditions of ALSC, and its ability to remain effective under present rapidly changing conditions.

COMPROMISE PROPOSAL

The proposals brought forth hours of sharp debate and struggle and a number of charges against organizations and individuals within ALSC.

After several hours, when all delegations had spoken to the issue, it was clear that the voting delegates were about equally divided between those favoring disbanding ALSC and those favoring continuing ALSC in one form or another.

In an effort to resolve the impasse, the RWL and the Congress of Afrikan People (CAP) agreed to co-sponsor a compromise proposal, creating a Continuations Committee to seek a direction which could unite the largest number of forces within ALSC. The proposal was accepted in a near unanimous vote.

The Continuations Committee was structured as the highest body within ALSC, replacing the national secretariat whose term in office was due to expire at this meeting.

The committee was composed of representatives of all chapters and organizations who had submitted proposals,

volunteer members from the outgoing national secretariat and representatives from both factions of the two contested delegations.

The meeting also voted to transfer the administrative functions of ALSC to the Atlanta and Newark chapters.

The RWL and many other forces who had favored disbandment, pledged to continue to work with ALSC in the future.

The Continuations Committee was mandated to call another national meeting within a four month period to present its proposal on the future direction of ALSC.

Unemployment 'Blues'

NEW YORK (LNS) — A recent survey of unemployed middle-class men, found that many felt "suddenly confused, disillusioned and betrayed," as well as "discarded by the very social institutions" they had trusted.

According to the Wall Street Journal, even men who later found work said their new jobs hadn't eased their feelings of cynicism toward society. The study warned that among the "lasting wounds" of joblessness are disruptions in lifestyles, changes in political beliefs and lack of confidence in the social order.