

Allen T.

PARTY BUILDER

SWP Organizational Discussion Bulletin

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SOCIALIST ACTIVISTS AND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Socialist Activists and Educational Conference being held August 8-15 at Oberlin College is open to all members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. It will enable comrades to come together to discuss the unparalleled opportunities for growth of the revolutionary socialist movement.

The conference sessions and pre-conference written discussion will center around the best organizational ways of maximizing the gains that we can make in this period of radicalization and rapid growth of the SWP and YSA. The discussion is not for the purpose of determining political line; its specific purpose is as a medium to aid in implementing the decisions of the previous convention.

In the discussion all comrades will have the opportunity to exchange experiences in various fields of our political work and to put forward suggestions for making more effective the campaigns in which we are engaged.

Among the points take up at the conference will be such aspects of party building and branch structure as finances, forums, election campaigns, education, Militant sales, publications, etc, and implementation of our work in the antiwar, Third World, and women's liberation

movements.

A major feature of the conference will be the educational sessions that will take place. Lectures and discussions will take up the key questions relating to the problems of party building for the American socialist revolution. Central party leaders and educators will prepare many of these lectures.

This bulletin, Vol. IV No. 1 of the Party Builder opens the SWP written discussion for the conference. The Party Builder is open to all members of the SWP for discussion on any question of an organizational nature. Material submitted for publication in the Party Builder shall be selected, edited, accepted or rejected by an editorial board designated by the Political Committee.

YSA members are also encouraged to participate in the written discussion prior to the conference. Contributions from non-party YSAers will appear in The Young Socialist Organizer.

At the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference, all members of the SWP and YSA will be able to participate in the discussions on the organizational questions as well as in the educational part of the week.

ORGANIZATION REPORT TO SWP NATIONAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

February 28, 1970

by Joel Britton

It is clear from the Political and Women's Liberation Reports, and the recent YSA convention and SMC conference that we are at a very important juncture in the opportunities and responsibilities of our party. These derive from the deep and broad radicalization that is now taking place and our past efforts to assemble, educate and organize a cadre.

In the struggle with our competitors for leadership of the radicalizing youth we are in the best position ever. Never in the history of the Socialist Workers Party have we been in such a favorable position.

In 1946 -- our previous high point in size and influence, the Stalinists were a major obstacle. They had close to 100,000 members and a much larger periphery.

We now have more active members, more cadre, and have even more potential to develop as a combat party than we did in 1946. Of course, we are still a propaganda group, not a mass party. But our goal is to become a party of mass action and we show this in many ways by our actions while we are a propaganda group.

We can now take big steps toward becoming a party that can be the American workers' party of mass action as the radicalization deepens.

At the last plenum, it was reported that we had reached our largest size since the Cochran split. We have added over another hundred members since then. And, if we total the members of the party and the members of the youth who are not in the party, that is, the entire Trotskyist movement in this country, we are probably numerically larger than at any previous time in our history.

We are beginning to reap the benefits of our organizational concepts and methods: democratic decision making and centralized execution. We are the only radical organization that can confidently decide on a perspective and carry it out.

Why is this so? We have democratic decision-making bodies, in which we get the collective thinking of our members, where everyone has the opportunity to present ideas and learn from others. We function by majority rule. A minority is obligated to carry out majority decisions, but can re-raise its ideas later for discussion and decision.

We alone of all radical tendencies have open, functioning units on a national scale, with headquarters, bookstores and forums. The geographical distribution of our party branches is the most favorable in the history of our party.

This has required a heavy investment in time, energy and money. I'm sure that we would all be surprised at the scope of our entire national operation, especially if we could translate these things into dollars and cents. Even the Communist Party, which doesn't lack money, does not have these open, functioning units. For the most part they have only bookstores, and these in only a few of the major cities.

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We have another key asset: an increasingly mobile cadre, a growing number of mobile young comrades. This contrasts with the situation in the 1950's when we were in a holding operation. Objective conditions held us down to minimal propaganda for the most part, given the limited opportunities to intervene in the mass movement. Of course in an earlier period, in the 1940's on the other hand, we were very mobile because of the labor upsurge. Now, as in the '40s, it is primarily objective conditions that present us with such opportunities for growth and rewards for our mobility.

We have a growing layer of party youth who are no longer in the YSA. We have less and less of what was referred to at the last plenum as "total activist overlap," where most of the active party comrades were also leading comrades in the YSA. A process is occurring that we want to accelerate: the YSA is becoming more and more of a genuine youth organization. The Cleveland organizer, for instance, reports that the Cleveland YSA is about 40% high school students. The trend in the YSA national office is for younger and younger people to take on the major responsibilities for leading the YSA. The last two people brought in were 19. The national secretary of the YSA is 22 years old. At the YSA convention, leading comrades in the YSA took conscious steps to graduate NC members who were no longer playing a central role in the YSA, even though they were several years away from what has been their customary graduation age of 27. The YSA has found that this process is advantageous to its growth and leadership development.

Increasingly, party organizers and other key party activists and leaders are comrades in their early and middle twenties. Of course, this is a very important consideration for the perspectives we are outlining at this plenum. Party branches are now beginning to graduate out of youth work their young organizers and other party comrades who are no longer on campus or playing a key role in the YSA -- in some cases, three, four, or five years before they are 27.

Most of our branch organizers are 30 years of age and younger. Two are 23, one is 24, two are 25, two are 26, two are 27, two are 28, and two are 30. Only two of the branch organizers are in the YSA, only one is on the YSA exec., and the perspective is also to graduate these branch organizers out of the YSA.

There are comrades here who I think could add to the discussion on the importance of these trends in our movement, comrades who've had recent experiences where they've been YSA organizers, and then become party organizers and made the mistake -- it's virtually always a mistake -- of staying in the YSA and/or staying on the YSA executive committee. The tendency is to smother the development of whoever has become YSA organizer. It tends to retard the development of the genuine new leadership in the YSA local, and it detracts from the branch organizer's ability to organize the SWP. So the YSA is becoming younger and younger, and the party is becoming more and more a party of young activists whose responsibility is to build the SWP.

We don't propose a motion that the graduation age for party members from the youth should be 25 or 24, but that's the trend that's occurring, and that's clearly what should become the norm in the branches more and more. Of course, we'll have to maintain a certain amount of flexibility, just as we do when the age is 27.

We discussed this in the Political Committee, and with the NEC of the YSA, and there's general agreement on the mutual advantages to the movement of this trend.

Because of the favorable political situation the American Trotskyist movement has the opportunity, unique in its history, of increasing the edge we have on our opponents, of moving increasingly into the center of American radicalism. Our ability to do this depends largely on our organizational efforts to extend and consolidate our advantage. We must push forward our expansion programs. In some cases we must make qualitative leaps.

Though we are more of a national party than ever, we still have a long way to go; there are major cities and, more important, some regions of the country where we are absent or very weak. So we must push ahead on our geographical expansion. Established branches must release people so that we can strengthen small or weak branches and set up branches in new areas, often where we have a youth unit. For example, we want to build up Atlanta, not only depend on their own recruitment, but send additional people there so that we can ensure that the Atlanta branch can play the role of a strong regional center. We must make a further expansion in Texas, continuing to build up Austin and lay the basis for a branch in Houston, one of the largest cities in the country and a very important city in that region. We must re-constitute a branch in Denver if we take seriously our evaluation of the recent developments in the Chicano movement. We think we should have a branch in the the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., where we have a number of members at-large of the party, and a growing YSA.

Party organizers and National Committee members in the branches have to play a leadership role in helping make possible the release of comrades from branches to go to new areas to build new branches or, in some cases, which I'll get to later, to strengthen the center or to strengthen other branches.

Today is not the time -- if it ever was -- for any kind of provincialism, for a super-cautiousness about assigning new comrades to leading responsibilities in the branches. This is the kind of period where very new comrades can take on major responsibilities, not only in the YSA, but in the SWP.

The regional work of the branches is vital in paving the way for the geographical expansion of the party. More and more branches have become regional centers. We've been discussing this in the last couple of years and this is happening on a bigger scale now, but we must expand this further. These branches must reach out further and more consistently, and grapple with the problem of growth, consolidation, and education.

We must re-emphasize the mobility of our cadres. We have to shift people around. We're not building home-guards. We're building a combat party on a national scale. Our one- and two-year veterans can go to a new area and set up branches. We're not trying to stim-

ulate party growth artificially by shifting people around -- we're expanding the scope of our operation by taking advantage of genuine political opportunities. At this point, we have 15 branches. There are 115 areas where there are YSA locals or members-at-large of the YSA outside of the areas where we have party branches. This gives an indication of the potential for geographical expansion of the party. This particular phenomenon has never occurred before in the history of our party. This geographical spread, the widespread areas where we have Trotskyist comrades, youth locals, or little clumps of at-largers here and there with the perspective of becoming youth locals, is something new.

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Our press and publications have been expanding, and opportunities exist for qualitative leaps forward in some respects. Because of this period of radicalization, a premium is put on our propaganda output. There is more and more of a receptive audience in more and more layers of the population, and we must have the necessary quantity of literature and the pamphlets and books on a diversity of topics. The general dissemination of our ideas and the acceptance of part or all of our ideas by broad layers of the population will be a crucial factor in the coming period. In this regard, let's look at the revolutionary socialist weekly, The Militant.

Since the last plenum, the size of The Militant has expanded to the point where it's now consistently 16 pages. In order to do that, it was necessary to increase the staff. But the comrades who are doing the day-to-day work on the paper are finding more and more that there's not room in the paper to put all the material in that should be in, so in the near future we have to look toward a further expansion in the size of the paper.

As important as the resources and the personnel to carry this out is the circulation. The circulation of The Militant is nowhere near what it could be, given the opportunities we face. Last fall's sub drive was the biggest drive we've had since the mid-'40s. 4,000 new subscriptions were projected, and we helped get over 6,000. This spring The Militant has projected 7,500 -- a high figure for a spring drive -- on the basis of our increased growth since the fall and the even deeper radicalization and interest in our ideas. Next fall, if we continue to grow, and the YSA continues to grow at the rate it's growing, it would not be unrealistic to start thinking about figures like 20,000.

In your kits are some figures recently released by The Militant on its circulation. I'd just like to draw your attention to a couple of points. First is the increase in circulation since the last plenum, from slightly over 9,000 to over 11,000. Also important and relevant to the potential for geographical expansion of the party is the fact that 22.8% of the subscriptions are in states where we have no party branch; 1,000 subs just in those states. Domestic bundles have increased by 1,000 since August. A very important fact is that 34.5% of the total domestic bundles are now being ordered by YSA locals and at-largers. This is up a few percentage points from the time of the last plenum, and we can look toward it increasing even more in the coming period.

The new monthly magazine is going to be a very important vehicle in our theoretical fights against the anti-Marxist and pseudo-Marxist ideas of various new left currents and individuals that have come onto the scene. The magazine will require additional time, effort and money, but it is a very important part of the expansion of our propaganda activity in the coming period. There'll be a special supplementary report on the new magazine.

Material in the kits shows the increase in literature published, which is quite dramatic between 1969 and 1968. It shows some of the projections for 1970. This is an area where qualitative leaps are possible and absolutely necessary.

* * *

We must expand and strengthen other national departments. One of the most important is our national education department. We've gotten a number of letters, raising questions about educational problems that are faced in various branches and ideas for grappling with this in the branches and on a national scale. We have to grapple with the question of changing composition. One of the most important features of the YSA convention, in my opinion, was what it indicated about the growth of Third World recruitment in the YSA, to the point where there are now about a hundred Third World comrades in the YSA. The rate of growth of this section of the YSA was faster than the overall rate of growth. This is very important. Many are high school students or working class youth. We have to grapple with these aspects of changing composition and the period that we look ahead to when we will be recruiting more and more working class youth. We've got to grapple with the problems of educating our older

comrades, comrades that have been in the party a couple of years, who are now considered older comrades in many of the branches. There is the problem of consciously programming this educational work so that young branch organizers and other branch activists don't become totally immersed in activity, but continue their educational development as well.

Briefly, on the question of our new recruits, who some of us used to call "lower level" than our previous recruits of the early '60s who were thought to be better read, and who understood more about general Marxist theory and socialist ideas. At the YSA convention, Nelson Blackstock, YSA Organizational Secretary, said that the YSA has to put that myth to rest, and I think we should do the same in the party. The recruits that are now coming to the YSA and the party on the basis of our activity in the antiwar movement, on the basis of our election campaigns, etc. are the highest level recruits we've been getting in this decade. They're learning things in weeks or months that took people in my generation years to learn. This is because of their experiences in the living struggles.

We also have to adjust our thinking a little bit. We have to remind ourselves that the constitution of the party states that "every person who accepts the program of the party, and agrees to submit to its discipline, and engage actively in its work, shall be eligible for membership." I know, as a previous branch organizer myself, when you introduce a proposal to admit someone to membership, or when someone asks to join, there's a tendency to place unduly high priority on the question of whether the person has read all of the basic works of our movement, everything by Trotsky and Cannon, etc. We have to grapple with that question, and how it fits in with our whole problem of education. As we enter a period of upsurge and increased recruitment we're going to have to do more and more education in our basic ideas right inside the movement, inside the YSA and inside the party.

Our educational work has to be tooled up on a branch level and in the center. We've had some preliminary discussion on this, and we've projected a more systematic and careful use of the tape service, and this is one of the things that the YSA will be promoting in The Young Socialist Organizer. We have to begin thinking about additional educational bulletins and summer school tours. We should begin now to nail down the summer schools, not just the general perspective of having them, but the programs and publicity. In the next period,

we're going to need more discussion on this problem of education.

Now, in terms of the national office of the party, which has been the area in the last few years that we've been slowest to reinforce. One of our real weaknesses in the center has been in terms of personnel and manpower. We've strengthened the national office modestly, by adding a couple of people to the Administrative Committee, one of whom still has major responsibilities for our work in the antiwar movement. We are adding a person to the national office staff. These steps, as minimal as they have been, have made it possible to have more trips to the field and more contact with the branches. We are more able to send people to the branches when problems develop, when comrades in the branches want direct consultation with comrades in the center. This was especially important in terms of the ultra-right attacks in Chicago and DeKalb. It was helpful in coming to grips with the developments in the Chicano movement.

We must strengthen even more our political collaboration with our co-thinkers. We project doing even more than we've been doing in the recent period.

All of this depends on money. There are two categories that comrades should keep firmly in mind. One is that the center is absolutely dependent on the regular money coming in from the sustaining pledges from the branches. Then, for major expansion projects, just as in the branches when a major state campaign is projected, major sources of outside income must be sought. For major expansion we have to look for financial sources outside of the regular sustainer income from the branches. That regular sustainer income is the basic foundation of our financial structure and is what we depend on for our day-to-day functioning.

If the proposals in the organization report and the financial report are approved by the Plenum, there'll be a proposal to the Political Committee to establish a national office financial department, with a national financial director, Comrade Judy White.

* * *

The next category of expansion that I want to deal with is our state election campaigns. Now these campaigns are very important in and of themselves, and especially in preparation for our big '72 national campaign.

Through these campaigns we maximize our propaganda output, we intervene in the real politics of the states, and often,

have an influence in what happens, as we did in Atlanta last year. We use our transitional program as concretely as possible to provide an example for Black, Chicano and Labor parties of the present and future.

At our last convention, the political and organizational reports pointed to the lessons of the Halstead-Boutelle campaign, which really laid the basis in many ways for the campaigns that we've been able to have in 1970. They pointed out that we projected a campaign aimed at youth recruitment on the basis of our program for solving the problems of the working masses. We projected and carried out a campaign as a party which is deeply involved where the action is. This was reflected in our choice of candidates and in other ways. We learned that campaigns should be started early, when most of our gains come, and should be planned out in advance so that finances and personnel are adequate. We learned the importance of tying contacts made through the campaigns into a relationship with the party in one way or another. One of these ways in the Halstead-Boutelle campaign was that of giving short introductory Militant subscriptions to various categories of endorsers in periods when we didn't have subscription drives. We projected the importance of legal fights against the restrictive ballot laws that exist in most states.

The 1972 campaign was also projected at the last convention, and by the time of the next plenum, we will have to make some preliminary decisions on the 1972 campaign. Even though it seems like it's a long way off, we have to start giving it some thought. What we're doing now in the 1970 campaigns is going to be very important -- it's going to pay off now in 1970, and it's going to pay off by preparing us for the 1972 campaign. The 1970 campaigns will help lay the basis for geographical expansion of the party and YSA.

I want to summarize the accomplishments of the 1970 campaigns so far.

State campaigns have been launched, or are about to be launched in California, Texas, Ohio, Washington, New York, Minnesota, Georgia, Michigan, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. Some of these campaigns were launched last fall. California was the first -- in November, then Texas in December. Ohio and Washington were among the first and a number of the other campaigns started in January or February. In some cases, they involved more than one party branch in the state. California involves four party branches and six YSA locals. In other states it is usually one party branch and at least a couple of YSA locals.

There are likely or possible campaigns where we have youth units or have a perspective of a branch in nine other states. These are states where there are YSA locals where it may be possible to run an independent socialist campaign.

Legal fights are in preparation or have been launched in a number of states. Georgia was the first state to get a brief into the courts. We have had a lot of meetings and a lot of discussion on other suits and have the collaboration of Leonard Boudin and the ECLC in this matter.

I want to compare these campaigns briefly to the campaigns we ran in 1966 and 1968. 1966 was the last off-year election between presidential campaigns, an appropriate year to compare with our 1970 campaigns.

In 1966, the first campaign that was launched was the New York campaign, and this was the one which really set the national example. We ran a big slate of candidates headed by Judy White for Governor and had a fairly large budget and an ambitious perspective. That campaign was launched in July; the election was in November. One aspect of that campaign -- the critical support tactic towards Aptheker -- was launched in September. The other major campaign that we stressed in the paper, and that we propagandized on a lot that year was the campaign of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama. We started covering it in May and gave consistent coverage to it through the election.

Beyond those two, it was pretty bleak. In New Jersey we ran Joe Carroll for U.S. Congress -- that campaign was launched in September, 1966; in California there was an almost non-existent write-in campaign for Taplin for Governor and Cobet for Lt. Governor. The first article in The Militant on this campaign appeared October 3, 1966. One of our more serious campaigns that year was in Minnesota, where Joe Johnson was on the ballot for Governor. Our only legal fight that I was able to figure out from reading The Militant was that of Jack Marsh for Congress in Minnesota. It was a fight against being thrown off the ballot, and we lost. We supported an independent Black candidacy in Pennsylvania. Last, and undoubtedly least, was the campaign of James Boulton for Congress. That campaign was first (and last) mentioned in The Militant on October 17, 1966. In that campaign, the throw was off, as Boulton would say.

Now, in 1968 we did a lot better. As part of the much more ambitious, highly organized Halstead-Boutelle cam-

paign, we ran state campaigns in 11 states, some of which had big slates of candidates. These were started considerably earlier -- the California and New York campaigns started the end of January -- but for the most part these campaigns were not at all of the scope and on the level of the present state campaigns that we are running -- in terms of their actual state-wide character, in terms of staff, in terms of money, in terms of the number and full-time status of candidates and campaign directors, in terms of regional outreach beyond the states. In 1970 we started earlier, with more material, more attractive material, more meetings, more impact in the press, more of everything.

California gives a graphic illustration of the difference between these campaigns. I don't know if there are any exact figures for what was spent in California in 1966, but I assume it was less than \$300. The California state campaign has already raised and spent almost \$7,000 and projects spending -- if that \$300 figure is accurate -- at least 100 times what was spent in 1966. That would be over \$30,000.

One of the very important aspects of the state campaigns are the legal fights against unconstitutional election laws. The California comrades have initiated the legal fight through a separate Committee for a Fair Ballot, with sponsors who won't necessarily endorse our campaign, but do agree with the right of minority parties to be on the ballot. Another important aspect is the collaboration that we've developed with lawyers who are working with us on these legal fights.

I should go into some of the weaknesses of the campaigns. If anything, there's an underestimation of the opportunities we face with our state election campaigns, even though these campaigns are on a much bigger scope than previously. Enough steps haven't been taken, in most cases, to involve actively in our campaign the many high school students, college students, women's liberation activists and Third World activists, who will actively support and work for our campaigns if we expend the time and energy, and set up the proper organizational forms for that to happen.

Another weakness has tended to be substitution of the YSA for a broader formation of youth support for the campaigns. It's very important to capitalize on the publicity that the YSA has received, to announce that the Young Socialist Alliance, the leading socialist youth organization in this country, is supporting our candidates, that it is going out to every campus in the state, every high school in the state, and is

going to sign up young socialist supporters of our campaigns. But we must not think that almost anyone who will support our campaign will immediately join the YSA, and therefore see the YSA as the youth support group. Many students will be attracted to our campaigns who won't join the YSA, but will be a young socialist campaigner, a young socialist for the Socialist Workers candidates in 1970.

Another weakness is that we've underestimated the potential, in some cases, to raise money for the full-time candidates that should continually be on the road as state candidates. This is particularly important in California, where we have a number of branches and where we're doing something that's new, an experiment. The California comrades will have to work out the correct forms for doing it, but it's very important to have the conception that the state candidates are not candidates of one or another branch. These are genuine state candidates. Their responsibilities aren't to a branch, or to an area of work that they've been active in, but as state candidates.

In general, the election campaigns and the legal fights that we've launched are a very big step forward for the party, and are a sign that we can confidently come to grips with the opportunities for expansion and growth.

* * *

I want to discuss briefly the expansion and consolidation of branches and branch structure. This was discussed very thoroughly in the report at the last plenum, and also at the last party convention. [See Internal Information Bulletin No. 2 in 1969 for the 1969 Plenum report, "Political Trends and Party Organizational Perspectives," by Jack Barnes; see Internal Information Bulletin No. 2 in 1970 for the Organization Report to the 23rd National Convention of the SWP, by Jack Barnes.] I don't want to repeat all of the points that were made about branch structure, but simply stress the importance of the leading comrades giving thought and energy to maximize the development of the branches, which are the key units of the party. Unless we do this, we will not take maximum advantage of the opportunities to recruit, educate and assimilate the young people who are coming toward us. We must set the right kind of example for the YSA and for those comrades who are in a branch and will later be asked to go to another branch or to a new area where we have no branch. We must set the proper example and teach the right lessons about how a branch should be built. Otherwise, we will cut across the ability to reach out in the way we should.

As the tempo increases, as the opportunity for the party to intervene as a party (not as individuals) into the mass movement develops, these are going to become increasingly important. The functioning of the branch departments, factions, committees must be thought out and led, not left in negligence and routinism.

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There's no convention of the party this year, and there is a definite need for discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences on the many questions that have been raised in this report -- the possibilities for expansion, coming to grips with educational problems and opportunities, etc. Many of the comrades who are heading up the work in the branches, who organize the forums, who are the financial directors, etc., aren't at this Plenum. Many of them don't take the time to write often enough, so that a purely literary internal discussion we might try to initiate would be inadequate. It's very important, we think, to get heads of departments in various branches and the national center together, to involve the branch leaders who are not here, to involve the active ranks of the party in a thorough discussion of the problems of growth that we face and the opportunities we face. We would like to propose holding an active workers conference in order to take

maximum advantage of our opportunities to expand, to discuss party building problems and perspectives in the face of these new opportunities, to exchange ideas between the center and the branches and between branch activists, with a premium on involving the ranks of the party in this discussion.

The Political Committee proposes the following motion:

To call an active workers conference to take place during the summer of 1970, and to refer to the Political Committee responsibility for its preparation and organization.

We think that such an active workers conference is made possible by the general agreement on political perspectives in the party, and necessary because we face new problems and opportunities.

The test for the leadership of the party as a whole in this immediate period is to meet the challenge of our unique opportunities for expansion: expansion of our propaganda output; expansion into new cities and regions; expansion in absolute size and specific weight compared to our opponents; and becoming more and more, in each local area and nationally, the very center of the radicalization.

NEW FINANCING OF THE EXPANDING PARTY

(Report to SWP National Committee Plenum)

March 1, 1970

by Judy White

What we want to do in this report is draw the main lessons from our experience with the "new" financial system. It is just a little over a year since all branches completed the transition to the sustainer system and what we have learned during that year should be shared and absorbed by the party so we can take the next steps forward in the financial arena.

First we should look at how the scope of party finances has increased over the past year. As has been amply pointed out in the preceding reports at this plenum, the growing radicalization over the past period has created increasing opportunities for our party. These have led, in turn, to a national expansion of the party since the last plenum. To translate this to the point of view of a financial secretary, all the political decisions we have made for expansion cost money.

To review briefly, the main areas of expansion that the national office has been financially responsible for are:

1) more travel between the center and the field -- to help in crises such as the rightist attacks in Chicago/DeKalb, Houston, Austin, etc. in the recent period, to help coordinate work and exchange information (like the antiwar travel, the consultative visits on trade union work made by Frank Lovell and on the Chicano Conference made by Joel Britton) -- in other words, travel to increase collaboration between the national office and the leadership in the field.

2) We have had more international travel expenses as we increase visits -- like the ones described earlier -- to find out what is happening in the world and to publish it.

3) In the area of geographical expansion, since the last plenum new regional centers of the party have been established in Atlanta and Austin. The national office has helped to get them off the ground, to establish headquarters, to have a full-time organizer, etc.

4) The paper had been publishing one 16-pager per month; other times it was a regular 12-pager. Now the paper is a regular 16-pager with an increased circulation. This has necessitated additional staff in the business and editorial offices and bigger press runs -- all of which cost more money.

5) The final area of expansion has been to add more staff to the Administrative Committee.

We want to continue to increase all these areas -- especially expansion into new areas, collaboration between the field and the center, and of course, we are projecting increased publishing and a new magazine. None of these are included in the budget projection as you can see. But we're going to have to raise a lot of money to carry out these plans too.

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The core of the party's finances is the sustainer system. It is the heart of the day-to-day functioning of the party budget on the branch and national levels.

The most obvious thing we have learned from the first year of the "new" system is that it is a big advance over the old one. It has been a big step toward regularizing the party's financial functioning. It has made possible an increased, steady income for the branches and the national apparatus of the party. This has enabled us to expand our functioning as opportunities have increased.

We checked back over the 1967 figures for per capita pledges to the national office (before we went on the new system) to compare them with 1968 (the transitional period onto the sustainer system) and with 1969 (our first full year of the system). We don't have figures for 1967 showing how much was pledged on a per capita basis to the branches, but we could compare those figures for 1968 and 1969. As you can see from the sustainer chart in the kits, there was a marked increase in that amount -- from an average of \$20.68 pledged to the branches as of the last plenum to \$22.82 currently.

The other figures we compared were the 1967 and 1969 pledges to the national office; by combining the pledges made on the two fund drives in 1967 plus the monthly sustainer pledges to the national office for that year, we found that the average per capita pledged to the national office for 1967 was just a little less than that pledged for the last six months of 1969 (\$10.68 to \$10.80). That was quite a striking discovery to us, because it is obvious that we are doing a lot more both in the branches and in the national departments of the party than we were in 1967.

When we analyzed those figures we came to some conclusions: 1) a lot of the money that used to be pledged to the national office during the 1967 period -- under the old system -- used to come from non-members through fund drive pledges, so the current per capita does reflect a higher contribution to the party from the members themselves; 2) and most important, comparing the figures for this period shows that the "new" system by no means works automatically. In fact, if you look at the last year -- from Feb. 1969 to Jan. 1970 -- you can see from the sustainer chart that we have actually had a slight drop in per capita sustainer pledged to the national office, although, of course, the total monthly sustainer income to the national office has risen.

So, while we have taken a major step forward in regularizing the financial functioning of the party on the local and national levels by instituting this system, we can see that we have a way to go in tuning up our work in this area.

Immediately some questions are raised from a comparison between 1967 and 1969. Does the fact that the per capita pledge to the national office is still about the same mean that the per capita system is unrealistic? Specifically is the \$15.00 per capita norm unrealistic?

We don't think so. The fact that already one branch -- Los Angeles -- has broken through to a \$16.00 per capita reconfirms our estimate that the system and the \$15.00 norm are not unrealistic.

Our estimate is that the problem of leadership consciousness on the question of finances is the explanation for the fact that nationally the per capita pledge to the national office hasn't risen much. In many cases we have found that the

drop in per capita sustainer pledged by a branch to the national office happened without the branch leadership really being aware of it.

That leads me to our first concrete proposal on how to improve the functioning of the new system: we propose that all branches institute a per capita pegging system for their monthly pledge to the national office. In other words, if a branch is currently at a level of pledging \$12.00 per member per month to the national office and recruits two new members during February, as of March that sustainer pledge would automatically go up \$24.00 -- \$12.00 for each new member. That way, per capita pledges will not just drop unconsciously as they do sometimes in branches who view their sustainer commitment to the national office as a flat monthly figure. We think instituting a pegging system in all the branches is a key next step in bringing the nature of the new system more to the attention of the party leadership.

* * *

Think for a minute about the differences in method of financial functioning between the old system and the new one: the slack of the old system allowed much less attention to be paid to party finances on a regular basis -- we could always make up for financial slipping twice a year during fund drives.

Now we need to absorb an entire new consistent regularity in functioning which we have only been partially successful in doing.

What is this method of functioning? What does it mean in the concrete? If a branch of 25 members or more is to meet the \$15.00 per capita norm to the national office, as a rule of thumb, an average of \$30.00 per member must be pledged and paid to the branch each month in order for the party to function effectively on a local and national level.

Once again a glance at the chart on sustainers will show that a big part of branch financial problems rests here. There isn't a single branch of the party that has that kind of sustainer base right now.

So we have to deal with all the things we have learned about how to get sustainer pledges up.

There must be a continued effort on a regular basis to keep from

slipping on this and to raise branch income as new expansion on the branch and national levels is projected.

The example of leadership plays a big role here. The most important single lesson we have learned is that the level of financial commitment of a new comrade joining the party is basically determined by the example of leading comrades already in the branch: if the norm in a branch is to give \$7.00 a week sustainer to the party, it is likely that a new recruit will give around \$7.00; if the norm is to give \$15.00 a week, most likely a serious new recruit will pledge \$15.00; if it is \$25.00 a week, a new member will give \$25.00.

We have to remember that a new person joining our movement has no idea of how we do things financially or otherwise; he is learning a whole new way of functioning. One of the new habits the leadership can teach is the sustainer habit. We have found that it makes a big difference if a leading comrade in the branch sits down with a person wanting to join the party and goes over the financial commitment the party expects of him just as we go over the political and other aspects of the organizational commitment party membership entails.

One of the things we think is true -- it would be good to hear some discussion on this -- is that the biggest financial loss in a branch that is not functioning well, is low sustainers from its new members. If a branch figures its sustainer under the per capita pegging system and doesn't have a good solid norm of sustainer pledges to the branch, every new recruit can be an increased financial drain on the branch instead of an asset. Unless the leadership sets an example in this area, it can be a big problem.

The key concept on getting sustainers up, however, is regularity -- this is a characteristic of the combat party in all areas of work and it is the key to dealing with most of the financial problems of the new system. Just as we would not think of scheduling only one Militant sale per month, we cannot fall into the habit of reviewing the finances of the party only once a month, or, as in some branches, even less than once a month.

This brings me to the second concrete proposal we want to make to help the functioning of the new system: we propose that the rest of the branches switch over to the weekly

pledge system as opposed to monthly pledges.

Weekly regularity in pledges has a lot of obvious advantages -- most comrades get paid weekly so it should be natural for them to pledge weekly; the party needs money every week -- to mention only a couple of them.

Weekly pledges gear in with another important activity of the combat party -- weekly branch meetings. All of our other activities are thought of in weekly terms: how many subs did the comrade sell this week? Did the comrade do a cleanup assignment this week? Is the comrade coming to the forum this week? And all areas of our work suffer when we break this regularity. Less Militants get sold if we miss a branch meeting and any financial director can tell you that if you skip a branch meeting you never make it up 100% financially. Some comrades always fall behind.

A second area where regularity is central is in sending sustainers to the national office. We have urged branches to make partial payments on their sustainer pledge to the national office; instead of sending \$860 once a month, it should be easier for a branch to send \$200 each week as it is collected from the comrades. The weekly approach to meeting national office commitments helps the financial director emphasize the point to comrades of the importance of making regular payments on their sustainer pledge.

The third area where regularity in dealing with finances should help us to improve the functioning of the new system is in reports to branch and executive committee meetings. These must be regular, political reports on finances.

There are two things we'd like to say about these branch and executive financial reports: first, they should not be harangues. That means we can't try to solve problems on sustainers by passing motions on a minimum sustainer or on questions like getting jobs. The party is a voluntary organization and, aside from an initiation fee and monthly dues, all contributions to the party from its members are voluntary. The way to solve sustainer problems is not to command, not to pass motions, but to convince.

Secondly, the function of the reports has to be to politically explain and motivate -- they shouldn't

be highly technical, bookkeepers' reports. The most effective kind of financial reports have a few key statistics and a lot of political inspiration.

Another thing that is useful to do periodically in the branches is to draw up charts of progress on sustainer pledges. These charts are very helpful in spurring on comrades to raise their pledges and, on the other side, it is disastrous for a branch to wait a year to find out that the per capita pledged to the branch has fallen.

Regularity in finances means that more time must be spent, and more attention must be paid by the branch leadership to this area of party work. This need for constant attention to party finances points out what a key post in the branch the financial director is. We have to draw the conclusion from this that the post of financial director must be given to one of the most respected and conscious comrades in the branch for this area of party functioning to be effective.

* * *

In addition to regularizing all aspects of work with the new system, there are some secondary lessons we have learned on getting the sustainer system working more smoothly.

One of these lessons is that we can't afford to waste the time or money of comrades. Concretely, we mean that branches have to be careful to avoid money-raising gimmicks as a substitute for the sustainer system. I want to give one example from the experience of a branch that has since learned a lesson and has taken some big steps forward in improving their financial structure.

That particular gimmick was the movie panacea for branch financial difficulties. I was talking to Andrea Davis, the branch organizer in San Francisco, about their experience with it.

She told me the worst part about it all was that the branch sold popcorn -- and as she said, "We crunched over it all the rest of the week." Not only did this project involve a phenomenal number of man-hours to carry out -- Andrea estimates that 15 to 18 comrades were involved in -- as she puts it -- "years of man-hours every weekend" but the headquarters was virtually non-functional during those two days each

week. The bookstore was covered over by tarpaulins, a movie screen and chairs were set up, and so on.

And, to top it all off, the film showings didn't always even fulfill their main function -- to raise a lot of money for the branch.

The leadership of any branch should give serious attention to a question like: "Given our numbers and the political tasks we want to carry out, is this the most efficient way to raise the money we need?" before launching any such projects. We want to avoid getting involved in fund raising projects that do little or nothing to build our movement at the same time that they raise money.

In terms of the political and financial needs of the party, the sustainer system wastes the least time and energy of the comrades. And, substitutes for this system have never yielded the same results in dollars and cents or in party building. In fact, they tend to miseducate and disorient the comrades on how the party functions.

* * *

We have noticed another problem some branches are having that directly relates to party finances. Recently the branch minutes have reported a series of discussions to the effect that comrades should get jobs as a number one priority task. This problem -- which I call the perpetual student or volunteer fulltime functionary syndrome -- is a serious one that can have a devastating effect on branch sustainers as well as other areas of branch functioning.

What the branch leadership has to aim for in this regard is to instill the attitude in comrades that decisions like having a job or not having a job are basically political decisions for our movement and they should not be made on a "personal" basis anymore than decisions about attending branch meetings or selling our press are personal decisions made by individual comrades. We have to make sure that comrades understand you don't have to be "fulltime" to be a professional revolutionary.

A final lesson we have learned on getting sustainer pledges up in the branches is the need for the leadership to spell out very concretely the dollars and cents commitments needed from each comrade for national

and branch tasks. It is important periodically to break down the \$15.00 per member norm, for example, into its component parts, as a way of clarifying for the comrades what the national financial needs of the party are. There's a little Wall Street Journal-type chart in the kits that does this. The same thing has to be done for branch needs. It will make the financial demands of the party more concrete and relate them to each comrade's pledge.

It's vitally important, for example, for each member of each branch to understand what it entails financially on his or her part to have a full-time organizer for the branch or what is required from each branch to have a 16-page Militant to get out our ideas each week.

* * *

There are two other lessons we have learned from a year on the "new" system that affect branch financial functioning as a whole.

One is the problem of basing a branch's financial structure on a couple of huge pledges coupled with a generally low average sustainer pledge level. That kind of problem is being faced right now by a couple of branches -- it explains the contradictory figures on the sustainer chart for Austin, for example.

Every branch has a few big pledges -- usually given by some of the best branch activists. And because they come from key activists, it means the pledges are apt to come to an abrupt halt as these comrades are asked to transfer or work fulltime for the movement. Any branch that faces such a situation of financial decimation -- like Cleveland did recently when a whole group of activists who had high pledges were pulled out for national assignments -- will need a period to readjust its finances.

The main thing to aim for here is a broad layer of substantial pledges in the branch which can minimize this kind of a problem.

Of course, if there is a comrade in your branch that has an exceptionally large amount of money he or she wants to give to the party, the correct thing to do is have the comrade give the money directly to the national office. We have a couple of comrades in that position who have made arrangements through George Novack, our ace fund raiser, to give that money to the party.

Lastly, we have found that the new system requires more regular correspondence between the branches and the center on problems and progress. The national office has been slow to realize the amount of attention that must be paid from the center to finances, but as Joel reported, we plan to set up a national department with a fulltime financial secretary to deal with this area of party functioning.

In order for us to be more effective in this, we need to have the monthly financial reports come in regularly and promptly and we need special correspondence with the organizers and financial directors on things that don't show up in those reports.

* * *

There is a second area of party finances I want to say a few things on, because it is an area of increasing importance as our influence grows -- that is, raising money from our periphery.

First of all, there are some simple norms in this area of party finances that have to be taught to all new comrades:

1) People who will give money directly to the party shouldn't be asked to give to civil liberties or antiwar groups which can draw on much wider sources to begin with.

2) Our comrades working in outside movements should make sure that these movements pay their legitimate expenses according to the given norm; otherwise these comrades are indirectly taking money away from the party.

* * *

The increasing influence of our movement and the opportunities this influence opens for us, mean financially that work with the periphery to raise money also has to be systematized and regularly examined by the branch leadership. As you can see from the sustainer charts and from the L.A. report on fund raising in the kits, there are big differences in how the branches are doing in this aspect of fund raising.

We should keep in mind in thinking about our periphery, by the way, that the periphery can no longer be thought of solely -- or maybe even primarily -- as aging ex-party members. Our party's periphery now includes a whole

number of young lawyers, professors and young ex-YSAers and ex-party members who should all be talked to systematically.

It is important that this whole area be considered on a regular basis by the branch leadership among other things because we no longer have the big, public, semi-annual fund drives which used to be the occasion for hitting our periphery for donations.

And, while we want to avoid gimmickism in our approach to fund raising, there are a number of functions which can involve the periphery and be politically as well as financially profitable for the party.

The big semi-annual banquets and public meetings that Peggy Brundy goes over in the L.A. report in the kits are probably the most outstanding examples of functions that maximize political gains at the same time as financial ones. Peggy's report gives a complete step by step run down on how to make the most from these affairs. Of course, the election campaigns that all the branches have launched or are about to launch offer an excellent occasion for holding meetings like these.

* * *

The final thing I want to do in this report is go over, in general, the meaning of the financial needs of the party to the national leadership. Finances is a national leadership responsibility. We know that our party is different from all other organizations in how it is financed. Regular, sizable, voluntary contributions by the members are the backbone of party finances. You can see how this is true for the national office from the budget projection in the kits. It is less true than ever before that the regular day-to-day functioning of the party is financed by a few angels and that the responsibility for financially supporting the party does not lie with the rank and file members.

Because of this unique characteristic of our party, it is a primary, continuing job of the collective leadership to educate on this concept of finances: to take collective responsibility for financial needs of the party and to set a collective example for the ranks of our movement.

The national leadership is in the best position to be able to keep a balanced view of the interaction

between national and branch needs in the financial sphere; to be able to prevent the kind of mistakes that are made too often on a local level which damage the party's whole financial structure -- not to speak of harm done to other party structures. I'm referring to decisions like not paying a sustainer pledge to the national office on time or lowering the sustainer pledge to the national office. Things like deciding to add fulltime functionaries in a local area without thinking through how that will cut into funds available to the party nationally and locally. Or the opposite extreme: deciding not to have a fulltime organizer or a headquarters for a branch -- done for supposedly "financial" reasons.

These two aspects of party finances -- the local needs and the national needs -- are completely complimentary. The branches with good sustainers to the national office by and large also are the branches with healthy local finances. These two facets of party finances in no way contradict each other and are a function of the general level of health of a branch in all areas of its work. That is, there is a close connection between the political situation in a branch and its financial health and vice versa.

We often say that the party is not a federation of autonomous units or a federation of oppressed groups in society. Well, this concept has to be extended to cover our thinking about party finances too. We have to avoid the tendency to dichotomize branch finances from national finances. There is an intimate connection between the financial health of the party as a whole and the health of each individual unit of the party.

Let me give a series of examples to show what I mean by this:

The party national departments are meaningless without a network of healthy branches: why put out our literature if there are no branches to buy it, sell it and read it? What use is The Militant if there aren't comrades to read and sell it?

The "national needs" of the party are at the same time the needs of every single member of our movement. They aren't some alien, abstract thing. We have to avoid provincialism or the opposite in our thinking about the financial needs of the party.

It's a national need of the party to have large, effective election campaigns in all the states where we have branches. It's a national need of the party to have open, public functioning units of the party in as many cities as possible. And it's also a national need of the party to expand the size and circulation of our press; it's a national need to launch a new monthly magazine as a weapon in our propaganda offensive, and so on.

And whether the money to pay for these needs passes through the center as in the case of the press, or whether the money is raised and spent in the local areas, the need to raise this money is a national need and a national leadership responsibility.

It is the job of the party leadership to decide the realistic needs of the party, to organize and plan out ways of meeting them, and then convince the whole party of these needs to the extent of financing them as well as voting for and working on them.

* * *

In conclusion, then, considering the areas of national and branch expansion that we have agreed need to be carried out in the organization reports today, and the financial needs that go along with these political needs, we should set concrete goals for the next six months on the financial arena -- the next steps forward in strengthening the financial apparatus of the party on the national and local levels. You'll notice that the budget projection for the next six months is not based on an overnight rise to a

\$15.00 per capita national norm. We have learned that it will take some time for us to reach that goal. But what it is based on are concrete steps forward on increasing the per capita sustainer so that by the time of the active workers conference we will be able to say that not only have we achieved a greater degree of regularity in financing the party but we also have moved closer to the dollars and cents goal we set to permit the party to expand as rapidly as possible.

The other thing to remember about the financial projections we are making is that they do not include the needs of the shop nor the needs of the publishing house nor the needs of the new magazine. All that must come from elsewhere.

* * *

Concretely, we propose two steps to help the process of improving the day-to-day functioning of our finances: 1) to institute in all branches the per capita pegging system on national office sustainer pledges to prevent any unconscious lowering of the members' financial commitment to the national apparatus of the party and 2) to institute the weekly pledge system at the branch level to help in regularizing the members' financial commitment to the party.

The key to setting and meeting these goals in the area of finances as in all other areas of our work lies with the leadership of the party -- in its ability to convince and inspire the comrades to show their political commitment to making the American revolution in dollars and cents as well as in their other actions.

ONE YEAR PROGRESS REPORT ON SUSTAINER SYSTEM, January 1970

<u>Branch</u>	<u>Ave. monthly per capita pledged to branch</u>		<u>Ave. monthly per capita pledged to N.O.</u>		<u>% total sustainer pledged to N.O. 1/70</u>	<u>% monthly income raised in other ways (socials, donations, etc.)</u>
	<u>2/69</u>	<u>1/70</u>	<u>2/69</u>	<u>1/70</u>		
Atlan.	---	28.25	---	7.50	27%	9%
Austin	---	10.44	---	15.00	100%+	8%
Boston	13.57	18.95	7.71	8.33*	44%	7%
Chicago	31.69	30.00 ¹	14.84	15.00 ¹	50% ¹	6% ¹
Cleve.	27.50	16.67+	15.00	8.33	50%-	3% (?)
Detroit	27.83	22.18	12.07	8.54	38%	1%-
L.A.	19.53	21.37	15.00	15.00**	69%	17%
N.Y.	21.03	23.59	15.00	13.21***	56%	9%
Oakl.-						
Berk.	19.49	30.29	8.14	7.45	25%	4%
Phila.	20.58	27.28	7.45	10.87	40%	9%
Portl.	---	14.14	---	6.86	49%	0%
S.D.	unk	unk	4.74	4.20	unk	unk
S.F.	16.04	20.83	9.79	13.00	62%	12%
Seattle	20.83	18.89	10.91	10.00	50%	14%
T.C.	22.59	22.19	11.08	11.22	51%	17%
Averages	20.68	22.82	11.72	10.80		

* As of March raising to \$11. per capita

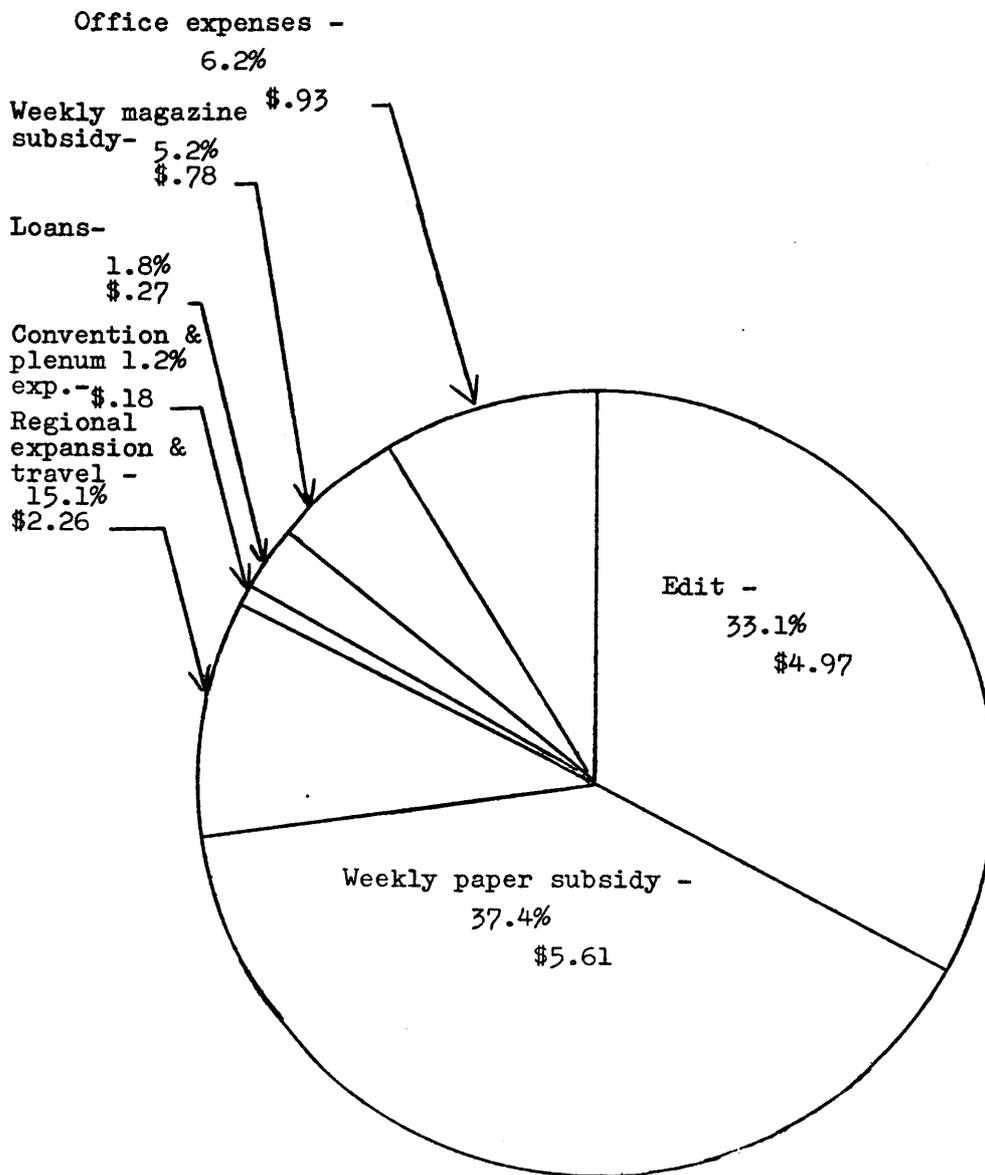
** As of February raising to \$16. per capita

*** As of February lowering to \$13. per capita

¹ As of November 1969 -- most recent report received.

<u>Total monthly pledge to N.O.</u>	<u>to N.O.</u>	<u>Six month ave. actual monthly payments thru:</u>
<u>2/69</u>	<u>1/70</u>	<u>12/68</u>
5859.	6415.	5743.
		<u>12/69</u>
		5958.

ALLOCATION OF \$15.00 (Norm) PER MEMBER PER MONTH SUSTAINER



REPORT ON FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES OF L.A. BRANCH

by Peggy Brundy

During the past year we have had considerable success in raising money for party activities outside our membership. Income from this source was remarkably higher last year than it has been in previous years even though Los Angeles has consistently raised money from these sources for many years.

The following figures, indicating yearly lump sums of income from the various sources show the important place that this outside fund raising occupies in our overall finances. At the same time the backbone of our finances remains members' sustainers.

1968	1969	
15,294	15,188	Members sustainers to branch
248	216	Coffee and soda
1,229	1,173	Forums
706	2,023	Non-member sustainers and misc. contributions
1,284	2,253	Socials and collections at socials

For the purpose of this report, outside money raising is abstracted from other branch political activities. In actual practice the fund raising flows from and is geared to all other activities. In mid-1968 we established a members' sustainer system. By early 1969 use of this system, coupled with an equally important careful curb on unnecessary expenses, had stabilized our branch finances. We were able to cover most basic expenses -- \$15.00 per member per month to the N.O., organizer, rent, etc. -- with the sustainers and money from forums, coffee and soda. During 1969 our average monthly per capita pledge from members rose from \$19.50 to \$22.00, and in February of 1970 we raised our N.O. sustainer to \$16.00 per member.

Having taken the crises out of internal finances, the branch turned toward raising money from outside sources. Comrades are encouraged to give to the party through their sustainers, not through large contributions at socials. Likewise we have a policy that the party must be reimbursed for all goods and services rendered to outside movements by individual comrades. If comrades are in a good enough financial position to be able to subsidize phone calls, leaflets, etc. for these movements, they are encouraged to raise their party sustainer and collect the money laid out.

The Periphery

Basic to all outside money raising is, of course, a contributing periphery. In general we do not ask anyone who might contribute to party activities to contribute to such activities as the antiwar movement, defense cases, etc., since thousands of others will contribute to these movements if searched out. Conversely, we view everyone who has contributed to one of these movements in which we are involved as a potential contributor to the party.

Very few people will enter or remain in this periphery under their own steam. We must organize this work just like any other. We compile lists of past, present and potential contributors and then assign comrades to do the necessary weekly follow-up with specific contributors. Each person must be periodically brought up to date on current activities of the party (if not involved in them), visited, welcomed when they come to our hall, and made to understand the concrete use to which their contribution is being put. This tactic of assigning specific comrades to work with specific contributors on an individual basis is one of the reasons for the sharp increase of income from these sources in 1969.

Some of our contributors have been around the party since the radicalization of the forties or earlier, but recent world events and party activities have reinspired them to contribute more heavily when talked to, and brought around us many new contributors. In general the potential for money raising has radically improved during the last couple of years. Our aim is to consolidate a money-giving periphery out of the current radicalization, and during 1969 we took big steps in that direction.

Non-Member Sustainers

Needless to say our most treasured source of outside income lies here with regularly paid monthly pledges of non-members. Our aim with every peripheral element is for them to make a regular pledge whether they are ex-comrades, potential recruits, or supporters of one specific area of our activities.

Making a regular pledge is motivated to these people just as to comrades. This type of contribution allows the branch to budget more efficiently. In our actual budget, however, this category is separated out and not depended on (opposed to the members' sustainers) because they tend to be less stable. These pledges are collected consciously every month; we don't just wait for them to be brought in.

Included in this category is a \$20.00 per month rent from the YSA and, beginning late 1969, a similar monthly amount from the bookstore. Sources of money are available to the YSA and not the party; some people would rather contribute to a youth organization than to the party. In this period there is every opportunity for a radical bookstore to make a profit if a rational system of record keeping and controls is instituted. As we expand use of our bookstore, this branch subsidy will increase.

Social Events -- (Political and "Non-Political")

It is best to establish a basic pattern of a few adequately spaced big socials held year after year. Then both comrades and periphery will begin looking forward to them. The periphery comes to expect being approached for big donations at these certain times. It doesn't take long to establish these traditions. We've had only two Militant banquets but already it is looked forward to. Successful outside fund raising requires the allocation of several people to this work. Forces utilized for these affairs include people drawn from periphery and comrades not engaged in external activities.

All social events must be money raising events. We plan and review every aspect of our socials from the beginning with the view of profit, as well as whether people enjoy themselves. Even at smaller events it has never hurt attendance to charge admission and to handle the refreshment concession for a 100% profit.

The May Day and Fall Militant banquets are our two biggest money raising affairs. They have been major events that politically inspired comrades and periphery. Planning begins months in advance. A political theme is set. Lists are made of all people who might come, a mailing sent out, then followed up with phone calls pushing advance sale of tickets. Our last banquet was attended by about 130 people (we have only 54 comrades

in the branch.) Cultivating the periphery pays off. In the case of people who might make a large contribution, we try to visit them and line the contribution up in advance of the collection speech, as "seed" money. This often results in large "surprise" donations from new people or others we hadn't expected to contribute.

On beverages: we serve a free, simple, alcoholic punch during the cocktail hour and unlimited quantities of free wine during the meal. Wine is less expensive than hard liquor or fancy drinks and goes down easily. By collection pitch time everyone feels warm and generous. Buy wine in gallon jugs and transfer to smaller, attractive table bottles.

On food: people should feel they have gotten their ticket's worth out of the food, freeing other money for the collection. It sometimes helps the atmosphere on special occasions to have the food served by comrades as waiters and waitresses. Serve plenty of relishes, bread and butter, and salad, with an inexpensive type of meat. Cost per person for serving turkey dinner (the cheapest meat), runs about \$1.70. Or another style is buffet with all food donated. Whatever the food or style, the point is to figure out before hand what it will cost, plan on a large profit even on student tickets. We have been selling tickets for \$5.00 and \$2.50, so a large chunk of profit comes from dinners alone.

On the collection: this is placed at a point on the program where we think the audience will be most responsive to such an appeal. We generally use the "hard sell" or "Novack" approach -- pitching the appeal around a specific expansion project the party is undertaking and then asking, or pleasantly demanding, some specific amount of money from the audience to finance this project. The work of contacting individual contributors in advance pays off here because we have an idea of where to start -- \$200, \$100, etc. The collector works slowly down: all \$50s, all \$20s, \$10s, \$5s, \$1s, then empty your pockets.

Caution: Hard sell collections that raise hundreds of dollars are a real inspiration to our periphery too. But they shouldn't be used too many times during a year, probably two or three times at the most.

Smaller, less formal socials such as a New Year's party, a summer picnic in the park, and a summer

shiskabob in a comrade's back yard, are also tradition. These raise less money (between \$100 and \$150) but are designed to give comrades and periphery a chance to keep acquainted and relax. On a smaller scale, we do the preliminary work of calling up etc. for these events also. Often peripheral people will contribute a fifth of spirits to a social affair.

Rummage Sales

Our two rummage sales raise about \$650 per year. The advantage here is that the money comes totally outside of our membership and periphery. We generally try to keep away from non-political money raising events, particularly small ones, but this twice yearly event is such a huge money raiser that it cannot be ignored. Most cities probably have available store fronts that can be rented for one or two days to sell the rummage in. It's best to rent a place that houses rummage sales year round; then no publicity on the sale is needed. All that is necessary is to collect a literal mountain of discarded clothes, kitchen utensils, toys, books, and anything else. The periphery helps here, but this year we plan to try collections in college dorms at the end of the spring semester.

Book Bazaars

We have had success several times with book bazaars. The most successful are those that contain a large number of political books. The books are collected from 1) ex-comrades and periphery who have decided after many years that they no longer need many of their books; 2) donations of libraries of deceased; 3) culling read, duplicate, or unwanted novels and other books from current libraries of comrades and periphery. We could also probably collect books through campus drives. As with rummage sales, comrades are given first crack at the best of the books through a presale.

Use of Headquarters: Forums, Coffee and Soda, etc.

These regular branch functions can be real money raisers if approached from that point of view. Coffee, soda, cake, etc. is provided as a convenience for comrades and contacts, but if they went to a restaurant they would have to pay for it anyway. We should get that money. One temptation to resist is providing top quality soda and expensive cakes. Serving these can destroy the profit from the entire effort. If correctly planned and carefully watched a 100% profit is possible.

Over the period of a year, this adds up to the equivalent of another large money raising event. There is generally an unfortunate tendency among both comrades and friends to lapse into the habit of just helping themselves to a cup of coffee or a soda because they are working on a mailing -- or some similar excuse. For this reason, a very close watch must be kept on the income-expense ratio, and when it slips much below the 100% mark, the branch should investigate and find the leak.

Forums are also consistent money raisers simply in the course of using them as propaganda forums. Pitfalls to be avoided that can eat up profit are 1) maintaining mailing lists of people who haven't come in months; 2) perpetually expensive leaflets; 3) extensive paid advertisements in underground, campus or bourgeois media; 4) travel expenses or fees for speakers. A small mailing and selective advertising (much is available free) will bring out approximately the same number of people. Exceptions are made for forums of particular importance or interest. On the other hand it is good to cultivate relations with numerous noted leftists and others who will bring big crowds into our halls. The person at the door should strictly collect the admission price from everyone, except in the most dire circumstances. The person or committee planning forums should assume the responsibility of assuring this profit for the forums.

When outside organizations use our facilities to run leaflets, put out mailings, make phone calls, etc., the party should be reimbursed at least the cost of these goods and services. This holds true also when a comrade working in the organization does the phoning, or mimeoing. Hundreds of dollars can easily be poured into these organizations (and out of our treasury) through our goods and services. A system of keeping track, billing and collecting should be set up.

Also, comrades working fulltime for outside organizations should get paid by that organization whenever possible.

As we continue to grow more and more, money will be coming into our headquarters and, concurrently, more and more people. This necessitates a tightening up of procedures in handling income. Concretely, no money should be left lying around in any part of the H.Q. Large sums of money should be counted or receipted behind closed doors. Not only

can significant sums of money be lost through petty theft, but any loss of a large sum of money can wreak havoc with the branch budget, create an aura of suspicion, and undermine the desire of both comrades and periphery to donate to an organization that just loses its money. It's best to handle these kinds of problems before they happen.

In conclusion, none of these methods for raising money and holding on to it by themselves guarantee a sound branch financial base. They must be taken together in the context of a budget and projection set by the

branch as a whole as part of our political perspectives. Political motivation rather than harangue coupled with persistent follow-up are the best ways to proceed. This allows planning ahead since we know how much more money is needed and when it must be raised to avoid financial crisis. Actual income and expenses must be reviewed monthly or even weekly in some cases to make sure it conforms to the projection.

We hope that other branches will contribute reports on money raising methods and projects they have found successful.

