

Moving On

MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

The rejuvenation of Uncle Sam



Join the Army; travel to exotic, distant lands; meet exciting, unusual people and kill them.

PLUS:

**Schools for socialism
Marxism & Christianity?**

Toward a socialist America

Comment

One of the things that I always find disturbing is to run into a NAM member or friend in a distant city who immediately begins to offer me a passionate opinion—pro or con—on some aspect of *Moving On*. I don't object to this because I'm not interested in hearing his or her views. On the contrary, I find such feedback very helpful.

What bothers me is that I know that I never would have heard it but for a chance meeting. Much as all of *MO*'s editors appreciate your input when we travel around the country, we also would like to know that we can get your views without having to come to your town.

This is one reason why letters to the editor are so valuable to us—and to our readers as well. They can offer other points of view on what's happening in a specific city or area of work on which we've carried an article. And they can offer different political points of view—particularly on topics on which disagreements exist within our organization.

We try to print as many such letters as possible—and even if your letter doesn't get printed, you can be sure that it was carefully read and considered by the editors.

In addition, we welcome letters commenting on aspects of *MO* that are not intended for publication. We'd be glad to have your suggestions for article topics or your opinion on articles we've printed.

We try to answer all letters—though it may take a little time. And we do discuss all suggestions. If yours isn't implemented, it's because there were some clear practical or political countervailing concerns.

We want *Moving On* to be a magazine that aids its readers in their political work and in their understanding of the world. We need your help to meet that goal.

Robata Lynch

BRINGING BACK THE DRAFT

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In several bills now moving rapidly through Congress, conscription is being resurrected as the necessary shot-in-the-arm for America's flagging armed forces.

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NAM-sponsored socialist schools offer a range of topics and experiences that go far beyond traditional educational approaches and traditional Marxist study groups.

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Warren Zevon is hot. His records are beginning to sell a lot and popular

FRONT COVER: "Mad Brute" poster entitled "Enlist U.S. Army" from World War I; "I want you" poster, untitled, from World War I (sic) adapted from a British Navy recruitment poster of that period. "Join the Army" anti-war poster, 1971.

magazines feature his face. Rapping argues that his songs have something to tell us about our society and ourselves.

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Millions of Americans have taken to the road, or the track, or the course. With aching muscles and pounding hearts, they attest to the benefits of regular running. Joseph says there are lessons in it for the left—if we don't keep our distance.

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CONVERGENCE OR CONFLICT?

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MOVING ON is published monthly except August and January by the New American Research Institute, 3244 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60657. Subscription price: \$5 yearly. Controlled Circulation Postage Paid at Chicago, Illinois.

Bringing back the draft— the rejuvenation of Uncle Sam

The chilling provisions of the draft legislation provide a clear insight into the intensity of military's desire for the draft. Stung by the "loss" of Iran, the military industrial complex appears to be gearing up for direct intervention in the Mideast.

by Tony LeMay

IN THE SPRING OF 1970, I WAS MINDING my own business on a vacation in Aguas Calientes, Mexico. A phone call from home destroyed the atmosphere. Mom said, "You have a postcard here. It says, 'Greetings from the Government of the United States of America.'" Seven days later I was in basic training—where my lifestyle *really* changed.

My experience of being drafted may soon be shared by another crop of men and women. The U.S. House of Representatives concluded hearings on draft registration March 12, 1979. Their legislative proposals are clear signs that the U.S. military wants access to a vastly expanded labor pool in the near future. A summary of the House bills now in committee includes the following:

H.R. 23 (Rep. Bennet)—calls for draft registration to begin October 1, 1979 (men only); waiver of the Privacy Act;

Tony LeMay is a member of Eugene NAM who is active in the anti-draft movement.

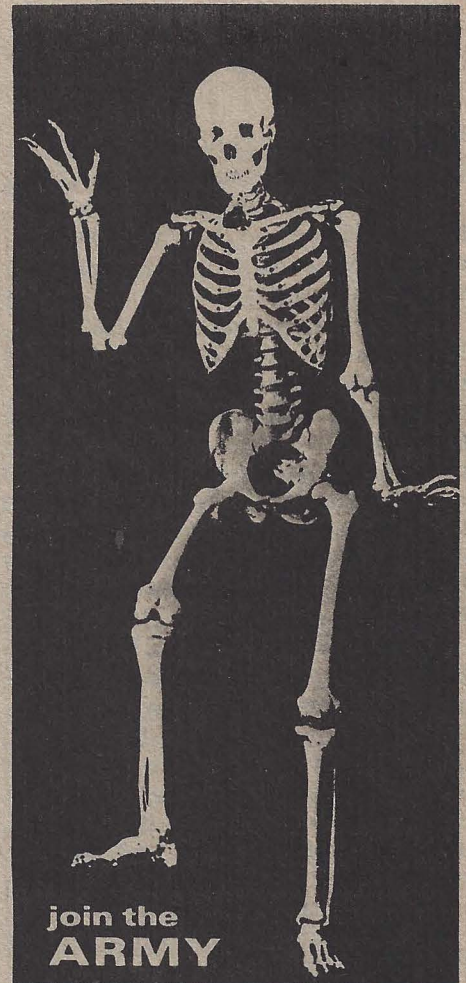
transfer of the selective service to the Defense Department; provides for assessment of the recall of veterans in times of war.

H.R. 1901 & 2404 (Rep. Montgomery)—calls for registration of men and women; calls for classification and induction of up to 200,000 men annually into the Army Reserves.

H.R. 2078 (Rep. Wilson)—calls for induction (of men only) to begin July 1, 1979 and to end June 20, 1981.

H.R. 2206 (Rep. Paul McCloskey, Jr.)—"the National Service Act," calls for universal service for men and women with four options.

H.R. 2500 (Rep. Nichols) directs the President to submit a plan for: draft registration to begin January 1981; transfer of Selective Service into Defense Department; registration and induction of women; and waiver of the Privacy Act.



Denmark poster.

Comment

Two similar Senate bills have also been introduced in the Senate.

Congressional sources predict that both the House and the Senate will act on *registration* as early as July of this year.

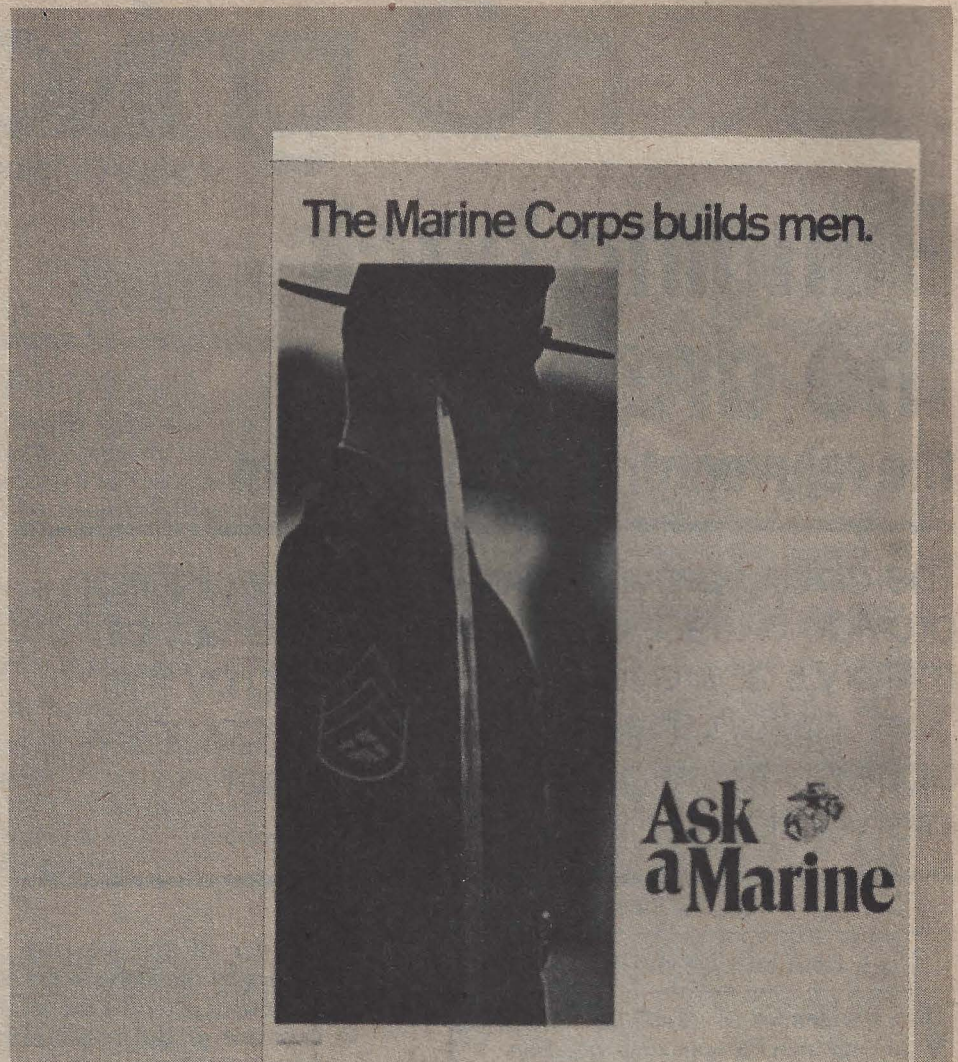
The chilling provisions of the draft legislation provide a clear insight into the intensity of the military's desire for the draft. Stung by the "loss" of Iran, the military industrial complex appears to be gearing up for direct intervention in the Mideast. On February 25, Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, appeared on "Face the Nation" to warn that "the U.S. would go to war to protect its oil interests" in the Mideast.

And in testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on March 12, Energy Secretary James Schlesinger said that "the Persian Gulf is the key to the destiny of the free world as we know it." Schlesinger's remarks were punctuated by the dispatch of the attack carrier *Constellation*, a cruiser, and a destroyer to the coast of South Yemen on March 13, 1979.

Economic pressures

Although these news items are important, they do not adequately explain the intense pressure on Congress for the reinstatement of the draft. Other reasons can be found in the current state of the American economy. Despite the highest corporate profits in nearly thirty years (26% in 1978), multinational corporations are being threatened by liberation struggles around the world.

Economist Paul Sweezy states that "Capitalism is at another crossroads." He notes that the U.S. is faced with an impending recession, tightened money, and a capital situation in which two-thirds of all U.S. dollars are held outside of the U.S. Given this context, a large, flexible, and aggressive military force would be invaluable in restraining independence movements in Third World nations.



U.S. Marine Corps poster, 1971.

The draft is also viewed by some as a panacea for domestic socio-economic conditions. Unemployment in the U.S. may be as high as 20% if teenagers, early retirees, women, and chronically unemployed persons are considered. Minority unemployment is particularly severe, with urban Blacks often experiencing 40% unemployment. The military would thus serve as a "safety valve" for an economic system which had generated excessive internal pressure.

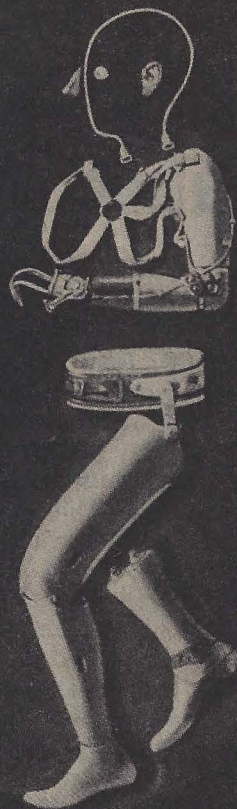
The ramifications of this draft legislation are deeply disturbing. Perhaps the most obvious implication is the loss of personal choice faced by draftees. Oregon Congressman Jim Weaver points out that "to require millions of our citizens to register with another federal agency, and then to live with the constant threat of being uprooted and pressed into service, would be a need-

less government intrusion that would not be balanced by any real increase in our security."

The draftees of the Vietnam era were typically those who were members of the working class. Those who retained a choice were most commonly the rich or the upper middle class who were able to obtain student deferments. Equal rights of choice did not extend along lines of economic class.

The draft also promotes a militarization of American society. An active draft would in all probability create a significant increase in the total size of our armed services. Linkage of the draft system to a civilian "national service" system would further promote militarization. By maintaining a large, mobile, national service labor pool, whose entry requirements and procedures paralleled those of the military, the military

THE ARMY BUILDS MEN



William Gibbs

U.S.A. poster, 1971.

intervention in hot spots like the Middle East or Southeast Asia. Recent testimony to the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee by Pentagon officials clearly demonstrates that the Pentagon feels constrained by present personnel levels, and that all branches of the military favor draft registration.

At this time, opposition to the draft initiative is virtually non-existent, due in part to lack of press coverage of Congressional actions and in part to a belief that draft registration is innocuous. One exception is a national coalition, Citizens Against Registration and the Draft, which has recently been formed. CARD is now hiring staff. Local opposition has surfaced in Boston, Mass. and Palo Alto, California.

In Eugene, Oregon, the draft issue has already demonstrated its potential for broad based organizing. The Eugene Coalition to Oppose Registration and the Draft includes NAM, the University Veterans Association, Clergy and Laity Concerned, American Civil Liberties Union, Campus Christian Ministry, Gay Peoples Alliance and the Feminist Theory Collective. A debate on the draft at the University of Oregon drew over 500 people.

In an important new development, the participation of feminists and socialist-feminists in the Coalition has had a profound effect on the anti-draft efforts. In addition to contributing to the analysis of the issue, they have dramatically improved the level of participation of women in the organization by democratizing the Coalition's mechanics.

The basis of the left's opposition to the draft should cover a wide range of issues. The loss of individual choice, the militarization of our society, and the use of military forces to solve economic crises are all matters which demand our immediate attention. The nature of the issues provides an excellent opportunity for broadbased organizing efforts and educational projects on a local, regional, and national level.

Opposition to the draft initiative is virtually non-existent, due to lack of press coverage of Congressional actions and a belief that draft registration is innocuous.

would have almost immediate access to even more personnel.

At the same time, the military is attempting to drastically expand its educational facilities and to establish its educational programs on a parallel basis with public universities and community colleges. This would further extend military control of civilian institutions.

The attempt to waive the Privacy Act

is yet another demonstration of the military's desire to increase its control of the American populace. Access to *all* public records by the military would be an outrageous deterioration of our individual rights.

The reinstatement of the draft would also contribute to a highly aggressive military posture. A rapid expansion of the military would increase the options of the Pentagon and the possibility of U.S.



Everything but the kitchen sink — NAM's socialist schools

by Michael Fonte

The schools provide the space for non-alienating, non-competitive reflection on our collective history, a chance to explore classic texts and theoretical models — and how they relate to contemporary experience — and the opportunity to then organize ourselves for action.

THE SOCIALIST COMMUNITY SCHOOL in Los Angeles was back in action for its winter semester. From my registration desk vantage point the sounds of the Tuesday and Thursday classes were intriguing.

On Tuesday, the *Literature of Latin America* class was discussing the Cuban poet, Nicolas Guillen, exploring his style



as well as the political and cultural aspects of his work. In a far corner, an equally fascinating discussion filtered out from the *Science and Social Change* course, with, to my ears, unfamiliar talk of scientific paradigms and the methodology of science under contemporary capitalism.

On Thursday, with the sounds of Leadbelly filling the air, the *Blues Tradition* class examined the historical development of blues as an expression of black culture. In another room there was excited talk of the overthrow of the Shah and the politics of the Ayatollah Khomeini and the Left Iranian groups as *Hot Spots in the Revolutionary World* warmed up.

Across the nation Socialist Schools, initiated and organized by New American Movement chapters, are involved in much the same kind of diverse programs. NAM chapters in Chicago, Oakland and Los Angeles have had schools for several years. More recently, courses have begun in Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Detroit, Buffalo and Seattle.

Why Socialist Schools? At a period in U.S. history when one of the main socialist tasks is not party building but class building, the schools are centers where elements of this project are unfolding. The struggle for liberation must stress the task of creating what Gramsci would call a new 'integrated culture', embracing all aspects of society, all dimensions of human existence.

The schools provide a context for developing three aspects of this inte-

Michael Fonte is a member of Harriet Tubman NAM in Los Angeles and a leading activist in the Los Angeles Socialist School.

grated culture: class consciousness, a working class culture, and political organization.

No amount of theoretical study in itself develops class consciousness. But the schools provide the space for non-alienating, non-competitive reflection on our collective history, a chance to explore classic texts and theoretical models—and how they relate to contemporary experience—and the opportunity to then organize ourselves for action.

The core Marxist courses provide the basic framework for study, and have elicited the strongest response. They are designed to reach not just Left activists but a broad cross-section of interested people. The introductory classes, like *Who was Marx?* *What Is Socialism?*, explore basic concepts as simply and clearly as possible and show how they link together to form a coherent understanding of the world.

Other courses delve into particular aspects or classic Marxist texts. Many schools, for example, have reading groups on *Capital* which try to break down the barriers this work presents to many people. Classes on Lenin's political theory, Gramsci's cultural insights, or Marxist theories of the State all strive to lay the groundwork for theoretical development that leads to effective action.

A clear understanding of imperialism is a vital aspect of any socialist worldview. *Topics in Puerto Rican History and Culture*, for example, covers the political and economic domination of that island by the U.S., while *Latin American Perspectives* deals more broadly with American penetration of the whole continent. The *Hot Spots* class offers background on anti-imperialist struggles around the world: Nicaragua, Iran, the Mideast, South Africa.

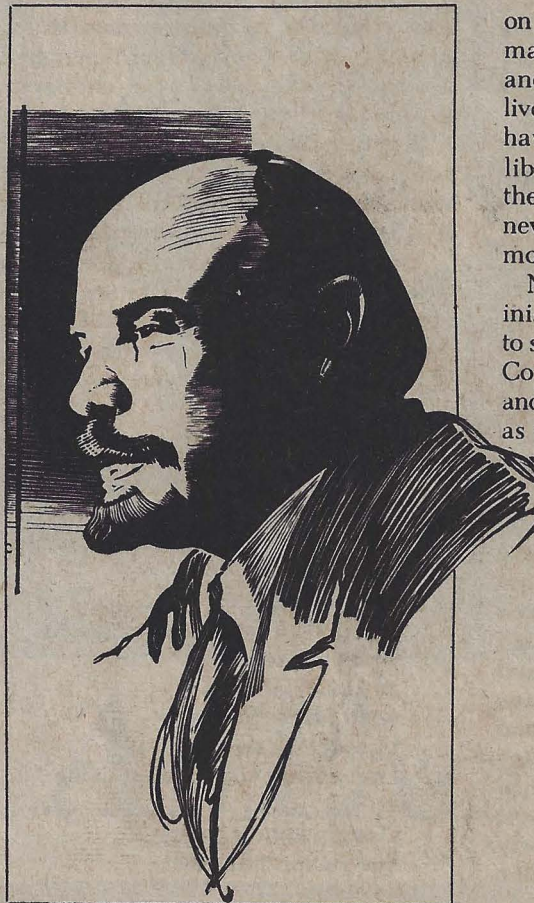
Study of the history and impact of racial and sexual oppression is another integral element in socialist education. A course like *Racism in Labor Markets* provides an examination of the nature of racism in U.S. labor markets from a number of different theoretical per-

spectives, including internal colonial, race-as-nationality, and labor market segmentation. It discusses such issues as affirmative action, immigration policies, and anti-racist organizing at the workplace in the light of these various analyses.

Black Communities and Politics in the Late '70s details the process of class differentiation taking place in Black communities in the U.S., the emergence of a thin strata of professionals and managers alongside a substantial working class and a rapidly growing 'underclass' of permanently unemployed.

Cultural concerns

Some sessions are for women only—recognizing the need many women feel to develop and clarify their own ideas. Others involve both women and men. *Working Women's Struggles* focuses



on the totality of issues—emotional life, material survival, caring for children and relationships—which make up the lives of working women. Several schools have also sponsored forums on gay liberation which address the nature of the gay movement, the impact of the new Right and the tasks facing the movement today.

NAM's commitment to socialist-feminism also means that the schools try to strengthen theoretical understandings. Courses look at traditional socialist and feminist ideas and review the success as well as failures of existing socialist

revolutions in liberating women at home and in the workplace. Perspectives of radical feminists, reform feminists, anarcho-feminists and lesbian feminists are examined in relation to the struggle against capitalism and patriarchy.

Along with these core programs on Marxism, racism and sexism, the schools provide classes that help us recapture our own history, taking it away from the textbook distortions we have all come to know and hate. *US History* examines how American capitalism developed, the growth of social classes, the centrality of racism to capitalist development in the U.S., the role of continuous expansion and the rise and decline of movements opposing capitalist class rule. *Chicago Politics, Los Angeles: The City that Grew, San Francisco Politics, Labor and the Left*— all give a view of history from the 'other side' and help students gain a new historical perspective.

Core courses and historical developments form the background necessary for an analysis of the present day, with its challenges, dangers and possibilities. A popular class in Los Angeles, is *A Marxist Analysis of Current Events*. Other such courses include *Television, Capitalism and Everyday Life* which examines TV in the context of the modern consciousness industry, and *Personal Life as a Political Issue*.

Some of the courses mentioned are designed to start the process of building a revitalized working class culture. More explicit attempts to overcome the privatization of our lives and restore some vibrant community space include everything from sing outs through proletarian cooking classes, sports and games to May Day celebrations. Chicago is experimenting with dance classes and political theatre. East Bay's *Creating Political Theatre* chooses a political theme and develops this into a short play using a variety of theatre techniques. In *Poetry Without Oppression*

participants read and write poetry "by and for human beings who may one day walk the earth as equals." *Penas*, that wonderful Latin American combination of politically infused song, dance and poetry, also create space for new cultural forms and experiences.

If all this activity is to build that 'class with the future in its hands', though, effective political organizing is absolutely necessary. The schools provide a forum for NAM organizing, a chance for NAM to express its politics and to grow itself, in numbers, depth and range. But more than this, the non-sectarian nature of the schools allows for the multiple organizing forms that are so vital today: women to coalesce in the struggle for equality, solidarity groups to form in anti-imperialist struggles, coalitions to build around issues of quality education, immigration rights, health care, the Weber case, cut-backs in social services, union struggles.

This organizing link has not always been made by the schools and the people who voluntarily keep them going, but it is central to their approaches.

The Socialist Schools are involved in building toward a new future. They struggle towards the day that Guillen has John-only-yesterday-with-nothing (Juan sin nada no mas ayer) describe as his new life:

I have, let's see
that I have learned to read,
to count,
I have that I have learned to write,
and to think
and to laugh.
I have that now I have
a place to work
and earn
what I have to eat.
I have, let's see:
I have what was coming to me.*

(Tengo, vamos a ver,
que ya aprendi a leer,
a contar,

tengo que ya aprendi a escribir
y a pensar
y a reir.
Tengo qua ya tengo
donde trabajar
y ganar
lo que me tengo que comer.
Tengo, vamos a ver,
tengo lo que tenia que tener.)

Tengo by Nicolas Guillen, translated by Robert Marquez in *Latin American Revolutionary Poetry/Poesia Revolucionaria Latinoamericana*. A Bilingual Anthology edited and with an Introduction by Robert Marquez. (New York: Monthly Review, 1974)

**"Pessimism of the mind,
optimism of the will."**

— Antonio Gramsci

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Looking for America



WARREN ZEVON

AN *E*XCITABLE 

AND EXCITING — BOY

BY ELAYNE RAPPING

THE TIMES THEY ARE ACHANGING again. The sixties are long gone. Dylan has developed a middle aged paunch. And who is going to tell us what it feel like to be living in America now?

Maybe that doesn't strike you as a very important question. After all, American popular music, even at its best, has rarely gone beyond the "moon, June, spoon" romantic relationship areas of life. We don't expect our singer/songwriters to deal with such subjects as work, money or social conditions. All we ask from them is a few minutes of fantasy, relief from the drear of daily life.

But every once in a while someone comes along who writes songs that do in fact place personal issues in a broader social context. And when that happens it's an exciting event—politically and culturally.

That's what Warren Zevon has been doing for the last few years, and at last, he's beginning to get some recognition for his efforts. *Rolling Stone* named Zevon songwriter of the year for 1978 and chose his only hit single, "Werewolves of London," one of the top five songs of the year. In addition, his most recent album, *Excitable Boy*, has been getting a lot of radio play lately.

Zevon's music ranges from hard rock to blues to country ballads. His arrange-

Elayne Rapping teaches at a Pittsburgh area college and works with a local group organizing against violence against women.

ments, which he does himself, are intricate and haunting, and his musicians and back-up singers are among the best in the business.

I think it's important for those of us concerned with social change to understand what it is about Zevon's music that makes it politically significant, in spite of the fact that Zevon himself is not a "political person." He is reaching a large audience because he projects a vision of the quality of life in America which is emotionally and factually true, although it contains no message or conclusion (and indeed is fraught with confusion and contradiction).

When I heard him for the first time I was puzzled. The word that came to mind was "decadent." And yet I found myself increasingly addicted. Nothing else seemed quite substantial or relevant enough, and so I kept playing Zevon. It had a quality I had never heard before,

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a strange combination of eeriness and hilarity.

It's no coincidence that Zevon is part of the LA music scene and uses that city as a metaphor for most of the social and personal phenomena that are his main themes. He is obsessed with the banal, dehumanized, atomized quality of life in Southern California generally, and Hollywood specifically. His characters always wake up "with shaking hands", are endlessly searching "for a girl who understands me" and are generally strung out on one thing or another.

While these may sound like a bunch of cliches, in Zevon's hands they seem original and uniquely chilling. For one thing, he never glamorizes decadence as many musicians do. For another, he never puts down the people involved. Rather, there's a sense of sadness and compassion in his songs that comes from the sense that these people exist in and reflect the community (or non-community) that spawned them.

"Poor, Poor Pitiful Me," made popular by Linda Ronstadt, is a case in point. In content it resembles the Rolling Stones' "Honky Tonk Women." But where Mick Jagger always has a leer in his voice, Zevon's voice expresses not sexual excitement, but depression and even despair:

Well I met a girl at the Rainbow Bar
She asked me if I'd beat her
She took me back to the Hyatt House
... I don't want to talk about it

No leers

In fact Zevon's attitude toward women is generally one of sorrow and affection. One of his most moving songs, "The French Inhaler," is about a young woman who comes to Hollywood to "be a star" and ends up wasted on drugs and one night stands. It begins:

How're you going to make your way in the
world woman,
When you weren't cut out for working ...
How're you going to get around
In this sleazy bedroom town
If you don't put yourself up for sale

And it ends on a harrowing note:

Loneliness and frustration
We both came down with an acute case
When the lights came up at two
I caught a glimpse of you
And your face looked like something
Death brought with him in his suitcase

Even his outrageously funny songs show compassion for women in a male world. The title cut of *Excitable Boy* has some priceless, if understated lines about male violence:

He took little Suzie to the Junior Prom
Excitable boy, they all said
And he raped her and killed her, then he
took her home
Excitable boy, they all said
Well he's just an excitable boy

Zevon is fond of parodying fifties themes to fit these more complicated and difficult times. The idea of rock n' roll as a source of joy and pleasure, common in songs like "Rock Around the Clock" and "Let the Good Times Roll" gets overhauled in several of Zevon's songs. "Mohammed's Radio" is a series of comments on the hardship of people's lives—"Everybody's desperate trying to make ends meet/ Work all day, still can't pay the price of gasoline or meat"—followed by a mournfully sung chorus: "Don't it make you want to rock n' roll/All night long."

There is a sense of resignation and irony in all these songs that is characteristic of Zevon. But the most notable aspect of his style is his odd habit of

**HIS SONGS EMBODY
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peppering his songs with specific place and brand names. His junkie doesn't just meet his connection. He pawn's his "Smith-Corona" and meets his man "down on Alvarado St/By the Pioneer Chicken Stand." At first this may jar, but listen a few times. He's singing about us and our world. A world in which fast food chains, plastic palm treed bars and tacky hotels are the most stable, dependable, even the most real things in many people's lives.

But if Zevon knows a lot about the plastic culture of credit card America, when he tackles international politics, as he does a few times, he falls flat on his face. Yet despite this political naivete, he is an essentially political artist—in the same sense that Dylan is. Both create a complex background of social and economic forces against which their characters' personal experiences must be understood. And both share a deep sense of the complexities and confusions of an uncertain and depressing political era.

Of course, it was easier for Dylan. He came of age in a time of political energy, anger and optimism. He could express those things in song because there was a community that shared them.

For Zevon it's different. Disco music has replaced "protest music." The desire for escape has replaced the desire for social change. And the New Right has replaced the New Left as the driving force defining the terms of our political dialogues.

So what can an artist do? The bravado of sixties political music rings hollow now. It's a time for reassessing our political direction and the political pulse of an increasingly conservative and fearful population. It's a time for figuring out what's happening and what we can realistically do about it.

For me, Warren Zevon is helpful in that endeavor. More than anyone else, he is making music for these times. His songs embody the despair and loneliness that the Right is cashing in on and the Left needs to understand better. His music is at once very funny, and very hard to laugh at.

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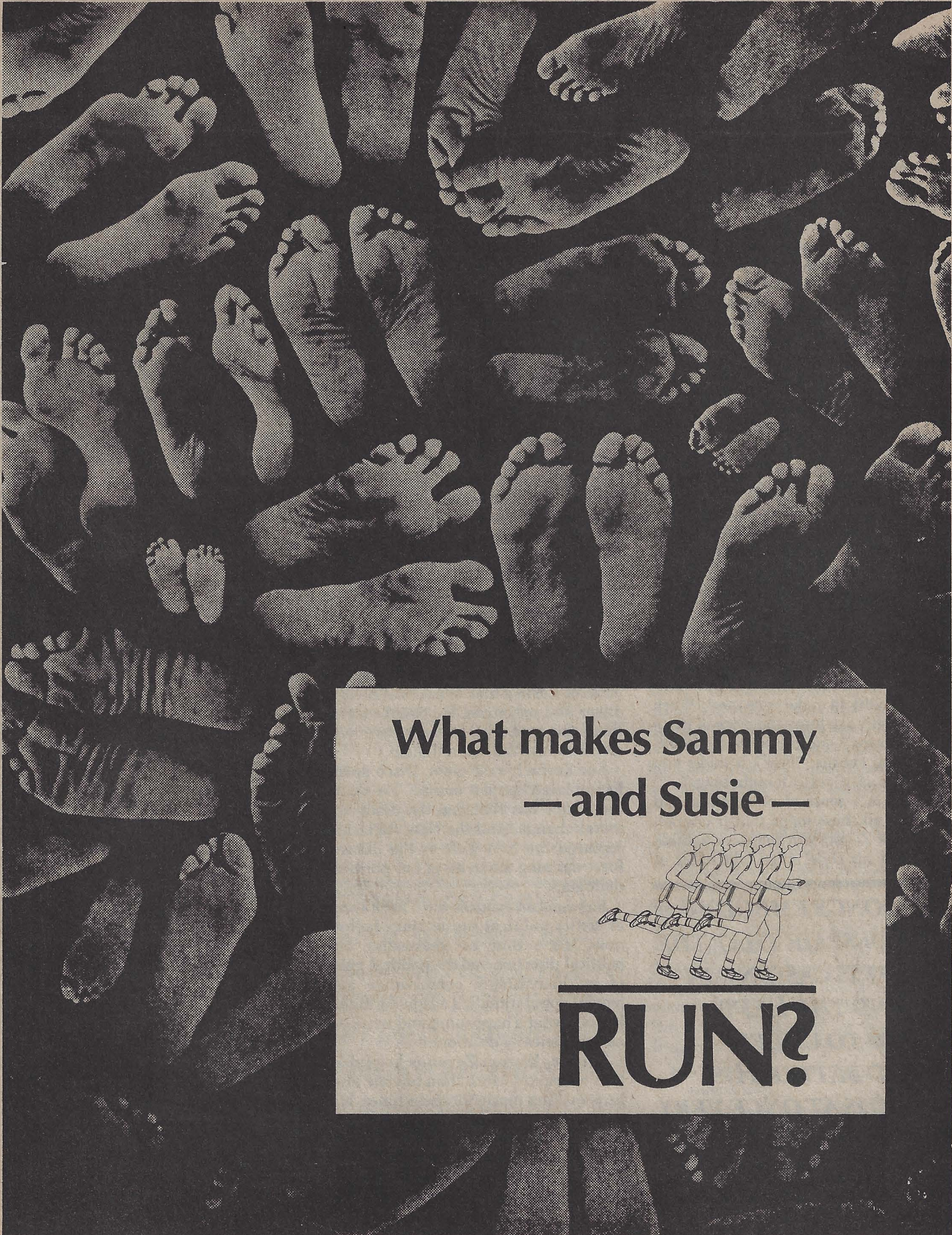
So you're a socialist. You're in it for the long haul. And you don't yet have a career. Or the career you trained for has a thousand applicants for every opening.

Why not get a job where you can combine politics and supporting yourself? A revitalized, democratic and militant labor movement could make a big difference on the American scene. And responsible socialists in the rank and file can play a part.

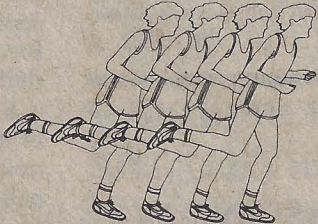
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What makes Sammy
— and Susie —



RUN?

by Paul Joseph

BY NOW YOU HAVE HEARD IT ALL. Running is good for your cardiovascular system, confidence, and overall sense of well-being. For a quiet sense of satisfaction and euphoric, mystical, quasi-narcotized highs. For creating democratic and participatory communities and a stronger sense of one's inner self. For promoting longevity and an appreciation of the present. For breaking through to new levels of accomplishment that you never dreamed were possible.

Etc. Etc. I mean enough already. This kind of thing is more likely to leave you bored if not angry with those who try to make you feel guilty if you don't run six miles a day.

And there is another factor. We are now beginning to hear of more negative aspects of the running boom. Some people have become literal running addicts, so dependent on their daily regimen that jobs, family and close relationships suffer. Others find it difficult to rest their injuries, running until vital muscles and tendons are abused beyond repair. They have to be placed in casts to prevent them from ending up cripples.

We are haunted by the specter of a semi-comatose population, drugged into virtual insensibility by hard exercise. Potential socialists, their will to resist dulled by the tranquilizing effect of ten miles on the roads, placidly accept whatever society throws their way. "Cuts in social spending? Arms race escalating? Big deal. Yesterday I ran an hour and a half and studied Dr. Sheehan's philosophy for three more. I'm self-actualized, man, so don't bug me with your political shit."

But wait! Sheehan's drivel aside, this was supposed to be a positive appraisal of running. What's going on?

Well, this will be an appreciation of

Paul Joseph is a NAM member in Boston. He teaches sociology at Tufts University and runs.

running. But one that hopefully is both more balanced and politically relevant for socialists.

Many of the values and impulses contained in running are positive and should be part of the "stance" that the left projects. Of course, running is not pure; this is still capitalism. But in spite of its inevitably contradictory role, running has features that socialists can identify with, and perhaps extend, in our search for a better society.

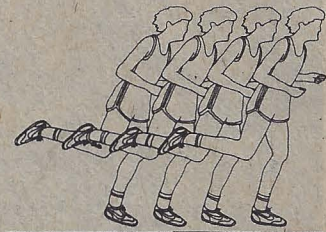
Embedded in the act of daily running is an implicit but still powerful statement concerning the quality of life. In running a person not only recognizes the importance of health but of leisure time—organizing a day so that work, no matter how satisfying, does not become overwhelming.

This is not to ignore the unfairness of a situation in which a comparatively small proportion of the population has the opportunity "to organize their day" such that they can run as much as they want. But examples, and there are many, of otherwise "apolitical" computer specialists, journalists, lab technicians, and the like who refuse to accept jobs unless they are free to arrange their time so that they can run, have to make one think that something is going on besides people moving their legs back and forth.

Motivation crisis

I also believe, particularly in the case of "serious" runners, that the project is an indirect statement about the quality of their work life, and a lack of satisfaction relative to their original expectations. Runners are frequently quaint sorts who have difficulty fitting into the normal rhythms and expectations of late capitalism.

The running boom can be read as a collective and massive motivation crisis with all of its attendant consequences and implications. Of course one could think of more effective forms of protest than a long run. But short of viable alternatives, such forms of "escape" assume different overtones.

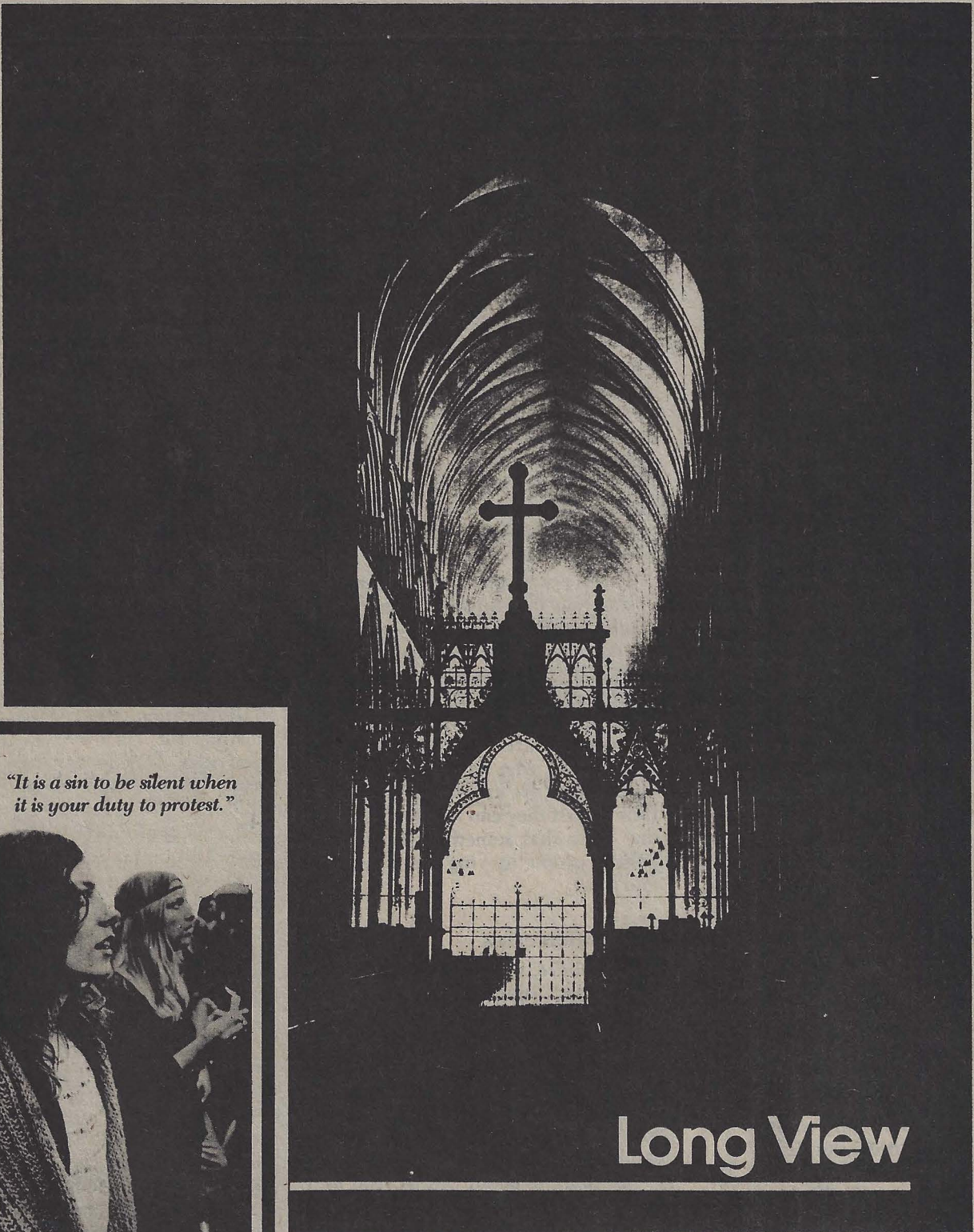


In running a person not only recognizes the importance of health but of leisure time—organizing a day so that work, no matter how satisfying, does not become overwhelming.

In addition, running has become a method for some women to cultivate activities outside of their normally expected roles. Running magazines are full of stories of housewives who have felt a sense of power, self-development and liberation in running.

In competitive athletics running has been, along with basketball, the site of battles marking the partial shift of priorities in the physical education budgets of colleges and universities. In the process men have appreciated and admired women who have displayed their skills in high level performances. They see women in a way that commands new respect.

Competition in running is different than in other sports. Although increasingly commercialized, road-races are not nearly as contaminated by the elitist and athlete-spectator division that marks most sporting events. (This is not to suggest that there isn't a time for being a spectator or that watching professional athletes doesn't make for good theater.) It is no accident that Billy Rodgers is a
continued on page twenty



*"It is a sin to be silent when
it is your duty to protest."*



Long View

Marxism & Christianity— Convergence or Conflict?

by Lee Cormie

IN THE LAST TEN YEARS OR SO MORE and more Christians are claiming to be Marxists. And some Marxist parties and movements are acknowledging their right to do so. These facts stand in awkward relation to the theories and practices of what historically have been two opposing camps.

Not surprisingly these developments have caused much confusion and conflict, most evident recently in the debates over liberation theology and its use of Marxist analysis at the conference of Latin American Catholic bishops at Puebla, Mexico.

As a Christian who believes that fundamental economic and political change is ultimately the only adequate response to widespread suffering in the U.S. and throughout the world, I would like to offer some reflections on these issues.

Perhaps the best way to begin is to look briefly at articles in two recent publications.

Last summer, *In These Times* (August 2, 1978) published a special section entitled "The Left Hand of God," which pointed toward two different kinds of Christianity. The first, the Christianity of the major denominations, represents a distortion of biblical faith, especially with regard to justice for the oppressed. The second is biblical faith rooted in struggles for justice and liberation. With varying degrees of optimism, the *ITT*

Lee Cormie is a member of Christians for Socialism and NAM in Chicago. He teaches at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.

The possibility of transcending the capitalist system is at the heart of the turn to Marxism by many Christians.

authors noted the emergence of activist groups within the churches which are oriented to social change.

They clearly reflected a sensitivity and even sympathy with the traditional Marxist critique of religion as the opium of the people. Nevertheless, they just as clearly projected another possibility for religion. As one author suggested, the traditional Marxist critique is an overstatement, and needs to be revised to allow for liberating forms of religion.

Irwin Silber wrote a critical response to these articles in the *Guardian* (November 22, 1978). His response is two-fold. First, he recognizes the progressive role that many Christians, and even some religious institutions, are playing in struggles for justice throughout the world. He specifically points to Martin Luther King and Malcolm X in the U.S. and to Latin American Christians who have been "mainstays and martyrs of the revolutionary struggles . . ." And he insists that it would be inexcusably sectarian for Communists "to refuse to unite with those who come to struggle out of their religious convictions."

But for Silber, this alliance between Marxists and Christians committed to

justice is a strategic alliance. It does not point to a real convergence between a certain type of Christianity and Marxism. Indeed, it cannot. For in Silber's view, there is a fundamental philosophical contradiction between Christianity and Marxism.

Christianity is inescapably idealist, he argues, resting on the premise that ideas, "whether in the form of 'the mind of God' or a set of absolute moral principles existing independently of concrete circumstance," are primary in evaluating social phenomena and motivating human behavior. In contrast, Marxism is materialist, resting on "the premise that objective reality and, in particular, human social activity, is the fundamental foundation that gives rise to the ideas, philosophy, religion, laws, moral principles, art and culture that make up the intellectual activity of the human race."

As such, for Silber Marxism represents a revolution in science which has transformed religion into an irrelevant intellectual force. Ultimately, then, in spite of the strategic alliance he recommends, Silber sees a contradiction between Marxism and Christianity so fundamental that "one must ultimately defeat and extinguish the other."

Ships passing

On one point the article in *ITT* and the *Guardian* seem to agree—the active involvement of Christians in the struggle for a new society. But at other levels, they are like two ships passing in the night, neither aware of the other's presence nor addressing the issues about which the other is concerned.

Thus, Silber raises the question of the philosophical underpinnings of Christianity and Marxism, an issue which none of the *ITT* authors addressed. Moreover, neither Silber nor the *ITT* authors addressed the issue of social scientific analysis of the capitalist system, its economy and culture, the nature of oppression and exploitation within it, the possibility of transcending it, the strategic and tactical tasks, or the vision of a new society. Yet it is these very issues which are at the heart of the turn to Marxism by many Christians

throughout the world.

It seems to me that there are two fundamental historical facts that call into question Silber's quick rejection of the possibility of convergence between Marxism and Christianity. They also point to the need for a fuller articulation of the dimensions of this possible convergence than articulated by any of the *ITT* authors.

First, there is the growing worldwide involvement of Christians in Marxist movements. The organizational manifestation of this tendency is the Christians for Socialism movement, now present throughout Latin America, Europe, and North America; there are similar currents in Asia and Africa.

For these Christians, the attractiveness of Marxism lies in its social scientific analyses of the causes of oppression and exploitation, in its recognition that these evils can only be overcome in a fundamentally different kind of economic system and in its clearly articulated strategies for achieving this end. For them there is no question of incompletely or partially embracing Marxist analyses and strategies.

The well-known Christian-Marxist dialogue of the 1960s and early 1970s was essentially a conversation among intellectuals who explored the challenges, divergences and convergences between Marxism and Christianity as intellectual systems. It was different from the current involvement of Christians in Marxist movements and parties, for this new engagement has occurred essentially at the level of practice. And in fact, it is for this very reason that the specifically theoretical issues that this engagement raises have not been extensively analyzed.

The very fact of this new development, however, points to the necessity of resolving these issues in ways different from the usual Marxist response—a response developed in reaction to a very different kind of Christianity. The possibility of such a revised perspective on religion concerns the very essence of Marxism as a method which involves a constant dialectic between theory and practice.

Worldwide ferment

This possibility is more than idle speculation. The second historical fact I would like to point to is the current worldwide ferment in Marxist theoretical discussions. While these discussions have not by and large focused on religion *per se*, they continually return to the question of the relationship between economic or "material" factors (base) on the one hand and culture and politics (superstructure) on the other.

They are rooted in the concern to appreciate the cultural and other factors that legitimate oppression and exploitation, and that might inspire revolutionary engagement. These concerns are central, for example, in the writings of British cultural Marxists like Williams and Eagleton and can be traced to the writings of Lukacs and Gramsci.

In the U.S. these discussions have reflected dissatisfaction with the marginal status of Marxist movements and concern over the failure of most traditional

Marxist approaches to adequately address racism and sexism as fundamental forms of oppression related to but not merely reducible to class exploitation. This failure, against the background of the feminist and black power movements, has stimulated efforts to articulate a fuller analysis that takes account of psychological, cultural, and political as well as economic factors.

These debates also point to the issue of the values to be promoted in the new society and, perhaps, anticipated in the struggles to achieve it. It is clear that much more is at stake in unfolding a new society than simply technical economic questions concerning how best to organize the economy. There are questions concerning human values and meaning in life that cannot be settled by mere reference to laws of economic development or by appeal to some unilinear evolutionary process manifested in history—a preeminently bourgeois view of history!



Moreover, it is clear from the history of Marxist movements throughout the world that the cultural traditions that inform these movements have had a profound impact on the different understandings of new forms of human relationship and social organization.

The issue is not simply one of religious faith, for it involves very concrete questions about how to organize production and distribution in the new society to best promote desired values and behavior. And it involves very practical questions about how best to organize movements to bring about these changes.

At both these levels there is no substitute for disciplined social scientific analysis of the contradictions in our society. But this issue of vision and values also opens onto questions concerning the meaning of human life, the nature of current distortions and limitations, and the possibility of transcending them in a new society.

It has been relatively easy to criticize dominant values and institutions in the U.S.; the great unfinished task is to unfold a new vision of women and men, of community and family life. . . that will capture the imagination of a broad cross-section of Americans.

These are concerns at the heart of all religious traditions, and they are still with us after all the social scientists, materialists and otherwise, have had their say.

This seems especially true in the U.S. It has been relatively easy to criticize dominant values and institutions; the great unfinished task is to unfold a new vision of women and men, of community and family life, of relationships to the natural environment which will capture the imagination of a broad cross-section of Americans. In fact, it can be argued that the Right has been able to mobilize so many more people in part precisely because it has recognized this cultural dimension of current crises.

Sense of meaning

For many Christians it is at this point that their faith is important. In sensitizing them to the suffering of the exploited and oppressed, in promoting their commitment in the struggles for liberation, and in reinforcing their faith in the non-necessity of the present order, it provides a sense of meaning in their lives and hope for the future.

Though this is clearly not the dominant interpretation of Christian faith, not the interpretation of most theologians and church officials, it is really not so shocking. After all, the Judaeo-Christian tradition emerged in the context of resistance and subversion—the ancient Israelites against Egypt (the Exodus story), and the early Christians against the dominant elites in Israel and against the foreign domination of Rome.

Against the background of these developments in the theory and practice of Marxists and Christians, it seems to me that the continued refusal to consider the possibility of a convergence between them itself smacks of idealism, of theory well-insulated from the real world of historical facts.

However, this potential convergence confronts Christians in particular with fundamental challenges.

In the first place, the major denominations do not have a good track record when it comes to questions of injustice

and exploitation. "Love for the poor" has often served to obscure oppression in the larger society and within the churches themselves. This places a special burden on Christians to demonstrate their identification with the oppressed and their commitment to liberation.

Second, even when Christians have clearly been committed to justice, their actions have often been confused. All too often moral passion has substituted for analysis, leading to involvement in action with little attention to lessons from the past, questions of effectiveness, or priorities. This confronts Christians with the issues of social scientific analyses and strategy.

The liberal theology which has dominated the mainline churches in the 20th century has long ago given up the notion that theology should, as medieval theology did, explain the world. There is no doubt for these Christians that science has taken over this task for the physical world. But while religion is increasingly understood as concerning values and motivation, there is still a tendency to see these in idealist and individualist terms.

We need to overcome this tendency. We need to see the ways in which our ideals and values, our very perceptions of ourselves as individuals are caught up with mechanisms of oppression. In particular we need a critical perspective on institutionalized religion in the U.S. and on popular religious movements. And we need an ongoing critical perspective on ourselves and our churches in relation to the struggles for a new society.

It seems to many Christians today that this kind of reflexive and critical perspective is at the very heart of Marxism as transformative praxis. If this method of analysis and practice will help to make us Christians more effective participants in the struggles for justice and liberation, it will also help to make us better Christians. For it is only through participation in these struggles that we can be faithful to our God.

We get letters...

Questions slogan

In Judy MacLean's "Left Turn" column (MO, Feb., 1979), she discusses the slogan, "Every member a Marxist."

It seems that what the slogan is attempting to say is "Every member a critical socialist." If this is the philosophy the slogan is meant to convey, that is fine. And if the slogan means every NAM member should be familiar with and able to use the Marxist framework of social analysis, that is fine too.

However, to label oneself a Marxist (or Trotskyist or Maoist—or Moonie) is to label oneself a "follower of..." with the added probability of tacking on the onus "uncritical follower of..."

The radical left certainly should be well grounded in theory. But let us, as MacLean says, also be flexible in our approach. Let us be free to define our politics in relation to conditions and aspirations, not personalities.

Jay Jurle
Prairie Point, MS

Socialism or liberalism

I greatly enjoyed reading David Moberg's article, "The Politics of Necessity—New Alliances Emerge" (MO, Feb., 1979). He believes that the Fraser Coalition, the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition and COIN may represent a new center of left-wing political power that could either greatly change the Democratic Party or form the basis of a new party.

Well, that may be so, and I will not speak against any attempt to launch a counter-attack against the well-organized Right. But whether the liberals reorganize in the Democratic Party or form the basis of a new Liberal or Labor Party, the critical question, it seems to me, is will this in and of itself make winning socialism any easier. I think not.

Reorganizing old parties or building new liberal ones won't win people to socialism, although it might win them back to liberal solutions. But is it not true that the economic dynamics of the capitalist system are making liberalism an obsolete solution anyway?

Liberalism, according to current fiscal crisis of the state theory, only throws vast sums of money at social problems without solving any of them, creating a welfare/warfare economy that sooner or later financially bankrupts the state.

In fact, more than anything else it was New Deal liberalism that clobbered the Socialist Party, stole its thunder and support. As long as liberalism is alive, socialism can't grow.

Donald Busky
Philadelphia, PA

Moving On



Country Music
Stand by Yourself

PLUS:
Cleveland, back from the brink
Socialism and the black community

Why Parton?

I'm somewhat uncomfortable with the cover of Dolly Parton (MO, April, 1979). Not that I think it's sexist; it's too ambiguous to be called sexist or anything else. It's the ambiguity that bothers me. That is, I think our cover should attempt to graphically demonstrate in some way how we're different from non-left publications. Most of our covers succeed in doing this, and do it fairly well. This one doesn't.

It tends to elevate Parton to the status of folk hero, which she certainly doesn't deserve. I'm sympathetic that that wasn't your intent, but it nevertheless tends to put her in that light.

And in some ways the problem gets compounded by the article it represents on country music. This is undoubtedly a subject worthy of left evaluation, especially since it is part of and has real roots in working class and feminist life. But the article is too one-sided and uncritical.

For example, Parton's behavior in her public performances, at least the one I saw,

was unambiguously sexist. Ideally such an article should reflect and analyze both her (and others) feminist and sexist tendencies. Otherwise the article, like the cover, tends to become a feminist puff piece, rather than a socialist-feminist perspective.

Rick Kunnes
Detroit, MI

On target

Your article on the Evangelicals (MO, Feb., 1979) was a remarkably good piece of journalism. Coming from outside the movement, Judy MacLean has nevertheless managed to understand some of the chief issues which face, and often divide, evangelicals. Her analysis of what the movement represents, in terms of a possible challenge to the system, was also, to my sights, pretty on target. We at THE OTHER SIDE wish evangelism were challenging the system in a more systematic way. That's what we work for.

The one criticism I would have of the article is that it focused too exclusively on movements and celebrities, neglecting the millions of evangelicals in typical, down-home congregations, not likely to be stirred either by a 700 Club or by us Radical Evangelicals. Many of them are blue collar people, relatively unsophisticated, being ripped off by the system and yet remaining mystified by its ideology. Until you, and we, communicate with folks like that, the system will never be massively challenged.

Al Krass
Philadelphia, PA

How to improve

As members of Southside Chicago NAM who work on our chapter's publication, the RED GARGOYLE, we can appreciate the hard work that goes into producing each issue of MO. However, we have some suggestions for the improvement of the magazine.

First of all, let's examine Judy MacLean's article, "The Awakening Women." (March, 1979). MacLean provides no explanation of why the organizing of Latinas in Pilsen is politically significant. The article characterizes the neighborhood as being a vague abstraction of inner city life, with no analysis of the forces which shaped and will perpetuate urban poverty.

MacLean two-steps the whole issue of development of Chicago's poorer neighborhoods. We give up. What does this state-

ment have to do with socialism? "Although the neighborhood's proximity to the city's downtown Loop has led a few developers to renovate some buildings and move in young Anglo professionals, the neighborhood remains mostly poor." The residents of Pilsen have taken to the streets to protest renovations, which displace and outprice the people who have lived in Pilsen for years.

Furthermore, the article does not look at why the Latinas' program is significant from a socialist/feminist point of view. MacLean speaks as a bourgeois feminist. She examines the organization of Latinas as if the women were an unusual species of feminists, who might curiously have roots in the feminist movement of white, middle-class college educated women.

Now, let's look at the magazine as a whole. Since **MO** strives for more than "front page news," we must insist that articles be more analytical. Events must be reported and EXPLAINED. Without greater political emphasis upon issues of class, race, and sex, we cannot hope to help radicalize those who are not "enlightened", white, and middle class college graduates.

The layout of the magazine resembles a third grade storybook: lots of white space, pretty pictures, and BIG letters. The ratio of copy to graphic/advertising material is 1:1. Graphics should not be used to fill up space, as in "Over-the-counter Therapy." They should be used to enhance or inform the content of the article.

Looking at the staff box would lead one to believe that MOVING ON has a hierarchical form of authority and organization. Who types, crops pictures, pastes down, etc.? Furthermore, there is no indication that unsolicited submissions are accepted, nor that publication in MOVING ON is anything but by invitation only. The staff box implies neither dialectical materialism nor democracy.

**Anne Goodwin
Julie Trowbridge
Chicago, IL**

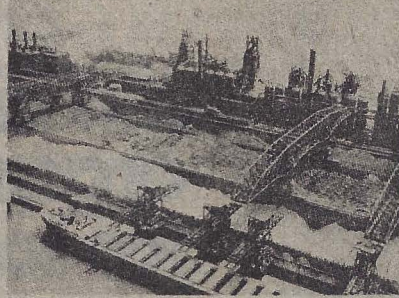
Phabar's confusion

We agree with Phabar (**MO**, Feb., 1979) that we must begin to clarify such issues as reopening steel and other idled plants under workers' and community control. Rather than clarifying the issues, Al Phabar has succeeded in confusing them.

When a plant is idled, resulting in workers' layoffs and economic disaster for a community there are alternatives in reopening plants. Plants can be modernized to produce the

Capitalism's bad apples

by Al Phabar



U.S. Steel South Works, Chicago.

The Long View

16 MOVING ON 378

THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE UNITED States 100 is not to create a problem of the ownership of a national asset as it is to provide a means to business approach on a definable portion of modern day capitalism.

For example, the left has established no market mechanism for analyzing recent steel mill shutdowns. Capitalism is more in the past, the relevant comparison that demonstrates it has made the U.S. steel industry unprofitable, or at least, unprofitably profitable, and unworkable has led to it.

Why not just convert the plants under worker control? "Work the land for a margin of profit, control" this plant, control the company. Workers have the ability to control the plant, but for the sake of control to demonstrate the feasibility of self management? And if government grants or loans helped to

At Phabar is an agreement with the steel and in the 1930s.

Less profit, with capitalist or worker control, means less investment and more labor time required—and that means either longer hours for the same living standard or a lower standard.

help out the capitalist owners, could it be less chosen not only for the social democracy of "nationalizing the industry for public control" as well as an economic right?

The left, such as American social democracy is neither necessary, or desirable. Now we are being encouraged to the steel case, based on some common sense. There is a long history of profit, so that capitalism can have a whole lot to blame for the investment that long has been established in that area.

Long profit, with capitalist control or worker control, means less investment and more labor time required. That means either longer hours for the same living standard, or a lower standard.

Some democracy is what the left want when it comes to industrial growth, but enough to control the investment with the living standard. In England, for example, social democracy, while providing greater freedom to workers, does not mean that the living standard is being raised. In fact, the living standard has not been raised.

In France, West Germany and Scandinavia, social democracy is not the industrial power of control and trade unionism. Workers' control is necessary to have with long left requires.

In the U.S. the steel industry is a dramatic failure. There is no market left.

advantages of workers' control is that the productivity of workers increases because they believe they will have greater control over the benefits of productivity increases. (Productivity refers to output per unit of labor.)

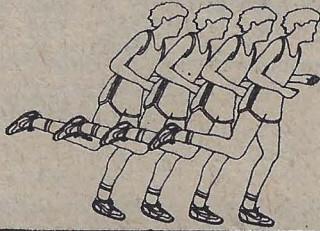
It seems to us that Phabar laments the left's position on maximizing wages. That section of the article is so confused we are not certain of its meaning. If that is what he means, he is overlooking the fact that wages and salaries are the largest component of consumption spending. Further, that the end result of investment in plants, factories and equipment is output of consumer goods (as well as more capital goods to produce more consumer goods).

If workers' wages and salaries are insufficient to buy up all the consumer goods, we get unused plant capacity and a fall in investment and employment. In our market economy, such imbalances are one source of capitalist business cycles and instability.

It is true that we can't change the instability of capitalism by maximizing wages or by "saving capitalism's bad apples" but community and workers' control over idled plants is one small but progressive step.

A subcommittee of the Leo Gallagher Chapter of the Los Angeles NAM is working on a project involving workers' and community control over runaway and idle shops. If anyone is interested in this project please contact Ben Margolis, 3600 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2200, Los Angeles, 90010.

Members of Leo Gallagher NAM



much more approachable and attractive personality than Pete Rose.

You can also run in races against world-class athletes and feel the glow that comes with a strong effort—despite the probability that your margin of “defeat” will more than likely be measured in miles.

While often seen as “laidback” (let’s face it: they think we’re space cadets), runners are actually in search of a variety of experiences that range from peace and harmony to hard intensity. A run in the woods on a rainy day is far different from the concentration and focus required by a marathon on the edge of your ability. Running offers both; and in a society in which apathy and cynicism are increasing, any countervailing experience is to be cultivated. Running creates honest emotions. You feel. Some of the time that feeling is discomfort, or even pain. But there are moments of real elation. And you always know you’re alive.

Running is now admittedly experiencing a strong dose of “faddism.” But beneath the “band-wagon” effect are other aspects. Work satisfaction, the changing role of women, the meaning of competitiveness, the commercialization of sport, and a rich blend of emotions are all contained in this fascinating and contradictory activity. Perhaps this is why a Gallup Poll found over twenty million Americans claiming they run regularly.

But enough analysis. My only real point is that as socialists we cannot afford to ignore a widespread cultural development like running, nor shirk from the political issues outlined above.

You might even want to try it. Run. After all, it’s good for your cardiovascular system, self-growth, longevity . . .

Join an activist organization for socialists!

Some people are working very hard these days. The corporate elite who run GM, EXXON, ITT and more have a lot to do just keeping up their profit margins. But they don’t rest there. They work overtime for even bigger stakes—the future of capitalism.

We’re working for racial and sexual equality, better housing, decent health care. But what about **our** future? We too need a long range vision. As the corporate elite makes plans to preserve capitalism, we need to make plans to end it.

The **New American Movement** is a socialist organization that works for a better life in the present and a better world in the future. We’re still young and small, with a long way to grow. But we believe that we can make a difference. And that you can, too. Join us.

- Here’s \$15.00 for my first year’s associate membership dues.
- Please send me more information on chapter and at-large membership.
- Enclosed is a contribution of _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New American Movement
3244 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL, 60657

NAM News&Views

"In unity there is strength" is as true a lesson for the Left as it is for anyone else. The Right has been heeding it—and unfortunately, they have indeed been getting stronger. As NAM discusses the question of how to unify and with whom, I'd like to offer my opinion.

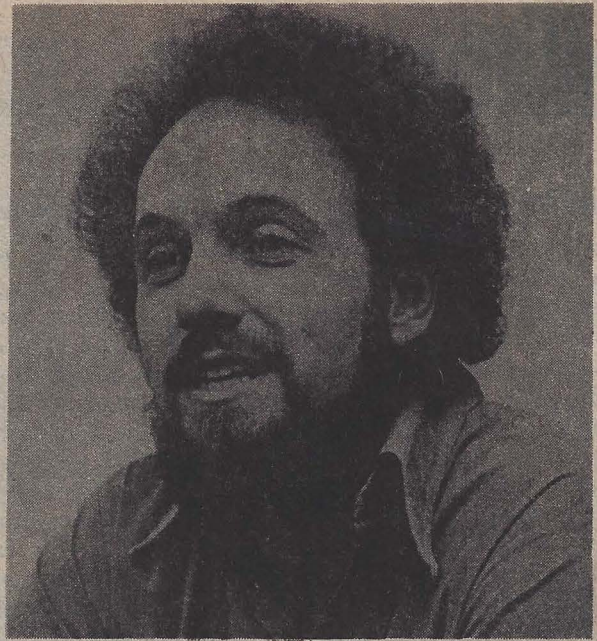
At times leftists seem to have a fatal fascination with the differences among us instead of seeing what we have in common. But as a socialist friend of mine says, "We have no enemies on the left; we have enough enemies with the capitalist class".

That doesn't mean that we can all be part of one socialist organization. There are valid differences between left groups, even as to what they mean by "socialism." Yet these differences shouldn't prevent us from talking and working together; after all, socialists are always trying to work with people who aren't socialists. One reason the word "sectarian" gets applied to leftists is because some groups seem to believe they know the only true strategy to achieve socialism, just as a religious sect knows the only true path to salvation. Other groups (or sects) become a dangerous enemy, for they might mislead someone looking for the truth, or hamper the "correct" group's work.

A more modest, or even ecumenical, spirit would be especially appropriate today. For this is a period marked by a crisis of socialism. In the U. S. the entire organized socialist left has not comprised more than 20,000 people for the last 25 years. In Europe and elsewhere Communist and Socialist parties are to varying degrees calling into question their traditional political theories, strategies and models.

The crisis is defined for example by the failure of social-democratic governments to even move toward socialism, and also by the fighting between China and Vietnam. It is a painful period. At the same time it provides the opportunity for both the revitalization of socialist theory and socialist organization. Signs of this are the phenomenon of Eurocommunism, the new relations between Communist and Socialist parties in Europe and elsewhere, and the support the once notoriously conservative Socialist International is giving to African and South American Liberation Movements.

It is in this context that we should welcome new possibilities for left unity here in the United States. Most pertinently for NAM, in the last six months the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), and the International Socialists (IS), have separately suggested that we hold discussions about joint activities. DSOC passed a resolution at their



Richard Healey is National Secretary of the New American Movement.

Left turn

national convention in February, proposing that NAM and DSOC "explore the possibility" of a merger at some time in the future. And there are signs from the IS and from other groups of a greater openness not just to work together, but also to new kinds of political discussions.

This approach is very helpful to the process of left unity. Unity, of course, is not unification, and no one is suggesting that any merger can occur immediately. Yet it is significant that merger is even being mentioned. For it sets a tone and a dynamic of solidarity to the more concrete discussions and the carrying out of joint activity. It moves away from that old left orientation that only stresses what differentiates one organization from another.

These suggestions of left unity are a signal of how much all three organizations have changed in the past years. Each has identified with very different traditions and engaged in very different activities. Even one or two years ago, such ideas about unity would not have been conceivable. To prevent misunderstandings, however, I should add that IS, and DSOC, have not made similar overtures toward each other (yet).

The challenge of the 1980's to socialists is to create a mass socialist movement in this country, a movement that is part of the mainstream of American political and social life. There are no blue-prints or ready answers as to how to achieve this. A recognition of this fact, combined with a willingness to engage other socialists in open dialogue and a process of left unity can aid us in the fight for the creation of a real socialist movement.

All the news...

NO NUKES

•When the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, PA had its near-brush with meltdown in March, NAM chapters were quick to respond. Some leafletted customers at *The China Syndrome*, a movie about the dangers of nuclear power that underscored the near-disaster that was taking place off the silver screen. "People really saw what happened on the screen could happen here any time," says Sidney Skinner, a member of **Blazing Star NAM** and **Michigamee Alliance**. Other **Chicago NAM** members joined in a no-nukes demonstration April 14... In Long Island, NAM members leafletted shopping centers about the dangers of nuclear power and took part in several demonstrations demanding the closing of a local nuclear plant... **Los Angeles NAM** members joined the Alliance for Survival in sponsoring a no nukes demonstration that drew 2,000 people April 7... **Portland NAM** members, part of Trojan Decommissioning Alliance, picketed the local power company calling for the shutdown of the nearby Trojan plant, almost identical in design to the faltering plant at Three Mile Island... **Pittsburgh NAM** members picketed Duquesne Light with the Pennsylvania Alliance for Jobs and Energy, calling for that company to shut down its nukes.

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

•New York NAM members joined the Northwest Coalition for Reproductive Rights March 31 in a demonstration calling for women's right to choose safe abortion, contraception and freedom from forced sterilization. The 5,000 marchers also demanded federal and state funding for abortions, enforcement of HEW's recently released guidelines on sterilization abuse, and an end to use of contraception, abortion and sterilization for genocidal population control. The march was part of a series of actions in 18 countries on that date on the theme of reproductive freedom for women. NAM members participated in coordinated actions in other U.S. cities, including Boston, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Oakland, CA.

HIGH ENERGY

•NAM has joined the national Citizens/Labor Energy Coalition (CLEC). The coalition includes labor unions and citizen's action groups and hopes to forge a nationwide force to oppose the corporate energy agenda. Last winter the Coalition opposed shutoffs of gas and electricity nationally and had notable success in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Maryland (**Baltimore NAM** shares the credit in the latter state.) NAM members have helped organize regional and local coalitions in Missouri and Oregon... NAM's **Energy Commission** issues regular mailings for socialist energy activists. The latest includes an update on the anti-nuke movement and its plans for national and regional actions this year, information on international organizing on energy issues, and useful resources. Energy Commission, 3640 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110.

CONVENTION

•Debate on labor and electoral politics, workshops on organizing and a concert by feminist folksinger Kristin Lems will be features of NAM's national convention. The meeting will be August 8-12 at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The latest in left and feminist films will be screened, a year's experiences exchanged and old acquaintances renewed. The convention is open to non-members.

NEW CHAPTERS

•A group of community activists has formed a new chapter in **Long Beach, California**. They can be contacted at: c/o Fonte, 725 Rose Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90813... **Champaign-Urbana NAM** is a new chapter in central Illinois. Campus activists, veterans of the struggle to pass ERA in Illinois and others joined to form the chapter. Their address: Room 284, Illini Union, 1301 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801.

SPEAKING

•Barry Commoner spoke on "Energy and Politics" April 24 for **Los Angeles NAM's Socialist Community School**... Eastbay NAM's Socialist School has a full schedule of spring forums including "Hollywood meets Vietnam" May 4 and "Baby Boom on the Left," May 9.

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Just for the looking...

NAM in Brief

The New American Movement combines a Marxist analysis with careful attention to the current realities of American politics. It combines a deep commitment to its socialist principles with a tactical flexibility in its political approach. It combines a focus on the development of theory appropriate to our times with an activist orientation that stresses involvement in the crucial issues of the day. And it combines a vision of a socialist future based on democracy and human freedom with efforts to project

in our work elements of that future.

NAM has over 35 chapters involved in organizing for labor union democracy, against nuclear power, for abortion rights, against violence against women, for affirmative action, against apartheid in South Africa, and much more. Chapters also organize cultural and educational events that attempt to present a new and challenging socialist perspective on our world.

All of this work is informed and united by certain basic political ideas:

- NAM is committed to working toward a socialist society in which material resources and the decision-making process are democratically controlled by all people.
- We are committed to a socialism that has equality and respect for all people at its core—one that carefully balances the need for collective planning, ownership, and decision-making with a high regard for individual rights and freedom.
- The development of a movement for socialism in America will require the growth of socialist consciousness within

the working class—all those who have to sell their labor power (even if they are not directly paid) in order to survive. For it is only a broad-based movement representative of the diversity of the American people that can fundamentally challenge the power of capital.

- American capitalism is a powerful and entrenched system. Yet it is also rife with contradictions. Organization is key to changing power relationships and exposing these contradictions. We are committed to the development of a socialist party that can carry out these tasks, as well as to the growth of the most strong and progressive possible popular organizations.

- Democracy is central to the process of building a movement for socialism. Only as working people become active, organized and begin to take control over their lives can a new society take shape.

- NAM sees the struggle for the liberation of women as integral to a socialist movement. We value the contributions of the women's movement in showing how revolutionary change must deal with all aspects of people's lives. And we defend now, and in the socialism we project, the liberation of gay women and men.

- Racism cripples national life—it denies the humanity of minorities and thwarts the potential of the working class as a whole. NAM is committed to fighting against racism and national oppression in all forms.

- The fate of socialism in the United States is tied to the rest of the world. We support struggles for national liberation and human freedom wherever they occur.

- NAM supports the positive achievements of the existing socialist countries. However, we are also critical of various aspects of their policies, and see no one of them as a model for our own efforts.



NAM chapters

- Austin NAM, c/o McBryde, 2204 San Gabriel, Austin, TX 78705
- Baltimore NAM, P.O. Box 7213, Baltimore, MD 21218
- Bellingham NAM, 1001 Key St., Bellingham, WA, 98225
- Blazing Star NAM, P.O. Box 7892, Chicago, IL, 60680
- Boulder NAM, c/o Zarichney, 3305 E. Euclid Ave., Boulder, CO 80303
- Buffalo NAM, P.O. Box 404, Buffalo, NY 14205
- Chicago Northside NAM, c/o NAM National Office, 3244 N. Clark, Chicago, IL 60657
- Chico NAM, P.O. Box 3476, Chico, CA 95927
- CSA/NAM, c/o Rick & Sue Momeyer, 210 N. Bishop St., Oxford, OH 45056
- Danville NAM, c/o Nagle, 231 S. Edwards, Danville, IL 61832
- Dayton NAM, c/o Mericle, 321 Neal Ave., Dayton, OH 45405
- Denver-Bread & Roses NAM, c/o Crawford, 1376 Eudora, Denver, CO 80220
- Detroit NAM, Box 32376, Detroit, MI 48232
- East Bay NAM, 6025 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, CA 94609
- Harriet Tubman NAM, P.O. Box 24521, Los Angeles, CA 90024
- Leo Gallagher NAM, c/o John Hare, 655 S. Euclid Ave., Pasadena, CA 91106
- Long Island NAM, P.O. Box 608, Huntington, NY 11743
- Madison NAM, P.O. Box 401, 800 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53706
- Middlesex NAM, P.O. Box 443, Somerville, MA 02144
- Missoula NAM, c/o Berg, 1203 Sherwood, Missoula, MT 59801
- Milwaukee NAM, P.O. Box 1315, Milwaukee, WI 53201
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- New Haven NAM, 188 Willow St., New Haven, CT 06511
- New York NAM, P.O. Box 324, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013
- Philadelphia NAM, c/o Hamilton, 1501 Cherry St., No. 287, Philadelphia, PA 19102
- Pittsburgh NAM, 5420 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
- Portland NAM 1118 SE 20th Ave., Portland, OR
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- San Diego NAM, P.O. Box 15635, San Diego, CA 92115
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- Santa Cruz NAM, c/o Rotkin, 123 Liberty Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060
- Seattle NAM, c/o Frank Krasnowsky, 3117 E. Thomas, Seattle, WA 98112
- Southside Chicago NAM, c/o Van Meter, 5100 S. Ellis No. 2, Chicago, IL 60615
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