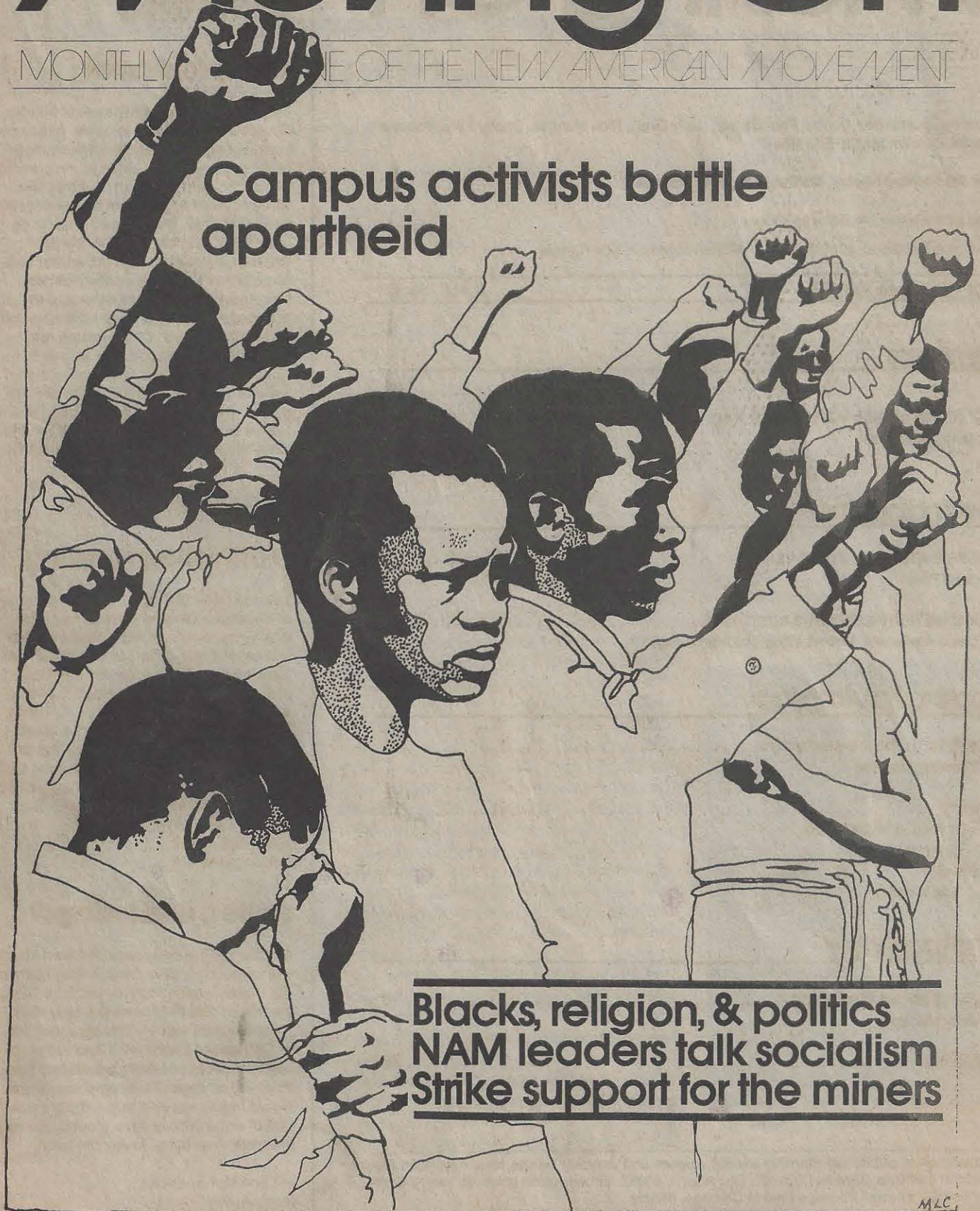


# Moving On

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

## Campus activists battle apartheid



**Blacks, religion, & politics**  
**NAM leaders talk socialism**  
**Strike support for the miners**



# Moving On

MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

EDITORIAL BOARD: Ben Dobbs, Paul Garver, Holly Graff, Rick Kunnes, Bobby Lilly, Roberta Lynch, Carolyn Magid, Eric Nee

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## Letters

### Complex issues

I really enjoyed the April issue of MOVING ON, almost from cover to cover. Although I am in complete political solidarity with NAM, your magazine tends to the growing pile of "to-be-read" stuff. But this last issue covered a number of issues of great concern to me. The article on health by John Haer, member of the renowned Pittsburgh chapter, iced the matter to a large extent. The Cambodia/Vietnam piece gave a semblance of reason to a bumper of a situation. The article on United Neighborhoods Organization really highlighted all the complex issues surrounding Alinsky and neo-Alinsky organizations (with the addition of the editors piece). The PROD article was good too—I know a lot of movement people tend to write PROD off, which is a real mistake.

—Buck Bagot  
San Francisco, CA

### Worthwhile reading

The last issue of MOVING ON gave promise of becoming worthwhile reading. If the quality continues at the present level, it will be read with pleasure. We are all complaining that the people who are disapproving the current situation are asking questions in the N.Y. Times, L.A. Times, Washington Post, etc.. Very few questions reach the left periodicals. But the possibility of such a switch must be anticipated and prepared for. You are well on the way. Keep up the good work.

—Samuel Kalish  
Los Angeles, CA

### Skilled underdogs?

So Charles Dewey sees skilled workers as the underdogs, even though they always get higher wages than the unskilled at a particular plant? (MOVING ON, May 1978, "The Skilled Trades—Privileged Sector or Oppressed Minority?") And the problem is that cost-of-living escalators tend to equalize wages? I thought socialists would like to see just that—the elimination of wage differentials. I found Dewey's analysis surprising, to say the least.

—Lane McKendrick  
Boston, MA



## Comment

# Out of the closet — and into a trap

by Nancy Wechsler

Is Massachusetts State Representative Elaine Noble an example of “gay candidates with generally progressive politics who should be supported now”? That’s what Christine Riddiough said in her article “Out of the Closet and into the Legislature” in the February MOVING ON. I want to take up the question of just how liberal Elaine Noble really is, what it means that she is a member of the Democratic party, and what it

means for socialist feminists to support Democrats, be they gay or straight. I also want to suggest an alternative strategy for the left and the gay movement.

My political perspective comes from my experience as a gay activist, socialist feminist, and former radical elected official. During the years 1970-74 I was active in the Human Rights Party (HRP), a radical third party in Michigan. For two of those years I served as an elected official from HRP on the Ann Arbor, Michigan City Council.

The strategy implied in Riddiough’s article is that socialist feminists should support and work for gay Democrats, because gay Democrats tend to be more progressive and because “in the absence of a large socialist movement, it is hard to expect more.” The experience of gay socialists who have been elected to office is ignored; the socialist feminist opposition to Democrats like Elaine Noble is dismissed as “some independents.”

It is not just independents who are disappointed and angry with Noble’s record as a legislator. She has lost favor with almost everyone left of center. It isn’t at all clear from her record, her statement, and her actions that Elaine Noble can even be considered a liberal. As the years have gone by she has voted more and more consistently with the conservative House leadership, often against a liberal reform block in the House. Riddiough points out that this “strategy gained her the support of the Speaker of the House and other Democratic powers for gay rights legislation.” Unfortunately, when the bill came up for a vote this year it went down to defeat despite the compromises she made to win support for it. And it would be naive to see her compromises with the House leadership as merely a tactic for gaining support for gay rights

—Noble is clearly angling for Democratic party campaign funds, and endorsements for her bid for the U.S. Senate.

Specifically, Elaine Noble voted against attempts by the House liberals to reform the House code of ethics in the wake of the extortion convictions of two state senators. She helped the leadership protect its power, particularly the speaker’s right to appoint committee chairs and to control the discharge of legislation from committee. A few weeks later when the leadership named the new Ethics committee, Noble was the only woman chosen. She has also voted against the liberals’ attempts to pass financial disclosure regulations, though it is rumored that financial disclosure will be her main campaign theme against Senator Brooke if she gets the Democratic nomination.

### Reasons to criticize

Radicals have many others reasons to criticize Elaine Noble’s performance as a state representative. She has not used her position in the legislature to organize people around pressing issues such as rent control, abortion, cutbacks in social services, or attempts by the state



photo by LNS Women's Graphics

Lesbian participants in a demonstration in support of New York gay rights ordinance.

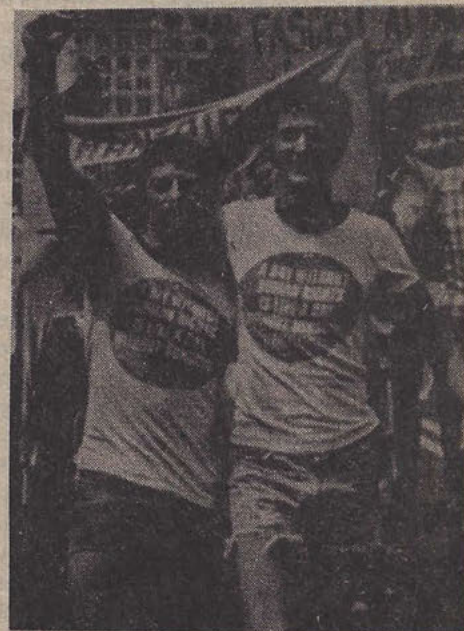


photo by Peter Mellillo/LNS

Gay rights demonstration in New York City.



to build a maximum security prison ward for "violent" women.

During Noble's first year in office the newly elected "liberal" Democratic Governor Dukakis set about "balancing the budget," taking a hatchet to social service programs. He pushed for legislation that would prevent most people under 40 (without children) from collecting welfare benefits. He slashed health coverage for welfare recipients. Noble was noticeably silent. As a State Representative she has access to press and media that radicals don't have. She could have used her position to help organize opposition to the cutbacks. She did not. The Boston Women's Union, to which I belonged, became active around this issue. We were a part of a group called the Coalition to Fight the Cutbacks. The coalition organized in communities and called for demonstrations and attendance at public hearings in the State House Noble was critical of our tactics, considering us disruptive. In the end we were unable to mobilize enough people to stop most of the cutbacks.

For the past year or two the women's and lesbian communities have focussed much of their energy on issues of violence against women. The Coalition to Stop Institutional Violence opposes the State of Massachusetts building and funding a maximum security prison ward for "violent" women. There have been numerous educationals, demonstrations, and public hearings organized by this coalition. Noble has yet to take a stand for or against the Unit.

Noble hasn't helped us because she puts her faith in, and wants to receive her power from, not us, but the powers in the legislature. She counts on getting things done for the people in her district by being in the good graces of the House leadership. She feels no responsibility to any political group or constituency other than the Democratic Party. She has actively campaigned for other Democrats including Mayor White of Boston, for Governor Dukakis, and last but not least for Jimmy Carter. For her campaigning she expects things in re-

turn from other loyal Democrats.

What happened to Noble will happen to anyone who runs as a Democrat for public office, no matter what their intentions. There are tremendous pressures to conform on City Councils and State Legislatures—to play by the established rules, not rock the boat, not be too outrageous or "disruptive". All Democrats, no matter what their specific brand of liberalism or conservatism, are tied in to the national Democratic Party structure—the party of Carter, Kennedy, Texas oil millionaire Robert Strauss, and the likes of Senator James Eastland

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## **Noble hasn't helped us because she puts her faith, and wants to receive her power from, not us, but the powers in the legislature.**

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(D-Miss.).

Should socialists, feminists or radicals put any energy into electing Democrats? Even gay Democrats, pro-ERA or Pro Abortion Democrats? What message does that give people? One message is that we believe that because, as the argument goes, Democrats are better than Republicans, that electing a Democrat will really make a difference. It says that all people have to do is elect reform Democrats or Democrats that are good on one issue (and bad on many others) and everything will be better. As long as people believe that, we will get nowhere. Electing Democrats isn't the way things will change. In the long run, which Democrat or Republican is in office does not matter. Democrats say one thing while running for office; it is likely they will behave in quite another fashion once elected. The Democratic Party is just as tied in to the ruling class as the Republican Party.

## **Active people**

We need organizations to activate people to fight for what they need, instead of relying on some elected official who is bought off by business. We need a socialist party that will run against the corporate liberals of both parties.

In Ann Arbor I ran against and argued on City Council with "reform-left-wing" Democrats. They voted the way business wanted on most major issues. Only strong outside pressure would get them to change their votes; for example, an organized and very vocal gay movement forced the Democrats to vote for HRP's gay civil rights ordinance. An active and disruptive women's movement forced them to support our plan for spending revenue sharing money primarily on social services. The Democrats agreed to our proposal to have city employees covered by unemployment compensation only when we informed them that it would cost the city \$16,000.00, cheap enough to look like you cared about labor issues. Yet they voted against a tough anti-strike breaking ordinance HRP drew up, and refused to step in during strikes to restrain the police from harassing picketers. During the Farah pants strike and the boycott of non-union grapes and lettuce by the United Farm Workers, the Human Rights Party brought resolutions to Council supporting the workers. The Democrats voted our resolutions down the first time around, stating that they hadn't heard the "company's side" of things, and therefore could not support us. And while they all considered themselves anti-war Democrats, they voted down each and every resolution we brought to Council opposing the Vietnam War.

One thing radicals in this country must do is build a mass based, democratically run third party, a party that engages in electoral work, organizes demonstrations, does strike support, takes active roles in strikes, builds connections between rank and file labor union groups, and pushes for feminism and gay liberation on every possible

*continued on page 21*



# Getting Together

## Strike support in a new vein

By John Haer

When the 160,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) narrowly accepted a third contract proposal last March 24th, ending a tumultuous 110-day strike, corporate America breathed a sigh of relief. Events had been getting out of hand. The strike had generated a wave of rank-and-file militance that churned the already choppy waters of the energy monopolies, splashed the office of the country's President, and threatened to wash away the stagnant UMWA top leadership.

In the initial stage of the contract negotiations and strike, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), the negotiating arm of the mine owners, sensed they could take advantage of what they perceived as a weak and divided union. The BCOA arrogantly insisted on a "work stability package" which virtually removed every right the mineworkers had to control their own working conditions, job safety, and health and welfare benefits. But the BCOA bit off more than they could chew. They seriously miscalculated the solidarity and gutty determination of the coal miners to fight back and the ability of the miners' struggle to elicit a groundswell of public support.

Although the final contract contains fewer rights and benefits than the miners had demanded, it has only a few of the straitjacketing provisions the BCOA attempted to impose. The miners' stubborn refusal to give in to the attacks on their living standards and rights in the face of tremendous odds—a stiff industry assault, widespread adverse media, the Presidential invocation of Taft-Hartley, and a weak and vacillating union leadership—is testimony to their courage and tenacity.

Situated in the heart of coal country, the forty members of New American Movement's Pittsburgh Chapter worked on many and varied mineworker support efforts. "Our NAM labor committee discussed the possibility of a coal strike, its ramifications, and how we could work to support the miners last Fall," says committee chairperson Ronaele Novotny. "We knew there was much at stake for the miners and labor in general, and that a coal strike would especially affect our region. We felt the right-to-strike issue was particularly important, because the United Steelworkers Union several years ago negotiated away the local right to strike without even a membership vote. It also was clear that the energy industry would really try to impose [take aways] on the UMW which, if successful, would further weaken organized labor."

Pittsburgh NAM's labor committee was the focus of the chapter's planning for strike support. Its members work in different places and types of jobs. Several are local union elected officers, and two are union staff members. Some work in unorganized shops where union drives are under way. Others, who work where employees are dominated by undemocratic and corrupt unions, participate in rank and file groups.

"Our initial discussions were on how to avoid the sectarian arguments that weakened a previous miners' support coalition three years ago," Novotny says. "With that purpose in mind, we had general discussions with some of the other left groups. This time, there seemed to be better working relationships, perhaps because so much was at stake."

In the strike's first month, there was little support activity, but in early January, a loose group of industrial activ-



*Johnny Paycheck performs at Pittsburgh benefit for the miners.*

**Johnny "Take This Job and Shove It" Paycheck performs at a benefit for the mineworkers in Pittsburgh, PA.**



ists, many of them working with the local Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), hatched a unique idea. They proposed a marathon football game with teams from various workplaces as a focal point for rank-and-file efforts to support the miners.

"It seemed just crazy enough to work," recalls Tom Simonds, a member of both NAM and TDU and activist with Yellow Fever, a local cab drivers' rank-and-file group. However, NAM members objected that a football game might limit participation by women. The event's planning committee, which came together under the name of Committee of Concerned Unionists (CCU), was receptive to NAM's misgivings. But by that time planning for a football game was already too far underway to change the sport. However, the participants did recognize the possibilities that the event might foster a "macho" atmosphere and affirmed their intentions to diminish it.

Organizing for the "Coal Bowl", as the game was to be called, progressed rapidly, and CCU grew as more activists got involved. By late January, teams from nearly twenty plants and offices in the greater Pittsburgh area were committed to play. "People really liked the

idea of a cross-union strike support event," says Simonds. CCU activists made a special effort to reach out to all workers that were currently on strike, in addition to the miners. Teams from three UMW locals were slated. Striking steelworkers from Mesta Machine and Latrobe Steel and striking auto-workers from J.E. Wiegand fielded teams. To recognize all the various area strikes (in addition to the mineworkers, more than 10,000 union members, mostly in steel, had been out up to seven months), CCU renamed the event "The Union Bowl".

The final pre-game roster listed 24 teams from steelmills, coal mines, department stores, firehouses, truck terminals and warehouses. NAM members initiated three different teams—cab drivers, state workers, and steelworkers from a plant north of the city.

"Some local unions passed resolutions of support and gave contributions," says Simonds. "In other locals, they just rounded up a team. Our emphasis was on involving as many working folks as possible, and that meant that going through official channels wasn't always possible or necessary."

On Feb. 4, Union Bowl day, the city's astroturfed Dean Field was filled with about 450 players, their families, and well-wishers. Although the weather was frigid, an adjoining recreation hall offered a warm environment and showings of *Union Maids*, *Harlan County USA*, and *Testimony* (the J.P. Stevens Boycott Committee film). Bluegrass singers and players performed, and the beer, coffee, and bake sale goods were soon devoured. The eight-hour marathon concluded with a rally that evening, addressed by representatives from the striking locals, TDU activists, and even two Puerto Rican unionists who were passing through Pittsburgh on a national speaking tour.

The event netted a little more than \$1,000, which was used to purchase ads in several of the steel town dailies, presenting the miners' side of the strike. By mid-February, three full-page ads appeared in the *McKeesport Daily News*,

the *Homestead Daily Messenger*, and the *Valley News-Dispatch*. Headed "Which Side Are You On?" the ads detailed how the miners' strike against the energy companies was in the forefront of labor's defense of living standards. The ads detailed actions to be taken to support the miners and were signed by some fifteen local unions, local union presidents, or labor organizations.

Simonds felt the ads were "really a good form of advocacy, because they are so visible and reach so many people. They showed the connection between the miners' strike and other labor struggles. Several miners commented that having their side known to the general public was really encouraging. The Union Bowl was also a good kick-off for CCU, too," he continued. "The game produced a mailing list of some 300 people and a number of activists who wanted to see the organization continue and grow."

CCU continued its support activities throughout the duration of the strike-petitioning against the Taft-Hartley injunction, joining support demonstrations, and working with other strikers as well. In early April, CCU activists decided to continue the organization and give it more of a formal character. A steering committee was elected, and an all-day labor workshop is planned in May.

## Shove It

In mid-January, another local formation to support the strike formed, initiated through the UMWA District #5 office in Pittsburgh. The Western Penna. Coalition to Support the United Mine Workers solicited and received endorsement and contributions from the Allegheny County Labor Council and a number of local unions. They held local press conferences to endorse the miners' demands, and sponsored a large support rally on Jan. 19 with music by country singer Johnny Paycheck ("Take This Job and Shove It!"). UMWA President Arnold Miller was among the top labor leaders who addressed the 1,000-person rally. On Feb. 6 the coalition sponsored a demonstration and march



Photo by Joni Rabinowitz

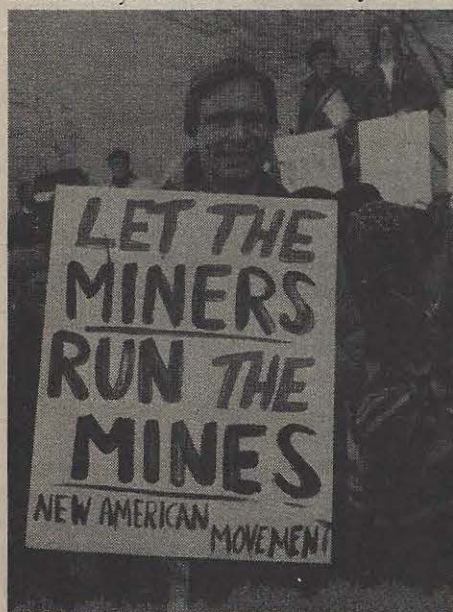
Community representative testifies at PUC hearing on Duquesne Light's requested increase.



in downtown Pittsburgh to support the miners. This demonstration mobilized some 1,500 people, including busloads of miners from adjoining areas.

After discussing their participation in these two support formations, NAM members concluded they should contribute to both where possible. As several of them were elected union officials, they could lend their support to press conferences and mobilize their union members for the demonstration called by the Western Penna. Coalition. "We tried to assure that both formations weren't working at cross purposes," says Novotny. "However, the Western Penna. Coalition offered us little opportunity for planning input. CCU was much more open in that respect."

While these labor support efforts were proceeding, Pittsburgh NAM's utility committee, the People's Power Project, was busy drawing connections between the miners' struggle for a decent contract and the continuing utility rip-offs. The committee has a three year history of fighting the rising rates of the local electric utility, Duquesne Light. Last summer, the project joined together with several community groups to form the Pennsylvania Alliance for Jobs and



Support demonstration after the Taft-Hartley was invoked.

Energy (PAJE). Paul Garver, the chairperson for the chapter's utility committee, and also chair of NAM's national energy commission, states that PAJE saw the situation clearly: "the BCOA was using the utilities as a mouthpiece during the strike."

"By late January," Garver continued, "the utilities really began applying the pressure." In Pittsburgh, over a two-week period, Duquesne Light launched a major media blitz. They petitioned the Governor to provide armed deputies and even helicopters to protect the delivery of non-union coal. Warning of "serious coal shortages and dwindling stockpiles," they filed a conservation plan with the Public Utility Commission (PUC) that would gradually reduce energy consumption and eventually culminate in selective blackouts and massive industrial layoffs. On top of this, they filed for an emergency rate hike to get the consumers to pay for oil-fueled electricity purchased from the large inter-state combines at a price 3-5 times higher than coal-fueled power.

### Strike Surcharge

Working with the activists in PAJE, NAM decided to mobilize against Duquesne Light's rate hike request, which they dubbed the "Strike Surcharge." PAJE, with the support of the Western Penna. Coalition, geared their protest efforts toward a local PUC hearing on Feb. 16. Nearly 350 protestors, including many mineworkers and representatives from several of the city's community action agencies, turned out for the hearing. The demonstrators briefly picketed the hearing building and then marched inside to present 2½ hours of testimony by some thirty groups and individuals opposing the rate hike.

"PAJE's strategy for the hearing," says Garver, "was to show that utility consumers and striking mineworkers have common cause to oppose Duquesne Light, and there was plenty of ammunition for the attack. After all, Duquesne Light owns and operates five mines, and is a member of the BCOA. If they cared so much about the public



Union representative addresses rally to support miners.

safety, why didn't they influence BCOA to offer the miners a decent contract? We were convinced that the utility was underestimating its coal supply, deliberately creating a crisis atmosphere to pressure the miners into an unjust settlement in the name of "public interest." On top of that, they were grossly overestimating the cost of their purchased electricity so that consumers would blame the miners for a rate hike."

Testifying for NAM at the hearing, spokesperson Joni Rabinowitz called on consumers to refuse to pay the "Strike Surcharge." "The only solution to greedy profit-making businesses like Duquesne Light," she said, "is for the community and workers to take them over and run them in our own interests." Many of the other speakers echoed these sentiments.

A miner from Freeport, who didn't have time to prepare his own statement, read the complete text of the Peoples Power Project/NAM leaflet, which included a call for public ownership and democratic control of workplaces. Later, he said that the leaflet was a good statement of exactly how he felt.

Following the hearing, the PUC ordered a 25% cutback of energy to Duquesne Light's 32 biggest industrial customers, rather than a 50% cutback on all 1800 industrial users, as the utility had requested. In addition, they postponed a decision on the surcharge. On the same day, the PUC found Duquesne Light had over-charged its customers \$5 billion of fuel-cost adjustments in 1974. Although the surcharge was eventually imposed, it was only after the

*Continued on page 21.*





*This photo appears on a poster advertising the film, "Last Grave at Dimbaza" which was made illegally in South Africa. It depicts the conditions of life for black South Africans under apartheid.*

## Campus activism surges around South Africa

By David Alexander, Iris Young  
and Robert Miller

Social scientists and educators have been quietly writing off the campus activism of the late sixties and early seventies as the aberrant nonsense of a disaffected generation. By now it has become a truism that the students of the seventies are uninterested in politics. There is no question that the economic crunch of the seventies has forced students to think more of sheer economic survival than did the students of the sixties. But the recent upsurge in campus activity around the issues of U.S. corporate involvement in South Africa

shows that campus politics is not merely a part of the buried past.

The last year has brought a number of dramatic examples of student militancy in the face of immediate reprisal, as well as some significant successes. For example, in the spring of 1977 over 1000 students out of a student body of 6500 at the University of California at Santa Cruz demonstrated to demand that the university sell stock in corporations with investments in South Africa. 401 of that 1000 were arrested. In November 1977 a large demonstration at the University of Wisconsin at Madison culminated in a march to a meeting of the board of regents. Police sprayed mace on the crowd as they tried to make their way up the stairs to the meeting. A

few months later, however, at the advice of the Wisconsin State Attorney General, the regents voted to sell \$9,000,000 worth of stock invested in corporations with interests in South Africa. After almost a year of campus activity, the Oregon State Board of Education, which administers 13 colleges, voted to divest stock valued at \$6,000,000 in corporations with interests in South Africa.

Campus activity concerning South Africa is part of a growing movement to put pressure on U.S. corporations to cease their economic support of the apartheid regime. While this activity has been going on for over a decade, in the last two years it has snowballed into a major national movement. The origins of the current activity can be traced



directly to the student uprisings in Soweto in the summer of 1976, which focused world attention upon the oppression and the militancy of the black South Africans.

Since that time a number of city governments—including Gary, In., Madison, Wisc., Washington, D.C., and Davis, Calif.—have decided to cease doing business with corporations with investments in South Africa. An increasing number of labor unions have voted to withdraw funds from banks lending to the South African government. Among these are the United Auto Workers, Furriers Joint Council, and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America.

### High return

Almost all of the campus movements have been directed at calling for the respective colleges and universities to sell their stocks in U.S. corporations with significant business interests in South Africa, in order to pressure those corporations to pull out of South Africa. Without such pressure, of course, corporations are quite reluctant to take any such steps. South Africa contains some of the world's richest deposits of minerals essential to industrial production. Investment in the South African economy, moreover, brings a high return. Before the current recession return was as high as 18% and even now stands well above the world average.

Despite a resolution of the U.N. General Assembly calling for world economic boycott of South Africa, the policy of the Carter administration has been to support U.S. economic presence in South Africa. As recently as June 1977, Ambassador Andrew Young expressed confidence that the presence of U.S. corporations in South Africa can have a positive effect in promoting progressive change in the condition of black South Africans and in pressuring the government to change its racist policies.

The bankruptcy of this policy, however, is becoming clear to almost everyone. The NAACP and numerous church groups have called for withdrawing U.S. investments in South Africa. Even the

January 1978 report of the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee says: "The net effect of American investment has been to strengthen the economic and military self-sufficiency of South Africa's apartheid regime, undermining the fundamental goals and objectives of U.S. foreign policy."

In calling on their trustees to divest of stocks in corporations involved in South Africa, students have used various tactics. Last March in only three days the anti-apartheid committee at Swarthmore College collected the signatures of half the student body on a petition calling for the board of trustees to divest. Students at Miami University, in Ohio, passed a divestment referendum by a three to one margin. At several colleges, including Yale and Oregon, there have been pickets and protests of companies with South Africa interests who do on-campus recruiting. Student groups have picketed and sat in at administration buildings and picketed meetings of their boards of trustees.

At several schools students have tied the issue of investment in corporations with business ties to South Africa with other issues of racism and imperialism. The Santa Cruz Coalition Against Institutional Racism's program of demands links the divestment of South Africa holdings with overturning the Bakke decision, establishing a Third World Studies Board, expanding the special admissions program and other measures supporting third world students. At Wesleyan University students marked a day of tribute to Malcolm X by sitting in at administrative offices to demand University divestment. Some campus movements, including Oregon and Chicago, have participated in community campaigns against local sale of the South African gold coin, the Kruggerand.

### Links with banks

Several campus movements have linked the question of South African investments to that of the corporate interests of their trustees. At Northwest-

ern, students demonstrated in front of Johnson Products to urge the company's president, a Northwestern trustee, to support divestment. In conjunction with a community coalition demanding that Chicago based banks end loans to South Africa, students at the University of Chicago have been protesting the links between the university and banks such as First National and Continental. The university has twelve trustees who are directors of banks which lend money to South Africa.

There can be no question but that the protests are meeting with significant success. After students at Hampshire College occupied the Cole Science Center in the Spring of 1977, the Board of Trustees voted to sell \$39,000 of stock invested in corporations with South Africa interests. When Firestone Rubber Company did not respond to requests about its investment policy in South Africa, Smith College sold shares in that company valued at \$688,000. In September 1977, after two years of student agitation, the board of trustees at the University of Massachusetts voted to sell \$600,000 worth of stock in 20 corporations. Harvard University sold \$600,000 worth of shares in Citicorp and Manufacturer's Hanover in February 1978. The University officials have denied that the sales were politically motivated, but it can be no coincidence that they occurred soon after the South Africa Solidarity Committee collected 3000 signatures on a petition demanding their sale. The Board of Trustees at Ohio University recently voted to divest of \$52,000 of stock in Getty Oil, ITT, Mobil Oil, Emery Air Freight and Monsanto.

Colleges and universities which have refused to divest have nevertheless been forced by the political pressure on their campuses to face the issue of U.S. corporate involvement in South Africa. A number have made weaker gestures. These include writing letters to corporations asking that they work for changes in South Africa, and supporting stockholder's initiatives which call upon corporations to change their policies with



relation to South Africa. Some base their compromise position on the "Sullivan Principles". Supposedly humane guidelines for corporations in South Africa, the bankruptcy of these principles has been exposed by the American Committee on Africa's pamphlet, "Too Little, Too Late".

The pressure on banks and corporations to withdraw their economic support from South Africa has yielded some action. Citicorp, for example, recently made public a decision to cease lending money to the South African government or government owned enterprises. Carole Collins, national coordinator of the Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, points out, however, that "this does not mean that Citicorp money will not find its way to South Africa. Money can be lent to U.S. corporations which in turn may lend money to the South African Government."

### Cost of management

The Polaroid Company recently withdrew its operations from South Africa after it was discovered that the local affiliate was selling film and cameras to the South African government for use in making the "passbooks" of the South African blacks. The March 9, 1978 newsletter of the Investor Responsibility Research Center reports that in recent months several banks have said that "the cost of management time spent in responding to people questioning loans to South Africa or the possibility that depositors might withdraw funds or complain publicly about lending practices have become factors to be weighed carefully in evaluating future loans."

Perhaps the most significant success of the campus movement on South Africa, however, is the degree to which it has reawakened student interest in politics. "The work on South Africa is attracting a large number of people who were formerly politically inactive," observes Judy Johnson, a member of Chicago Southside NAM, "as well as many people who have done no political work since Vietnam." Sharon Pee-

ples, member of the Committee Against Apartheid at Miami University and a NAM member, reports that "this is the only issue which has stirred up people on this campus since Kent State. Miami is a rather conservative, quiet campus, and we feel we've had real success raising consciousness and moving some people toward political involvement."

One of the most promising aspects of the campus movement has been its success in drawing together a wide diversity of individuals and groups, including Third World groups, left groups



photo by Ben Davis

*South Side Chicago NAM supports divestiture demonstration, February, 1978.*

and church groups. At Wesleyan University, for example, a Black student group, a Latino student group, and an Asian interest group were among the members of a coalition which sponsored sit-ins and a letter writing campaign.

NAM has also been an active part of the movement. NAM members have been involved in campus coalitions around South Africa at the University of Oregon, University of Wisconsin, Miami of Ohio, Yale University, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and University of Chicago.

Organizers agree that the movement has been successful in mobilizing students, raising consciousness and bringing together white and black students. At some campuses there have been some problems, however, keeping up involvement and carrying forward its momentum to other issues. This reflects, at least in part, some of the problems of time and academic schedule that the campus based movements have. Many people consider it necessary to remedy these weaknesses by forming strong ties with community groups and other non-campus organizations.

In spite of problems, though, the movement grows. A recent East coast conference drew 400 activists who hope to form a more coordinated campaign against corporations investing in Southern Africa. The heightened activism on campuses may well show that it was the apathy of the mid-seventies, not the sixties activism, that was the exception on American campuses.

*A number of regional and national organizations have been or are being formed. Groups to contact for more information include:*

*American Committee on Africa, 305 E. 46th St., NY, NY 10017*

*Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, 615 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago, IL 60657*

*Committee to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa, 305 E. 46th St., NY, NY 10017*

*Stop Banking on Apartheid, 2160 Lake St., San Francisco, CA 94121*

*UN International Year of Struggle Against Apartheid, c/o Dennis Brutus, Northwestern Univ., College of Arts and Sciences, Department of English, Evanston, IL 60201*

*Washington Office on Africa, 110 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002*

*David Alexander, Robert Miller and Iris Young are members of Oxford NAM and the Committee Against Apartheid.*





Dr. Martin Luther King addresses the First Baptist Church, April 1961.

## Looking For America

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# Black faith, black worldview

By Manning Marable

The small country church, filled with perspiring worshippers, stands beneath the shade of several withering pines. Young black girls in carefully ironed organdy dresses sit in neat rows of metal folding chairs. A young man wearing a starched white shirt and gloves stands ready at the entrance, opening the door for late arrivals. Several fat, older women are busy cooling themselves with cardboard fans provided by a local, enterprising undertaker. All eyes are directed toward a large, frayed and soiled red plush chair with a high back, in which the minister sits. After the opening hymn, all is quiet.

A short, wiry black man wearing an ill-fitting black suit stands and faces the congregation. He closes his eyes tightly, raises his sweating palms toward the rafters and prays aloud in a deep, resounding baritone:

"Blessed Jesus, we thank you for life, the greatest blessing of the world, life. We thank you for the blood that circulates through our bodies. We thank you for the blood and the air so we can stand on our feet. We thank you for the loving hand of mercy bestowed upon us; that Thou are in our midst. Prepare us for our souls' journey through this unfriendly world, and when our life on this earth is ended receive us into Thy home which art in heaven."

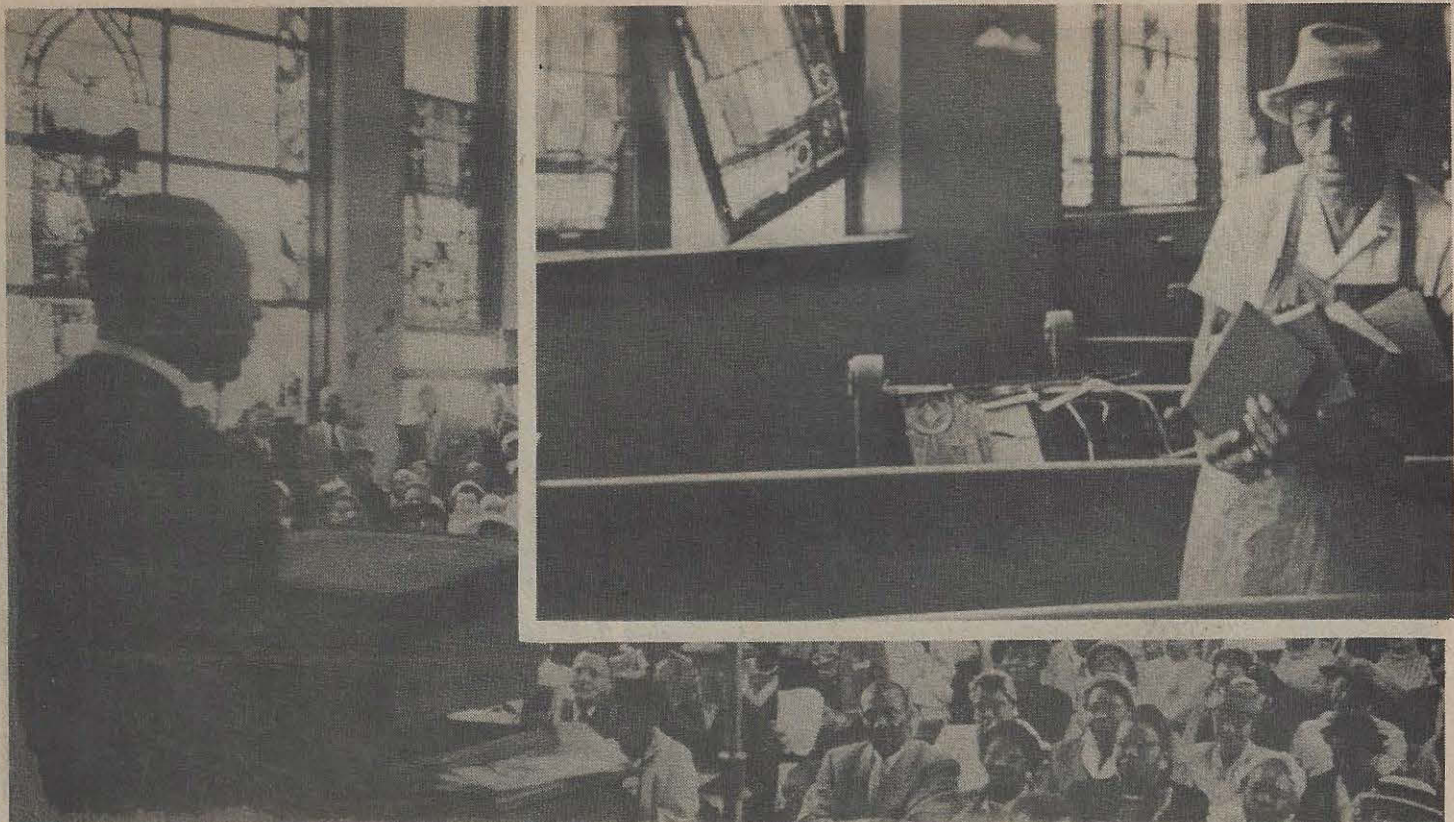
There are moans and exclamations resounding from all corners of the small room. "Lord have mercy, Amen." The choir, joined by the congregation, begins to sing softly. "We'll Understand It Better By and By."

Charles S. Johnson, the famous black sociologist, witnessed this scene and others like it hundreds of times in his extensive research throughout the Black Belt during the nineteen thirties and forties. Johnson spent several years in Tus-

kegee, Alabama, and came to understand the deep emotional and spiritual influence of Christianity in the everyday lives of rural black people. In his book, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, Johnson pointed out that "among rural Negroes the church is still the only institution which provides an effective organization of the group, an approved and tolerated place for social activities, a forum for expression on many issues, and an outlet for emotional repressions." Black faith provided the central ideological elements in organizing the rural black population's accepted conception of life, labor and human development. The catharsis of black faith which is expressed even today in dozens of rural, country churches in Tuskegee represents the collective consciousness of an entire race and class.

Tuskegee itself is a community of perhaps fourteen thousand people in Macon County, Alabama, situated along a





*The bombing of Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church took four lives.*

broad sandy plain that cuts across Georgia and Alabama. The counties in this geographical region are still called the Black Belt. Alabama's Black Belt consists of perhaps one third of the state's area but now holds about one ninth of the state's population. The region is characterized by a high percentage of blacks, the dominance of cotton and timber agriculture and a general lack of industrial development. Macon County is exceptional only in the existence of two economic institutions that employ about 4,500 people—Tuskegee Institute and the Veterans' Administration Hospital. Culturally, Tuskegee's black population is divided roughly between the relatively affluent professional elite and the rural working class black majority. Both groups are organized around their respective religious institutions—the Negro petty bourgeoisie attend their Episcopal, Presbyterian and Catholic churches, while most poor blacks are Baptists and Methodists. Throughout the history of this small but important black community, black churches and black faith in general have played the decisive role in directing the pattern of political protest for the entire black population.

### **Skeptical Attitude**

Tuskegee Institute blacks have always held a more skeptical attitude toward or-

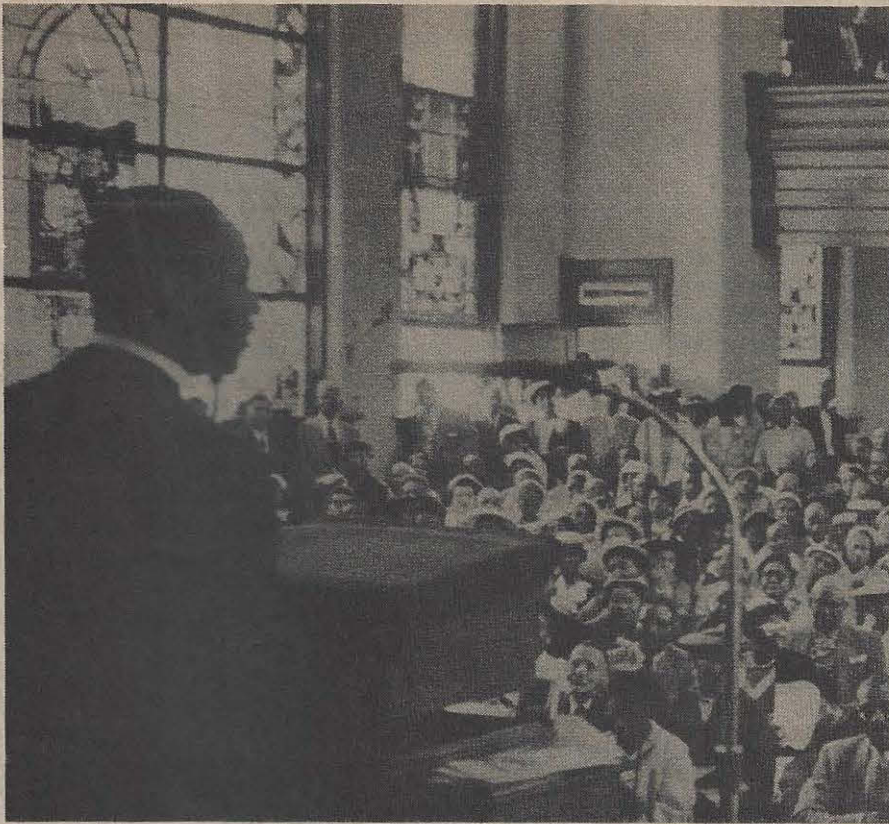
ganized black religion and black ministers than many rural and working class blacks. The reasons for this go well beyond the recent past, into the very origins of the college. Booker T. Washington, the famous black educator and first President of Tuskegee Institute, attended Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C., in 1878-79, but turned his back to a career in the ministry. Washington believed that the majority of black ministers were opportunists and good-for-nothings; "not only ignorant but in many cases immoral men" who used religion as a means to rob the black poor. Tuskegee Institute had no direct religious affiliation, unlike the majority of black colleges and universities.

Despite his public image, Booker T. Washington was neither an originator nor an innovator in the area of black education. He was, however, a remarkably pragmatic politician who attempted to provide a temporary solution to a series of complex problems that involved the Southern white man, Northern capitalist interests and black people. In an age of fierce reprisals against black political activists, Washington counselled caution and a tactical acceptance of black electoral disfranchisement. As the rhetoric of white racism increased, he retreated behind the peculiar, semi-religious language of "self help", moral "fortitude" and "accommodation".

During a period of entrepreneurial capitalism and unbridled optimism in the sanctity of private enterprise, he embraced the Calvinist work ethic and helped Tuskegee graduates to become small merchants, insurance agents and businessmen. The Aesopian language of Tuskegee allowed Washington to establish Tuskegee Institute as one of the most secure and profitable black-directed institutions of higher learning in America. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute faculty understood that Christian religious rhetoric and a tactical acceptance of the prevalent evangelical fervor that was sweeping across the white South could be useful toward their pursuit of material support for their institution.

Many of Tuskegee Institute's efforts to transform the educational and cultural "inadequacies" of the rural black folk were aimed at the traditional black preachers. Tuskegee's chaplains often attended black pastors' conferences in an effort to reach the uneducated black clergy. The Tuskegee Womens' Club, an organization of faculty wives and female instructors, "conducted an open-air Sunday school" in Tuskegee's black neighborhoods that were openly hostile to their interference. Respectable local ministers were invited to preach at the college chapel on Sunday mornings or evenings, and the faculty occa-





*Arrested demonstrators fought back through passive resistance.*

sionally made the rounds through the rural backwoods, singing praises to the Lord in Macon County's small black churches.

The relationship between rural blacks and the established representatives of churches was, at best, stormy. Of \$29,000 raised annually in black church contributions, about \$23,000 was allocated for ministers' salaries. Some preachers were commonly known as "money-men", rambling itinerants who held steady jobs in Opelika or Montgomery and who travelled to Macon County on Saturdays and Sundays for religious services. One black congregation locked its doors to keep one minister from gaining entrance into the church one Sunday morning. In retaliation, the pious pastor raised a small revolver and threatened to shoot his members unless he was immediately paid.

Despite the weakness of organized religion, rural black society expressed a deep and genuine identification with the Christian principles of brotherhood, love and the redemption of man. Religious services were held informally in many parts of the county without the benefit of clergy. Most rural blacks who were self-taught had learned how to read from studying the Bible. Biblical analogies were a fundamental part of black Southern oral literature. Many

black children were named from characters from the Old Testament. Black social gatherings were often held on church property, and were always initiated with a prayer. Many churches regularly sponsored box suppers at 25 cents per meal, with all donations contributed to the church budget, toward a sick member of the community or for other worthy causes.

The "blues culture" of the poor blacks generated its own special ethical traditions and social events that were divorced from the Negro petty bourgeoisie. Saturdays, for example, were usually established as the day for all important black social events. Rural blacks rode mules, horses or drove buggies to the town square early Saturday morning. "They crowded into the small rooms, communities and country stores," one historian writes, "where their main objective was usually to mingle and talk with their fellows and their secondary objective was to shop." Negro communities sponsored barbecues and suppers at the church grounds during late Saturday afternoons—huge, colorful feasts with freshly slaughtered goats, hogs, sheep and yearlings, cooked over hot charcoals in pits dug deep into the warm earth.

At informal gatherings like these a prayer was usually delivered. It was not unusual, however, for rural blacks to

combine political satire with their faith. One old verse particularly stands out:

*Oh Lord,  
Send down your Thunderbolt  
to kill all the white folks  
and let the niggers stay  
so  
we can eat lean meat and 'heavendust'  
three times a day. Amen.*

### Uneasy Rudeness

At times black faith forced its will within the secular political realm with uneasy rudeness. Miss Roxie Bennett, a close friend of my grandmother, says that in the late 1950s her white landlord gathered together all of his black workers and informed them that they should have nothing to do with the NAACP or any other integrationist organization. "Why, if they sent my sweet daughter to school with one of yawl niggers," he related casually, "ah'd kill myself. God help me, ah'd pick up a razor blade and slit my throat from ear to ear."

Hearing this, Miss Bennett threw down her hoe and burlap sack. Without saying a word to her "master" she marched out of the cotton fields. "Sure I was scared," she says today, "but I knew that God weren't about to abandon me there." Other blacks did the same. Three generations after slavery,



the hegemony of white over black in Macon County collapsed within a single decade. The deep and abiding faith of Miss Bennett and other rural, working class blacks gave them the courage to reject and to denounce the logic of Southern history.

During the civil rights movement, the gap between the rural and petty bourgeois blacks seemed to narrow. In theory, the local integrationist organization which advocated black suffrage and civil rights, the Tuskegee Civic Association, was open to the entire black population. In practice, it was initiated by thirty black, male college professors, and it soon developed as an elitist pressure group. Its leaders described themselves as "middle class", "upwardly mobile" and "professional". Membership came almost totally from the Veterans' Administration hospital, the campus and from the local black school system. The TCA successfully challenged the state legislature in the federal courts when it gerrymandered almost all registered black voters out of the city boundaries. It was largely responsible for expanding the number of black voters in Macon County from 29 in 1940 to 514 in 1950 to 6,803 in 1966.

Like Booker T. Washington, neither the TCA nor the Institute's black establishment allowed local black ministers to assume leadership positions within their organizations. Few ministers were active members of the TCA and the organization endorsed few preachers for elective office during the 1960s. Sociologists Lewis Jones and Stanley Smith observed twenty years ago that "the Tuskegee Negro ministers are not accorded the status and recognition which they usually experience in other Deep South communities." It is extremely unlikely, for example, that a Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson, Ralph David Abernathy, or Hosea Williams would have survived or been allowed to share political leadership in such an environment.

Nevertheless, Tuskegee Civic Association members inevitably carried their religious values into their political strategies

and organizational work. TCA mass rallies were held every Tuesday night, usually in a church. Dr. Charles G. Gomillion, the leader of the TCA, would deliver a brief speech on the status of some pressing political issue, attempting like a fundamentalist minister to raise morale and to inspire the large audience. Members of the Negro Ministers Council were allowed to attend these gatherings and often led the group in prayer. Strategies for various political activities were justified by

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## **Slave spirituals and old gospels...were now providing moral impetus and inspiration to black students and young militants.**

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some New Testament parable found within Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. The real decisions affecting TCA strategy were held at smaller, official sessions in individual homes of the leaders. However, like the rural blacks, the Negro elite found it difficult if not impossible to express its reformist, gradualist political aspirations in anything except religious rhetoric.

### **Open Revolt**

By 1964 the majority of Tuskegee's students were in open revolt against what they viewed as the reactionary and conservative leadership of Gomillion and the TCA. The Tuskegee Institute Advancement League, closely associated with the radical wings of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, countered the TCA's demand for racial parity with its own demand for Black Power. Student lead-

ers invited Malcolm X to lecture on campus in the face of bitter administrative opposition. Communist Party secretary Gus Hall spoke before a packed student audience in late 1965. Here again, the black students often expressed what they perceived to be "black nationalist" or "revolutionary" ideas within the Southern, Black Christian tradition. Students marching in downtown picketlines would sing "Freedom Songs," which were simply the old hymns of the rural country churches.

When Tuskegee students joined arms and sang "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around," as they stood across the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma facing Alabama state troopers, they repeated the songs and sounds of black protestors and ministers during Reconstruction days. Marx reminds us that when human beings "appear to be engaged in the revolutionary transformation of themselves and their material surroundings, they timidly conjure up the spirits of the past to help them." Slave spirituals and old gospels that once inspired Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois were now providing moral impetus and inspiration to black students and young militants.

We are now almost a decade beyond the Movement. No one places hand grenades in the mailboxes of black voter organizers and black ministers anymore, as in the 1960s. Institute students are mostly lethargic; political organizing in rural Macon County is out of style. Still, every black politician in Tuskegee finds it necessary to play the role of the black preacher to get elected. Any aggressive aspirant to public office learns quickly the softly phrased sentences, the onomatopoeia so essential in making a sermon or campaign speech memorable.

The county's state representative, Thomas Reed, has sponsored his own gospel radio show for years. Reed answers questions, prays into the microphone and listens to the black constituency with the humility of a rural preacher. Few listening to Reed would

*continued on page 20*





drawings by Kathe Kollwitz

## For Mario Manzardo

Time ran out for you my comrade  
but you kept pace up to the end  
Farm Workers Peace Council all the rest—  
the clock ticking in your weakened  
bones ran down and you began to hear  
and you began to hear  
the silences between the ticks  
and you rested

now it  
seems that  
time  
is very  
short

what is a lifetime  
when there is a world to win  
there is so much to be done we must decide  
how best shove up the dial one noisy notch  
closer  
to universal harmony (do it do it do)  
before the silence  
in between the ticks  
is all that we can hear.

-Sara Heslop

3/15,16,17/78

## Fred

Earlier he was an outlaw—  
I think it was 1923,  
there was a bounty on Wobblies then,  
in California selling **The Industrial Worker**.  
one of those free speech fights landed  
him in the big house for four years.

Now he watches his wife  
who's forgotten her name  
(and his)  
still sends letters and bucks  
to help change the management  
of this earth — Welcomes us  
with ice cream, pies, coffee  
and a heart sick hand-worker's rhetoric.

-Lee Webster



# Talking about socialism

By Judy MacLean

*Socialism is not a popular idea in the U.S. today. In fact, it is often not even a clear idea. Time Magazine ran a cover story March 13, 1978, on world socialism which dusted off many common myths and confusions—and Time did not find it necessary to consult even one American socialist. It is often hard for American socialists to answer some of the most basic questions people raise. Below, NAM's Political Committee, Marilyn Katz, Richard Healey and Judy MacLean, take on nine common and difficult questions about socialism. Readers are invited to send other questions socialists are asked, especially those that present difficulties.*

## **What do you mean by socialism?**

**Healey:** Most basically, we're talking about a system that is different from the capitalism we live under now in that people will own and control all the resources of society. They won't be in private hands, as they are now. But unlike what exists now in socialist countries like the USSR, by socialism we mean more democracy, not less.

**Katz:** That's a good point. Many of us were raised to think capitalism means democracy and socialism means lack of democracy. But in the clash of social forces that was the civil rights movement of the '60's, we discovered it was capitalism that was keeping black people from exercising even their most basic democratic right, the right to vote. And now that formal right has been won, by and large, but the lack of any kind of economic democracy keeps minorities from having much say about their own destiny, either collectively or individually.

**Healey:** Just as important as collective ownership and democracy are new

kinds of relationships. Capitalism keeps us insecure—worried about our jobs, our car payments, our worth in the sexual marketplace. We're talking about a system, socialism, that takes care of our basic needs so we can develop more caring, and equal relationships, too.

**MacLean:** We are giving a good description, but it's kind of abstract. When someone asks me that, I like to start right where we are. If we're at work, I start with what it would mean if we, the employees, could run the company, and meet with other people in the city to decide what purposes our company would serve. Or I start with a familiar problem. Like rape. I and most women I know are afraid, walking the streets of Chicago at night. It seems like such a complex problem here. Yet every socialist country, whatever their other flaws, has eliminated rape. And capitalism is unable to do it. That's an example of the new kinds of relationships you mention, Richard.

**One of you said Russia is a socialist country. I've always called Russia communist. What is the difference between communism and socialism?**

**Katz:** In Marxist terms, socialism is the process that gets you to communism. Under socialism we would work to change the economic system and relationships we'd inherit from capitalism—and it would take years to overcome the legacy of inequality, racism, and sexism that is being produced now.

**MacLean:** And the destruction of the cities, pollution of land, air and water, the poisoning of food.

**Katz:** Those too. Though faster immediate progress might be made on some of that. In any case, we would be working toward communism, the system Marx describes where there are no more classes and everyone gives accord-

ing to his/her ability and receives according to his/her need.

**Healey:** An example would be work. Under socialism, everyone would still have to work to get paid. But gradually, as we all change, people would begin to work for other reasons, like building a better life for us all. Eventually, under communism, the incentive of pay would no longer be necessary. But these are the Marxist terms. Many Americans use the words differently. They call the USSR communist, where we'd say it is socialist, but a distorted socialism because it lacks democracy. And they would say Sweden is socialist, where we'd say it is still capitalist, with a big welfare state to soften some of the harshness of capitalism.

**MacLean:** Part of the problem is that there is world-wide confusion about these terms. We say the USSR is socialist, but are we really so sure they are on the road to communism Marilyn described? We do know that Russia can't be a model for us. Part of the confusion stems from the lack of a good socialist model for already developed, industrial countries like the U.S. Ideas sometimes get clarified better by human action, rather than by writing new definitions. Maybe some of the things Eurocommunists are trying to do will change the shape of this confusion. Ten years from now, we will have other answers, based on what's happened to socialism world-wide.

**But it's not realistic. There's no incentive to work under socialism. The agriculture of Eastern Europe is stagnant because there is no incentive to plant crops. The machinery turned out by Russia is inferior to what the U.S. produces, and more expensive, too. And even the Cubans admit they can't make a soft drink as good as Coca-Cola did there before Castro.**

**Katz:** In some ways, those comparisons are unfair. The U.S. is more developed than any of these countries, all of which are using socialism to overcome incredible backwardness. Look at China and India. After less than 30 years under socialism, China can feed, clothe





**"Capitalism keeps us insecure—worried about our jobs, our car payments, our worth in the sexual marketplace. We're talking about a system, socialism, that takes care of our basic needs so we can develop more caring and equal relationships." —Richard Healey**

and house everyone, while capitalist India is still mired in poverty and hunger.

**Healey:** But still, many shoddy goods do come from socialist countries. The problem though, is bureaucratic planning, not lack of incentives. They have incentives, but usually they are incentives to produce the most, not the best. But fundamentally, we look at human beings differently from capitalists. We don't think people are basically greedy and lazy, only working because they have to. Capitalism may make us that way because of the way the system degrades work, but there are lots of other reasons people work.

**MacLean:** Yes, everyone can think of a time they worked because they wanted to. Maybe during World War II, or to help out in their community or church, or to solve some social problem. Under socialism, we'd progressively be creating more spaces where work was like that.

**Katz:** Also, look at who gets the incentive to produce under capitalism. Right now a whole generation is growing up in the inner city with no chance at even the most minimal of American incentives, a job. And that takes an enormous

social toll. Under socialism, everyone would have a job. In existing socialist countries, in fact, there is little or no unemployment.

**You mentioned bureaucratic planning. That's the worst part of socialism. You just get a big bureaucracy controlling you.**

**MacLean:** But there is a whole lot of bureaucracy now in the U.S. At the top of it, controlling it all, are the heads of large corporations. We're not a nation of small businessmen and women. We're a nation of people who by and large work for bureaucracies already. Under socialism we couldn't get rid of all that immediately, but we could at least bring it under democratic control while we all work to dismantle it.

**Healey:** Yes, but bureaucracy really is a problem, and we can't wish it away by saying capitalism has it too. I have enough faith that Americans hate bureaucracy that even if we wanted to, we wouldn't be able to build a big socialist movement unless it works out ways to fight bureaucracy as it grows. Modern communications and technology make centralized decision-making a lot less

necessary. We advocate local and regional control, not decisions by a small elite.

**Katz:** You can see the seeds of that now in NAM's organizing around neighborhood control of utilities. We're trying to get power away from bureaucracies and put it in people's hands. And that will have to be true every step of the way if socialism is to succeed here. succeed here.

**You mentioned earlier about China being able to feed and clothe everybody. There may be more equality under socialism, but don't people then have to give up their individuality?**

**MacLean:** I think there's a myth of individuality here. The women's movement showed me clearly how much what I thought were individual choices were actually programmed into me as a woman when I was very young.

**Katz:** Often individuality here in the U.S. gets narrowed down to what you can buy. People's only option is to define themselves in terms of what they wear, the type of car they own or the quality of their stereo. The media defines that as individuality.

**Healey:** It's not bad to be able to buy things, though. It is just bad if that's the only way to express individuality.

**MacLean:** But I also think we need to reexamine our concept of individuality. Individuality doesn't just mean can I pack up and move anywhere any time I want, can I be a loner, a cowboy, with no responsibilities to anyone. Individuality can only really happen in relationship to the people around you, to a whole society. Under socialism, with less competitiveness and insecurity, individuality could flourish in a way we can't even dream of right now.

**But doesn't socialism have a pretty miserable record for freedom and human rights?**

**Healey:** A lot of things have happened



under socialism that we wouldn't defend. But President Carter shouldn't be so self-righteous. Look at the genocide of native Americans, slavery, concentration camps for Japanese during World War II, all under capitalism.

**Katz:** Or life in the ghetto today. What chance for freedom and human rights is there?

**Healey?** Or look at the dictatorships the U.S. supports around the world, from Haiti to Brazil to South Africa. Capitalism can be just as repressive to human rights, even more so. There's no guarantee under either system. People have to fight for them.

**Katz:** The rights we have so far were fought for. And now we're fighting for extending rights.

**MacLean:** Yes. For example, the Supreme Court says a woman has a right to choose whether or not to have an abortion. But President Carter says she doesn't if she is poor. And take a woman's right to walk down the street at night unmolested—that's an important human right, too. Or non-discrimina-

tion against gays. This is not yet a right anywhere, capitalist or socialist, but it is one that we stand for. But there is one kind of freedom that we have to say that we're against, and that is the freedom of heads of multinational corporations to make decisions affecting all our lives. That kind of freedom won't exist anymore.

**Katz:** Yes. But that kind of freedom in this country often gets confused with the freedom of ordinary people to speak out.

**Healey:** Which would also be extended. Under the kind of socialism we'd want to see here, people could raise any kind of criticism. Even if someone wanted to publish a newsletter advocating a return to capitalism, it would be OK. Of course it wouldn't be very effective.

*Socialism doesn't seem to have a great record on feminism. In the Soviet Union women are doctors, but the profession of doctor has been devalued. In Eastern Europe women still have sole responsibility for the children even though they*



Photo by William Johnson

*"Right now a whole generation is growing up in the inner city with no chance at even the most minimal of American incentives, a job. In existing socialist countries, in fact, there is little or no unemployment."*

*—Marilyn Katz*

*work. There are no women in the top leadership of China. Women have a better chance of winning things here, under capitalism.*

**MacLean:** It is hard to generalize, but all socialist countries have tried to liberate women. It has gone backwards and forwards at different times and different countries. But socialist ideas were by and large originated by men and have been administered by men. And their ideas about women's liberation have been simplistic. It came down to socializing housework and getting women into traditionally male roles. That's good as far as it goes, but not enough to liberate women.

I think we're in an excellent position here in the U.S. to integrate the ideas of this century with socialist theory. It's not just women doing what men have done that is important, but men entering the realm of caring and nurturing of the young, the old and the sick that women have always worked in. And making that realm just as important as the traditional male world, in terms of how society's decisions are made.

**Healey:** Just as we say we're democratic socialists, to emphasize that the socialism we build must be democratic so, too, we say we are socialist-feminists, because of the insights the women's movement and the gay movement give us as to how capitalism invades every corner of our private lives. Under capitalism today, the family is falling apart without anything that seems viable to replace it. Socialism wouldn't be a cure-all, but it would give us a basis for more secure relationships for working out more equal ways of living together.

**Katz:** But it won't just happen, you're right. That's why we in NAM say there will always need to be an independent women's movement—now, as we build a socialist movement, and under socialism, too.

*But how can you be so sure you can do better here? Other revolutionaries must have wanted a lot of what you talk about, but human nature being what it is, it didn't work. Aren't you just dreamers?*





Photo by William Johnson

*"Individuality doesn't just mean: I can pack up and move anywhere any time I want. . . with no responsibilities to anyone. Individuality can only really happen in relationship to the people around you, to a whole society." —Judy MacLean*

**Katz:** One advantage we have is being able to learn from the mistakes and experience of existing socialist countries. But about human nature. What has the woman's movement taught us about what women's nature is? So many things that were thought to be inherently female have been shown to be socially created. One by one the myths have fallen. And the same thing will happen to our ideas of human nature.

**Healey:** The process towards socialism is important. It won't happen here unless millions of people fight for it. And those millions of people will be the same folks, but with some differences. In the 1960's when I saw people sitting down at a lunch counter in the South or sitting in at an ROTC building, willing to be arrested, they changed. Different kinds of relations formed. They learned things about each other. They began to trust each other. And they began to trust themselves.

A lot of people already know the system isn't good, isn't satisfying their needs. And they know there's another side of people that comes out in disasters and emergencies, where people pull together to help each other out. In the process of building a socialist movement we've got to create institutions that can help people experience this about themselves.

*You say millions of people will try to change society. But how could that happen here?*

**MacLean:** It is significant that *Time* recently ran a whole cover story on socialism, very critical, of course. There are more people really dissatisfied with their lives right now than any time in our country's history. And *Time* wants to make sure they don't turn to socialism. *Time* covers gurus much more favorably; they would rather people turn there.

**Healey:** A poll last year found that 80% of the American people said capitalism couldn't work.

**Katz:** But 90% said socialism couldn't work. Still, only a 10% difference in the U.S. is not that large.

**MacLean:** But what a cynical prognosis, if people think neither can work.

**Katz:** That's important. Because it's cynicism, not contentment, that keeps people from being able to move together to change things. But our experiences, in the civil rights, anti-war and women's movement have shown that people can change things. And change themselves, too. People grew then. In skills, in confidence. And a sense of community grew, too. We socialists do have a hard task, overcoming that cynicism. We have to take part in unions, in neighborhood struggles, the women's move-

ment, the movements of minorities, the gay movement, where people can come together, win things, and learn that it is possible to make changes.

**MacLean:** A small group could never bring about socialism here. Only a movement supported by well over half the population could do it. At a time like this, when people aren't joining together much at all, the task seems impossible. But other struggles will arise, and they'll inevitably lead people to turn to socialism. Our own history as new leftists shows that. Socialist thinking was all but stamped out in the U.S. in the fifties, yet we rediscovered it somehow. In the U.S., socialism is an idea whose time is coming.

## NAM literature

**Women Organizing: A socialist-feminist bulletin** is now available. It is a resource for women engaged in feminist organizing and attempting to develop a socialist feminist strategy. Published by NAM's Socialist Feminist Commission. 75 cents single copy; \$3.00 per year for four issues.

**Reproductive Rights Newsletter** A new bulletin from NAM on abortion, sterilization abuse and other aspects of reproductive rights. 30 cents single copies.

**Undocumented Workers: Are they the problem?** A new NAM pamphlet analyses the history of migrant workers in this country, criticises Carter's policies, and proposes solutions. 60 cents single copies; 55 cents each for 10 or more.

**After Dade County: Turning Defeat into Victory** A new pamphlet on recent gay rights struggles from Blazing Star NAM. 25 cents each; 20 cents each for 10 or more.

**Basic Marxism: What It Is and How To Use It.** A 13 session course in Marxist theory and contemporary socialism. \$1.00; \$.85 for 10 or more.

Please include 15 percent postage charge on all literature and poster orders.



# Religion, culture and protest

from page 14

guess that he was convicted last year of attempting to bribe a state senator. Another prominent black politician and businessman has a gospel show and, like Reed, he expounds platitudes of Christian faith, hope and brotherhood. This same figure has earned hundreds of thousands of dollars in land deals of dubious legality. Behind the mask of Christianity resides a corrupt and parasitic relationship between the people and their self-appointed leaders.

Yet other altruistic ministers continue to devote their time and energies in grassroot-oriented welfare projects and educational programs. Young black students who denounced the black church and questioned their own faith

a decade ago are, more often than not, to be found within the pews of a Baptist or Methodist church. They have recognized, reluctantly, that the center of political life within the black community has always begun within the church.

Black Christianity has provided blacks with their general framework for understanding politics, aesthetics and all aspects of human interaction. It is profoundly contradictory and inconclusive in that its emphasis upon moral self-redemption and an afterlife do not in any precise way guide political or even ethical struggles in the secular world. Black faith has repeatedly provided the essential ideological terrain for political ac-

tivism and struggle against white racism and political oppression. Christianity forms the inner logic of the entire history of black civil society in Macon County and to a lesser extent, for all of Afro-America. The contradictions within black politicians and politics in the seventies as well as many of the successes are both by-products of a long process of ethical/political development. The future for black America, whether socialist or not, will be determined fundamentally by the manner in which black faith is integrated within the overall materialist ideology for revolutionary social transformation and political change.

*Manning Marable is active in the Alabama Black Political Assembly and chairs the Department of Political Science at Tuskegee Institute.*

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## For miners in the heart of coal country

from page 7

PUC discovered a \$3 million "error" —the utility had over-estimated costs.

In addition to these two major organizing initiatives, Pittsburgh NAM aided the miners' cause through publishing a supportive article in its monthly newsletter, co-sponsoring and speaking at a university forum on the Taft-Hartley Law, and attending another large anti-Taft-Hartley demonstration in early March. Two members who work with the Welfare Dept. researched and pub-

lished the appeals procedure for strikers who are cut off from food stamps, which several groups distributed to the miners.

In the Pittsburgh region, there was a tremendous outpouring of labor and community solidarity for the miners. Many locals conducted food drives or gave contributions. As this aid and support increased, the area's mine workers seemed to grow even more determined to protect their rights and union. In fact, the miners of District #5 voted

to reject the third contract offer, although the national vote gave the edge to contract acceptance.

"While our political work to support the miners was certainly small compared to the total amount of labor and community solidarity which occurred during the strike," comments Pittsburgh NAM spokesperson Rabinowitz, "we're proud to have played a role. The miners sparked a level of mass activity that pushed us all ahead."

*John Haer is the Editor of Service Employees International Union Local 585 News and a member of Pittsburgh NAM.*

## A view of gays and electoral politics

from page 4

front. This country, unlike most other capitalist countries, has no mass party that even begins to resemble a left-wing party. It would be an important step in building the American Left for there to be such a party. Though this is a long range goal, we must start working towards it now.

And what of the gay movement? Too many gay activists agree with the strategy of "out of the closets and into the legislature". Too many are involved in lobbying efforts and courting politicians. We desperately need a more active and visible movement of lesbians and gay men. We need the support of the women's movement and the left. We need to do a tremendous amount of outreach (not lobbying) to convince people not only that there should be gay civil rights legislation, but more important, that lesbianism and homosexuality are good. If we can do that we will see not only the laws change for the better but our social interactions with our neigh-

bors and co-workers change for the better.

We need to win the future Dade County referenda, not by proving how respectable and religious we are, or by relying on the few straight or gay politicians who will support gay rights. We must take the offensive ourselves, by being ourselves, however straight or outrageous that might be. We need to take to the streets more, not less—demonstrating, going door-to-door, leafletting and speaking. And more than all that, we need to reclaim many of the issues of the early gay and women's movement, and carry them further. We need to expand the present scope of the gay movement to once again include a broad discussion of sexuality, sex roles and role models, alternative living situations and support systems. We need to actively support gay teachers, and work around lesbian mother custody cases. Finally, we must continue to link up with others who are fighting the recent wave of right-wing attacks on gay rights, abortion, the ERA, and busing.

*Nancy Wechsler is a member of Middlesex NAM. She is a former member of the Ann Arbor, Michigan City Council and is a long-time gay activist.*

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The illustration shows three stylized figures from the chest up, wearing t-shirts with the letters 'NAM' printed on them. The figure on the left is a man wearing a hard hat. The figure in the middle is a woman with shoulder-length hair. The figure on the right is a man wearing a flat cap. They are all smiling and looking towards the right.



# NAM News

**ROCKY FLATS** Neither the winds nor rains of the Rocky Mountain Front Range discouraged the estimated 6,000 demonstrators who came to Rocky Flats April 29 for a rally to "Convert Rocky Flats; Fund Human Needs; and End Nuclear Hazards."

Speakers included two Japanese survivors of Hiroshima. Winona La Duke Westigard of the Inter Indian Treaty Council delivered a rousing speech about the exploitation by the energy industry of Native American homelands. Dr. Helen Caldicott brought telegrams of solidarity from the Federation of Labor in Australia who have refused to mine uranium until a year-long study of its effects on workers is done and is then submitted to a referendum of the people.

NAM members worked in local campaigns to organize participation in the national rally. Members from **Boston, Dayton, Baltimore, Seattle, Portland, Laramie, Ft. Collins, Boulder, Denver, and Colorado Springs** took part.

A demonstration in solidarity with the Rocky Flats Action was held at the Rockwell international headquarters in Pittsburgh. (Rockwell operates the Rocky Flats plant for the Dept. of Energy.)

The tactics workshops on April 30 emphasized that disarmament work must concentrate on a shift in the economy, standing firm on the principle that trade union wages and health benefits must be guaranteed to any displaced workers.

Hoping to win their support, the Rocky Flats Action Group met with members of the plant's U.S.W. local during the planning stages of the rally. However, the president of the local and the Denver AFL (in a narrow vote) came out officially against the national rally.

**WOMEN WORKING** Members of **Dayton NAM**, in Ohio, helped form Dayton Women Working, an organization for clerical workers, several years ago. The group, now numbering hundreds of members, pressures employers to change unfair practices, and helps individual members who face job discrimination. It also helps women trying to organize unions. The members have recently put pressure on local employers to provide better maternity policies and on the national government to pass legislation making pregnancy part of disability plans. The group also sponsors a "Rights and Respect Forum" each year for National Secretaries Week in April. This year the forum included a contest for the Pettiest Office Procedure in Dayton.

**BLOCKING RECALL** Santa Cruz NAM has formed Coalition Against the Recall to block a right-wing campaign to dump three progressive county supervisors, Phil Baldwin, Ed Borovatz and Gary Patton. Although the chapter does not agree with everything the three have done, NAM believes the space the three have created for the labor, women's, minorities and environmental movement will disappear if even one is replaced by a candidate tied to local land speculation interests. Citing funding the supervisors have given to programs such as Women's Health, Childcare, a Senior Citizen's Center and mass transit, Tim Jenkins of Santa Cruz NAM says, "If we lose one of the progressive supervisors we will be confronted with a board which is responsive to the interests of large developers. The kind of speculative development the recall backers want tends to raise property values and rents without compensating with new jobs, affordable housing, or income into the county." The chapter believes the chances of blocking the recall are good.

**NETWORKS** NAM has national networks for activists in several areas, and people outside of the organization are encouraged to link up with them. Among them: **Health Commission**, Rick Kunnes, 19920 Lichfield, Detroit, MI 48221; **Labor Commission**, Mark Mericle, 321 Neal Ave., Dayton, OH 45405; **Socialist-Feminist Commission**, Holly Graff, 7125 McPherson Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15208.

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## What is NAM?

The **New American Movement** is a nationwide organization of socialists in nearly forty chapters. It is committed to organizing a majority movement for a social and economic system that is thoroughly democratic, in which the wealth and resources of the nation are publicly owned and democratically controlled by all Americans, in which the decisions which shape our lives are decentralized and coordinated in a way that permits us all to have control over them. Membership in **NAM** is open to anyone who agrees with its basic principles.

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