

# **PARTY BUILDER**

## SWP Organizational Discussion Bulletin

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MILITANT AND ISR BUSINESS OFFICE  
REPORT TO SALES DIRECTORS

During the past three and a half years, *The Militant* has more than doubled in size, going from 12 to 28 pages. Its average yearly circulation has seen an even greater increase from 5,884 a week in 1968 to 19,056 in 1971 before we successfully completed the largest subscription drive in the history of the paper. Our yearly average circulation ending in October 1972 should be even larger than last year when we surpassed the circulation of the *Guardian*.

Along with its expansion to a 28-page weekly and its circulation growth compared to other radical publications, *The Militant's* influence has generally increased throughout the radical movement. We find more and more radical, women's, Chicano, gay, and campus press reprinting articles directly from *The Militant*. With the new international supplement, "World Outlook," *The Militant* will have wider coverage of the events shaping world history than any other socialist paper.

During this same period of time, the *International Socialist Review* has expanded from a bimonthly magazine to an attractive monthly theoretical journal. To help build its circulation, the *ISR* carried out joint subscription drives with *The Militant*. In both the fall of 1970 and 1971, the *ISR* gained over 3,000 new readers (although this was short of our goal of 5,000 in 1971). More than 10% of these people renewed their subscriptions for a year, and many *Militant* readers have taken out an *ISR* subscription if they do not have one. Already the *ISR's* circulation is greater than that of the Communist Party's magazine, *Political Affairs*.

In order to keep up with this growth in circulation, *The Militant* and *ISR* business office has added more staff and up-to-date machinery to handle the enlarged *Militant* and *ISR* mailings and to better coordinate the subscription drives. Experience has shown that the subscription drives along with bundle sales are the main source of *The Militant's* and *ISR's* expansion.

The purpose of this report is to go into some of the newer areas of work the business office is developing to help increase the circulation of the press. Many sales directors are not familiar with this side of the business office and may find some useful new ideas and projects for improving their local sales activities.

**Communications With Local Areas:** The most important new area of *The Militant* and *ISR* business office is the development of the sales letter, "The Militant Gets Around" column, and in general more direct communication with local sales directors. This communication is especially important when we are organizing special large bundle sales, like those around the wage freeze and the Attica rebellion, or when we are helping organize sales for mass demonstrations. Feedback from sales directors to the business office, particularly in the monthly sales reports, has resulted in a number of gains. New ideas for improving plant-gate sales, for example, are aided by an interchange of information between local areas and the business office. So are other successful sales hints, such as the Saturday wrap-up sales and the regular collection of sales money

each week to enable areas to keep current on their bundle bills. When useful ideas for improving sales are sent to the business office, we can quickly pass them on to other areas. This exchange of information will become more and more valuable as areas begin to take larger bundles to sell.

**Exchange and Complimentary Subscriptions:** The business office can arrange exchange subscriptions with local radical and campus newspapers and complimentary subscriptions for important local contacts who for one reason or another cannot subscribe. Individuals, groups, and publications that should be receiving *The Militant* or *ISR* should be brought to the attention of the business office. We especially want to encourage other papers to use *The Militant* as a source of news and to reprint articles. We only ask that they give us credit.

We also can do a lot with various mailing lists, like sending individuals and organizations sample copies with a subscription appeal. For example, when Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley attend a conference, they often have a sign-up sheet for those interested in, and interested in reading about, the Jenness-Pulley campaign, the YSA and revolutionary socialism. The business office can then send those people a few sample copies and a letter asking them to subscribe. Already, by arrangement with the Socialist Workers Campaign Committee, every endorser who does not have a *Militant* subscription is sent three sample copies, and then we send them an attractive letter encouraging them to subscribe to the newspaper this fall. We want to make sure that local Raza groups, women's liberation centers, high school and college student governments and newspapers, and other radicals have access to *The Militant* and *ISR*. Local libraries can also be approached to buy subscriptions to both periodicals.

**Promotion:** Besides our improved renewal mailings and sample-copy subscription appeals, we are now experimenting with exchange ads with various radical press, contacting local distributors about placement on newsstands, and printing special promotional pieces (like the flyer on the "Soviet Bloc" issue of the *ISR*).

We want to encourage local areas to try to have one person on their sales committee act as the *Militant/ISR* representative in opening up newsstands and bookstores and in servicing them regularly. Two sales representatives in New York City, for example, spend every Saturday placing 300 *Militants* and once a month 400 *ISRs* on local newsstands with very good results. If local distributors are interested in carrying *The Militant* and/or *ISR*, the business office will make special financial arrangements with them.

In addition to the exchange ads the business office arranges with other papers, sales committees should consider placing ads in their local campus and radical newspapers, especially when the fall sub drive and election campaign are launched. *The Militant* ads in the *ISR* can be cut out and used as camera-ready copy for this purpose.

And the business office will be making available camera-ready ads, posters, stickers, new subscription blanks, and brochures for both *The Militant* and *ISR* free of charge to help local areas in their publicity work this fall.

*Involving Readers in Bundle and Subscription Sales:* Along with motivating campaign endorsers to subscribe to *The Militant*, we have begun making periodic appeals in the paper for readers to help sell weekly bundles. The response to these ads has been very good. Also, the YSJP national teams last spring made sure to encourage new YSJP groups to send in for a regular bundle as one of their first activities. We then send the names of these new sales people to the regional sales committees so that they can work with them and help them.

This fall we want to continue this process by encouraging all YSJP groups to take bundles and subscription

quotas in the subscription drive. We got a very good response to previous appeals in the paper for individuals to take sub quotas. The response should be even greater this fall because of our election campaign, and many of our subscription drive publicity materials will be geared toward encouraging people to read the newspaper of the socialist campaign.

\* \* \*

As *The Militant* and *ISR* circulation and influence continue to grow, one of our most valuable assets will be regular reports from local areas about their new ideas and experiences, such as new methods to increase sales, the response of people to *The Militant* and *ISR*, new promotional ideas, or work with *Militant* supporters in having them help sell the press.

## DETROIT SALES REPORT

by Debby Deegan, Detroit Branch

Organizing sales, like every other area of branch activity, involves education (political and financial) and organization.

### *Education*

Education must be "formal" and "informal." By formal education, I mean having a class on sales. In Detroit this class consisted of an explanation of Lenin's original conception of the press and a national paper. For this purpose comrades were asked to read relevant sections of *What Is To Be Done*. Also, the role played by the paper at different times during the party's history was examined. By looking at the extreme hardships endured in the early years in order to publish *The Militant*, it becomes clearer exactly how important this paper is and always has been to our party. Also, anecdotes about daily editions of *The Militant* printed during the strike waves of the '30s and '40s give comrades a real feel for what we mean when we say that *The Militant* is an organizer.

After this initial class, which all comrades were urged to attend, the sales director continued on a week-to-week basis to point out the importance of selling the press. In order to do this, it is important to emphasize in informal discussions with comrades, especially less experienced members, and in sales reports at branch and local meetings, how sales relate to other areas of activity. When comrades sell, they are building other departments

of the branch (the campaign, forums, finances), as well as building the mass movements and the party itself by getting out our ideas.

One activity that we have failed so far to integrate sufficiently with sales is the campaign. "Campaign consciousness," the feeling that we want to make the Socialist Workers Party *visible* to every person in Detroit and Michigan, has helped sales considerably. What we have not yet done sufficiently, however, is make comrades feel that they are *campaigning* for the SWP when they sell *The Militant*. Selling *The Militant* should be the first step in a process: every customer is a potential campaign endorser, and consistent customers are potential recruits to the YSA and the SWP.

Downtown Detroit is a beehive of political activity every day, especially Saturday. The Panthers, Muslims, YAWF, and the SLP (and we can be sure soon the Communist Party) distribute literature to shoppers. If we aren't there with *The Militant* we are letting a golden opportunity pass us by; an opportunity to let people compare the paper with the other "papers" so freely distributed. During weeks when we sell big bundles, like the recent bundle of 1,000 out of which we sold 840, you could feel the branch and local "glow." Admittedly it was a week of heightened political interest around the escalation of the war, but what we must understand is that the sentiment is always there and much greater than we imagine. What

comrades who do sell discover is that there is indeed a large number of people who are interested in one of the mass movements, if not in our ideas per se.

For example, with the recent coverage of African Liberation Day, *The Militant* has been extremely easy to sell to young Blacks. We must understand the importance of linking up a movement in which they are already interested, and us, the SWP, revolutionary socialism.

The other kind of education that is necessary is financial. If comrades feel responsible for *Militants* checked out and not returned in time for other comrades to sell, they make sure they turn their money and unsold papers in. Very careful records must be kept and follow-up work done to make sure that day to day, week to week, the money is turned in. Sloppy finances means sloppy consciousness in general about sales. Sales is a *habit*: signing out *Militants*, selling them early in the week and turning money in should be a norm. The sales director should give monthly reports on how much money was made or lost each week to the financial committee. Sales should be motivated as an important fund-raising activity for the branch.

### Organization

The organizational aspects of sales are many. I will attempt to list important areas and relate some experiences we have had in Detroit. First, the sales director must see herself or himself as a *builder* of the branch and local. That is, the function of sales director is one of *organizing* comrades to carry out an essential assignment. The sales director should *expect* comrades to sell but not "beg" them. Only when comrades politically understand that sales are important do they respond.

A) *Record Keeping*: Mimeographed sign-out sheets are kept for *ISRs* (monthly) and *Militants* (weekly) on the stand where *Militants*, *ISRs*, and the money box are kept. This stand is kept in the workroom of the hall which comrades frequent but which is "safe" from pilferage, for instance. The financial director and sales director should constantly check the box to make sure money is accounted for. An envelope is kept in the box for comrades to turn in money owed for the preceding week's sales, and attached to it is a list of comrades who owe money and how much. Money for current *Militants* is simply put in the box and the sign-out sheet completed ("number sold," "number returned," "money turned in" columns). In addition to these sheets the sales directors keep a weekly chart of comrades: name, fraction, number sold last week, money owed, and where and when they plan to sell this week. The sales directors use this chart to keep track each day of where comrades are at in terms of sales. Also useful is a running daily tab of who has *Militants* out and how many they have sold. At the beginning of the week a sign-up sheet should be compiled of every time and place comrades can sell. Carbon copies should be made for the SWP and YSA organizers and each sales director. This sheet can be passed around at meetings and gives directors a picture at a glance of who is selling where and when so comrades can be reminded to sell and organized to sell together when possible. Another record that should be kept is a running list of how many *Militants* have been sold each week by each comrade. This way the director can see selling patterns over a number of weeks. The sales directors should keep a list or file cards containing for each com-

rade: address, phone number, where and when they work, when and where they like to sell, if they have a car. This way, comrades who have similar schedules can be organized to sell together. Also, comrades who live or work near certain campuses or plants for instance can be encouraged to sell there.

B) *Sales Committee*: We have found that the best way to organize the sales committee is to have the sales directors, the heads of each fraction and the campaign and/or YSJP director on the committee. Fraction heads function as sales directors in their fractions. They give weekly reports on how many *Militants* each member of their fraction sold, and how many copies the fraction itself sold. Fractions have goals and it is up to the fraction head to see that comrades work together as a team to sell their fraction's goal.

The best time for the sales committee to meet is early in the week (Monday) so reports can be given on the last week's sales and sales can be organized for the present week. In addition to fraction reports, the sales directors should report on finances, on articles in *The Militant* especially relevant to specific areas of work for each fraction, and on special events where their fraction can sell. It is clear that it is important to have the campaign or YSJP director on the sales committee. In this way sales and campaign work can be integrated. It is important that the sales committee meet regularly once a week, or more often during a bigger-than-usual bundle sale.

C) *Organizing Teams*: We want sales to be comfortable, to be enjoyable. Mostly what we have to do is encourage every comrade, whether together or alone, to get into the *habit* of selling regularly each week. *Regular* selling habits (approximately the same time and place each week) are the best guarantee of consistent sales. Comrades should be organized when and where possible to sell together. This shouldn't be forced—some comrades have very complicated schedules and they shouldn't be forced into uncomfortable habits. Consistent sales allow us to build up a base where people expect to see us each week; people get curious and those who buy each week can be asked to come to forums, to endorse the campaign, etc. This is especially important on campus. When possible, cars should be made available to leave the hall at 6:00 every evening so comrades who work all day can get in a good hour or two at shopping centers or movies.

In terms of *where* comrades can sell: listed on our sign-up sheet are: six plants Mon-Fri. 5:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; three or four high schools where we have campaign endorsers at 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; three or four campuses where we have endorsers during the day; and shopping centers and films in the evenings. Weekend sales are regarded as *wrap-up* sales, so we try to make sure that comrades don't wait until the weekend to sell. We want to have this time free to tie up loose ends. Places to sell include downtown, shopping areas (especially Sears), beaches, the art museum, movies, and special events such as conventions and festivals. The sales directors must keep up with what's happening in the city by following underground newspapers, campus papers and radio announcements. Current times and places of popular movie showings require that the directors check out the movie section two or three times a week in the newspaper. It is important to make sure that comrades are assigned to sell at forums and campaign interventions.

A very positive selling experience is organizing teams,

mainly through the campaign, to go out to community college campuses around the Detroit area where we don't have members. On these campuses where our opponents are largely absent, the receptivity to *The Militant* and our ideas is very high. It sparks comrades' enthusiasm to sell in this kind of situation. A word on Sunday sales: this is a last-ditch measure, but not to be discounted. If you use your imagination, I'm sure every city has a few places where *Militants* can be sold on Sunday.

D) *Visual Aids*: We have a big bulletin board that is visible to all comrades with three charts. One which is made up each week records each person's sales. A "thermometer" is also kept to record day-to-day where the entire branch and local is at in relation to breaking even and selling out the bundle. Also on this board is a list of places and special events each week where comrades can sell. What is created is a little "socialist competition" when someone sees everybody else has already sold 10 or 15 *Militants* and they haven't sold any yet this week. At this point it should be said that only when comrades on the branch and local executive committees set an example by selling early in the week is there a spirit created in which the branch and local as a whole feel motivated to sell. This fact cannot be overemphasized.

E) *Meetings*: YSA and SWP business meetings and educationals should be used to organize sales. The sales directors should attempt to talk individually to each comrade to make sure they have turned their money in, signed

out *Militants*, have a time and place to sell and to keep track of their day-to-day progress. Reports should indicate who has done well and, most important, politically motivate *The Militant*. Mention should be made of special articles and selling places. Comrades and fractions who have done well and who have tried new ways to sell *The Militant* should be mentioned. Comrades should want to sign out their *Militants* and look forward to selling after hearing the report. Follow-up work must be done: phone calls must be made to all comrades in the branch and local two or three times a week to keep on top of where comrades are at.

F) *Role of Big Bundles*: Branches and locals shouldn't wait until they sell out every week for a month until they raise their bundle for a special issue. What we have found is that getting in a big bundle from time to time "flexes" our selling "muscles" and is an excellent way to increase selling habits and consciousness overall, and the effects are long-lasting. What branches should try to do is to gradually and constantly increase their bundles. The way it should work I think is like this: A branch has a regular bundle of 300, sells out or breaks even for a few weeks; takes a big bundle of 1,000 then raises the bundle permanently (until the next big bundle) to 400.

G) *Other*: The city letter should be used to organize sales: indicate special selling places, report who sold last week, who owes money and announce articles of special interest in this week's issue.

June 15, 1972

## ON ISR SALES

by Morris Starsky, Los Angeles Branch

Our total bundle for January-March 1972 was 200. We sold 123 for a net loss of \$8.50 for the three month period. In contrast, our total bundle for April-June was 300 of which we have already sold 258 for a net profit of \$24.00. How was this accomplished?

There is no secret gimmick that we discovered to improve ISR sales. However, there are two fundamental maxims that we re-discovered.

(1) The most effective way to sell someone an ISR is to ask that person to buy one.

(2) It is easier to sell someone a magazine you have read than it is to sell someone a magazine you haven't read.

We learned some other things as well. We asked ourselves what sort of people would want to read the ISR and where do you find them. Clearly, revolutionary socialists are one group of people who will buy a revolutionary socialist magazine. In Los Angeles, revolutionary socialists are not hard to find; they meet on Monday and Thursday nights. Everyone at these meetings is asked individually if he or she wants to buy an *ISR*. The response is phenomenal. Moreover, this practice makes salespeople out of the revolutionary socialists at the meetings because they generally read the magazine and want to share what they have learned with other political activists.

There are other individuals in every city who would buy a revolutionary socialist magazine if they were asked. These individuals can be found at meetings advertised in the underground press, at demonstrations, on campuses, in factories, at shopping centers and other places like that. These places are listed and comrades are sent to them to ask the people there if they want to buy a revolutionary socialist magazine. The results in LA support our conclusion that there simply is no more effective way to sell the *ISR*.

After re-discovering these fundamentals we learned a number of other things that might be helpful for other branches and locals.

- Most new comrades and some not-so-new comrades do not know the history and the role of our press. Educationals on this topic provide better motivation for comrades than do sales oriented exhortations.
- Every sales intervention should include a specifically made assignment to sell the *ISR*. A sales intervention should be a conscious part of every intervention. There should be a point on sales on the agenda of every work fraction.

- The sales committee should be large enough to have a division of labor roughly along the following lines: campus/high school sales, factory sales, Saturday wrap-up sales, intervention sales (including events listed in public press), finances.
- The sales committee should regularly participate in a meeting of every work fraction to discuss ways of improving participation in sales and finding new places to sell.
- *ISR* sales benefit from (but cannot depend on) the occasional windfall of one or two comrades selling a great number of copies. Sales projections should be based on a gradual increase of participation without much emphasis on high individual sales norms. Top salespeople should be recognized, but their achievement not counterposed to that of comrades who regularly sell 4 or 5 *ISRs* a month. Those comrades can be motivated to try to increase their sales, but, the main sales emphasis of the branch and local should be directed toward increasing participation rather than high individual sales.
- The *ISR* sells better when presented as a political magazine than as a theoretical journal. The magazine is a collection of articles and those articles are what sell the magazine. You cannot sell the *ISR* abstractly; you must sell concrete articles.
- Comrades selling the *ISR* should have several issues with them. If selling is oriented around individual articles then the more articles you have on different subjects the better your chances are of selling at least one magazine. Often, a person will buy more than one when invited to do so.
- Selling the *ISR* to our comrades first helps to develop the underlying concept of direct political contact between revolutionary socialists and people who are not merely customers but participants in a form of political activity.

We haven't done much with bookstores and newstand placement of the *ISR*. That's the weak side of our recent experience and we are planning to do something about it. We have learned from our recent experience that the *ISR* is an attractive political magazine with a lot of potential for communicating our ideas and providing a source of income for the branch and local.

June 28, 1972

## ORGANIZING THE YSJP TEAMS

by Janice Lynn

In the spring of 1972 the national campaign launched six traveling teams of Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley to supplement the tours of the national candidates and other campaign speakers.

These teams were able to reach more young people with the SWP campaign than would have been possible with the candidates and national YSJP coordinators alone, and they were able to break ground in areas of the country that previously had not been covered.

An Afro-American team visited Black campuses in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. A Midwest team covered schools in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri, and other teams traveled through Florida, the Southwest, Northwest and the Mid-Atlantic region.

In addition to visiting campuses where sub teams had gone in the fall of 1971, all the teams went to places where socialist ideas were heard by many for the first time.

The YSJP teams made significant gains for the SWP '72 campaign and our movement as a whole. They visited 104 campuses in 26 states reaching thousands of people with the socialist alternative for '72.

During their eight weeks on the road these three-member teams signed up 1,698 new endorsers of the Jenness-Pulley campaign. They initiated and worked with approximately 30 active YSJP groups, and sold over \$1,000 worth of revolutionary literature and over 4,000 copies of the paper. The most popular item was the campaign truth kit, "Everything you always wanted to know about George McGovern. . . ." 1,445 copies of the truth kit were sold. 425 introductory subscriptions were obtained.

In addition, the teams played an important role in the actual recruitment to the YSA of 8-10 campaign supporters.

The political value of these traveling YSJP teams is apparent from the number of people reached with revolutionary socialist ideas, the number of campaign supporters who were encouraged to do active campaign work, the recruitment of new people to our movement, and the confrontation of our ideas with those of the capitalist candidates.

Many lessons were learned from the experiences of these YSJP teams. These should be especially useful to branches and locals when they launch their own regional teams this fall.

The original financial projections for the teams, which were made by the national campaign office, were confirmed to a large extent. Although the projections for the amount of income we expected could be raised each week turned out to be too high, the actual costs turned out to be lower than had been projected.

The team members were able to live on a small subsistence. Housing and free meals were often provided. The Southwest team was able to save money by cooking food, especially breakfasts, instead of eating out. Motels

or hotels were used only in extreme emergencies.

The importance of a dependable car cannot be over-emphasized. Those teams who had little or no car trouble during the eight weeks on the road functioned more smoothly than those teams who constantly had to worry about their car. In addition, an unreliable car inevitably adds considerably to team expenses.

Credit cards were an essential item for the teams. If they do not have to spend cash for gas, oil and car repairs, they can live from the money they raise while on the road. One campaign supporter donated the use of her credit card for one of the teams which saved the national campaign committee almost \$300.

Most of the teams found it was possible to raise enough money to sustain themselves for the eight weeks, eliminating the need to send money through the mail. An average of \$600 was taken in by each team through the sale of literature, truth kits and other campaign material. The Northwest team raised over \$900, the bulk of which came from setting up meetings for themselves with honoraria on campuses they visited.

Before each team left, the team members were supplied with a handbook which outlined the basic political objectives that the national campaign projected as well as organizational and financial suggestions. An outline for a weekly political report was provided and the captain of each team was expected to send in a weekly report of the team's work. This procedure was followed by all the teams and was an important and essential way for the national campaign to follow the work and progress of each team.

Telephone calls were made once per week at a designated time to report on any significant developments and to arrange the address to which the next weekly bundle and additional campaign or other literature could be sent.

One member of each team was assigned to keeping the financial records. Weekly financial sheets were provided and sent in regularly with the political report, signed endorser cards, subscriptions and other information.

The handbook also outlined some of the supplies each team would need. In addition to the obvious things, such as sleeping bags, a driver's license, a metal money box and a folding table, each team was urged to bring one or two prepared speeches, a portable typewriter with which to write the weekly reports and articles, and a camera with which to take action photos for the paper.

The importance of feeling out each campus and then adjusting the team's activities to each particular situation was stressed by all the teams. They would look at the bulletin boards to see what was happening and to get a quick idea of what organizations were on campus. Louise Halverson of the Southwest team reported, "We were very audacious at setting up literature tables and hawking the paper on campuses and at political events

and meetings. We asked no permission and got no permits and usually didn't get hassled."

Jeannie Reynolds of the Mid-Atlantic team similarly reported, "Aggressiveness is the key to getting endorsements and to selling literature and truth kits. Never go to the administration to get a table set up. They will get around it and cause undue delay."

Table techniques naturally varied with each comrade on each campus. The main ingredient however, seemed to be enthusiasm. "Be excited about the paper. Be knowledgeable about the literature. Approach every person around the table. At the end of the day, your throat should be dry and tired from having spoken to a few hundred people," reported Southwest team member Louise Halverson.

Literature tables were usually set up outside the union, cafeteria or library. Often one team member would take packets of free campaign literature, other literature, the paper and magazine, endorser cards and sub blanks and approach students lounging around the campus. All the teams reported the high interest, among foreign students especially, in the weekly international magazine.

The Southwest team found it was worthwhile to put in many hours at the literature table during the day and then take the evening off. Other teams, like the Midwest team, found it valuable to canvass the dorms and student housing during the evening, going room by room with a small selection of campaign materials, trying to sell each person something, particularly a subscription.

All the teams reported that it was very time-consuming to concentrate on renewal work by looking up individual subscribers in the dorms. However, subscribers were met in the course of going door to door or at the literature tables and were encouraged to renew their subscriptions. The teams concentrated on selling \$1.00 introductory subs which were easily obtained and bought by many students who were interested in the SWP campaign.

All the teams reported poor results from fund-raising and visiting professors at random and found that the time involved was not equal to the results. Those team members who did visit professors were unable to solicit campaign contributions but were able to interest them in literature and the paper.

Most teams found that their best work was done on the larger university campuses. On small campuses, the flow of people was slower, and the students seemed to be somewhat more isolated from national events.

All of the teams reported great interest in the SWP campaign among campus newspapers and radio stations. The

campus newspapers were usually very helpful and eager to print something on our campaign. There were many opportunities to write letters to the editor, set up interviews and submit articles in response to an article on another campaign, around an issue on the campus or on the SWP campaign generally. A little persistence usually resulted in an interview or other type of spot on the campus radio station. For example, the Southwest team did a one-minute tape at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff which included the location of their table and the tape was played three or four times that evening. The Northwest team was interviewed on several TV stations.

The teams were especially oriented toward recruiting and getting YSJPers into active work. People who wanted to get actively involved right away were given papers, sub blanks, campaign literature, endorser cards, posters, stickers and catalogues. In addition, these people were encouraged to order a weekly bundle of the paper to sell and additional campaign literature to distribute.

YSJPers also worked with the teams at the tables, helping to hawk, sign up new endorsers and generally getting an idea of ways of rapping to and approaching people. Some YSJPers, as well as at-large YSAers were able to travel with the teams for several days when they visited nearby campuses.

The Southwest team reported, "When a very interested person came along, we didn't hesitate to take an hour or two off to get into a serious discussion of the YSA and our politics. We stressed the importance of actually joining the YSA, to have a say in the organization's politics, and we always tried to collect the \$2.00 initiation fee and \$2.00 dues while we were there to make it official. We assisted them in making up and sending a literature order and bundle order. We always sent copies of recruitment letters to the YSA National Office and the Regional YSA Organizer. Names of all endorsers were left with any local YSAers or key YSJPers."

With the experience of the spring teams behind us, the national campaign expects this fall to be even more exciting. We will be sending out more national campaign teams to travel across the country building the SWP campaign during the two months prior to the elections. Combined with the regional YSJP teams that each area will want to send out, and the tours of the national and local candidates and other campaign speakers, the Socialist Workers campaign can reach hundreds of thousands of new radicalizing youth with the only serious and viable alternative in the '72 elections.

June 19, 1972

## REPORT ON EDUCATION IN THE BOSTON BRANCH

by Louis Proyect, Boston Branch

Our work in Boston over the past 12 months in the field of education has probably been similar to that of other branches, except in the area of branch educationals given at business meetings.

Boston has had extremely successful results with branch business meeting educationals. According to some comrades who have transferred in recently and who have had experience in a number of branches around the country, our educationals have been the best they have ever attended.

There are relatively minor organizational procedures that have been implemented which account for much of the success we have been having in this area. The first of these is scheduling the educationals at 8:00, before the "business" part of the agenda. When the educationals were scheduled after the "business" part of the agenda (which meant anytime from 9:00 to 10:30), YSA members who were not also members of the party would have to wait around the H.Q. until the talk began. This, of course, was a big inconvenience to them and very few, understandably, chose to come. Worse than this was the complete cancellation of educationals due to unforeseen lengthy business agendas—YSA members who were patiently waiting for the educational to begin were told with regret to "come back next week." Now things have changed completely. YSAers are notified through their city letter what the branch educational is for that week and are encouraged in their business meetings to come. At least three or four YSAers come to educationals and undoubtedly attendance at these educationals has been a factor in bringing some of them closer to the party and convincing them of the need to join.

The second organizational change that has helped to make branch educationals successful is the practice of putting a 30-minute time limit on the lectures and a 15-minute time limit on discussion. This, of course, means that most educationals are given in more than one part, spanning two to three weeks. The benefit of this approach is that educationals don't take up such an amount of time that would make it necessary to have branch meetings ending at 11:30 p.m. Generally, we find that our schedule runs something like this: educationals begin at 8:00, the discussion begins at 8:30 and ends promptly at 8:45. There is a 15-minute break for payment of dues and pledges and the "business" part of the agenda commences at 9:00. Usually we adjourn between 10:15 and 10:30. Another benefit of this approach to scheduling is that comrades find it *much* easier to pay close attention to 30 minutes of a lecture than to 60 minutes. Since comrades' interest and attention can be sustained more easily over a 30-minute period, we have found that the questions and discussions are much more lively than after a 60-minute lecture.

Now it is self-evident that organizational procedures alone will not guarantee successful branch educationals. You also need to ensure that the *content* of the educa-

tionals is designed to sustain the interest of and serve to educate the branch.

In Boston, we have tried to select topics that satisfy the following criteria:

1) They should cover areas that will be relatively *fresh* to the oldest of cadre as well as the newest member.

2) They should pertain to relatively *topical* questions in the radical movement *even though* they may draw upon material from historical issues and controversies.

3) They should avoid rehashing articles and analyses from our party press. This does not mean that the person assigned to give the educational has to deliberately avoid using the party press as resource material. In fact, we have found our back issues of *The Militant* to be invaluable aids to giving educationals.

Perhaps by giving a picture of what topics have been assigned and carried out as well as those that are coming up in the future, comrades can get a more concrete idea of how we have tried to satisfy the above criteria.

a) The origins and development of the Cuban Revolution—this was a two-part educational, the first part dealing with points which we had been in agreement with the Cubans on and the second dealing with points of disagreement. Resource material included speeches by Che and Fidel, analytical articles in *The Militant* by Joseph Hansen and Harry Ring and material published in an Education for Socialists bulletin, "The Class Character of the Cuban Revolution."

b) A history of the L. S. S. P.—using internal documents, this educational tried to get to the roots of the betrayal of the formerly Trotskyist L. S. S. P. in Ceylon. In a sense, this educational tried to present the concept of how to build a Bolshevik party by focusing on a negative example.

c) A history of the Chinese Revolution—this was a three-part educational presented in as many weeks. The first part began with the origins of peasant and working-class struggles in China and concluded with the Stalinist betrayals of the 1920s. The second part focused on the policies of the CCP during the '30s and '40s up till Mao's seizure of power. The third was an analysis of Chinese Stalinist policies on a governmental level from the '50s until today, particularly the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.

d) A study of Rosa Luxemburg—this educational in two parts was a balance sheet which tried to show her unique role in combatting reformism in the European labor movement as well as her weaknesses (such as her misunderstanding of the dynamics of nationalism).

The aforementioned educationals are those that have already been given. The following are those that are being prepared:

a) James P. Connolly's contribution to the Irish struggle.

b) A Marxist analysis of the American Revolution of 1776.

c) A Marxist analysis of the American Civil War.

- d) A review of Trotsky's *1905*.
- e) An analysis of contemporary imperialism.
- f) The history of the internal discussion in the Trotskyist movement on the deformed workers states in Eastern Europe.
- g) A background to the coming world congress of the Fourth International.

Although selecting the right topic is an important ingredient for a successful educational, of course, the *sine qua non* is thorough preparation. The only reason, in the final analysis, why we have had major success in Boston in the area of branch educationals is the *painstaking, careful and conscientious* work that was done by the people assigned to do them.

A series of norms related to the preparation of branch educationals has been established in Boston. The first of these is very simple but very necessary, namely that educationals be *written out*. Clearly, it is no guarantee that an educational that has been written out will be inherently superior to one given spontaneously. But more likely than not the relatively inexperienced comrades who will be assigned to give educationals will not yet have accomplished the art of speaking extemporaneously. And given the historical focus of many of our educationals, it is even harder to present them with just an outline and some notes. We have found that, at the very least, branch educationals are easier to follow, and sustain the attention and interest of comrades, when they are written out beforehand.

It is logical that an educational that has been written out previously will also be an educational that is more

organized and more riveted to the essential points under discussion. Every person who is assigned is also expected to have a carefully prepared outline before beginning the actual writing out of the educational. Naturally, these outlines serve to give the talks more organization and coherence. A person assigned is also expected to have a schedule of target dates and deadlines in order to rationalize their work. For example, this may mean three weeks to do the reading and a week or two to write it. At any rate, rush jobs at the very last minute are not allowed to occur.

In light of the stringent attention to content and preparation, it has been our experience that the education director has to play a very active role in this area of work. A *laissez-faire* attitude is definitely out of the question.

Now all the preparation described so far would be justified in itself if it resulted in excellent lectures that raise the theoretical level of the branch. But there is another valuable aspect of this work that has to be taken into account. That is, the comrades who have taken these assignments attest to the fact that their experience has given them the confidence to speak in public on areas related to the topic of their talk as well as on any number of other topics. Also, it has taught them how to research and organize historical and theoretical material. And, finally, it has taught them how to appreciate the application of the Marxist method within a strictly defined area under investigation.

June 23, 1972

PLENUM REMARKS UNDER  
ORGANIZATION REPORT

by Judy White, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local  
May 14, 1972

The defense of Latin American political prisoners being carried on through the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) is linked to and a part of a common international campaign by the world movement. Although there are differences in the world Trotskyist movement on the perspective for Latin America, it is very important to keep in mind that there is unanimous agreement on the need to wage a determined defense of the democratic rights of all political prisoners and victims of the police repression in Latin America, with special emphasis on Argentina.

Even more significant than our agreement on the need to carry out such an effort is the progress that has been made to implement the decision.

New defense committees have been formed in France and Canada. In this country, USLA has been reactivated. The beginnings of good collaboration have been established between these committees and the defense committees and individuals carrying on this work in Argentina.

Following some personal contact with opponents of the Argentine dictatorship, USLA has begun to receive a steady stream of up-to-date facts on the repression in Argentina. Comrades will get a feel for this from the next issue of the *Reporter*.

USLA has obtained enough documentation and testimony on torture, abduction and assassination from Argentina in the past few weeks to fill a small book. This new collaboration that has been established will make it more possible to carry through on our proposal to wage a stepped-up campaign in defense of democratic rights in Argentina. For many of our co-thinkers, what we do in this arena will be a test of how serious the SWP really is about internationalism.

Involvement in USLA work by all party branches is essential. Since USLA was reactivated at the beginning of the year there have been different lines of participation in this activity by party branches. Some have yet to carry out any activities in defense of political prisoners in Argentina; others have made participation in USLA a significant part of regular branch life.

What I'd like to do now is present a fuller idea of our thinking on what the branches can and should be doing to implement this defense effort; and give you an idea of the nature of the openings we've found in areas where comrades have gotten into this activity. To put into perspective what we want to do in the defense of human rights in Argentina we have to keep in mind certain features of the cases.

For example, there is no one central figure who has been victimized around whom it would be possible to build a concrete, personalized case. In that sense, the effort is quite different from the campaign the world movement was able to wage around Hugo Blanco, for example. We're aware that it is difficult to organize the work with-

out a concrete focus like a speaking tour, a date for demonstrations around the cases, etc. We hope to be able to change that problem now that we've established collaborative relations on the defense.

However, what is possible and what can gain support for the campaign is general propaganda around the denial of the most basic democratic rights in Argentina. Even the bourgeois press in this country is picking up on this now. An article in the April 23 *Miami Herald* points out:

"The Morello case is a symptom of the times in Argentina today. It has led the prestigious *Buenos Aires Herald* to mull aloud what many Argentines must secretly ponder:

"While such cases remain unexplained, is it any wonder that ordinary people find it hard to believe that a government that allowed this kind of thing to go on is really concerned about democracy?"

"A democratic exit from six years of military dictatorship is the nominal—the political game in Argentina today.

"But the game is being played with little democratic content, amid indiscriminate violence by both terrorists and government, great social unrest and economic stagnation that features runaway inflation."

It would be a serious mistake for the SWP to default on carrying out this campaign because we have political differences with others in the world movement or because of the difficulties of some of the cases.

Branches can and should work with USLA supporters in local areas to:

1. Take advantage of periodic openings to publicize and gain support for the Argentine campaign: e.g., participate in conferences on Latin America, Chicano and Puerto Rican gatherings, meetings on political prisoners—places where we anticipate there would be a high interest in this topic. Build meetings for prominent speakers who will appear for USLA like Jose Revueltas, Paul Sweezy, etc.

This is important to get the name of USLA better known, to publicize the Argentina defense and to help raise money for USLA through speakers' fees these individuals can get.

2. In a low-key way integrate the defense of Latin American political prisoners into the daily work of the branch and YSA locals: have branch educationals and forums, get a few prominent individuals and organizations to endorse the defense campaign. Every branch should get a regular bundle of *USLA Reporters* and fact sheets and have them in bookstores and on literature tables, sell subs to the *Reporter* and hawk the magazine at special meetings.

3. Help raise funds for USLA—help get speaking engagements with honoraria for the Latin America Speakers Bureau, help organize fund-raising events for guest

speakers or other prominent USLA supporters, and help solicit donations from endorsers for USLA.

In areas where comrades have begun to dig into USLA activities, we have found that there are a lot of possibilities to broaden USLA campaigns and to bring new layers into the defense work. There are four categories of people who generally prove to be sympathetic.

1. Latin Americanists among liberal and left-wing faculty members and other prominent individuals. These people by-and-large are willing to do more than lend their names to USLA campaigns.

2. Latin American artists and intellectuals living in the United States.

3. Latin American, Puerto Rican and Chicano youth.

4. Individuals, mainly young, who have bummed around Latin America or who have a great interest in the Latin American struggle. Most of these consider themselves radicals and have been looking for a group like USLA to get active in.

These openings which I mention show that in addition to the importance of getting involved in the USLA work to help our Latin American co-thinkers, the party can realize recruits and establish itself with new sectors of the radicalizing population around the question of the Latin American revolution through this work.





