

P.O. Box 471 Cooper Station  
New York, N.Y. 10003  
March 24, 1977

TO ALL NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Attached for your information is a copy of a report given to the San Francisco local by David Keepnews for the nominating commission for the San Francisco local executive committee.

Comradely,



Betsy Farley  
YSA National Office

Excerpts from the nominating commission report to the San Francisco local, approved on January 27, 1977. The report was presented by David Keepnews, San Francisco State University chapter.

Last night seven comrades met to nominate people for the San Francisco YSA local executive committee. This nominating commission consisted of two members elected by each chapter and a chairperson for the commission.

The deliberations of the commission set an important precedent for our local in selecting its leadership in the future. For this reason I want to explain in some detail what we did -- why we had a nominating commission, what kind of discussions the commission had, and what recommendations we came up with.

To decide on a list of nominees for the local executive committee, we had to consider the question of what the purpose of the LEC is. Its purpose is different from the chapter executive committees, which guide, direct, and organize our work on each of the campuses. The LEC should give political direction and guidance to our work on a citywide basis. It's more than an amalgamation of chapter executive committees or a body of chapter representatives.

For example, the LEC can discuss our goals for the national sales campaign in this city -- but it shouldn't decide which sales locations we should try out on each campus. It can give direction to the fund drive -- but it shouldn't discuss how each individual can raise his or her fund drive pledge. It can discuss expansion onto a new campus. It can prioritize and direct our political campaigns.

The LEC doesn't have to include every experienced comrade in the YSA. It doesn't have to include all the hard workers in the YSA, who number far more than any LEC could accommodate. What it does need is those leading YSA members whose particular experience, talents, and role in the YSA can help the LEC discuss and decide on the YSA's work citywide.

The LEC should be more than a composite body of the leaders of each chapter. For example, the LEC should discuss perspectives for antiracist work in San Francisco. It will be important to have comrades with experience in antiracist work who can help the LEC in its discussions on the subject. Comrades are needed with experience in education, high school work, and other areas.

This is why we felt the need for a nominating commission that could consciously, carefully, and deliberately discuss out and decide on a recommendation for a team of comrades who would make up the best possible LEC. The nominating commission was delegated to discuss the comrades in the local, and select a small number who, as a group, could function as a city leadership.

It should be noted that the outgoing LEC was elected without the benefit of a nominating commission. Two leading comrades were not elected to the LEC, but the LEC felt they were so indispensable to the LEC discussions that they were invited to virtually every LEC meeting. This is a problem we want to avoid. The actual city leadership and the LEC should be one and the same. The nominating commission feels the list of comrades we're proposing does this.

Our deliberations weren't very long -- about two and a half hours -- but they were very productive. We found that a large number of nominees for the LEC generated very little discussion in the nominating commission. This was because a large number of comrades are viewed already as authoritative citywide leaders. We all agreed fairly quickly that these comrades should be on the proposed LEC.

In the course of our discussions we also found ourselves discussing some of the political problems we face in San Francisco. We did this not to pre-empt the LEC, or attempt to mandate it, but to figure out what the LEC would need to cope with these problems.

We took note of new opportunities in antiracist work. We wanted input on the LEC that could represent some of our past work as well as some of our newer experiences -- especially in the high schools. We wanted to equip the incoming LEC to deal with some of the organizational problems in antiracist work, like the problem of how we can build chapters of the Student Coalition Against Racism on San Francisco campuses.

We wanted an LEC that could discuss the educational needs of the local and help the chapters organize education. We were also concerned with the local's participation in the YSA's financial campaigns. In all of these areas we discussed who in the local could add their knowledge and experience to the LEC's discussions and decisions.

Our longest, and I think most fruitful, discussion concerned the YSA's needs in dealing with high school work. A priority for the incoming LEC will be discussing how to take the campaigns of the YSA into the high schools. The proposal includes two high school students. In our opinion having these two comrades on the LEC will help strengthen our high school work, although it will not automatically make us stronger in the high schools. These comrades are proposed for the LEC not as "representatives" of high school work, but as two leading YSA members who can play a central role in LEC discussions while the YSA citywide seeks to meet the challenge of strengthening our work in this area.

Although some comrades on the proposed list have unique experiences, every comrade on the list has important contributions to make in every respect. They are leaders of the YSA, not representatives of a fraction, committee, or area of work.

We realize that there are YSA leaders who will not be elect-

ed to the LEC. But we feel that our proposal represents the top leadership in the city. As a body, it will have the authority and the ability to act for the San Francisco YSA and to guide the local.

The proposed list consists of eight members. This is because we felt that eight comrades were needed on the LEC. When we discuss the composition of the LEC tonight, the size is also open for discussion.

No one is required to vote for this list. Comrades can nominate and vote for whomever they want, whether they are on the proposed list or not. Some weight should be attached to our deliberations since we were delegated to spend time in discussion for the sole purpose of selecting an LEC. But our word is not final, and comrades are free to nominate, motivate, and vote for anyone they choose.