

APRIL 1979

50 CENTS

# Moving On

MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT



Dolly Parton

*Country Music—  
Stand by Yourself*

**PLUS:**

*Cleveland: back from the brink  
Socialism and the black community*

## Towards a socialist America

One of the most important aspects of **Moving On** is its connection with the New American Movement. In my view it is a connection that enriches the organization by providing a forum for the expression of new ideas and a vehicle for elaborating and disseminating our political approach.

And it is a connection that enriches the magazine by holding it accountable to a body of people who are engaged both in the development of political theory appropriate to American reality and actual attempts to test that theory against that reality in concrete work.

It is a connection, however, that is not without dilemmas. For example: How do we respond to major historical events with a clear and forceful voice given the still-slow workings of democratic decision-making in our organization? Or how do we present not just what NAM does, but why we see its political role as so essential - without just sounding like cheerleaders?

Two articles in this issue represent our attempts to address such problems. The first is an article on the current situation in Southeast Asia by Dave Dellinger. It is normally our policy not to reprint articles. However, we felt that this piece offered such an articulate and thoughtful contribution to the clarification of such a complicated and troubling issue that it was worth altering our policy.

At a recent meeting of our national leadership, NAM decided that while we felt the Chinese invasion of Vietnam clearly violated socialist standards, we had much more serious doubts about exactly how to judge Vietnam's actions against Cambodia. Because of the deep disagreements - and the lack of sufficient information - we decided to postpone a decision until there is further study and discussion. It is our hope that Dellinger's article can contribute to that process within NAM while also offering insights to all our readers.

The second is the article on Socialism and the Black Community by Manning Marable. Marable does not simply assert that NAM is the vanguard party and all revolutionaries - black and white - should be part of it, as some groups are wont to do. Instead he tries to examine the complex problems involved in the development of a socialist politics in the black movement and describes why NAM can play a key role in that process.

*Robata Lynch*

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# KUCINICH/CLEVELAND

## a stark matter of class

by Jeffrey Wilson

Rarely in recent American history has a politician of any significance challenged business prerogatives as Mayor Dennis Kucinich of Cleveland has. Coming to office in November, 1977, he immediately scuttled exotic business-backed schemes for downtown development. He fought to block tax abatements for banks and companies hoping to avoid full payment of property taxes on new buildings. He battled against a proposed new ore unloading dock on Lake Erie for Cleveland's Republic Steel Corp., the terms of which would have amounted to a hand-out of tens of millions of dollars.

The mayor blasted Cleveland's banks, which are among the nation's most profitable, for their discriminatory lending policies. And perhaps most importantly, he adamantly refused to sell the city's Municipal Light Plant (Muny Light), which distributes electricity to a fifth of Cleveland's residents.

Understandably, corporate Cleveland is quite unhappy with Dennis (as he is generally known). Its opposition strategy, as well as Kuchinich's own response, have raised questions of some importance to the left. When Kucinich rather intemperately fired Police Chief Richard Hongisto at a news conference in March, 1978 (an incident that has not been adequately explained—Hongisto never really proved his charges that he was being pressured to commit "unethical acts," while the mayor's replies were also somewhat questionable), a recall campaign began which busi-

*Jeffrey Wilson is a journalist who travels throughout the Midwest.*

ness eventually bankrolled to within 237 votes of success.

The recall, however, turned out to be merely a prelude of what was to come.

On Dec. 15, despite Kucinich's pledge to support an increase in the city income tax (which represented an abrupt turnabout from his previous stance), the city defaulted on \$14 million in notes held by six banks. While Cleveland did have financial problems—largely because the previous administration had dipped into bond funds to pay operating expenses—even business commentators ascribe the default to "political difficulties" rather than to an underlying financial crisis. Indeed, within days of the default, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that speculators were snapping up Cleveland bonds.

The default resulted from an effort by local business—represented by Ohio's largest bank, Cleveleand Trust—to hold a gun to the mayor's head.

The key issue in the default was Cleveland Trust's determination to force the sale of Muny Light. Though the bank is now at pains to deny it, on the morning of the default Clevetrust Chairman Brock Weir told Dennis the bank would raise \$50 million in loans for the city if it would only sell the light plant.

### Nefarious practices

Such a sale would necessarily have been to the local private utility, the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co. (CEI), which had waged a battle for at least 20 years to take over its public competitor. Two years ago, the Atomic Licensing And Safety Board of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission ruled that CEI had engaged in nefarious practice ranging from intentionally



Dennis Kucinich

## Comment

created blackouts to Muni customers to attempted price-fixing in its efforts to seize Muni. Those findings bolstered a \$330 million anti-trust suit by the city against CEI, which would be thrown out if CEI were to acquire Muni.

The mayor sought to avoid the sale of the light system, which had become a symbol of resistance to corporate power, but was finally forced to put the matter to a public referendum in order to win council approval of his proposal to allow a popular vote on the proposed tax increase.

In the campaign that followed, Dennis characterized Cleveland Trust's refusal to roll over the city notes as a simple matter of greed, pointing out the numerous interlocks between the bank and CEI. But there is reason to believe that Cleveland Trust acted as it did because Brock Weir saw an opportunity to eliminate the mayor as a political force. As the mayor himself noted in a September speech before the National Press Club in Washington, "An elected official who has no price is too dangerous to be permitted to survive."

By the end of the February campaign, Kucinich was using charts to depict the incestuous links between Cleveland banks and companies. In a television appearance, he pointed to "monopoly capital" as the source of the city's problems, and damned the default as a "strike by capital." Enlisting the support of Ralph Nader, he was able to initiate investigations of Clevetrust-CEI links by the Federal Reserve Board, the SEC, and the Justice Dept.

Needless to say, all this was intolerable to the business establishment. Weir referred to city hall as "that little chance downtown" in an interview and added, "We aren't talking about recovering \$5 million. We're talking about recovering a city." One newspaper headline clearly indicated where things stood: "Business thinks Dennis must go." Business leaders started meeting in what some saw as an effort to unite behind a fusion candidate to defeat Kucinich in the November election.

The business-backed campaign to rid



**George Forbes is president of the Cleveland City Council.**

the city of this scourge was notable especially for its flexibility.

When New York City neared default in 1975, business demanded—and received—huge cuts in city spending, especially for social services. But when Kucinich threatened drastic layoffs in the wake of Cleveland's default, his opposition banded together in support of municipal police and firefighters out of political expediency. Proponents of the nine-member commission proposed by Gov. James Rhodes to govern the city's finances, leaning on New York's Emergency Financial Control Board as an example, favored it not so much to reduce expenditures as to simply seize control of the city from a mayor who wouldn't heel.

Cleveland's financial predicament resulted from a lack of "business confidence." The Director of research for Standard & Poor's, which rates municipal bonds, revealed in an interview with the Cleveland Press that the main purpose of the sale of Muni Light was that it "would improve investor confidence. It's more a psychological

than a monetary issue."

The news media trained their guns on the mayor, pounding away at supposed mismanagement and relentlessly predicting financial ruin. Just prior to the recall, *The Plain Dealer* ran a series of articles headlined "Cleveland on the brink." Only after a heated protest resulting from the reassignment (and eventual resignation) of an aggressive reporter investigating Cleveland Electric did *The Plain Dealer* briefly open its columns to a few stories critical of the private utility.

Nationally, the Cleveland political scene has been viewed simply as bizarre. And, in a way, there is an element of truth to that view; if only because so infrequently does an issue in this country come down to such a stark matter of class. Kucinich framed it well in his Washington speech: "It soon became obvious to certain members of Cleveland's big business elite that our city administration was an obstacle to the proper functioning of the sacrosanct 'system.' In siding with the poor and working people on economic issues we

found ourselves locked in mortal combat with every mighty institution in Cleveland. Those powerful economic interests who are consumers of government, and who are the font of political power and prestige, expect compliance if not fawning obeisance. Failing to achieve cooperation they began to employ tactics of confrontation, retribution, annihilation."

Given the strength of this opposition and the threat of chaos that has hung over the city like a dense cloud, the outcome of the referendum was a remarkable vote of confidence in Kucinich's convictions, if not in the man himself: over 60% of the electorate approved the tax increase and rejected the sale of Muni Light.

While the implications of the vote for Kucinich's position and programs are still not clear, a look at the city's complex political life may shed some light on possible courses.

To begin, Kucinich has not been alone in his battle to focus conflict in Cleveland on a deserving target—corporate power. Important groundwork was laid by the Ohio Public Interest Campaign which, in a potent alliance with the United Auto Workers, brought the issue of business tax abatements to the forefront of public debate. OPIC organizing among labor unions, senior citizens, and community groups provided an issue-oriented base which did not necessarily belong politically to the mayor and his controversial administration.

Moreover, the near-maniac performance of some of the city council members, the most visible opposition to the mayor, has lately managed to overshadow many of the mistakes of key Kucinich advisors. Several Council members, including president George Forbes, are under indictment for a kickback scheme.

Forbes has become increasingly violent in his attacks on Kucinich. He recently compared the mayor to Jim Jones and once likened his own role to that of Christ crucified.

The Council has inexplicably reversed its position in negotiations with the administration, almost from one day to the next. And it has managed to appear both intransigent and fickle simultaneously. The results have rebounded to Kucinich's favor. In a recent poll, 57% of the people disapproved of the mayor's handling of the city's crises; but 67% disapproved of the Council's role.

### Church socials

Kucinich has also continued to exercise the political skills that catapulted him to his present position. Unlike many "reform" politicians, he has a real—and largely working class—base and he works hard to keep it. He is an inveterate attendee of church socials, funerals, and community gatherings. He constantly seeks ways to "cut" issues that will enable him to maintain this base while seeking progressive, even radical changes. It is this concern that primarily underlies his insistence on the centrality of economic—rather than social—issues.

He says: "Yes, I am ducking some of the social questions. But I would prefer to concentrate on economic issues because some of the social issues are very divisive, and they often pit against each other the very people who should be working together to resolve economic problems."

"Ducking the social questions" is both solution to and contributor to one of Kucinich's central dilemmas: the issue of race. It is his method of maintaining his base on the largely white ethnic and racist West Side, while trying to extend his influence on the black East Side. It hasn't always worked.

For one thing, it's impossible to completely avoid social issues. Thus, although Kucinich hasn't played the bus-ing issue, he has had to take a stand: he's against. Or when a public housing project was proposed in the heart of his home territory to the heated objections of local residents, he made one of those thinly disguised "tearing the

social fabric" statements.

Moreover, his opponents *have* played the race issue for all it's worth. When all but one of those indicted in the Council kickback scandal turned out to be black, Forbes managed to turn the case into a national cause celebre, eliciting support from well-known figures such as Vernon Jordan and Jessie Jackson. And during the recall, the committee formed to oust the mayor distributed a vicious tabloid in the black community branding him a racist.

Kucinich's tactics have sometimes left him open to such charges. In several instances, his own campaign literature, distributed in white communities, has subtly played on racist fears. During the recall, for instance, Kucinich supporters spread the word that a vote against Dennis would be a vote to make George Forbes mayor.

### Balancing act

Despite all these tensions, there are signs that Kucinich's economic orientation may be paying off. In the face of the widespread opposition of black leadership, over 50% of black voters supported the mayor's position in the February referendum. And in his victory remarks, he emphasized the importance of black-white unity.

Even if he can achieve the difficult balancing act required to make this unity a reality, Kucinich faces other problems in solidifying his support. Like many people who come to power primarily through political machinations, Kucinich is suspicious of popular mobilization that he cannot control. And like almost anyone under constant attack, he is wary of critics and surrounds himself with loyalists.

As a result, his administration has had a hard time forming alliances or building bridges. A number of community organizations seem alienated and on the outs with the mayor. And he in turn seems annoyed that they don't simply recognize him as a friend and suspend political agitation or pres-

*continued on page thirteen*

# Southeast Asia



photo by Steve Cagan

## — without heroes or happy endings

*Note: The following statement by Dave Dellinger on the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was written before the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. We feel it brings an urgently needed clarity to a tragic and perplexing situation.*

*While we share Dellinger's view that the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was the wrong course, we do not believe it in any way justifies China's invasion of Vietnam. Dellinger points out that U.S. policies have covertly encouraged the Chinese. American leftists need to find ways to oppose these policies, without falling into the pro-Soviet camp Dellinger describes among the Vietnamese at the fall meeting.*

*-The Editors*

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By Dave Dellinger

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**W**ouldn't it be nice if all the Third World countries that have been invaded, raped and exploited by Western powers could emerge undamaged spiritually from the experience, to become instant models of Utopian socialism? Then those of us who opposed the genocidal wars that were waged to prevent them from gaining their freedom could live happily ever after—at least so far as those countries were concerned. Our joy at their liberation would be untroubled by such embarrassments as the brutalities in Kampuchea (Cambodia) and the recent invasion of that country by Vietnam to install the government of its choice. And we wouldn't have to have second

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*Dave Dellinger is an editor of Seven Days. Reprinted from Seven Days, 206 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010. Subscriptions: \$9.00; sample copies: \$1.00*

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thoughts about our own contribution to the mess.

I don't mean second thoughts about whether we should have opposed the wars that devastated both Vietnam and Kampuchea, though that is being suggested by some. They would like us to use the present events to justify retroactively the brutalities and invasions by the United States and to weaken domestic opposition to present and future offenses. But two sets of wrongs don't make the first one right, especially when the first series created the conditions in both Kampuchea and Vietnam that made the second more likely to occur.

I mean second thoughts about our laxity as the United States methodically tightened its post-war embargo on trade, aid credits and diplomatic recognition like a noose around Vietnam's neck while coyly pursuing an opposite course with Kampuchea's instigator and Vietnam's tormentor, China. We might regret that after the formal war ended we did not oppose with equal vigor—if at all—Washington's policy of continuing the politics of war by other means.

The news was out, long before most Americans entered the anti-Vietnam-war struggle, that even countries calling themselves socialist can commit unspeakable atrocities against their own people (the Gulag Archipelago) and send tanks and troops to keep repressive, unpopular foreign governments in power (Hungary, 1956) or overthrow a popular regime that was inching toward "socialism with a human face" (Czechoslovakia, 1968). Fortunately this knowledge did not lead us to support U.S. intervention and war against Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos. Nor should it cause us now to

lose confidence in our ability to decide which policies of government are destructive and must be opposed.

Socialist countries, like capitalist countries, must be judged by their deeds, not their rhetoric. To do so is especially important for those of us who believe that socialism opens up the possibility, but not the guarantee, of just and humane relationships that are impossible in a society based on private ownership of social wealth and selfish competition.

What are we to say, then, about Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea?

First, that it inevitably leaves us both dismayed and confused by the contradictions in the situation. But there are marked distinctions, in favor of the Vietnamese, between the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, regrettable as the Vietnamese invasion may be.

The challenge of Czechoslovakia that terrified the Soviet rulers did not involve death and destruction for Soviet citizens. It was the spiritual challenge of a country that threatened to inspire Soviet citizens with the knowledge that it is possible to have both socialism and civil liberties. But Kampuchea repeatedly attacked Vietnamese troops, civilians and villages in the bitter border dispute between the two countries, causing tremendous losses of life.

The Soviets attacked a government that was trying to remedy the worst abuses of authoritarian "socialism," but the Vietnamese moved against a regime that was notorious for its cruelty. The Kampuchean regime had so little confidence in its people that it even confiscated all radios.

For different reasons, neither the Vietnamese nor the American press

can be fully trusted in their accounts of pre-invasion abuses in Kampuchea. It is especially galling that the American press that repeatedly called Kampuchea the worst violator of human rights on the planet—and tried to prove it by printing damning photographs that were made in Thailand by the CIA—now reports that there was considerable support for the Pol Pot regime in the zones that had been liberated the longest. But there can be no doubt as to the ferocity of the Pol Pot regime and the contrast between the



## Kampuchea repeatedly attacked Vietnamese villages in the border dispute

bloodbath it launched against those who had supported Lon Nol and the United States, and the far more enlightened policies of the Vietnamese. Even China, which has had no visible difficulty supporting the Junta in Chile, or collaborating with the Shah of Iran or the white minority regime in South Africa, was widely reported to be dismayed by its Kampuchean satellite and *agent provocateur* on the Vietnamese border.

## Understandable fear

Despite the many complexities of the border dispute, it is indisputable that many Vietnamese villages occupy territory that once was part of Kampuchea. In recent centuries Vietnam (and Thailand as well) often expanded at the expense of Kampuchea. And the French in the 19th century, for reasons of their own convenience and profit, incorporated large areas of Kampuchean territory into Cochinchina, an artificial French subdivision of Vietnam. But no country can tolerate having its citizens constantly attacked and killed by soldiers of another country that refuses to negotiate the dispute between them. Kampuchea's refusal may have been based on an understandable fear of Vietnamese intentions and power, a fear that to some now seems justified. But this was little consolation to the people killed or their relatives and neighbors. After more than a year of such losses, the Vietnamese apparently concluded that they could no longer content themselves with strengthened defenses and punitive expeditions—neither of which stopped the attacks—nor with waiting for the regime, buttressed by Chinese arms, advisers and work gangs, to be overthrown from within.

Despite these extenuating circumstances, there are many disturbing aspects to Vietnam's military conquest of its offending neighbor. To this date (February 3), Vietnam has claimed against overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that the Pol Pot government was overthrown by indigenous Kampuchean forces. Although there were numerous revolts by ordinary citizens and Party officials, it is ludicrous to suggest that the rebels possessed the planes, pilots, tanks, heavy artillery, organization and numbers to conduct the blitzkrieg that swept Kampuchea. One would respect the Vietnamese more, and see evidence of a clearer conscience, if they stated forthrightly that they had felt it necessary to invade Kampuchea in defense of the lives of

their own citizens and for whatever other urgent reasons they might present. Then at least there could be an honest debate on the strategy, tactics and political principles involved. It seems to me that Vietnam's many friends throughout the world, on both sides of the dollar curtain, deserve this much respect rather than being asked to swallow and repeat the current line.

(A weekly that is thought to reflect the views of the U.S. Communist Party headlined its story of the conquest: "Kampuchians Sieze Kampuchea." Oh well!)

On a related, more personal note, I attended a gathering this fall of about thirty anti-Vietnam-war Americans and several Vietnamese officials who were in New York for the meeting of the U.N. General Assembly. In a formal presentation, the Vietnamese excoriated China for having supported Lon Nol during the period he headed the pro-American, anti-Communist Kampuchean government (March 1970-April 1975), and for having received Nixon in Peking during the saturation bombing of Vietnamese cities. No mention was made that the Soviet Union recognized and supported the Lon Nol government, whereas in fact China did not. Nor was it mentioned that Nixon was similarly received in Moscow during the same period of massive U.S. bombardments, a fact that I know from

personal experience many Vietnamese resented at the time.

Americans in the anti-war movement had come to expect better from the Vietnamese—and many of us hope for a higher level of political discussion in the future.

## Grievous miscalculation

Finally, it should be pointed out that Vietnam apparently made a grievous miscalculation in Kampuchea. It may have thought that the Kampuchean people would welcome the invasion overwhelmingly. If that had been the case, Vietnam might not have had to become involved in long-term maintenance of an occupying force. Present indications are that the Vietnamese are not entirely welcome as a liberating, let alone occupying, power. Despite their superiority in planes, technology and organized military power, they may have to contend with considerable grassroots opposition whether from Kampuchians specifically loyal to the Pol Pot regime or those traditionally hostile to Vietnam and nationally hostile to any alien occupying force. If so, Kampuchea may turn out to be Vietnam's "Vietnam," to use a term given special meaning by the United States' attempt to play judge, policeman and avenging angel in Vietnam.

The preceding observation touches on one of the many reasons it is perilous for any country, whether capitalist or socialist, to think that it is capable of deciding which foreign governments need to be overthrown by military conquest from the outside. To do so violates Ho Chi Minh's poignant words that "There is nothing more precious than independence and freedom." At best such a decision involves a gamble at the expense of many lives and the risk of a gradual hardening of the invading nation's heart that will grievously injure it at home as well as abroad. At worst, it can provoke similar decisions by rival countries that may eventually escalate into world war. Given the present state of military technology,

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**Americans in  
the antiwar  
movement  
had come to  
expect better  
from the  
Vietnamese**





# A socialist runs for city council — and wins

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By Eric Nee

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Over two-hundred people filled the small cafeteria of an elementary school on the westside of Santa Cruz, a city of 40,000 south of San Francisco. The occasion was a City Council candidates forum attended by all 18 candidates, held by the Westside Neighbors, a local grassroots organization.

One of the candidates, Mike Rotkin, a member of the Westside Neighbors and the New American Movement, seemed both better known and more widely respected than any of the others. As an active member of the Westside Neighbors he has become known for his ability to articulate its views. He had already received their endorsement because of statements such as the one he gave that night:

“For too long, the City Council has responded only to big developers and

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**“For too long, the City Council has responded to big developers and other monied interests.”**

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other monied interests. The Council reaction to citizens who come before it, and to groups like the Westside Neighbors has been to ignore and insult us. The Council should work with neighborhood groups and respond to direct citizen participation. We need a Council that would facilitate rather than hinder the development of broadly representative neighborhood and community groups.”

As a solution to those problems Rot-

kin offered the following; “The City Council should take the initiative, along with Westside Neighbors and other groups, in applying for existing federal funds to help develop decentralized, neighborhood controlled health centers. We have large numbers of senior citizens and families suffering from inadequate health care services. We cannot depend on the County or the local medical establishment to serve our needs in this area. I am committed to using the political and financial power of the Council to ensure that every citizen in Santa Cruz gets decent and community-controlled health care. The reserves exist for such a program. We need a Council willing to fight to get this money and to involve neighborhood residents in planning how it will be used to best meet our needs.”

It was almost two years ago that members of the Health Care Coalition (a group initiated by NAM) began to go

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*Eric Nee is a health care worker and member of Santa Cruz NAM.*

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## Getting Together

door-to-door on the Westside of Santa Cruz in an attempt to form a neighborhood organization. The westside is a predominately working class neighborhood and the major racially-mixed area in an otherwise white city.

From the beginning the group was focused on the immediate issues confronting the community, seeking to involve minorities, working people, and women in solutions based on the principle of community control.

For the first year its activities revolved around services and social events, such as first aid classes, block parties, and medical screening clinics. Initial meetings of twenty people were held in the local Black Baptist Church.

Since that time the organization has grown in both scope and size. It successfully forced the reopening of the local library branch after it was shut down in the wake of Proposition 13 cutbacks. It has a monthly sixteen page newsletter, which is hand delivered to over 2,500 households within days of its printing.

Most recently it has been working to get city funding for a neighborhood controlled health center. This became a major issue when the sole (privately owned) clinic announced plans to move into new offices on the opposite side of town.

Corresponding with the upsurge of activity there has been an increasing amount of interest in the group shown by residents of the area. Recent meetings have been attended by more than eighty people; young and old, black and white, students and working people, socialist and conservative.

As the battle for a health center came up against the City Council (hundreds of people showed up at its meetings), many Westside residents began to realize the impact that local government can have on their lives. Esther Stanley, a senior citizen, is one such person. "The night I was at the City Council meeting I observed them and made up my mind about a great deal... The City Council wasn't a bit concerned in helping in any way. They

didn't think it would be any hardship. But the clinic moving to the eastside is going to raise costs and will not help the middle-class, lower-income and retired people... The City Council has people who seem to be mostly for the money groups."

### Neighborhood control

Rotkin's campaign grew out of experiences such as this. The ideas that he advocated were developed in conjunction with the people of the westside; they have stressed the importance of neighborhood groups participating in the development of the city's programs and of neighborhood controlled health centers and housing programs, while attacking business subsidies by the city.

The campaign facilitated the political development of many on the westside. More people are beginning to see the connection between their local problems and the broader issues affecting the city. They are beginning to understand who their enemies and who their friends are, and why. And they are discovering they can join with others, environmentalists, leftists, public employees, and students, to begin to take more control over their government.

In addition to support from the neighborhood, Rotkin had the backing of

many connected with the local branch of the University of California where he teaches community studies. "Students For a Progressive City" was formed on the campus to further his campaign and other efforts. This group has registered over 800 new voters on the campus, a significant number in an election where 4-6,000 voter can win the election.

The progressive community in Santa Cruz was the third crucial factor in this campaign. There are proportionately as many socialists and progressives here as in any city in the country. A loose coalition formed among four of the candidates who ran on similar programs and the supporters of two initiatives for rent control and growth management. They cooperated in a registration drive, and combined their efforts on the last days for a final leaflet drop to every home, and a massive get-out-the-vote drive on election day. As a representative to the Central Labor Council from AFSCME local 1728, Rotkin also reached out to public employees of the city and county, two of the three top employers in the county (the University being the first).

The campaign has been one of the largest and best organized, due primarily to the connections, resources, and efforts of the NAM chapter. Over 100 people helped to distribute leaflets,

## And wins...

**W**hen the votes were counted on election day, March 6, Mike Rotkin came in first of all the candidates for four city council seats, with slightly over 5,100 votes.

"It shows people are prepared to vote for socialists who run a campaign based on issues. I didn't water down my politics on issues like rent control and growth management. And though people knew I was a socialist, they voted for me because of my stands," says a jubilant Rotkin.

Rotkin did best in student, low and

moderate income neighborhoods, poorly in upper income areas. Of the slate of four progressives, only one other was elected. That will mean four conservative to three progressives on council. "It will be a hard battle," says Rotkin.

"Being part of a socialist organization made the difference in this election," says Rotkin, "and the election helped the chapter. Already we're involved in a second neighborhood group; we can envision organizing across the city."



photo by Jean Ross

**Westside Neighbors' press conference on financing for a health center.**

hold coffees, help put on fundraising events, and walk precincts.

### Socialist strategy

It is an integral part of the local chapter's strategy: working to help build permanent working class organizations at the workplace and in the community; joining with other progressive forces around common concerns; and maintaining an independent socialist presence in the community.

To date, helping to create the Westside Neighbors has been the most important aspect of NAM's work in the first area of the strategy. It has involved the chapter with a diverse group of people and moved it to articulate a socialist perspective and program that can speak to people who define themselves as liberals, moderates, and conservatives. (Some of the most active members of the Westside Neighbors would call themselves conservatives.)

To further its goal of unifying the progressive movement, the chapter was instrumental in organizing a coalition to oppose the recall of two local supervisors, has helped with strike support work, and participated with others on campus to oppose the Bakke decision and apartheid in South Africa.

Additionally NAM has attempted to maintain a socialist presence in the community through forums, distribution of *Moving On*, and annual sponsorship of International Women's Day.

Rotkin's campaign was an attempt

to link, but not collapse, those three aspects of NAM's strategy. It was directly connected to the chapter's work with the Westside Neighbors, attempting to advance grass-roots power in the neighborhoods. The campaign provided a forum for talking about those ideas, and his election could help to consolidate that power, e.g. aiding the use of city funds for a neighborhood controlled health center.

The campaign also helped to unify the progressive movements which exist in Santa Cruz around issues such as housing, health, the budget cutbacks, growth, women, gays, and public employees. Movements which usually remain single-issue groups are now able to unify around a common program.

While the campaign was not explicitly socialist, it was trying to impart a socialist perspective by raising such issues as neighborhood control, progressive taxation, support for public workers, opposition to business subsidies, and programs to support women and minorities. It also gave NAM members the opportunity to talk individually with people about NAM's perspective on the campaign and how it relates to our goal of a socialist movement.

Maintaining a balance between those three aspects of the strategy is not always easy. Rotkin was running as a representative of a grass-roots organization, which is both one of his strengths,

*continued on page thirteen*

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# Organizers' Notebook

## Parents, children & race

*Dear Organizer's Notebook: We fought for a community-controlled childcare center in our mostly white, working class neighborhood last year and we won. Now several of us are on a community/parent board. Some of the other board members have been opposed to having minority children in the center. How can we work constructively to change them?*

Most organizers agree that the most effective way to undermine racism is to get people into relationships in which they are working for a common goal. There are several ways you could do this.

You say the neighborhood is not entirely white. One organizer of parent boards in elementary schools says the argument that the boards should totally represent the community is usually effective. It's up to your group to recruit some interested minority parents once you've convinced other board members.

Another way you might try is by building alliances with other neighborhood centers. Quality, community-

controlled childcare is hard to get and hard to keep. People who've fought for it and won have tremendous common interests. You could try to set-up a city-wide board of such centers to keep pressure on city, state and federal authorities, so you can all keep your funding and parent-community control. Such a board would surely include representatives from childcare centers in minority neighborhoods.

"That doesn't mean, however, that minority people should bear the responsibility for breaking down racism, once you've got people working together," cautions another organizer. You will need to watch how to pick issues to work on so they speak to the common interests of minority and white parents, to support the ideas of minority board members, and to argue persuasively when divisive ideas (like reverse discrimination) come up.

There are also many things you can try directly with the white parents. "I would start caucusing among yourselves, talking about racism--where you've come from and where you're at. Once you've got some understanding of how you've changed, I'd get caucus members to bring up the personal element at board meetings," says a childcare organizer.

"The best way to fight racism in a situation that concerns children is to talk with parents about children. Admit to yourself you probably won't change adult minds. But no matter how the parents feel, the children are growing up in a different, more integrated society. If parents load their children down with their own bag-

gage, they're just making it harder for them when they grow up," says a parent who has worked on parent school committees.

"I wouldn't discuss racism directly with the parents," says another organizer, "but in talking about problems children face in the educational system, I'd bring up race discrimination as one we need to start facing now at the pre-school level." Over time, she says, the other parents may become willing to see this as a problem, too.

"Dealing with curriculum can be very positive," says a parent. "starting a curriculum committee, finding materials that can really give kids quality skills, a good start in life, means working very closely with a few parents. Many of the really better materials, like *Sesame Street*, are integrated. You can begin to have discussions on racism at that level."

All the parents and organizers stress that you won't change people overnight. You'll need to be committed to the childcare center over time, to really getting to know the other board members. Perhaps you'll even need to continue working with them as your children move up into elementary school if you want your ideas to have an effect.

—Judy MacLean

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# Vietnam

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*from page eight*

such a war may destroy the human race. War is not a paper tiger.

I have felt it necessary to say these things despite my love and respect for the heroic Vietnamese. They taught many Americans a great deal about love of one's own country, patient, protracted struggle against repressive institutions, and the necessity of distinguishing between the institutional enemy and the people who, although victims themselves, are misled or coerced into implementing its harmful policies. Americans can build a movement for political, economic and cultural liberation only on honest dialogue with Third World revolutionaries and nationalists whom many of us respect but know are not infallible.

Americans' continued resistance to U.S. aggression abroad, whether carried out by the military, the CIA, the World Bank or multinational corporations, cannot be based on the illusion that the victims of the aggression are flawless incarnations of the new societies or "new beings" toward which we and millions everywhere aspire and imperfectly struggle.

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# Kucinich

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*from page five*

sure on city government for their particular needs.

A similar problem exists with the city's labor movement. Aside from his relationship with the UAW, Kucinich has not been able to garner labor support. And he has had a heated and controversial relationship with city employees, insisting on an authority that few would want to grant any corporate employer.

It would not be accurate to say that all of these problems pale in the face of the larger political battles being waged in Cleveland now. But it probably would be correct to say none of them can be adequately addressed as long as

the corporate hand is at the city's throat.

Kucinich desperately needs both short term programs that can insure that normal city service can be maintained and longer term programs that offer realistic alternatives to the business-as-usual approach that shapes the lives of our urban areas today. Moreover, as with nearly every other major city in America today, real financial re-stabilization in Cleveland requires radically altered federal policy.

But prior to all of these at this point is a simple reality. Corporate power is determined to break the mayor—even if it has to break the city to do so. Kucinich passed a second crucial test with the February referendum. Now it remains to be seen whether he will be able to catalyze the necessary support to continue to stand up against that power.

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# Organization

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*from page twenty*

al unity between Mexican-American organizations, white progressives both inside and to the left of the Democratic Party, socialists and working class people of all colors and cultures is a prerequisite for the construction of a socialist America. Black nationalists must engage in a continued dialogue with these forces, learning from their own analysis as they learn from our unique historical experiences and perspectives.

Why join a socialist organization? Because the committed, day-to-day efforts of socialists across the entire spectrum of American society will ultimately transform the capitalist state. This personal commitment to struggle must involve certain organizational forms. NAM does not claim to be "the vanguard party." As a result, it can make effective contributions in the struggles against sexism, racism and other forms of oppression, while learning from the concrete experiences of other groups, such as black nationalist organizations.

Friendships can begin with individuals, but alliances can only involve

organizations. We need each other to accomplish our common and separate goals. White socialists who believe in racial equality should participate in any efforts to help reinforce black community control of its own institutions, support anti-apartheid and antiracist campaigns and acquaint themselves with black history and politics.

In doing so, they will better appreciate the black nationalists' positions on various contemporary political questions. As we learn to build a framework for dialogue between organizations, we should build a framework for social transformation. And as we build for a socialist future, we may also begin to realize the prospects for a non-racist society.

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# City council

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*from page eleven*

and a source of compromise. There exists a tension between winning the election, and striving to advance the level of political consciousness in the city. To ignore the first would alienate him from one of the key bases of his support, while to ignore the second could lead the campaign toward reformism.

NAM's involvement in this campaign has raised a number of important questions: 1) In precinct work, how much should the focus be on those people whose votes are assured (which could give us enough to win) and how much on reaching out to others? 2) To what degree can the campaign literature and speeches try to link immediate problems confronting Santa Cruz with a socialist-feminist analysis of their roots and solutions? 3) To what extent can an electoral campaign be educational, or should it be seen primarily as a means of consolidating the awareness and movements that presently exist? 4) How much visibility should NAM have in the campaign or the campaign committee? Hopefully, through campaigns such as this we can begin to formulate an approach toward these critical political issues.

by Eileen Willenborg

The winds of change have blown into the world of country music, stirring up a storm the likes of which haven't been seen since the Original Carter Family (dominated by the legendary Mother Maybelle Carter) made the first commercial successful recording of country music in 1927.

Loretta Lynn, known as the Queen of Country Music, has begun to express a strong feminist message in her music. Lynn has always been something of a renegade within Nashville's inner elite. She proudly sings of her working class origins in "Coal Miner's Daughter." And after the Hyden, Kentucky mining disaster killed thirty-eight men, she personally produced an all-star benefit concert (raising \$92,000 for the widows and children of the victims) because she remembered her mother's unending fears of a mining accident before Black Lung forced her father out of the mines.

Loretta Lynn disavows racism in any form and has often put her popularity on the line rather than reinforce prejudice. When she won the Country Music Association's Best Female Singer

*Eileen Willenborg produces feminist concerts and works in the women's music distribution network. She lives in New York and is a former Blazing Star NAM member.*



Tammy Wynette

*From now on, lover boy,  
it's 50-50 all the way*

award in 1972, Charley Pride, the first major black country music entertainer, was to make the presentation. CMA officials warned Lynn against touching Pride in any way because it would offend the predominately white country fans. When she received the prize, she gave him a hug and kiss on national television. After the ceremony, she told reporters that she was color blind: she was one-quarter Cherokee, so why shouldn't a red woman give her black brother a kiss?

She publically criticized the Vietnam

war and supported the Indians, whom she calls "my people," at Pine Ridge Reservation.

The Queen of Country Music has taken controversial positions on many issues that affect women's lives. She believes women should have control of their bodies, including the rights of abortion as well as to express their sexuality in lesbian relationships. Given her past, Lynn's new-found feminism is no surprise and is not an altogether new theme in country music. What is a departure is the radical manner in which

she is addressing women's issues.

The existence of a native feminism can be traced backwards through the discography of county/folk traditions. Appalachian folksongs, descendants of an even older Anglo-Saxon heritage, have portrayed the drudgery of the common woman's life and work for centuries. "The Gypsy Rover", "Barbara Allen", "Careless Love", "I Never Will Marry", and "The Housewife's Lament" are examples of women's songs of fierce independence from male domination.

"Single Girl", one of the earliest Carter Family recordings decries the personal and economic freedom a woman gives up when she marries:

*Single girl...going dressed so fine,  
Married girl...going ragged all the  
time;  
Single girl...goes to the store and buys,  
Married girl...rocks the cradle and  
cries;  
Single girl...going where she pleases,  
Married girl...baby on her knees.*

During the 1930's, country music written and sung by women reflected the struggles of labor, particularly union organizing drives in the coal fields of Appalachia. Aunt Molly Jackson sang "I Am a Union Woman" and "Kentucky Miner's Wife (Hungry Disgusted Blues)", Sarah Ogan Gunning contributed "I Hate the Company Bosses" and "I Am a Girl of Constant Sorrow"; Ella May Wiggins gave us "Mill Mother's Lament"; Lessie Crocker com-



Loretta Lynn

posed "Hard Times in the Hill"; and Florence Reese wrote the most famous union song of all, "Which Side Are You On?"

### Stand by your man

The country music of the 1940's and 1950's reflected its audience's transformation from an isolated, simple rural life to the congested, harsh life in the city. Women's roles flip-flopped from independence from primary family responsibilities during World War II to an even stronger subjection to the home during the 1950's.

The personal strains between men and women was a dominant theme in country music well into the 1960's. Men and women singers both focussed their material on the breakdown of the traditional family roles and the problems of love, marriage and fidelity. Tammy Wynette's experience was that even though you have to "Stand by Your Man" eventually you get a "D★I★V★O★R★C★E." Women were portrayed more passively during these decades, but the music continued to address subjugation to male dominance from the perspective of working class women.

Up to 1952, women had only performed traditional and/or religious material, and never as solo artists but always as member of groups. That year Kitty Wells released "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels", the first massively popular country song by a solo woman performer. The piece was written in answer to Hank Thompson's "Wild Side of Life", which condemns vampish women and their loose morals who torture God-fearing men. Wells' song attacks Thompson's composition saying anytime you meet a fallen woman, she was down "because there was a man to blame". "Honky Tonk Angels" clearly states that women's problems rise from their lifelong domination by men.

Kitty Wells opened the door for dozens of other singers to once again vent their anger at men: Connie Hall criticized men for senseless drinking in

"The Bottle or Me"; Bonnie Owens complained about her "Number-One Heel"; while Liz Anderson told her man "(You're) Excedrin Headache #99". Jan Howard released "I Wish I Was a Single Girl Again", and in "Rock Me Back to Little Rock" she longed for a simpler life "where the men don't try to take advantage of every woman who smiles".

### Demandin' satisfaction

So Nashville has gotten used to women singers complaining about their men, and even leaving them. But now, in the 1970's, female country musicians are exploring their inherent feminism in exciting new ways. The two biggest stars, Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton, are starting to flex their vocal muscles with a renewed spirit of independence and a new awareness of their right to demand equality.

Dolly Parton has said: "I need my husband for my love, and other men for my work. But I don't depend on any man for my strength." Loretta Lynn's latest release is titled *We've Come a Long Way, Baby*. The title song, the upbeat first cut on the album, has a verse that says:

*Well I don't wanna wear those paints  
And I'm gonna have my say,  
From now on lover boy,  
It's fifty-fifty all the way.  
Up to now I've been an object  
Made for pleasin' you,  
Well the times have changed  
And I'm demandin' satisfaction too!"*

In her autobiography Lynn writes about how she relates to women through her music: "Most of my fan club is women, which is how I want it. The men have enough things goin' for 'em in this life. We women have got to stick together. My shows are really geared to women fans—to the hardworking housewife...wishing she could bust out of her shell a little bit. Those are things most women feel, and that's who I'm thinking about and singing to during my show."

Loretta Lynn could be a study of Everywoman's life in Appalachia. Born to a coal miner's family during the Depression she grew up in dire poverty, but with a fierce pride in her Irish, Cherokee, and working class heritage. She got the equivalent of a fourth grade education even though she went to school for eight years. Just before her 14th birthday she married "Moony" (short for Moonshine) Lynn who was 21 and had just returned from the army after seeing the world beyond Butcher Holler, Kentucky.

A few months after her marriage, the local doctor had to explain to her just what it was that she had done to get pregnant. By the time she was eighteen, she had done "it" at least often enough to have had four kids. Then she found out what women could do to stop having babies. She had two more children later, but it was having the four children in less than four years that inspired the song "One's on the Way" about an overworked mother of too many children:

*But here in Topeka, the rain is a-fallin',  
The faucet is a-drippin' and the kids  
are a-bawlin',  
One needs a-spankin', one needs a  
huggin',  
One of 'em's toddlin' and one is a-  
crawlin',  
And...one's on the way...*

Some people might accuse Loretta Lynn of trying to profit from the women's movement, but country fans are not known to be a particularly feminist audience, although it is a predominately female one. Lynn's biggest and most controversial hit, "The Pill" was recorded in 1972, but it wasn't released until 1975 because of its lyrics:

*All these years I've stayed at home  
while you had all your fun,  
And every year that's gone by another  
baby's come,  
There's gonna be some changes made  
right here on nursery hill,  
Continued on page twenty-two.*



# We get letters. . .

## Gives pause

Why is it that reading Al Phabar's piece on "Saving Bad Apples" in the February MOVING ON felt like I had inadvertently come upon some propaganda sheet of the National Caucus of Labor Committees? No doubt the problem he discusses is complex and no one is going to say they are *for* unhealthy, inefficient production units.

Nevertheless, phrases like "Any non-total or anti-technological alternative will involve even greater waste of labor time, and hence will offer only the unacceptable choice between more work and lower living standards" give one pause.

It would appear that Phabar's particular brand of utopia would be a revival of the partnership of monopoly labor and monopoly capital in the technology-intensive sectors that dominated the "Guns and Butter" thinking of the 50's and 60's.

Perhaps it is old-fashioned utopianism to say it, but does socialism (or the movement towards socialism) involve simply encouraging a more efficient exploitation of relative surplus value or does it mean beginning to do away with the forms of social life which make words like "exploitation", (as mediated by the market dominate our lives.)

There was an interesting discussion of this in China in recent years (otherwise known as the Cultural Revolution), so we can be sure this is not only a problem of the movement towards socialism.

Can it be that in seeking to end "alienated labor" (that is, change relations of production) we may produce less "productive" (of surplus value) labor conditions, indeed even expand in undreamt of ways labor that is, in market terms, totally "unproductive" (art, culture, education, recreation, crafts, etc.)?

**John Beverley**  
Pittsburgh, PA

## Unhelpful

Al Phabar's piece on Steel closures and the

Left was disappointing. His sketchy piece was confused, his analysis problematic, his conclusions bizarre and quite sectarian. Though on final reading I found some well intentioned, if buried, points, the best one can say is that his piece was unhelpful to those of us doing work in steel.

He broadly accuses an undifferentiated left of initiating and participating in job-saving drives for antiquated industries better left to die. Even if this were uniformly true for the steel industry, his alternative is a gussied-up and all too familiar abstract model of political brainwork—"the development of a positive program based on new social relations of production," sounds terrific.

Now either this refers to the dreadful old "imminent critique" school of class warfare, where ideas, once formulated, are so powerful *in and of themselves* that they comprise both an attack on capitalist control and an antidote to reformism. If this is not what Al means, then the above grand eloquence is little more than a return to what we once dismissed as "programitis", without even an abstract appeal to displaced workers. In either case there is nothing actionable in Phabar's rhetoric, which is a hell of a position for a magazine called "MOVING ON."

In one area, Phabar is right, (though this is not the thrust of his piece): Even if we wished to, we can't sneak a European Social Democracy through the back door. Federal bailouts and short run schemes are no solution to a social crisis. The problem however is that a sectarian intellectual abstentionism is no replacement for social democratic tinkering either.

Along with precluding other than programmatic attempts to deal with job elimination, Phabar suggests much too static a conception of capitalist planning and crisis. Steel's crisis is political precisely in the sense that Big Steel has refused to invest in primary production, choosing to funnel surplus capital into spin-off industries. Obviously the choice is not capricious, but neither is it the mechanistic one Phabar believes it to be.

For the last two decades, it is no exaggeration to say that corporate steel leaders have engaged in an investment strike. Thus, it is the steel corporations, not steel workers, that retard the forces of production by choosing not to invest.

Unlike other sectors of an economy that could conceivably be allowed to fold, or be deemphasized, steel is a critical commodity, and one for which an individual capitalist state would never rely upon foreign trade even if on good terms. In time of war, this would be a disaster. So each state reproduces a steel industry, regardless of cost or waste.

Again, these corporate decisions are political choices, ones steel workers are in an excellent position to challenge without being obliged to defend an outmoded productive process, as Phabar would have it.

**Morris Patelsky**  
Gary Indiana

## Mistaken

In his article "Capitalism's Bad Apples" Al Phabar makes the classic mistake of economic determinism. Once example should suffice to demonstrate this.

In the middle of his article, he states that the best approach that the left can take in relation to inefficient industries in the United States is to let them die. He then says, "This approach may seem insufficiently empathetic with displaced workers; in fact, wasting the surplus on unproductive activities is itself an attack on the working class as a whole."

His answer for these displaced workers is, "to point toward some form of conversion to useful public sector production accompanied by income maintenance that would provide greater financial security for workers." The absurdity of this approach is that it basically abandons these workers or alternatively puts them on some form of welfare and tells them they should put their hopes in long term economic developments. What happens to these workers in the mean time? Are they waiting for socialist paradise or are they looking for answers to their dilemma: Since the left rejects them, they may well turn to the right.

Phabar reminds me of the Mensheviks explaining to workers why they must continue to put up with exploitation because the means of production are not developed enough for revolution. In conclusion, Phabar's article totally ignores the political and ideological components of class struggle.

**Dale Harrington**  
Madison, WI

# Socialist Organization



## and the Black Community

by Manning Marable

While I do not, in principle, oppose black participation or membership within largely white socialist formations, I believe that at this stage of history black socialists must struggle primarily to establish institutions within their own communities which indirectly advance the cause of socialist transformation for the general society.

Nevertheless, I am convinced that an organization such as the New American Movement will play a pivotal role, as far as the interests of the black nationalism are concerned. As a socialist organization committed to racial equality and devoid of the mechanistic, biracial dogma of the Old Left, NAM approaches the problems that affect black people with a degree of understanding and analysis absent from almost every other organization on the left.

As a black nationalist, it is also my belief that white socialists should better understand the broad dimensions of black nationalism and the historical social forces which created the black community. Any socialist organization which claims to be engaged in serious antiracist work must come to terms with the demands of black nationalists for community control of public schools, for example.

The question of "joining a socialist organization," for me, becomes something important: why a socialist alternative for black America? What should be the relationship between a socialist organization like NAM and a progressive black political formation like the National Black Political Assembly? Why have socialist organizations, by and large, failed to attract and organize large numbers of black people?

The experiences of the past decade have illustrated clearly that organizations constructed purely on racial grounds cannot effectively work toward

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*Manning Marable is an activist in the National Black Political Assembly and writes a syndicated column for black newspapers.*

the transformation of the American state or civil society for the benefit of black people. The National Black Political Assembly provides an unfortunate example of this process. In March, 1972, a variety of black people, representing a broad cross-section of the national black community, came together at Gary Indiana to create a black, united front-style, pre-party formation. black liberal Democrats, black Trotskyists, Pan Africanists, integrationists, and even a few black Republicans were present.

Throughout the contradictory history of the NBPA, no definitive analysis of political transformation transcending an elementary racial vocabulary emerged. The question of class struggle, when it was posed by Marxists like Imamu Baraka, was juxtaposed to the question of black nationalism. A few black leaders sought to interrelate the question of racism with the historical maturation of the capitalist mode of production. but at the rank-and-file levels, the Assembly never realized that the intellectual foundations of progressive black unity had to somehow transcend the prerequisite of race.

### Left pressure

During the 1960s, the NAACP was always under extreme pressure from the left, because of the militant, street-oriented activism of groups like CORE and SNCC. Even though these activist organizations lacked a clarity of political analysis they were at least sincerely grounded in a black working class and militant petit bourgeois base. In the early 1970s, the NPBA, the remnants of the Black Panther Party, and individuals involved in regional or community Black Power organizations pressured black elected officials toward a more or less leftward posture. None of these organizations remains a vital national force today.

The material basis that supports the fragile black petit bourgeois strata is being eroded rapidly through legislation, such as Proposition Thirteen in

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## Why have socialist organizations, by and large, failed to attract and organize large numbers of black people.

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California, and reductions of social service expenditures and programs within the public sector. The legacy of the New Deal has been overturned by a coalition of neoconservatives in both capitalist parties, by the capitalists, white petit bourgeoisie and by frustrated and alienated white workers. Black political promises for a meaningful federal full employment bill, the original Humphrey-Hawkins concept, simply could not be kept.

The great majority of black people have become disillusioned with both the Carter Administration and their own black elected officials, but no national black organization exists today that can point out these contradictions through a materialist analysis. Bourgeois hegemony has been sharply undermined since the period of the Movement, but an aggressive black organization, informed both by black nationalism and by socialist thought, has failed to take the historical stage.

Many white socialists fail to understand that, for the majority of black people, *race is virtually everything*. By this I mean that black people cannot think of themselves or others outside of the context of race. Racial considerations become central in considering any political analysis, any cultural program, and economic agenda. The fact of race is still the most pervasive *material* force within black existence.

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## Long View

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The permanent boundaries of race force black intellectuals to approach the question of integration with a degree of ambiguity. After many years of propaganda and research with the NAACP, W.E.B. DuBois recognized the very quixotic nature of his lifelong effort for assimilation into the great American melting pot. In his autobiography *Dusk of Dawn*, he wrote:

*Slowly but surely I came to see that for many years, perhaps many generations, we could not count on any majority (of whites who were committed to equality for blacks). The whole set of the white world in America, in Europe and in the world was too determinedly against racial equality, to give power and persuasiveness to our agitation. Therefore, I began to restate certain implicit aspects of my former ideas.*

DuBois argued that "in economic lines, just as in lines of literature and religion, segregation should be planned and organized and carefully thought through." Blacks should "evolve and support (their) own social institutions... (and) transform their attack from the foray of self-assertive individuals to the massed might of an organized body."

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

—Antonio Gramsci

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DuBois attempted to build a program that was simultaneously socialist and separatist: his economic cooperatives, functioning within the black community, would serve as transitional institutions toward reaching a socialist economy. This program was roundly denounced—black socialists and integrationist leaders alike opposed it, for very differing reasons.

### Reverse action

The concept of a racially-conscious, black united front, which would promote economic self-sufficiency and racial autonomy has never received much credibility, except during the Black Power period of the 1960s. There are at least two important reasons for this. First, the bulk of the black petit bourgeoisie is openly hostile to anything that is black. The leadership of the NAACP and Urban League, as well as the majority of older black professionals and intellectuals, view black nationalism or separatism as "reverse racism." As a result, they tend to advocate programs, such as busing for school desegregation, which will work against the longterm interests of the black, working class majority. They have little confidence in the ability of black people to solve their own cultural, social or economic problems.

The second reason for the failure to achieve black unity around DuBois' guidelines involves the very nature of black nationalist theory. Most nationalists have a sincere and deeply rooted antipathy for all Marxist organizations and Marxist analysis. The Communist Party's destruction of the National Negro Congress during the Depression and its bitter opposition to any militant separatist movement during the 1960's is partially to blame.

The few black Marxists I have met advocate the goal of racial integration, and are bitter opponents of black nationalism. Marxism usually presents itself as a pristine economic theory that disregards the unique and often primary role of racism upon the development of American capitalism and civil society.

I shudder even now to think of the many times I have heard well educated, black and white "Marxists" explain that the reason racism exists is because of "white skin privilege."

As a result, most black nationalists find themselves at an impasse when they reach beyond the nationalist community to make alliances with blacks engaged in integrationist or Marxist politics. In Detroit in late 1977, for instance, the nationalist people involved in the NBPA actively worked for the reelection campaign of Coleman Young, but did next to nothing for Ken Cockrell or with D.A.R.E. Last year, several members of the Executive Council of the NBPA travelled to Massachusetts to work for the reelection of Senator Edward Brooke, simply on the basis that he was the black candidate.

### Cultural integrity

Black nationalism cannot reach its larger, ultimate goals within America unless the entire society is transformed from the bottom up. As Malcolm X noted, "Capitalism cannot produce freedom for our people." Any attempt to build an authentic, autonomous community program for blacks cannot be achieved where the basic mode of production throughout society is privately owned. Black people will not achieve cultural integrity when the entire set of cultural relations are determined by the interests of an elite, male, white capitalist class. The struggle for the abolition of legal segregation based on caste or skin color has been largely accomplished, and was a necessary and significant political achievement. But the larger struggle, the battle to destroy white racism and for cultural autonomy for blacks as a people, cannot be achieved without dismantling the capitalist state.

The struggle against white racism and black autonomy must, of necessity, involve the building of permanent alliances with other groups who are committed to similar goals. Operation-

*continued on page thirteen*

# NAM News&Views

By Marilyn Katz

Ten years ago this month the women's movement was in full swing. Women were on the offensive, redefining themselves and the world around them. While the movement remained a minority if one counted the number of "organized women", the ideas of the movement influenced and took root among the 51% of the country who are women.

Today, however, the women's movement is on the defensive. The ERA, just a few states short of victory, is, in fact, a long way from passage. Abortion rights, so ardently fought for during the sixties, have already been denied to hundreds of thousands of women. And they may be denied to all if Henry Hyde, the Catholic hierarchy and the right-to-lifers have their way.

In part these losses stem from the strength of the Right with its well-organized and well-financed propaganda apparatus that preys upon the economic, political and psychological insecurities of a nation caught in chaos. However, the strength of conservative forces cannot be separated from the weaknesses of the women's movement and its inability to provide viable alternatives to the present situation.

While there have always been parts of the movement that fought for policies that reflected the needs and demands of working class, poor and Third World women, the movement as a whole has not always been so conscientious. The majority forces have often taken a segmented approach to the oppression of women, consciously or unconsciously neglecting the demands of Third World and working women in order to gain apparent victories for other sectors of the population.

Even during the earlier fight for abortion, the demand for "free or accessible abortion" lost out to the demand for simple "legitimization" of abortion. More recently we have seen other similarly divisive moves: The NOW decision to oppose the HEW sterilization guidelines, despite the fact that those guidelines had been fought for by Third World and socialist-feminist organizations; the NARAL decision to separate abortion from the demand for an end to sterilization abuse, aligning them more closely with the population controllers than the potentially revolutionary sectors of the women's movement; the single-issue approach of the Socialist Workers Party which has consistently refused to link abortion to the other economic and social needs of women for reproductive and sexual freedom.

In order to help reverse the tide of reaction, NAM is attempting to work around abortion in a way that stresses the needs of all women for reproductive freedom. We have made a point of linking the need for abortion to the ending



Marilyn Katz is Political Secretary of NAM.

## Left turn

### Beyond the politics of the possible

of sterilization abuse, to the need for safe working conditions, for health and child care, to the need for sexual freedom and education, safe contraception and for the economic and political conditions that are needed to insure reproductive freedom.

To further this work, we are working on: the Reproductive Rights Newsletter which now has broad circulation; the Bill of Reproductive Rights which has been adopted, in modified form, by many grouping throughout the country; we helped spawn a national formation of organizations who share this view (the newly formed Reproductive Rights National Network), including CARASA, the Abortion Action Coalition, The Committee to Defend Reproductive Rights, Healthright, Union Wage, National Lawyer's Guild, and others whose excellent work has shown that a militant reproductive rights approach can gain mass support and win victories.

While it is crucial that NAM and others build this independent sector of the abortion movement based on this perspective, that task is not sufficient. It is also necessary to enter into debate with the existing larger, "'pro-choice' forces" who have tried to restrict the movement to legislative, least-common denominator forms. That debate will be of great importance as we enter into this year's fight against the Hyde Amendment and the threat of a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion.

During these battles it will be well to remember that the strength and influence of the movement ten years ago came from its breaking out of the politics of the possible, into a movement that at its best fought for, in any way necessary, the farthest reaching needs of all women.

# All the news...

## MOVING AND SHAKING

•Members of **Danville NAM** are part of a nationwide caucus in the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) fighting against job cuts and for national bargaining at Veterans Administration hospitals. "Our people are turning to welfare for help because of the low wages. Care is declining because too few people are expected to do too much more," says an AFGE leader. The caucus went to Washington to confront VA administrator Max Cleveland with their demands in January . . . **Los Angeles NAM** members are part of a multi-racial coalition working to generate public pressure for a pro-affirmative action ruling by the Supreme Court in the Weber case . . .

**Portland NAM** is starting a Ratepayers Union to stop utility rate increases and fight against nuclear power . . . **Milwaukee** and **Chicago NAM** members tromped through snow in sub-zero weather with 2,000 others February 18 to demonstrate against a national Arms Bazaar near Chicago. The bazaar showcased weapons, from nuclear warheads to police hardware, but diligent organizing by Mobilization for Survival and others held the number of exhibitors down to a quarter of those expected. . . In Erie, Pennsylvania, at-large member, Debi Spilko is part of Down Wind Neighbors. They're working to stop a new steel plant that will replace 30,000 jobs in Pittsburgh and Youngstown with 8,500 at the new plant (at huge environmental cost to the area.)

## R2 N2

•Representatives of NAM and over a dozen socialist-feminist groups met in Chicago in February to form the Reproductive Rights National Network. The network will coordinate work around access to abortion, opposition to sterilization abuse, and a variety of other issues that make up reproductive freedom. Members of the network include CARASA (New York), Abortion Action Coalition (Boston) and many others.

## NEW CHAPTERS

•NAM continues to grow in the West. **San Fernando NAM** is a new chapter in the Los Angeles area based at Valley Community College. Through a survey, they found students at Valley were most concerned about the slashing of summer school as a result of last year's Proposition 13. In four weeks they got 4,000 signatures on a petition, and a delegation met with the administration and demanded reinstatement of summer school. Result: summer school is back at Valley. . . **Missoula (Montana) NAM** also formed recently. Members are veterans of several energy battles and helped win an initiative last year that effectively blocked nuclear power plant construction in Montana.

## EXPLORING CULTURE

•**Milwaukee NAM** sponsors a group of children ages five to ten who get together weekly to share cultural activities. Each session is conducted by

a guest adult. Activities range from non-competitive games to films to making peanut butter.

## WORD IS OUT

•**New Haven NAM** held that city's premiere showing of the film *The Word is Out*. The highly acclaimed documentary about gay people was screened as an educational event in support of gay rights legislation introduced in the Connecticut state legislature this year.

## RESOURCES

•NAM's Political Perspective, with a revised section on racism adopted in 1978, is available from the national office for 25 cents. The document sets out the basics of NAM's politics . . . NAM's latest Discussion Bulletin has debates on electoral politics, the Middle East, and much more. \$1.50 for a single copy.

## TRAVELING ORGANIZER

•NAM's newly hired traveling organizer, Jacquie Brown, has begun visiting prospective chapters, mostly in the Midwest. Last month she met with interested people in Columbia, Missouri; Kansas City, Kansas; Minneapolis and Northfield, Minnesota; Greenbay and Eau Claire, Wisconsin; and Tallahassee, Florida. NAM urges groups thinking of forming chapters or pre-chapters to contact NAM and request a visit.

## Country music

*You've set this chicken★ your last time 'cause now I've got the Pill.*

The song was attacked by preachers

in churches and banned by 60 radio stations across the country, including ones in Boston, Dallas, New York City, and Des Moines, Iowa. In spite of the flack, the single skyrocketed to the top of the charts (as has every one of her single '45's released to date) and sold 350,000 copies in its first six weeks.

Loretta's analysis of the radio stations' refusal to air "The Pill" is clearly

grounded in feminist logic: "if the disk jockeys were women there wouldn't be no confusion. The women listeners loved it, but the men who run the radio stations were scared to death. It's a challenge to the man's way of thinking. See, they'll play a song about making love in a field because that's sexy from a man's point of view. But something that's really important to women, like

birth control, they don't want no part of, leastways not on the air."

From her own experience, she says: "If they'd-a had them pills when I was younger, I'd-a been swallowin' 'em like popcorn... I know what it's like to be too young, pregnant, nervous, and poor."

### Rated X

In her song on the album by the same name, *Rated-X*, Lynn attacks the sexual double standards that are applied to divorced women:

*Well if you've been a married woman  
And things didn't seem to work out,  
Divorce is the key to be loose and free  
So you're gonna be talked about.  
Everybody knows that you've loved  
once,  
They'll think you'll love again,  
You can't have a male friend  
When you're a has been,  
Or as a woman you're rated-X.*

Loretta Lynn has not always had such feminist instincts. Her early lyrics indicate an acceptance of abuse and mistreatment by men that is borderline masochism. She may have complained

about her life, but she took no direct action to challenge and/or change the oppressive conditions:

*I guess you think I'm crazy,  
But it keeps him here with me,  
And I only see the things I wanna see...*

or

*I'm tired of asking you where you've  
been,  
Tired of all this misery I'm in,  
Two steps forward and six steps back  
again...*

She admits that she has changed, and her new assertive attitude first surfaced in 1967 with her album and song titled "Don't Come Home A-Drinkin' with Love on Your Mind":

*Liquor and Love, they just don't mix,  
Leave the bottle or me behind...*

She writes in her autobiography: "I'm not the bashful little girl I was fifteen years ago (when she first started in music, about 1962), when my only dream was a comfortable house for my family. In those days, if Doolittle (her

nickname for her husband) disappeared for a day or two drinkin' and carousin', I just accepted it. I got mad, but I accepted it. I'm different today. I refuse to be pushed around anymore."

Country music is a \$400 million dollar a year industry. Loretta Lynn's albums regularly go Platinum, which represents over \$1 million in sales. Her transformation to an outspoken, angry woman with a musical message has been witnessed by hundreds of thousands of women listeners and fans. Women buy eighty percent of all the country albums sold each year, and represent the largest listening audience for daytime radio shows.

Serious political organizers should listen to the feminist message in Loretta Lynn's music. It is both a reflection of the feelings, hopes, anger, fears of Everywoman and a conveyor of possibly the strongest feminist messages ever transmitted over American air waves. It is being heard by working and middle class women in all parts of the country. Can't you see it now: Loretta Lynn leads 50,000 housewives in a Birmingham, Alabama rally for the ERA.

## 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 than can carry out these tasks, as well as to the growth of the most strong and progressive possible popular organizations.

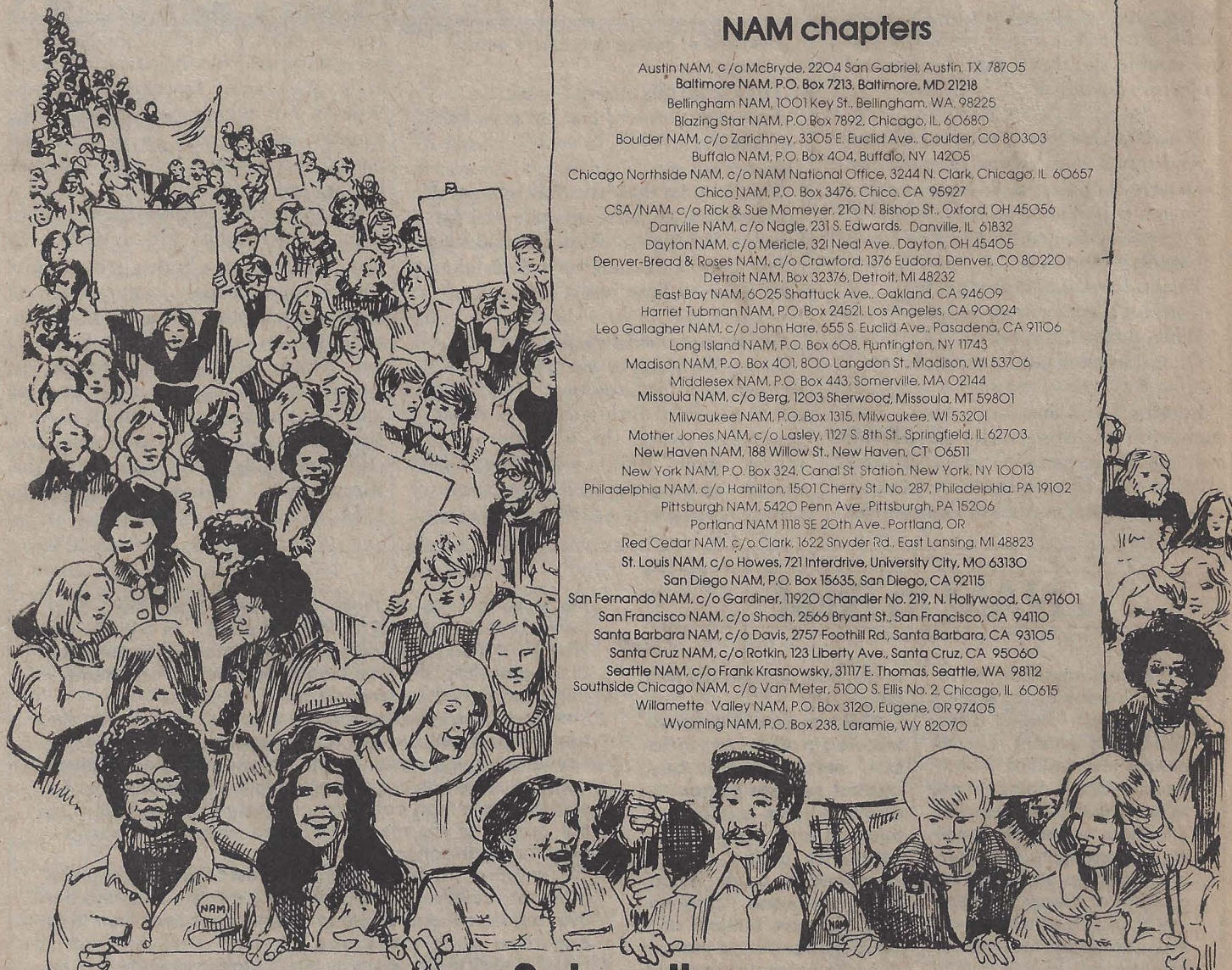
- Democracy is central to the process of building a movement for socialism. Only as working people become active, organized and begin to take control over their lives can a new society take shape.

- 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
- Mother Jones NAM, c/o Lasley, 1127 S. 8th St., Springfield, IL 62703
- 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
- Red Cedar NAM, c/o Clark, 1622 Snyder Rd., East Lansing, MI 48823
- St. Louis NAM, c/o Howes, 721 Interdrive, University City, MO 63130
- San Diego NAM, P.O. Box 15635, San Diego, CA 92115
- San Fernando NAM, c/o Gardiner, 11920 Chandler No. 219, N. Hollywood, CA 91601
- San Francisco NAM, c/o Shoch, 2566 Bryant St., San Francisco, CA 94110
- Santa Barbara NAM, c/o Davis, 2757 Foothill Rd., Santa Barbara, CA 93105
- 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
- Willamette Valley NAM, P.O. Box 3120, Eugene, OR 97405
- Wyoming NAM, P.O. Box 238, Laramie, WY 82070

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