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CAPITALISM MEANS WAR



The National Interim Committee of NAM has called on President Nixon to stop bombing Vietnam and to return to the Paris peace talks. It also urges all NAM chapters and members to take part in all anti-war actions and to demand an end to the air war, return to Paris, and get out of Indo-China completely.

The current offensive by liberation forces in Vietnam has proved conclusively that "Vietnamization" is only a publicity stunt designed to confuse the American people. In responding to the offensive, Nixon has chosen to escalate the US air war against the Indochinese peoples—even to bombing Hanoi and Haiphong—rather than to withdraw his American forces. Thus far he has partially withdrawn ground troops while brutally intensifying bombing and the use of electronic, remote-controlled antipersonnel weaponry throughout Indochina. His hand forced by the Vietnamese, Nixon is now escalating the air war in an attempt to devastate the entire area (which would still not give him victory). The only other choice is to recognize that the war cannot be won and to honestly disengage planes, guns and men.

A total withdrawal would be a blow to those corporate interests with direct investment in Vietnam and also to the greater number of corporations that fear that withdrawal from Vietnam will precipitate liberation struggles in other countries dominated by American capital. But ending the war would be a relief to the vast majority of people in the United States who have wondered for years why the war drags on when an ever-increasing majority wants it to end.

The war in Vietnam has been fought for more than 25 years. It began when US corporations decided after World War II to defend the colonial interests of all imperial powers too weak to defend their own empires. When, after nine years of war financed by the United States, the French were defeated by the Vietnamese, the US stepped in directly to prevent independence. This was done not only to defend the imperial system, but also to justify a massive arms budget, paid for by taxing working people and designed to keep American corporations profitable. It is part of a global policy of the United States to keep the colonies, and all other capitalist countries, open for investment by American corporations.

The war against Vietnam has taught hundreds of thousands of Americans that the United States will not permit the liberation of any colonies, if it can prevent it, as long as corporate capitalism prevails. But the war has also taught us that the corporations are not invincible, and that the interests of working people in our country are the same as those of the Vietnamese. We urge people to work to end

Letters

To the National Interim Committee:

We are writing on behalf of the Berkeley chapter of NAM. Our chapter devoted part of two meetings recently to an examination of the Manifesto apparently being circulated by the NAM National Office. On the basis of our criticisms below, we request the National Interim Committee to withdraw the manifesto from circulation.

First of all, we feel that there should be a more democratic procedure for issuing any document which attempts to present a general conception of NAM to the public. We recognize that the NIC felt obliged to act quickly to meet the expanding public interest in NAM and that most chapters were only in the process of being formed. Nevertheless, we feel that now would be a good time to formulate some procedural guidelines. Presumably the June conference will do this to some extent, but in the meantime we suggest that any document attempting to portray the nature of NAM or stating its position on a general issue of policy be circulated among all chapters for criticism before being adopted by the NIC.

Secondly, we were disturbed at the image of NAM which the pamphlet projects. Our unanimity of feeling suggests to us that the pamphlet is not representative of the NAM membership and should be withdrawn for that reason. The following points summarize our critical reactions:

1. The manifesto's cataclysmic tone tends to overstate the depth and maturity of the crisis in this country, and to substitute rhetoric for serious analysis of the discontent that does exist. It seems condescending towards the reader.

2. The alarmist tone ties into the broader question of ideology and false consciousness. There is virtually no mention of this subject, and yet presumably it is the major aspect of American life which NAM must confront. Movements such as the support for George Wallace reflect the rising level of dissatisfaction in the society, but they also pay tribute to the depth of ideological mystification of public life. Lacking a strong left tradition, Americans lack the tools of understanding which would enable them to grasp the meaning of their discontent and the possibilities of overcoming it.

3. It is in this context that the issue of socialism should be raised. Rather than trying simply to give a structural description of what socialism will be like, we should explain why we're convinced that now is the time to raise socialist demands and issues. A little more modesty here would be becoming--this process should be viewed as one of raising questions and exploring options, rather than simply posing some preconceived alternative.

4. Furthermore, the discussion of socialism tends to be unimaginative and unexciting. There may be too much emphasis on the economic aspects; more attention to quality-of-life issues might be good. At the same time, parts of the manifesto are thoroughly reformist and bourgeois. The bill of rights, for example, is based on bourgeois society and its categories. It fails to transcend liberal reformism; the Democratic Party could adopt it anytime.

5. The Americanism of the pamphlet is extremely offensive. The uniqueness of the United States should be portrayed in terms of the vast potentialities opened up by its productive forces and the impact of a socialist United States on the rest of the world, not in the alleged purity of our history. The attempt to appropriate the label "American" for ourselves, and deny it to others in a fashion reminiscent of HUAC, is particularly offensive. The re-writing of American history elsewhere seems more silly than offensive, e.g. talking about how a worker's union hall became the birthplace of American independence. We should locate our heritage not among the colonial patriots, but with the struggles of working people of the past century.

6. There is altogether insufficient analysis of the diversity of the movement and its organizational implications. Talk of a "single voice" is as absurd as it is troubling in its implications. The organ-

izational questions of ethnic groups and women are passed over much too facilely.

7. The graphics are completely out of place, and detract from both the continuity and meaning of the manifesto. Two graphics tend to suggest an old-fashioned, sectarian flavor, by picturing capitalism as robber-baron capitalism of the 1910 variety. Surely we need to develop a more sophisticated understanding of modern corporate capitalism. The historical one is too Americanist. The one from Harper's magazine seems totally out of place. The one on oil imperialism also, especially given the fact that the whole question of American imperialism is barely raised at all. It deserves more serious treatment. While we see the domestic orientation of NAM as basically healthy, we don't believe that an analysis of American capitalism can ignore American imperialism.

We recognize that NAM is still in the process of defining itself, and thus any attempt to develop a manifesto of this sort is bound to be difficult. We appreciate the effort that went into it, but in view that it fails to give an accurate conception of the most basic aspects of NAM, we urge that it be withdrawn from circulation.

Berkeley No. 2

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Dear NAM Newspaper,

I just wanted to write and commend you on the excellent job that you have been doing with the newspaper. I have been generally impressed.

However, I do have a couple of suggestions. Instead of reprinting the minutes of the NIC meetings, how about writing a report of what went on. Just reprinting the minutes may not help people understand what did go on, with what degree of importance was attached to the matters of discussion and the political implications of disagreements. Besides, the minutes make very dull reading.

More importantly, I feel that the newspaper should devote at least its cover and the first few pages to an analysis of current news. It has been my observation that a great number of people are very hungry for an analysis of the economic issues that confront the working people of the US. The situation changes quickly (the Pay Board changing, etc.) and the bourgeois press definitely only confuses people--and they know it.

I don't know what kind of decisions have been made about whether the paper is to be an internal or external organ. Right now it seems to be both or neither. I think that analysis of the economic news would be helpful to the people and NAM organizers.

None of this is meant in a critical mood; I'm trying to be helpful.

Sometimes it's a struggle,
Tom Schade

Dear Friends,

In the reportage on the New American Movement in various movement publications, including your newspaper and *Socialist Revolution*, passing reference has been made to a political tendency within NAM variously labeled "Americanist," "revolutionary patriotism," "the new patriotism," or the "red, white and blue Left." In almost every case the reference either deliberately and grossly misrepresented the position of this tendency in relation to Marxism, socialism, internationalism, imperialism, the working class (as in Patty Lee Parmalee's report in the *Guardian*), or accomplished the same by innuendo (as in the report by John Judis and Jim Weinstein in number 9 of *Socialist Revolution*, where, in reporting the NAM position on American imperialism, they say that "Apparent support (within NAM) for 'revolutionary patriotism' ... had led many people to believe that NAM wanted to shove anti-imperialism under the rug ...").

Unfortunately, neither Judis nor Weinstein attended any sessions of the workshop on war and imperialism at the Davenport conference, nor did they make any effort to inform themselves on what actually occurred in that workshop. If they had, they would have reported that whatever genuine anti-war and anti-imperialist content emerged in the final report of that workshop (adopted, as Judis and Weinstein correctly observed, by a wide margin in the plenary session), it was largely the result of sharp polemic by the "Americanists" against the sterile and sectarian program brought in ready-made by the IS. In the final vote on the workshop resolution, it was adopted with just one dissenting vote--that of the IS'er.

But even apart from what happened in Davenport, Judis and Weinstein must surely have been familiar enough with the "Americanist" or "revolutionary patriot" position to recognize that anti-imperialism is the very heart of it.

To quote from a tract entitled "Revolutionary Nationalism & the American Left" which I distributed at every national meeting of NAM up to and including Davenport:

"The credo of the New Patriotism (is that) the imperialist establishment consistently betrays the true national interests of the American people, which are fully compatible with the interests and aspirations of all oppressed and exploited peoples everywhere."

And: "The American version of revolutionary nationalism (revolutionary patriotism) would be anti-imperialist, socialist, humanist and libertarian in content and national in form and rhetoric. Indeed these are the basic characteristics ... which distinguish the revolutionary from all other forms of nationalism."

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SAN DIEGO '72



a report and analysis

BY DAVID PLOTKE

On March 17-19 a conference to plan activities in San Diego during the Republican convention in August, was held by the San Diego Convention Coalition in Santa Barbara. About 300 people from the west and southwest attended.

The San Diego group's plans for mass non-violent demonstrations at the convention and for "Expose 72" were generally approved by the conference. "Expose 72" will be a "large exposition about the victims of injustice and their liberation struggles; the institutions and ideas which perpetuate this injustice, and some visionary but practical alternatives to the oppressive system we live under." It is also planned that a "People's Platform" not yet written be circulated and used as an organizing tool before and after the convention. The people who formed the Convention Coalition in San Diego originally hoped for the inclusion of labor, black, Chicano and women's organizations within the Coalition. The platform would then have been drawn up by the Coalition as a whole. However, the Coalition is primarily composed of white youth, who hope to build alliances with others before writing a comprehensive political statement.

The conference developed a set of principles of unity as a basis for organizing for the convention and as a guide in the construction of alliances, both in San Diego and in other parts of the country:

- 1) We support an end to Nixon's policies of political, economic, racial and sexual oppression. (NEP, Wage-Price Freeze, the use of the Taft-Hartley Act, welfare cuts, veto of the child care bill, attacks on prisoners, use of grand juries in political trials, racist use of the busing issue;
- 2) Building alliances with Third World communities by creating the following relationships between Third World communities and the San Diego Convention Coalition: non-interference in the leadership of Third World communities, emphasis by white organizers on the issue of racism and the problems of working people in their own communities;
- 3) An immediate end to all US aggression and involvement in Indochina and support for the PRG 7 Point plan for peace in Vietnam;
- 4) We oppose all US interference in the internal affairs of other countries;
- 5) The demonstrations we are planning for August should not be violent;
- 6) No party or presidential candidate will be pushed through use of slogans or the speakers' platform in the demonstrations. In addition, we will not support any presidential candidate.

There was little opposition to these principles, although there was some confusion about the meaning of numbers 2 and 5 particularly.

The main political questions raised by the conference can't be resolved at the present time, but it is desirable to discuss them briefly and to encourage discussion within NAM about the convention activities.

First, the usual question of the relation between a national action and local organizing arose. Members of the SDCC argued that this national action can be different from previous actions because of its base in local organizing in San Diego. They emphasized bringing people to San Diego, which is understandable, but doesn't distinguish these activities from many previous national actions. At a time when the level of movement activity is generally low, a national action is certainly better than nothing. But if it is presented as an almost apocalyptic relief from local problems and local boredom, frantic, spasmodic work may be followed once again by collapse.

Second, how can mass anti-Nixon demonstrations be held without being reduced to pro-Democrat demonstrations? People were aware of this problem, and said that the actions at the convention were not to support the Democrats, but to attack Nixon and to help build an autonomous radical movement.

Yet to state that the Democrats shouldn't be supported is not sufficient to determine the actual means by which our actions will remain autonomous and large-scale. Most of the principles adopted by the conference are, or could be, supported by liberal Democrats without much more than the usual equivocation. To build a broad alliance for convention activities the organizers must work with groups that are attached to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, or which act as pressure groups on that party (UFWOC, NWRO, SCLC). Such alliances are not wrong, but they are not likely to emphasize the need for a movement independent of both major parties, much less a socialist movement.

These problems are due in part to the character of the Democratic Party -- its enduring flexibility and capacity to absorb insurgent social movement. At the conference, the slogan "a united front against Nixon's policies" was often used to describe convention activities. This slogan and the political conceptions that usually accompany it lose sight of the reality of the Democratic Party, which is neither a social democratic/ labor party nor simply a bourgeois party similar to christian democratic parties in Europe.

A united front against Nixon cannot help but reach into the Democratic Party. In 1968, an attack on the ruling party appeared as an attack on the whole system more clearly than it will in 1972. It seems likely that convention activities will be viewed differently by different people. Some will view them primarily as a means to construct an independent radical movement; others will regard them as a means to defeat Nixon.

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Equal Rights

BY JUDY STAHL

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." So reads the text of the much heralded Equal Rights Amendment recently passed by Congress after a half century of struggle by several women's organizations. This year, at last, there were very few problems with the amendment's passage through Congress, and its ratification by individual states is already well under way.

It is difficult to predict the effect of the amendment on American women. Our legal system reeks with sex-specific legislation denying women certain jobs, giving their husbands legal ascendancy in their marital relations, preventing married women from establishing their own homes, using their own names and so forth. (See Leo Kanowitz WOMEN & THE LAW). The amendment performs an important function by removing sex as a bar to achievement and initiative.

Traditionally, classifications based on sex have been upheld under the Constitution. The phrase "no person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws" has only very recently been interpreted to strike down laws denying women various rights, privileges and duties. Without the new amendment, women would have to continue the slow and costly course of bringing case after case to challenge discriminatory laws in state after state. The burden will now shift to the states if they wish to hang onto any sex-based laws.

Many people are afraid that the amendment harms women by invalidating "protective" labor legislation. These laws, which regulate the hours women may work, the weights they may lift, and in 26 states

the occupations they may enter, ostensibly were passed to protect women, "the weaker sex," from the hardships of the working world. But in fact these laws often served only to protect the exclusive rights of men to many occupations. As the president of the International Cigarmakers Union flatly stated in 1879, "We can't drive the females from the trade, but we can restrict their daily quota of labor through factory laws."

Minimum wage laws for women often excluded them entirely from some areas of employment since factory owners could not hire women at wages lower than men's, they refused to hire women at all. Maximum hours and no overtime or night work rules have had the same effect, and have been used to prevent the advancement of women who were hired.

Most ludicrous of all of course are the weight restrictions which exclude women from jobs where they must lift loads exceeding 15-35 pounds.

Special protections for women are increasingly suspect, especially given the extremely limited job opportunities available for women, and their low economic status generally. It is therefore quite unlikely that the equal rights amendment does women any harm by depriving them of the "benefits" of "protective" labor legislation.

The question remains of whether the amendment will have a positive effect on the status of American women. The amendment is likely to improve the conditions of most women as effectively as the 14th amendment improved the conditions of most black citizens—that is, not at all. The women who will benefit most are those most able to adopt the male occupations and responsibilities which have now been opened up to them. The Amendment carries with it no affirmative programs to guarantee that women become truly equal with men. Formal emancipation is granted without the means for its realization. In this way passage of the amendment may actually hurt the women's movement.

Like our other great victory, the right to vote, the main effect of the ERA may be to deflate the women's rights movement for a while. When the conditions of women's oppression and exploitation persist, they are even more likely than before to be seen as personal problems, not stemming from the nature of our social, economic and political institutions. The movement must be wary of this result; we must keep pushing for real opportunities to improve the status of all women. Now that we have been granted legal equality, we must work even harder to make the promise a reality. ●



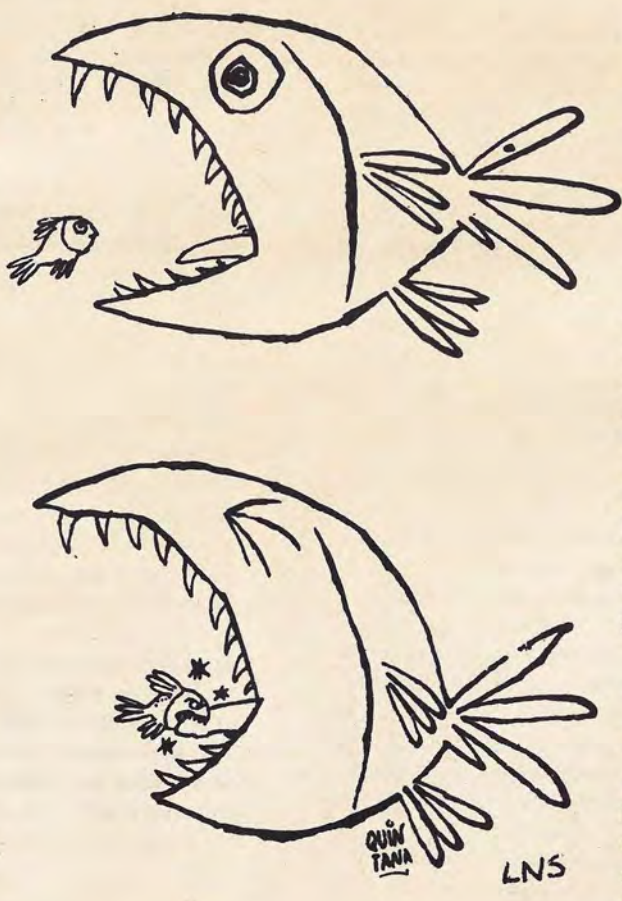
Organizers' Workshop

BY PAUL ROSENSTEIN

On April 7, 8 and 9, a NAM organizers' workshop was held at Volo, Illinois, north of Chicago. Over 40 chapter and pre-chapter members attended from around the country. The gathering, at a YMCA camp, was the first opportunity for many chapter people to exchange experiences and ideas with other NAM members since the Davenport conference last November. It was an upper.

The workshop was prepared and run by Heather and Paul Booth and Bob and Day Creamer, all of whom are active in liberal mass movements in Chicago. The sessions were opened by Karen Smith on behalf of the NIC and the National Office. The NIC criticized itself for inadequate assistance in planning the workshop, and thanked the Booths for their initiative. Karen also explained that while NAM is committed to building a mass socialist organization, there are different ideas within the organization of how this should be done. The presentation by the Booths, which was based largely on their experience in non-socialist organizations, represented their own perspective.

Heather Booth began the first session with an analysis that stressed the need for reformist movements to meet people's immediate needs. She asserted that people can be given a sense of their own power and strength through organization of movements that can win particular struggles and alter the existing relations of power by establishing local spheres of control. She emphasized the need to develop mass organizations, and stressed the need within them for divisions of labor and clear lines of leadership. She



called on those present to fight perfectionism, correct lineism, impossibilism, and all the other isms that have distracted the Left. She pointed out that organizing is the hardest thing to do, that it is much harder than doing service work, para-military activity, or agit-prop. Following her introduction, the group split up into sub-groups for discussion of this perspective.

For the rest of the week-end organizing tactics were discussed. The problem of how to build mass movements with a socialist consciousness was raised by several chapter people, but since the workshop was on techniques of organizing, these questions were not worked through. Presentations focused on the nitty-gritty of organizing a community for specific mass actions, and the methods of making NAM chapters function well, grow and be effective. In this brief report it is impossible to do justice to the material presented at the workshop, much of which was detailed and valuable information. Many chapter people thought these sessions useful and asked for written materials for wider use.

The participants had the opportunity to learn basic organizing skills, and also a valuable exchange of experience occurred. It became clear to many people whose chapters have been floundering that NAM is really a national organization, developing a large variety of activities, both positive and negative. Many chapters expressed similar problems of getting started and of defining themselves as a movement for democratic socialism. People went home with many new ideas, and with the intention of trying them out and reporting on their experiences at the June convention. ●



BY LARRY HIRSCHHORN

Wallace's showing in the primary elections has proved that busing is a powerful issue in the '72 campaign. When the Florida returns were in, Nixon quickly moved to capitalize on voter discontent by proposing legislation that would impose a moratorium on all new court-ordered busing plans. With this move he hopes both to prevent Wallace as a power broker in the electoral college, and to capture some of the labor votes that normally go to the Democrats. The Democrats are clearly in disarray. The much-feared "social issue" threatens to undermine them, as it did in the 1970 campaign, and one-time civil rights advocates find themselves imitating Wallace campaign slogans.

It is clear, however, that the busing of children per se is not the issue. Southern-style segregation has long entailed a systematic and state-supported style of school busing. To be sure, the traditional racial antagonisms play a role, but Wallace touches impulses that go beyond the opposition to busing and the issue of race. There is an elasticity to his rhetoric. If busing will not "stir them up," then high taxes, "welfare chiselers," foreign aid and Washington bureaucrats will. Clearly, Wallace is tapping deep reservoirs of unfocused but powerful discontent.

The presence of deep discontent is not surprising. The sixties was a decade of pervasive and sometimes convulsive political conflict. But the ease with which such discontent is channeled by right-wing rhetoric is disconcerting. It seems too easy to argue that the reactionary character of the Wallace campaign simply reflects the absence of countervailing left-wing propaganda. Every time Wallace attacks high taxes, he simultaneously lashes out at "welfare chiselers." Every indictment of "Washington bureaucrats" is followed by an attack on "long-haired hippies" and foreign aid. The power of his appeal is a sign of the consistency of his rhetoric. It is too generous to call Wallace a populist -- i.e., someone who might unite the ruled against the rulers. His success, reflected in the popular appeal of anti-busing, seems to have more complex roots.

At one level there seem to be no common ties between the hippie and the bureaucrat, the Ford Foundation and the mother on AFDC, but at a deeper level they flow from the same set of political events. They are all part of the dimensions of social change which threaten the islands of economic and social stability -- the small home, the stable family, the secure job -- that the "forgotten American" has so tenaciously built up. Youth attacks on morals and the work ethic, the black demand for jobs and housing, the bureaucrat's insistence on "urban redevelopment" and the Third World's fight against US imperialism all undermine the "security" the "common man" has achieved at much personal sacrifice. At its roots the Wallace campaign taps not simply discontent, but discontent translated into a resistance to these developing patterns of social change.

However, such resistance is not of necessity "reactionary." On the contrary, resistance to arbitrary infringements on people's freedoms is the precondition for all rebellion -- and nothing appears more arbitrary than the decision of a single Federal judge. Similarly, the demand for stability is a natural outgrowth of the desire for sustained patterns of community living. But the appearance and procession of change within capitalist society can poison discontent and status-quo defense with the elements of right-wing manipulation and rebellion.

Change in capitalist societies always proceeds unevenly. For every pattern of growth there is one of stagnation. Development is interlocked with underdevelopment and the resulting checkered pattern of losers and gainers unleashes deep communal conflicts. Moreover, in advanced capitalist society, the forces of change spring unplanned from many different points of the global economy. It is the complexity of their interaction, combined with the paucity and perversion of information, that gives social discontent its elastic character, and transforms blacks, hippies, bureaucrats and Vietnamese into seemingly one abstract social force. In this context communal conflicts transcend their strictly material basis and attain a more symbolic if not irrational character.

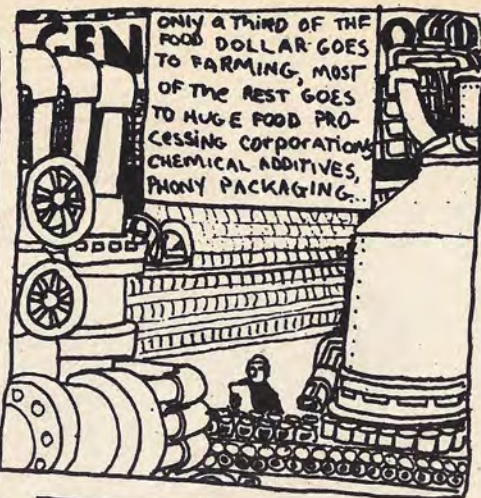
It is, in fact, this complexity of change that makes class consciousness so difficult to achieve, and false consciousness too common a condition. For example, it is not that the elite can simply use racism to "divide the working class." No class can exercise such total and arbitrary control. Rather the complexity of capitalist social reality itself makes such divide-and-conquer techniques possible.

In effect, the national resurgence of the race issue within the context of busing, does reflect real communal conflicts as blacks demand equal access to housing, jobs and schools. But it would be a mistake to see only this "conflict of interest" dimension. The visceral and elastic character of the busing issue indicates that it has come to symbolize a deeper resistance to the regional, national, and increasingly global dimensions of change impinging on all Americans. Busing as a symbolic issue, manipulated through the elements of right wing rebellion, has exposed the more irrational dimensions of public life. In this context, the sensible elements of public discussion, such as tax rates, municipal budgets, and the quality of education, often prove irrelevant.

If the busing issue is placed in the context of resistance to change, then those who attack "social planners" and white community demands for "local control" are hardly progressive despite the seemingly "radical" character of the language they employ. Radicals too quickly assume that similarities in language provide a basis for "link-ups." Community control theory is progressive only when it combines the right of community self-determination with the needs of the total society. When the language of community control embraces only one side of this equation, i.e., community self-determination, it is usually a mask for the defense of the status quo.

Much the same applies to the recent fascination with ethnicity, a fascination that has developed parallel with, and sometimes been synonymous with, the community control movement. The resurgence of ethnic consciousness would appear strange if one considers that the real basis for ethnic culture in America -- the peasant-based cultures of Europe -- have long ago been eroded by the process of modernization. But this resurgence has different roots. Ethnicity reappears as a tool of job defense at a time when public service jobs are being restructured and municipal budgets are being cut back. Thus in New York, Irish Power means defense of the police; Jewish Power, Jewish monopolization of the teachers' union; and Black Power, black control of anti-poverty money. In effect, both community control and ethnicity are too often mystifications for vested interest politics.

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Food Coops & Socialist Agitation

The following chapter report raises important questions concerning specifically the value of our work in co-ops and, more generally, the potential of working in alternative institutions with the goal of raising socialist issues and consciousness. The report does not raise two key questions which we feel particularly relevant to groups working in the area of production and/or distribution of food. First, how can the power of agribusiness and the supermarkets over food quality and prices be challenged? Can this be done through simple expansion of the co-op movement? And second, can food co-ops challenge the sexual division of labor within the family? Specifically, can and do food co-ops define women as other than consumers and men as other than providers? We are interested in further explorations of these and the questions raised in the chapter report.

Several members of the West Side Chapter of NAM (New York City) have been active in a large food co-op, in order to explore some of the political possibilities of this co-op in particular and of food co-ops in general. The questions we face in trying to do socialist political work in the food co-ops are several. This report represents our first thoughts on these questions:

1) Are food co-ops, by nature, socialist? Is there something inherently progressive about co-operativism? The notion that food co-ops are inherently progressive is often raised by those who see counter-community as an intermediate goal to be struggled for. These people argue that food co-ops spread the idea that collective effort works, that community established through co-ops encourages socially progressive values, promotes barter economics and generally provides an avenue of escape from part of the dog-eat-dog world of capitalist relations. They see the food co-op as a step in the creation of an alternative economy.

We do not share this view. It seems to us that the primary bond between co-op members is simply the search for cheaper food. Further, our experience has been that the actual management of the food co-op is not collectively shared, but rather monopolized by people who enjoy the work. The hard work of a few

devotees attracts a large number of people who, contributing a little work and shouldering less responsibility, obtain substantially cheaper food.

A study of the history of the co-op movement in this country might help us to avoid obvious pitfalls. The Consumer Cooperatives (the Twin Pines movement), which operates food stores, credit unions, furniture stores and apartment houses throughout the country, is a perfect example of the transformation of a co-op into a bureaucratized consumer service. Of course, not all co-ops must develop this way, but it does seem to indicate that some conscious and overt political work may be needed if co-ops are to be useful for OUR purposes.

In any case, the operating assumption of the NAM members in the food co-op is that the co-op presents simply an opportunity to raise political issues and to broaden our struggle for socialism ONLY as WE raise issues and broaden the struggle. We are working on the theory that the co-op is a neutral activity. In and of itself, we think, it is not enough.

2) What kinds of people are and can be involved in food co-ops? The co-op we are in (the Broadway Local Food Association) is over a year old. Over 250 families belong and the co-op does about \$2,000 per week in trade. It operates out of an abandoned storefront on the west side of Manhattan. This co-op is older, has more members and does a larger volume of business than most of those we've investigated.

The 250 families are divided into ten blocs which vary in size from fifteen to thirty member families. Generally the co-op includes two dominant social groups. There is a large minority of young people who stand in various relationships to the means of production: worker, professional, entrepreneur. They are long-haired, recently out of college or graduate school. They are not settled down yet, often express overt left and socialist sympathies, and are almost all white.

The majority of the co-op members are also white, but they are predominantly middle and upper class. They are older, more settled, have families, careers, etc. They have liberal, sometimes socialist, attitudes as well. Although few are active in electoral or left

politics, many ARE active in community work: PTA, school board, planning board, neighborhood councils, health councils, etc.

Our bloc of the co-op is a little different, as the area in which we work has a heavy population of older Irish and Italian people. Again, there is a large minority of young freaks and we have recruited only three Third World families into the co-op. The majority of the members are working class Irish and Italians, and a few retired people -- all long-time residents of the area. The Failure of our bloc (and of the rest of the co-op) to recruit black and Latin peoples is the subject of much discussion, and is only partially explained by the practice of holding meetings in English.

The time and energy requirements of the food co-op make it virtually impossible for working people other than housewives and retired people to be active. Those who work during the day can't help with the food distribution, and those who work at night can't attend the meetings. One of the mainstays of the co-op SHOULD be retired people. They need the service and they have the time to be active. Our bloc has just begun to attract them in significant numbers. We are at present exploring this area with two of the local senior citizens clubs, because it seems to us that recruitment of these people to the co-op could significantly broaden its base --and eventually broaden the base of NAM.

3) Can the people in the food co-ops be organized into broader and more "political" kinds of activities? How? We have initiated a range of activities staffed by NAM members recruited from the food co-op. These include a weekly newsletter for co-op members which attempts to raise questions about socialism; preliminary organizing for a People's Price Control Panel and a tax campaign; and research on local health needs and health insurance coverage for working and poor people in the city.

Young people have been the most eager to participate in these projects, and the People's Price Control Panel seems to be generating the most interest. But exactly how to raise socialist demands within it is still not clear to us.

4) Can food co-ops be used as a recruiting base

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JUNE CONVENTION

The three pieces in this section represent the thinking of their authors only. They are not "official" positions of the NIC, or of any chapter. They are presented for the purpose of beginning discussion about the general political direction of NAM to be decided at the June Convention. Harry Boyte's 60 theses are not intended as the outline of a convention document, but as an attempt at a comprehensive framework for pre-convention discussion. Ed Greer's proposal is for consideration by the membership as a specific position on the Vietnamese War. Ed Clark's proposal was written to stimulate discussion among the members.

SUMMARY OF THESES FROM A DRAFT POLITICAL PROGRAM

BY HARRY BOYTE, SARA BOYTE, BOB McMAHON

A. ON THE FEATURES OF ADVANCED MONOPOLY CAPITALISM:

The Imperialist Economy

1. The American economy, the center of the world imperialist system, is dominated by the monopoly sector, primarily based in production industries.
2. Imperialism played a crucial role in post-World War II expansion, providing raw materials and cheap labor from the Third World, and markets from the Third World and other capitalist states.
3. Direct foreign investment, rather than trade, is now the major means of securing markets in foreign countries.
4. The state now plays a major role in rationalizing the economy, providing new investment opportunities, and socializing indirect costs of production like education, health, transportation facilities.
5. By organized violence, the state continues to serve ruling class interests against individual dissidents and, especially in times of crisis, organized insurgencies.
6. The competitive sector, composed of services, retailers, small industry, building and real estate interests, small financial institutions, operates primarily on local and state levels.
7. Financial institutions play a central part in providing investment funds and coordinating monopoly policies.

The divisions of labor

8. Advanced capitalism increases the divisions of labor and the differentiation of the working class.
9. High paid, skilled jobs are primarily in the monopoly sector and are the preserve primarily of white males.
10. The weak position of the US labor movement led labor leaders to seek accommodation with capital; accommodation has only been feasible in the monopoly and, to a lesser extent, the state sectors.
11. This accommodation has meant union acceptance of productivity increase, of management's right

to run the plant, and of the obligation to discipline members to keep the terms of the contract, in return for union recognition and wage gains tied to productivity and/or the cost of living.

12. The state played a key role in fostering this accommodation, setting up the legal and institutional framework to facilitate it, and disciplining unions going beyond approved limits of militancy.

13. The monopoly sector, especially, has intensified the minute divisions of labor in the work process, even within the same skill levels; it also sustains the sexual division of labor within the home by emphasizing women-as-consumers.

14. Women and oppressed racial and national minorities are consigned primarily to lower levels of the state sector and monopoly enterprise, and to the competitive sector; their relative position has suffered from the displacement of inflation and tax burdens from the monopoly sector.

The social and cultural hegemony of the ruling class

15. The ruling class has used the cultural media to infuse its values and assumptions throughout society. Education, for instance, transmits most information about the society, leaving those who would rebel without any coherent alternative understanding, fragmented and disorganized.

16. Capitalist ideology reproduces fundamental archetypes of oppression: adult/child, man/woman, and adapts those archetypes to its needs—creating continuing models for master/servant relationships in all spheres of social existence.

17. Capitalist ideology develops such archetypes to create modes of behavior which meet its needs: an obedient, repressed, individualistic labor force; a passive fragmented mass of consumers.

18. The sanctity of property relationships builds upon the model of the family as property and the myth that defense of private ownership of the productive apparatus is necessary to defend the right to own necessities (e.g. houses, food, etc.)

19. Capitalist ideology perpetuates the model of "democratic pluralism" as the only possible model for the political resolution of conflict. It maintains the cult of the expert-as-problem-solver, a mythology that mystifies and disorganizes conflict in the society.

20. The ruling class has discrete agencies (media, foundations, business councils, etc.) that articulate, and implement its policies.

21. The core of cultural integration in America has been the myth of affluence for those within the "American mainstream," inseparably linked with the implied threat that "aliens"—especially the black colony—pose to the "common community."

B. ON THE END OF THE AMERICAN ERA

The economic crisis: challenge to hegemony

22. In the post-war period, US firms could exercise effective monopolies in the markets for which they competed or which they sought to dominate. This period is at an end, due to inflation in the US and competition from modernized capitalist competitors.

23. Third World nationalist and revolutionary challenge has made control and defense of the empire increasingly costly.

24. Persistent inflationary tendencies since World War II, brought about in part by the increased employment in the state sector (especially the military), have increased consumer buying power without increasing the supply of goods.

25. The expansion of non-productive state employment has been necessary to stimulate demand and absorb surplus labor (prevent depression and reduce unemployment) and to meet the military demands of maintaining the US world empire.

26. The ability of unions in the monopoly sector to obtain cost-of-living gains beyond wages determined by productivity has aggravated this tendency to inflation and redistributed its effects within the working class to workers in the state and competitive sectors.

27. Increased competition between capitalist nations will mean a drive for productivity and attempts to destroy the power of unions to gain cost-of-living increases, with gains limited by productivity.

28. In this context, union/capital accommodation has come under pressure; productivity means speed-ups, automation, and loss of jobs, and inflation and foreign competition produces new state restraints on wage gains even while real wages are eroded.

Structural unemployment

29. The US economy persistently tends to high unemployment due to automation and other productivity measures in the monopoly sector; new jobs cannot be created in competitive and state sectors to absorb the growing job seekers.

30. Women, racial minorities, youth, the old are placed at a disadvantage in the competition for scarce jobs.

31. A number of institutions function to hold members of these groups out of the labor market, releasing them if labor grows scarce; these include the family, schools, the military, and compulsory retirement.

32. Educational requirements for jobs have risen out of proportion to needed skills; as more become educated, those already advantaged seek to raise requirements in order to preserve their labor market positions and those of their children.

33. There is an increasing number of highly educated workers whose jobs require only a fraction of their skills and who have no prospect of better jobs.

34. Increasing numbers of youth are leaving school and have only a tenuous connection with employment; drop-outs are the core of youth culture; their rejection of capitalist work and success ethics is attractive to many struggling with the frustrations of education and alienating jobs.

The political crisis

35. The sixties witnessed the erosion of the political consensus of the post war period and growing self-consciousness of major blocs within the working class: e.g. racial and national minorities, women, youth, industrial and white collar workers.

36. Programmatic and ideological links between diverse sectors of the working class have not yet been developed.

The political response

37. The erosion of the political and economic hegemony of American imperialism creates major contradictions that threaten the agreement between labor and capital, generate structural imperatives for increased productivity and rationalization, and tend to freeze the labor position of minorities, women, and youth.

38. The state plays a pivotal role in this crisis, assuming increased social and indirect costs of production (education, pollution clean-up, etc.), as it acts more and more directly to rationalize the economy. At the same time, the state sector experiences rising unionization of workers and, pressed to raise revenue from already rebellious middle-income tax payers, faces an acute fiscal crisis.

39. The revolt of women and minorities generates continuing pressure for rationalization of the political economy.

40. In response to the crisis, liberal capitalism, rooted in the monopoly sector, has formulated "reform" programs that seek rationalization of the economy, reallocation of state budgetary priorities, and a lowered profile abroad (stabilization of the Asian and European balance, renewed attention to primary spheres of American influence and investment—East Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, etc.). These programs assume and sustain conflicts of interest between sectors of the working class, assuming, for instance, that expanded state services,

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THESES

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environmental cleanup, urban reconstruction, be paid for by middle income tax payers, or that expanded minority job opportunities come at the expense of white workers.

41. Such programs contrast with the reactionary currents based on national industries and local interests, located in the competitive sector. Reactionary politicians capitalize upon the fears of large numbers of working people about the decay of order and play upon the divisions within the working population.

C. TOWARD A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

The New American Movement

42. In the current context, NAM must offer an explicitly socialist alternative, both programmatic and theoretical, to ruling class reforms and reactionary programs. It can be neither a disciplined party nor a loose coalition, but must combine elements of both.

43. NAM must bring together diverse constituencies, experimenting with a variety of organizing efforts, and providing a medium for theoretical and practical exchange.

44. NAM must also advance the process of left cohesion, offer an explicitly socialist alternative, and constantly politicize mass struggles.

Strategic criteria

45. Any strategy based on one sector of the working class is inadequate for a revolutionary movement.

46. The revolutionary goal is to unite now divided sectors and to break down divisions of social life: production/consumption, family/community, work/education.

47. The dissolution of the agreement between capital and labor in the monopoly sector and the entrance of industrial workers into class-wide coalitions is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the emergence of a revolutionary movement.

48. The developing consciousness of white collar and technical workers—that they are structurally oppressed by their relationship to the productive process—is an essential component of an emerging revolutionary force. In the state and service sectors especially, such consciousness contains a demystification of the role of expert, a challenge to the structure and purpose of social services, and a growing awareness of the regressive mechanisms for financial support of services.

49. The growing rebellion of women challenges both archetypes of cultural and psychological oppression and the role of women in the productive process as surplus and unpaid labor. The women's movement will retain a dimension of autonomy, even as it allies itself with the class as a whole.

50. The emerging black (and third world) revolutionary movement represents a challenge to the racial division of labor, which has long divided and weakened the working class as a whole, and also signals an internationalization of struggle; like the women's movement, it will continue to retain a cultural and political integrity within the emerging revolutionary class movement.

51. The youth movement represents a fundamental critique of capitalist modes of consumption and work. Yet, based as it is on forces not integrated into the productive process, alone it will continue to be utopian and escapist, unable to mobilize the resources, galvanize a collective force, or develop a program for revolutionary transformation of that process.

52. Mass socialist consciousness grows from struggles that unite diverse sectors of the working population and bring together now compartmentalized spheres of life in alliances around common programs that clarify class conflict and provide the basis for a vision of a total reconstruction of social relations.

53. A revolutionary movement must sharpen class divisions by clarifying the material class interests of working people as a class, demanding that all reforms be paid for by redistribution of wealth from the ruling class (with special focus on the state policies like nature of expenditures, taxes, New Economic Policy).

54. Such a movement must, in the context of class wide struggle, fight to end special oppression of women, third world people, youth, and the aged.

55. Such a movement must clarify the quality of class struggle by demonstrating that the ruling class defines the character and ends of all institutional life—the work place, the school, social services, entertainment, etc.—according to the imperatives of profit making.

56. It must fiercely defend working class institutions and uncompromisingly support the right to self-determination for women and national minorities, and the right of workers to organize and strike.

57. It must also take the initiative in struggle for expansion of existing areas, and the creation of new areas, of working class control: demanding, for instance, free child care and a variety of other services controlled by consumers and workers; demanding the training of workers and the reorganization of work to allow a variety of tasks and control over the productive process by workers themselves; demanding schools serve the interests of workers, children, women, minorities, etc.

58. In the context of such specific struggles communities of the oppressed can be created to articulate a revolutionary vision of work, service, recreation, family and community.

59. Focus on state budgetary policies and administration can unite questions of distribution and control, demonstrating the role of the state in transferring wealth to the ruling class and in shaping services to fit the interests of profit-making.

60. A revolutionary movement must be internationalist. It must actively support the struggles of the oppressed everywhere (Vietnamese, South African, Northern Irish) as its own. ●



"There are still some people who haven't lost confidence in the dollar."

WHY WE NEED A VIETNAM POSITION & PROGRAM

BY ED GREER

Our Founding Convention should pass a resolution of political solidarity with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and adopt a program of organizing to implement it. This resolution and program should be organized around NAM's unqualified support for the PRG's Program as the basis for the end of the imperialist war currently being waged by the United States government.

There are two potential reservations NAM members might have. The first such objection is the "parade of horrors." If NAM begins to take foreign policy stands, will not the door be opened to interminable disputes over questions such as border disputes between Yugoslavia and Albania, the *bona fides* of various Palestinian political formations, etc? Surely it would be foolish for NAM to expend its energies on such matters, instead of organizing among working people.

Without a doubt NAM should avoid the "parade of horrors." But the way to do this is to rely upon the good sense and political consciousness of our membership. The past decade should have taught us to avoid "paper discussions" of obscure points of ideology, but Vietnam is not an obscure sectarian squabble. It is the leading political question in the United States -- one that defines the *class* interests and politics of different groups.

The second objection (put forth by Judith Shapiro of IS, Vol. 1, No. 4) is that such a resolution, "involving mindless identification with the PRG and North Vietnam ... (would be) disturbingly reminiscent of the last days of SDS." To buttress this argument, Shapiro "hazard (s) a guess that most delegates (at Davenport) didn't know what was in the Seven Point PRG Program."

Whether true or not, this objection points precisely in the direction of the fullscale internal political debate (with its natural spill-over effect of internal education) that a major policy resolution entails. Moreover, I believe that most NAM members are well-informed about Vietnam and have a fairly clear political position on the issue.

In any event, the politics of NAM ought not to represent the lowest common denominator of membership knowledge: rather it should express our best collective wisdom. This posture would mean that NAM should be raising the level of its internal political life as high as possible, bringing everyone within its ranks to that full understanding. (The other path NAM could take involves the creation of an elite with 'heavy' politics on the one hand, and a passive mass of followers on the other).

Now the positive reasons for this resolution are that it is a correct political position on the war, and that such a perspective is ESSENTIAL to NAM's project of "placing socialism on the agenda" among American working people.

Judith Shapiro and IS (as were PL before them) are simply wrong when they assert that the PRG and North Vietnam are "bureaucratic anti-working class regimes." It certainly is true that the American ruling class assiduously cultivates this view among American workers—so as to discredit socialist agitation. Since the outset of the Russian Revolution, this "big lie" technique has been at work. (It is also worth noting that a favorite method the ruling class uses to give credence to this notion is to employ erstwhile revolutionaries, paid renegades, etc. For instance Christopher Lasch has traced how the CIA manipulated former trotskyst and social democratic radicals into serving as cold war agents. "The Congress for Cultural Freedom," in Bernstein (ed.), TOWARDS A NEW PAST).

If, as IS insists, all existing socialist regimes are so terrible, then why should American workers believe that they can do better? IS's position of revolutionary 'purity' inexorably leads away from a popular socialist movement.

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VIETNAM POSITION (continued from page 8)

But the basis for this resolution cannot be simply that we are deeply committed to the Vietnamese. Nor is it enough to indicate that the war has made more of us into revolutionaries than any other single political event of our generation.

The essential test must be: does this position reveal, at least embryonically, to politically conscious working people that they stand for a new and different civilization to take the place of the present one?

I believe that a socialist politics on the war in Vietnam does. It speaks to precisely the debate that Jeremy Rifkin and I opened (Vol. 1, No. 2) about the validity of a "red, white and blue left." In my critique of Rifkin I pointed out that one of the main weaknesses with the concept of mass struggle which he embraced was that it did not confront the problem of national chauvinism among working people. I went on to argue that overcoming such a political culture ("false consciousness" if you will) is a *necessary and integral part* of the emergence of a self-consciously revolutionary working class movement.

In the heart of the world's greatest imperialist power, national chauvinism (which is closely linked to racism and tied to sexist views of the world) is not simply an obscure deviation from Marxist orthodoxy; it is a large part of the popular cultural basis for reaction. It must be eradicated from the culture of working people if we are to put socialism "on the political agenda" in real life.

Therefore NAM must embody within its political self-definition the most clear-cut possible opposition to national chauvinism. It must do this (1) because NAM has the affirmative responsibility to inscribe on its banners deep respect for the worth of other cultures and a firm recognition of every people's right to political and cultural self-determination, and (2) because NAM is seeking to win the mass of working people to a new conception of their history -- one in which we all have the power to control our social destiny. The PRG provides an example (not a model) from which all oppressed people can draw inspiration.

The ruling class necessarily seeks to crush the Vietnamese. If it succeeds, it will simultaneously deliver a telling blow against the revolutionary forces in the United States. Conversely, if it fails, significant new prospects for socialist politics in the United States will be opened for us.

The people of the US must come to understand that the victories and defeats in Vietnam are ours. That is the meaning of proletarian internationalism -- that the fate of oppressed people everywhere is linked not only in our vision of human decency, but also in our strategic understanding of the class struggle.

And if our New American Movement is not internationalist at its core it is nothing and deserves to be nothing. ●



ON THE QUESTION OF VANGUARD PARTIES

BY ED CLARK.

Although the following was submitted as a hastily-written letter to the newspaper, we include it in this section of the paper because it opens discussion on a subject which will be discussed at the convention in June. The writer suggests reading the pamphlet THE WORKERS OPPOSITION (\$1.00 from GPO Box 13011, Philadelphia, PA 19101) for background on the vanguard party concept.

Roughly, a vanguard party is a group which, following Lenin, believes that the working class is incapable of ruling as a class except through its most conscious elements, its "vanguard." These conscious and disciplined elements serve as a "general staff" of the working class, developing and guiding the working class on the correct road both up to the revolution and, afterwards, in the building of socialism and communism.

Among the groups that claim to be "the vanguard party" or to be building such a party in this country are 1) the Communist Party USA, 2) the Socialist Workers Party, 3) the Progressive Labor Party, 4) the Spartacist League, 5) the Workers League, 6) various Maoist fragments like the Revolutionary Union, Georgia Communist League (Marxist-Leninist), etc., and 7) International Socialists.

The NAM Founding Convention in June has a number of alternatives with regard to these groups. The three clearest seem to be:

- Let them all become members of NAM
- Exclude certain vanguard parties from NAM by name, leaving other parties to come in or not as they chose
- Exclude members of existing vanguard parties, groups that maintain the desirability of building vanguard parties, and anyone who advocates building a vanguard party.

The first option is attractive because it's easy. In addition, it has the aura of "fair play" about it. NAM would be a "marketplace of ideas." All of these parties would send members into NAM and engage in "political struggle" with each other, trying to win recruits into their respective parties. Some of the vanguard parties would try to win NAM itself to adopting part or all of the vanguard program.

This is substantially the course followed by the late Students for a Democratic Society. Prior to 1969, SDS was open to any and all vanguard parties. Three "vanguard" factions developed, one under the auspices of Progressive Labor, the other two among SDS members not aligned with any party outside of SDS. All three -- PL's Worker-Student Alliance, the Weatherman and the Revolutionary Youth Movement II -- agreed that a vanguard leadership was necessary. The burning question in their minds was which faction would hold power in SDS.

This course had certain consequences. First, unaligned members of SDS were alienated by the existence of the vanguard factions. Some people in NAM are beginning to feel the same way about IS -- the way unorganized people always feel around an organized minority -- especially a disciplined minority. On its face, this suggests that NAM members should be cautious about setting up factions, especially disciplined ones.



Beyond this, even people in or friendly to PL were ambiguous about PL clubs and, more importantly, about higher PL bodies making recommendations to SDS. Naturally, many SDS members had strong doubts about PL's commitments to SDS. These factors increased the alienation of the SDS rank-and-file.

Finally, when the factional struggle came to a head, most SDS members could not support any of the vanguards and left the organization entirely. One could argue that this was due to the generally "rotten politics" of all three factions. My own view, however, is that the overwhelming majority of SDS members, on the basis of their experiences with all three vanguards rejected -- even if they couldn't articulate it -- the whole idea of any vanguard leading them to socialism.

The second option -- exclude certain particular vanguard parties -- attractive both to NAM members who think that IS is "different" from groups like the CP or PL, and to NAM members who look for a "better" vanguard party that wouldn't do what the present rotten parties do.

First, it must be admitted that IS does seem different. They do not project the rule-or-ruin arrogance of PL or the various Maoist fragments. They are not lunatics, like the trotskyst splinters. They are not vulgar liberals like the CP or the SWP.

On many particular political questions, I agree more with IS than with some independent NAM members. For instance, I agree with IS that there is *no* "revolutionary socialist" country in the world today, no place where the working class *actually controls* the state and the economy. In every country that pretends to the name of socialism we find power in the hands of vanguard parties.

However, the IS leadership still retains its trotskyst heritage of the 1940's. They want to build a "Leninist Party," a democratic-centralist vanguard to lead the working class to power. They sincerely believe that without such leadership, socialist revolution is impossible, and they are prepared to assume that leadership.

The IS leadership celebrates and defends the Bolshevik Party of the period 1917-1921 when, under Lenin and Trotsky, power was taken from the workers councils (soviets) and vested in the Central Committee of that Party. The only reasonable conclusion is that (a) IS would do the same thing in this country *if they thought it necessary*, and (b) IS would attempt to rule NAM against the will of the membership -- *if they thought it necessary*.

Perhaps many members of IS would oppose an IS dictatorship over NAM *under any circumstances* -- just as I and other PL members opposed the idea of a PL dictatorship over SDS after the 1969 split. Some of us thought -- as most IS'ers might say now -- that our group should lead the mass organization because our ideas were correct, but that we should have the membership's approval of our leadership. We were willing to govern, but only with the consent of the governed. PL leadership, however, was eager to govern SDS regardless of the will of the membership -- because "that was the only way the movement would grow."

A group's willingness to become a vanguard with the consent of those who are led must *inevitably* become a willingness to assume a vanguard role regardless of those who are led. The excuse(!) -- the "needs of the revolution" -- can *always* be found when the vanguard leadership requires it.

IS is, of course, still some distance from this point. But some of the signs are there. Its own national convention has been repeatedly postponed. National policy is formulated by a small committee and its leadership has made a series of proposals to "tighten up" IS, with greater discipline for IS members.

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Since the Davenport Convention, various women in Minnesota and in New York have circulated amongst their chapters suggestions for a regional women's conference and the kind of role NAM women should play in the National June Convention. The NAM Newspaper collective has received copies of these statements and decided to print them to assure the widest possible participation in conference planning. Though these statements focus on a concrete action, they pose general theoretical questions about ways to link feminism and socialism. We urge all women to reply.

women's conferences

A PROPOSAL

FROM SOME NEW YORK WOMEN

I. In its debates over program, NAM has tried to understand political issues as they affect women. But because we haven't tackled certain theoretical problems, we are not certain about the real feminist content of our practice. The issue of feminist programs in a socialist context is complex. In the past, the preservation and reinforcement of the family under socialism has been emphasized, and women's place in the socialist revolution was evaluated mainly in terms of moving into the public workforce. However, the feminist critique of the family has now shown us that this is the wrong direction.

II. Juliet Mitchell, in *Woman's Estate* (Pantheon Books, 1971), discusses one way to see an inter-relationship between feminism and socialism. (See the December 1971 issue of *Liberation* magazine.) She proposes that we regard radical feminist consciousness as the material from which we develop a socialist analysis of women's oppression. She contends that the theoretical division between radical feminism and socialist feminism is diversionary. Her discussion of Shulamith Firestone's *THE DIALECTIC OF SEX* and Kate Millett's *SEXUAL POLITICS* (both in paperback) provides some of the questions we must ask.

How does patriarchy work? Is there a "general system" of women's oppression, constant throughout history? What about reproduction? Firestone posits that there is a material basis for sexual division in the reproductive system and that this division must be transcended; that the required revolution must be against Nature, not just against a form of society, e.g., capitalism. How far can we carry our attack on sex roles given the biological facts of reproduction? How do we deal with the personal level of sexism, given that most women live in a domestic unit with one man and some children? What are the implications of these questions for understanding the family? How does the ideology of the family affect women in the workplace? How can we understand the complexities of the relationship of women to work, whether in the home or outside it? What politics come out of a consciousness of female oppression?

III. We must try to deal with theory while we develop our programs, if we are to give them a real con-

tent. For many of us the question is how to move on the consciousness we have attained over the last few years. What structural changes do we strive for to realize the possibilities created by feminism? Can a new socialism be developed that is based on a radical feminist analysis of our experience as women?

At the Davenport conference it was agreed that women should meet before the June convention to develop our specific politics and programs. Since it seems unlikely that women with jobs or domestic responsibilities can travel far, we propose that those who want to, develop regional meetings.

IV. Suggestions for Topics: It is difficult to define topics either regionally or nationally, without some decisions on theory. We should work these out together. However, we should not feel a rigid commitment to the definition of topics because at each meeting certain topics might flow from the theoretical discussions that take place and the phrasing of the topics might change.

Some suggestions, to begin, however:

- Family, Marriage
- Motherhood
- Reproduction: Abortion, Contraception, Child-birth
- Sexuality
- Work
- identity as worker
- kinds of jobs we get
- equality in status and pay
- safety

Class, race and solidarity among women

The topics are problematical because they are already based on acceptance of irreconcilable divisions between modes of analyzing our experience. How do we overcome this?

Other program workshops might be on: ATT, welfare (e.g., implications for marriage, work that women do in home---raising children---or outside home), women in unions, industries in which women predominate.

V. Possible readings --- a beginning:

- Mitchell, Firestone and Millett
- NOTES FROM THE THIRD YEAR, Ed. by Anne Koedt, P.O. Box AA, Old Chelsea Station, NYC 10011
- WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION (the Baltimore journal), esp. Vol. 2, No. 3, "Women as Workers under Capitalism"
- Rochelle Paul Nortis, CHILD-REARING AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION (Boston)
- Linda Gordon, FAMILIES (New England Free Press, 791 Tremont, Boston)
- Frances Perkins Gilman, WOMEN AND ECONOMICS
- Re: health struggles---lots of literature from NY Women's Health and Abortion Project on gynecological exam, vaginal infections, VD, abortion

A PROPOSAL FROM

SOME

MINNEAPOLIS WOMEN

There has long been a serious split between radical feminist politics and socialist politics—a division that grows ever deeper. We are convinced that this often necessary division can and must be ended. We see that the way to end it is to make feminism a foundation for any serious efforts to build socialism.

We, the women of the Minneapolis chapter of NAM, strongly support the call for regional women's conferences to be held this Spring before the June convention. Hopefully, we would come away from these regional meetings with some basic solidarity regarding theory and priority programs. Results of the conferences would be exchanged.

In addition to these regional conferences, we propose that a full day during the national conference (preferably the 2nd or 3rd day to include late-comers) be devoted to feminist issues. We want at least a full day. We believe that feminist politics are not the sole property or responsibility of women and that both sexes must share equally in the struggle to end sexism.

For this day, we propose that the people at the convention be randomly placed into small groups of men and women with the same sexual balance as the whole conference (perhaps the groups would be as small as ten). We hope that each group would discipline itself to deal with topics on a prepared agenda (this agenda could possibly be worked on at the regional conferences). Some possibilities for this agenda might include:

1. Women's Health
2. The Family
3. Alternatives to the Family
4. Sexuality (straight and gay)
5. Reproduction (abortion, contraception)
6. Commitments to each other (personal and political)
7. Oppression of children
8. Sexism in education
9. Sexism at the outside workplace
10. Sexism and Third World women
11. Sexism and class

These group discussions can avoid shallowness and vagueness if people are well prepared for them. To aid this preparation a minimum of common reading should be done by all. This reading list would be sent out well in advance of the convention. We suggest that local chapters consider this reading a program of internal education and treat it seriously.

One last thing: this whole proposal is in no way meant to limit struggles around sexism to one day or a single format. It is a minimum, not a maximum.

vanguards

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There is a possibility --though slim -- that a substantial portion of IS's 300 members may be ready to junk the vanguard party concept altogether. If this is the case, a special opportunity exists for NAM in connection with the third option.

This option, as noted above, would exclude all advocates of the vanguard (or "Leninist") party, whether or not they were members of a group that claimed to be or wanted to build a vanguard party.

The main ideological basis for this exclusion would be that the vanguard party is an elitist perversion of Marxism; it is based on the premise that the working class is inherently unfit to govern itself and therefore a special group must govern on its behalf. NAM endorsing the fundamental principle that the

working class must achieve its own liberation, would accordingly reject the vanguard party concept.

If this option is adopted by the NAM Founding Convention, the opportunity arises to invite IS as an organization -- as well as its members individually -- to scrap the vanguard party concept and merge their efforts with NAM towards building a mass, democratic, revolutionary socialist movement.

I believe those IS members who sincerely want to build NAM into such a movement will accept such an invitation. There's even a small possibility that IS as a whole would enter NAM on this basis (over the howls of its present leadership no doubt). Insofar as IS does have many talented and active members, this would mean a big boost for NAM projects.

But even if the effort is for naught, we will still have made an important step forward. We will have decisively turned away from a hopeless course --

the whole vanguard party concept -- that has repeatedly paralyzed the left in this country and around the world.

In realizing a key principle -- the emancipation of the working class being the work of the working class itself -- we would have caught up with Karl Marx.

(P.S. The option which I favor could take the form of an article in the NAM Constitution as follows:

Article --

1. Advocates of the establishment and/or building of a "vanguard party" to lead the working class to power and to rule on behalf of the working class after the transfer of power are not eligible for membership in NAM.
2. The National Convention shall establish appropriate procedures as required to implement Section 1. ●

SENSE AND NONSENSE ABOUT THE WORKERS MOVEMENT

BY PAUL ROSENSTEIN

For the past ten years or so I've worked in half a dozen industries. Some jobs were union, some non-union. Some were in big plants, some in small. For the past three years I've been working in an auto plant. In the left wing press I've rarely read accurate articles or analyses of life for America's industrial working people. Many articles have suffered from trying to make the "facts" fit ideology. Others have clearly been written by people who have little knowledge of the "blue collar" workers.

For a while the young left was unconcerned about the working class. The action was in the civil rights movement, the middle-class based anti-war movement and the campuses. The country was in a boom period, workers seemed satisfied, bought off, affluent. They aspired to the "middle class" life that the young left was rejecting. Union and union leaders were respectable. They supported the war and government policies in general. They either actively discriminated against minorities or supported the status quo. Then for a while the "new working class" appeared to be the hope. After all, automation would eliminate the blue-collar workers, and besides, students had to have some perspective for their future careers.

Then the New Left found Marxism. The pendulum swung and a movement that had given up on the industrial workers found that they would make the Revolution. All of a sudden the struggles, the job actions and wildcats, the strikes, the victories and defeats of the workers became the standards of the progress of the revolution. Struggles that had been dismissed as "bread and butter" fights were now understood as battles against the system. Workers, were now seen to be suffering from wages inadequate to support a family, poor and unsafe working conditions and subject to arbitrary and humiliating discipline.

Radicals decided that their job was to bring "the truth" to the workers. So literature was distributed to educate the class, and the more dedicated radicals shed their middle-class privileges and joined the working class. While some material made sense, much of the literature distributed seemed to have been trans-

lated from English to a foreign language and back again, and many of those who actually got jobs found that the work was as gruesome and mindless as they had been taught, but that the workers in THEIR plant didn't seem to understand this. Discouraged, many faded from the scene.

But discouragement did not destroy the myths; hardly a week goes by when the Left press doesn't reflect them. I read all the time about how the workers are militantly fighting back against Phase II, how the sell-out union leaders are selling the workers out, how the growing rank and file movements are leading these struggles against the sell-out union leaders, against the government, and of course, against the bosses. We read about the recession (depression?) and the deteriorating working conditions and standards of living, the crisis of the system, and so on.

Well, there is some truth to this, but let's not get carried away with ourselves. An analysis that is incomplete or one sided is not objective; exaggerating a situation or over-generalizing a specific situation may be good for MORALE, but it cannot lead to successful politics.

The industrial relations system in this country is very complex and varied, and it cannot be dealt with by simple slogans. For example, militancy is usually totally confused with radicalism. Most of the time workers are not militant—and for good reason; when militant struggle does occur, left wingers see these actions as radicalism, class consciousness, class struggle against the system. When the unions and their leaders steer dissatisfactions into peaceful channels, the left concludes that the workers have been misled, sold out. Radicals' ideas of providing leadership is bringing out the truth to the workers—upon which the sell-out leaders will be dumped. This is paternalism—a convenient way of letting the workers off the hook, avoiding the fact that it is workers who elect those leaders, who allow themselves to be misled.

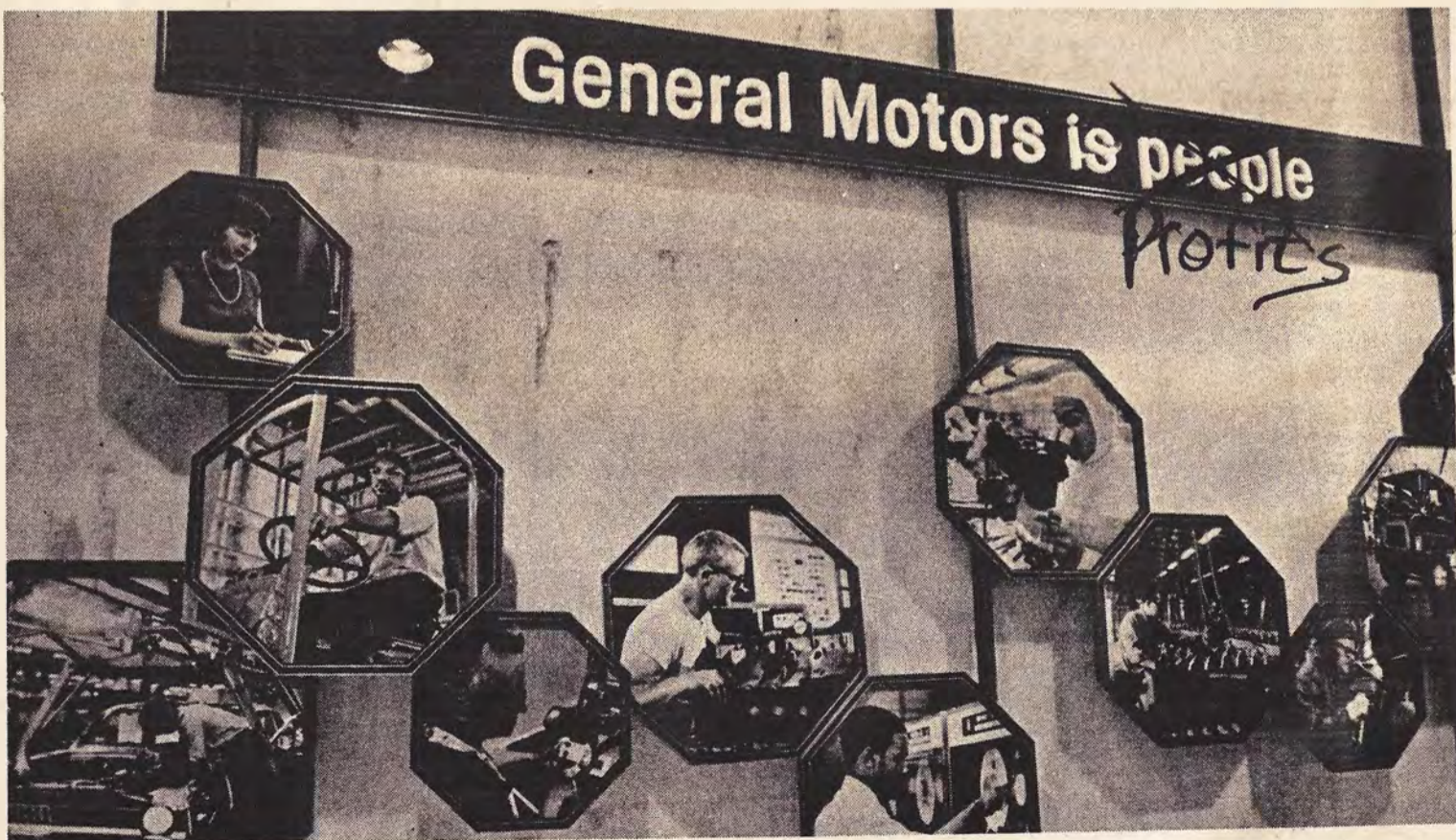
Another example of an inadequate analysis: we know that over the past five years real wages have not increased. This fact and others are used to show that workers are desperate over their economic situation.

Certainly, prices have gone up, and we need more money, but still a working family accumulates material goods, and over the years they can look at their increased possessions and see that even if food prices are higher, they have more now than they did a few years ago. And as for high prices—Nixon's policy may not be the fairest, but if it works, we'll be better off.

In my plant for a few years we've had several left groups "leading" us from inside and outside the plant; I myself have participated in rank and file caucuses in the plant, inside and outside the union structure. But little has changed. A year ago things were quite lively, perhaps they will be again next year—but little is happening now. When I run into my old friends and they ask me what's happening, I try to be gentle. I say, "Well, maybe my plant is different than the ones you've read about, but..." I see a look of disbelief that tells me I am a party pooper, a pessimist, a negativist, I didn't try hard enough, I must be a revisionist. What can I say?

Most of what has been written on industrial relations in this country is pretty bad—but there are a few useful books and articles for those who would like to learn about it but who can't go work in a factory. There's Stanley Aronowitz's "Which Side Are You On: Trade Unions in America," in *Liberation*, December, 1971. Aronowitz makes some of the exaggerations and overgeneralizations that I am so tired of, but he also makes some interesting points. *A Strategy for Labor* by André Gorz is a classic mindblower about how a class conscious labor movement could develop struggles. Two series of excellent articles by Elinor Langer have appeared in the *New York Review of Books* over the last couple of years. One series is on her experiences as a telephone worker, the other is on the problems of a progressive union local. For the most rounded analysis of the labor movement, its history and how it became what it is now, I would suggest *The Crisis of American Labor* by Sidney Lens. It was written in 1959 so its statistics are dated, but its analysis is excellent.

I'm sure I've insulted a lot of people by my own sweeping generalizations, but I've been trying to describe how the Left looks from inside the outside world. And I feel strongly that those who don't have any illusions cannot become disillusioned. ●



BUS ON

(continued from page 5)

Because the issue of busing is complex and integrates many strands of social conflict, it is a bit pretentious to propose a fixed "line" on busing. We can, however, clarify some of the issues of integration-segregation and "quality education" that might assist in the development of a clearer orientation toward busing.

Integration is no longer a code-word for radical and liberal sensibilities. With the realization that strictly legal maneuvers would not overcome the structural resistances to equality of opportunity, black leaders were correct to point out that more militant action, based on the accumulation of black power, was essential. But this should not imply that when forces for integration can be effectively combined, integration is itself no longer worth pursuing. In fact, from a long term perspective, integration furthers the welfare of both black and white children, and undermines the divide-and-conquer techniques of the ruling elites.

Studies show that the performance of black children improves in integrated schools. But contrary to recent academic propaganda, "racial" theories of intelligence do not explain this result. Rather the answer lies in the impoverished self-image that a degraded urban environment forces upon the black child. A child's image of himself is ultimately a function of the environment that socializes him -- of the MATERIAL basis that structures his experiences. When a black child enters an integrated school, he not only experiences a new environment, but cor-

respondingly discovers his own untapped potentials.

This does not imply that in one fell swoop integration can solve the problems of race relations. To believe this is to fall into that dreamland of liberalism in which social pacification is achieved with the passage of a few laws. In fact in the initial stages of integration, the black child's discovery of his own potential is matched by a sense of rage over his own previous deprivations. Thus integration often leads to severe racial conflict. But in the process the black child draws on the elements of his own experiences and background to help him understand his white environment. In effect, black power will not be an artificial evocation of Africanisms, but rather a tool for the authentic, active and conflict-ridden process of integration. Integration must mean conflict. The deadweight of racism lies too deep in the psychic structures of America's children. There is the burden of overcoming America's past. But in the process of conflict and struggle they can arrive at new and higher patterns of integration that will defy all divisionary techniques of the elites. By viewing integration as a process of conflict rather than as one of social-pacification, we can understand its progressive potential.

Finally, underlying all educational conflict there rests the issue of the quality of education itself. The educational crisis has been with us for some time. "Johnny could not read" since the 1950's. But recently there have appeared not only the standard problems of reading and writing, but an increasing collapse of discipline in the school.

This collapse reflects the ambiguity of schooling itself. Schooling is a training ground for work, but also a reservation to keep youth off the labor market. Increases in the years of schooling and the number of students reflect changes or increases in skill requirements for jobs, and the growing inability of

capitalism to provide work for everyone. It is the proportion or ratio between these two functions that determines the orderliness and functionality of schooling. There is evidence that in the last fifty years the problem of employment expansion has become the central contradiction of American capitalism. During this period schools have provided less and less of the skills and training of the work-a-day world, exhibiting the deterioration implicit in a system of capitalistically determined job creation.

The burden on youth is thus two-fold. Not only must they bear the oppressive rating and control systems, but increasingly such systems appear in a social vacuum without justification. In this context, quality education can hardly mean, as some parents often tell us, learning the inherited structure of skills, for they bear little resemblance to job opportunities. Nor, as others often suggest, is quality education conditional upon a concerted attack on discipline. Rather we suggest that quality education must flow from an orientation that transcends both the past and present. If youth is to struggle for its right to learning and education, it must develop a sense of the structure of revolutionary, future-oriented skills, i.e., skills that transcend the modes of work and divisions of labor that flow from the deteriorating system of market-determined jobs, skills that can be part of a consciously and democratically planned society in which the implicit productive and intellectual potential can be realized. The mind can only boggle at such a project, and no suggestion can be made here as to the nature of such learning. But if the young are to shape their future, if they are to engage in effective social conflict, then black and white youth will have to come together to take the full measure of their powers and the strengths of their vision. ●

GOP CONVENTION

(continued from page 3)

At this point defeating Nixon means electing a Democrat. In what ways is that desirable, and to what extent? In what ways do Nixon's policies differ from those a Democratic administration would employ? Are there important differences among Democratic candidates?

These questions can't easily be answered, but if they are not faced, we will again fall into a militance unaware of its own consequences. An SDCC pamphlet says that: "The Coalition isn't planning demonstrations at the Republican Convention just so we can have a liberal Democrat for president. We're moving against Nixon and the Republicans because they are the present guardians of the interests of the American establishment ... if we don't act in San Diego we will give Nixon a free rein in his escalation of the war and increasingly repressive domestic policies." This outlook is essentially defensive -- but not necessarily invalid at the present time.

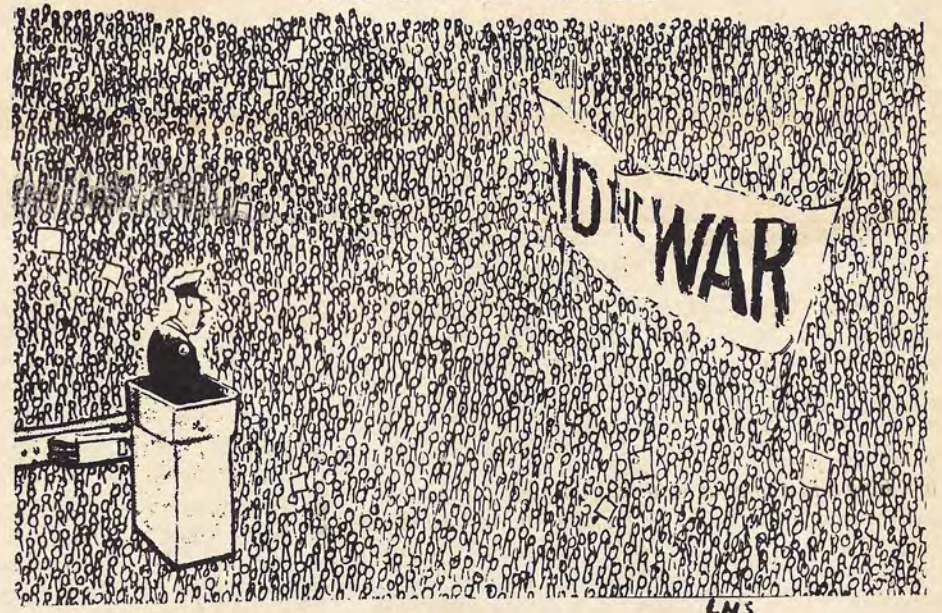
The problem in Santa Barbara was that not enough effort was made at the conference to determine the likely consequences of the actions planned. Yet it would be wrong to become paralyzed by the ambiguities and difficulties of the present situation. The Democratic Party won't retire if we ignore it, but will always respond to insurgent movement. A socialist movement, directly challenging the liberals will be required to find means of dealing with the Democratic Party's complex strengths in various situations.

Fragmentation of the women's movement and the refusal of many women to participate in activities with men seemed to combine to produce less immediate pressure against sexism in Santa Barbara than might have been the case a year or two ago. It is possible that some men take the absence of that immediate pressure for a sign that things are all right now, when, if anything, it indicates the reverse.

Fourth, there was general agreement at the conference on the need for an anti-imperialist movement, both for San Diego and beyond. Several different conceptions of such a movement were advanced. One emphasized primarily the deepening of political understanding of sections of the anti-war movement and of white youth, toward an integrated view of the sources and purposes of US foreign policy. A second conception, which also had considerable support, placed major emphasis on relating anti-war demands to the demands of the industrial working class, with the idea of forming a movement that would be anti-imperialist in its consequences, if not in its consciousness.

Third, the principles adopted by the conference make almost no mention of sexism, either with regard to the internal operation of organizing groups or to their political perspectives. But this is not to imply the absence of sexism. With the significant exception of the Convention Coalition group from San Diego (their speakers, proposals, etc.), men almost completely dominated the sessions which I attended. Associated with their domination in many cases was a real obstruction of clear political discussion, repetition of arguments, etc.

"You're Under Arrest"



Almost everyone at the conference strongly opposed the anti-war strategy of the SWP-YSA, which was seen as limiting the development of political consciousness, and often tying the anti-war movement to liberals within and close to the Democratic Party. There was an element of sectarian competition with the SWP that verged on becoming a quarrel over slogans. Yet insofar as the critique of SWP anti-war strategy is based on a desire to extend and increase political consciousness by relating the war to other aspects of US society, it should be supported.

Such support must be critical, however, because of the difficulties involved in defining, much less constructing, an "anti-imperialist movement." The viability of a sustained anti-imperialist movement that does not have a socialist consciousness seems to be questionable. In the absence of a deliberate attempt to create socialist consciousness around the war and imperialism, two political tendencies often appear, sometimes in conjunction with each other. One is moralism and cultism, which has come to the fore at the worst points in the history of the New Left: support the Viet Cong because they're beautiful and fighting back. Another is an economist attempt to link anti-war arguments to the immediate demands of industrial workers: oppose the war (or even: fight imperialism) because it's costing you money and making you work harder. The first tendency is generally limited in its appeal to the strata from which the New Left came. The second really requires an extreme deterioration of material conditions within the US for a chance of success, which is not certain even then.

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letters

(continued from page 2)

Further: "Imperialism is the mortal enemy of all humanity, of all nations of people ... the chief political contradiction in the world today is that between imperialism and its victims."

One would think that considering the presently fragmented and disoriented state of the Left in our country, all proposals for a new orientation, no matter how contrary to past dogma and past prejudices, would be carefully listened to and considered.

The problem, sad to state, is that American Marxists seem to be afflicted with the same blindness endemic among European Marxists, of whom Regis Degray wrote from his prison cell (October 1969): "The near-silence of European Marxists on this question of (revolutionary) nationalism will one day be seen as the most costly and ruinous of all historical omissions. The really urgent theoretical work, upon which the future depends, will be done by those who stop covering their eyes in the face of that 'question' (!!) of nationalism."

I hope that NAM will be the first to embark on a really serious examination of the concept of "revolutionary patriotism," and especially of the broader theoretical question of the historical dynamics of the nation and its role and function in capitalist and socialist systems.

Sincerely,
John Rossen

a reply

I think there are positive aspects to the new patriotism, even though I disagree with its form and with its theory. We need a left that is not ashamed of being American, that has pride in the real accomplishments of the American working class (as a whole, diverse class), and that can escape entirely from the sense of guilt at being citizens of the major imperial power in the world that pervaded and was so debilitating to SDS and other "anti-imperialist" groups

The question is not Rossen's position on imperialism, solidarity with the Vietnamese, etc. It is the profound difference in the meaning of nationalism to a revolutionary movement in the United States (or any imperial nation) and in the colonial countries. In Russia, and much more importantly in China and Cuba, as well as Vietnam, nationalism was consistent with socialist revolution because those countries were prevented from attaining national independence by the imperial powers. Thus it was possible for the socialists (Communists) to incorporate the bourgeois democratic demand for national independence in its revolutionary program. There was both a common interest and a still weak and indecisive bourgeoisie -- one that had not yet established its hegemony and that wavered between support for independence and serving the ruling class of the imperial powers. In that situation, the demand for national independence was a widely felt one, one that united all classes against the imperialists and at the same time exposed the ways in which the native capitalists were often betraying their own people.

It should be clear that there is no such situation in the United States. On the contrary, the United States (and Europe) present socialists with the opportunity of being the first unambiguously internationalist revolutions. Unlike the Russians, Chinese, and Cubans there will be no conflict between the "national" interests of the US after the revolution and its international commitment to the world revolution, a conflict that has been apparent in Russian foreign policy at least since the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939, and that is increasingly apparent in Chinese foreign policy. This is not meant as a condemnation of either of these countries, but is intended only to point out the contradictions faced by a pre-indus-

trialized nation after a socialist revolution. The problem of rapid development and self-protection of necessity comes into conflict with an absolute internationalism. This will not be the case in the US.

The question of nationalism for a socialist movement in the US must be handled very differently from the way it was in China or Cuba. There, the socialist revolutionaries led the struggle for national independence against most of the capitalist class. Here, we have a strong bourgeois revolutionary tradition that has been unchallenged by a socialist left. Our revolutionary "heroes" must be understood as the expansionists and oppressors of workers, slaves, women and national minorities that they were. While we can understand the American revolution as a positive development in its time, we must avoid identification with the bourgeois revolutionary tradition of imperial expansion that was built into the US from its inception.

James Weinstein

wages

(continued from page 16)

The American economy was modernized after WW II; but not so much as Europe and Japan, which by comparison started from scratch—and with much lower labor costs per unit of output, and much smaller arms bills, and shortages of everything: the capitalist dream. In short, the foreigners began to catch up with us and to be competitive; and the War accelerated that process, not least because of the inflation. So, back to the domestic scene.

In December, at the big money talks at the Smithsonian Institute, the United States agreed to devalue its currency and others agreed to revalue. The US also dropped the ten percent import surcharge, and retained wage/price controls. The hope was that revaluation/devaluation would cause a "reflow" of dollars, and mitigate the dollar crisis; in fact there was an increase in the outflow of dollars, which continues. One reason is that inflation has not in fact been halted, the war has not been halted, the flow of US investment dollars abroad has not been halted (or slowed), and since these are the causes of the world monetary crisis, the world monetary crisis goes on. All that changes is the nature of the harrangue Connally gives the foreigners in his intermittent meetings with them or the press.

There is one variable Nixon can deal with directly, or try to: wages. If all wages were frozen now and forever the world monetary crisis would continue (and so might inflation), but it might be somewhat less severe, because US exports might be more competitive. So Nixon is doing what he can. He can't freeze profits because you don't destroy capitalism in order to save it. Prices could be frozen—they were in World War II, by and large—but that would be a bummer in many ways, especially if it worked, from the viewpoint of Nixon's main supporters. But wages are easy to hold down, if not to freeze.

More exactly, the only wages that won't be held down are those paid out to members of the most powerful unions. There is a charade going on now in the Pay Board, and in the unions. Nobody could have believed that no wages would go up more than a stated percentage; in the new setting—bargaining with the state—bargaining power is still crucial. The big unions will do better than the average (as the ILWU has, despite the outcry), and the little unions and the unorganized will do worse than the average. The system is set up to work that way, top to bottom.

Nixon stands to lose a few votes from trade unionists this November, but not if he can help it, with busing as an issue and repression as a tactic. Trade unionists have a way of forgetting that over and over again, when the system has to come down on them, it comes down first on others—which, in our day, means blacks and chicanos, antiwar protestors, and other assorted victims of the system. Nixon has changed the administration of injustice significantly since he took office, and by and large he has gotten away with it. There is nothing at all to keep the new justice from picking off loud voices in the unions in the near future, anymore than in the recent past.

What has changed, and especially from the NAM view, is that labor struggles from now on will be more and more directly or indirectly against the state; more and more they will be struggles where the meaning of defeat will be full and long, rather than a dollar here or an hour there. In short, more and more workers who are not the most well organized will have reason to be increasingly dubious of a system about which they have always been at least skeptical, for the system's contradictions are now increasing and showing, and the natural pressure point to relieve them is to push on labor. What is being done now is only an introduction; there's more to come.●

san diego

(continued from page 12)

Within the US the only durable anti-imperialist movement would be a socialist movement. There are several reasons for this. First, the US is not a colonized nation, and contains no "national bourgeoisie" that might consistently oppose imperialism; the liberal bourgeoisie is clear and firm in its commitment to the general outlines of US imperialism, and retreats only under pressure. Second, there is no substantial petit bourgeoisie (middle class) that might be seriously anti-imperialist. This is due to the proletarianization of large parts of that class, and to the direct attachment of other sections of it to the corporate bourgeoisie. Third, the material position of the US is not so weak, nor is it likely to be in the near future, as to give immediate demands of various social strata a sustained anti-imperialist character.

Fourth, only socialist consciousness around the question of imperialism can provide a basis for an effective alliance among sections of the working class in the US whose immediate interests with regard to imperialism are often disparate and sometimes even antagonistic. Finally, socialist consciousness seems to me crucial in the self-understanding that can result among the participants in an anti-imperialist movement. The determination, strength, and creativity with which people act against imperialism, in Vietnam and elsewhere, is linked to the extent to which they see their actions as a necessary part of a struggle for the reconstruction of their own social relations—rather than as a moral imperative or as a way of maintaining wage-levels.

An analysis of imperialism, no matter how precise and well-researched, that doesn't connect anti-imperialism with the need for socialism within the US is ultimately an inconsequential exercise. In practice, it ends either in elitist actions or large demonstrations whose politics don't get beyond calls for peace and justice, expressions of a static and defensive radicalism caught within the existing system.●

FOUNDING CONVENTION

JUNE 22-25



* The Founding Convention of the New American Movement will be held in MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota, June 22-25, at the Pick-Nicollet Hotel.

* The Convention will be preceded by a one day meeting of women's and other caucuses, June 21st.

* NAM Chapters will be represented on the basis of their paid membership as of May 15, 1972. All first quarter dues payments must be paid by that date. Second quarter dues payments may be paid any time up to the Convention. Voting will be apportioned among chapters on the basis of membership paid up to May 15, and on second quarter payments received before or at the Convention.

Members-at-large must have their first quarter dues in by May 15, and second quarter dues by the Convention, if they wish to remain in good standing or attend as delegates-at-large.

* New Chapters now in formation must send in initial dues by May 15, and pay second quarter dues by the Convention. We urge all pre-chapters to notify the National Office of their status and to try to form chapters by May 15.

* A Convention Coordinating Committee (CCC) of the National Office Staff, resident NIC members, Task Force Chairpeople, and one or two others was established at the NIC meeting in Chicago, April 6-9. People interested in working on the Convention, please write to the CCC at the National Office. The main tasks tentatively outlined for the Convention are:

- 1) Adoption of a general political perspective for NAM.
- 2) Adoption of an organizational structure (Constitution).
- 3) Chapter workshops for discussion of experiences in trying to develop organizing programs, and other chapter activities and problems.

A proposal for a general political statement will be adopted by the NIC at its May meeting. This will be published in the paper and sent to chapters for discussion in early May. All chapters and individuals are urged to begin discussing and writing down ideas for this statement now. We want the maximum discussion before the Convention, both about the NIC proposal and others that may come in.

* A proposed Constitution will also be circulated. We urge chapters and individuals to discuss the organizational structure of NAM also.

AS OF APRIL 10, 1972, THE NATIONAL OFFICE TREASURY WAS MINUS \$ 32. THE CONVENTION AND PRE-CONVENTION MAILINGS AND OTHER EXPENSES WILL RUN OVER \$4,000. THIS INCLUDES PRINTING TWO MORE ISSUES OF THE NEWSPAPER, MOST OF WHICH WILL BE PRE-CONVENTION DISCUSSION AND CHAPTER PROPOSALS. THE NIC DESPERATELY NEEDS MONEY. ALL CHAPTERS, PLEASE SEND IN DUES PAYMENTS IMMEDIATELY. ALSO, WE URGE EVERY CHAPTER TO ASK ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS FOR \$5, \$10, \$25 OR \$50 TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE NIC TO FUNCTION. IF EACH CHAPTER SENDS IN \$150 IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS OUR PROBLEMS WILL BE ALMOST SOLVED. PLEASE TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND ACT NOW.

The NIC has received several suggestions about changing the name of NAM. The reason given most often is that the initials of NAM are the same as those of the National Association of Manufacturers. Other reasons have appeared in the last issue of this paper and have to do with using "American" instead of US. After discussing proposals to change the name, the NIC decided that a name change now would be confusing. We have spent too much energy establishing ourselves as NAM, and we believe that the meaning of those initials will change as NAM grows. We would like to hear what our chapter members and members-at-large think about this. Suggestions for new names should be sent to the CCC.

food coop (continued from page 6)

for NAM? Will doing so broaden the social base of NAM or will it solidify it? We feel that broadening NAM's social base cannot be done through the food co-op as presently constituted. Unless the base of the co-op itself is broadened to include more working and Third World people, the co-op will not be the arena in which NAM transcends its social origins.

We ourselves don't know if this co-op broadening is possible. On the other hand, the co-op does seem to be a good ground for solidifying the social base of NAM. That is, we've been able to recruit young people and professionals through the co-op.

We are, of course, in need of guidance on all of the questions raised in this report and would like to hear from you and especially to hear reports on similar experiences that people have had. If you are interested in a more detailed account of the co-op mechanisms, write to us. We have prepared a pamphlet which explains most of the working parts, and although it is keyed to New York City, it may be handy in other high population density communities.●

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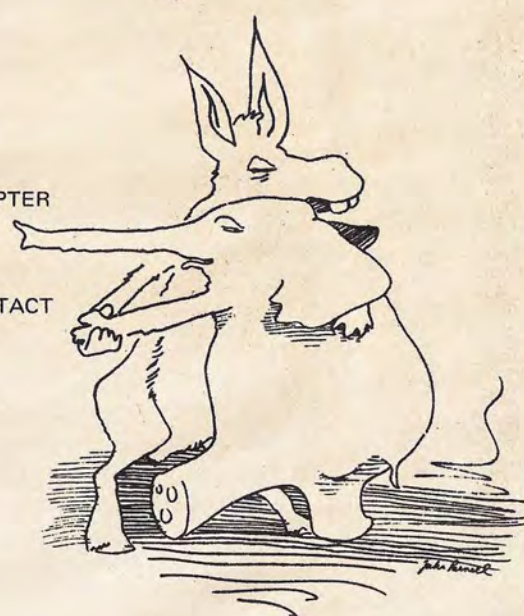
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BEHIND YOUR

BY DOUG DOWD

Nixon announced his New Economic Program on August 15. He had just been informed that the US had run a *trade* deficit of over 800 million dollars for the prior month. We had been running a deficit in our balance of *payments* since 1958; but this was our first trade deficit in the 20th century. In fact, what had allowed us to run the payments deficit with relative unconcern for all those years was the enormous trade surplus that accompanied it—anywhere from five to eight billions annually, until the last few years.

So long as US exports remained in surplus, the payment deficit of 50 billion dollars-plus could be viewed with no more than serious concern by the Japanese and Europeans; but once the trade surplus disappeared, they would know they had been giving credit and assets to the United States on the cheap, and run to unload the money before the inevitable devaluation could turn into a panic—and chaos.

The primary aim of the New Economic Policy is to calm the stormy international waters, halting inflation in the US through holding down wages, while reordering exchange rates so as to reduce US imports and increase our exports. At home, the problem is to be cured by constraints on workers; in the world economy, by constraints on other countries.

First, a bit on the "causes of the problem." (The March 1972 issue of *Monthly Review* has an excellent piece by DuBoff on "Dollar Devaluation and Foreign Trade.") After World War II, the internationalization and militarization of our economy prevented a return to pre-war depression conditions. But the process has had the defects of its virtues. Our overseas expansion ultimately brought us to a bloody and hopeless (from the US viewpoint) struggle in Indochina—as it had, ultimately, to bring us to one somewhere near or over the borders of the USSR or China. But the Indochina war would not have meant so much trouble if it had not taken place at a time of other troubles. The internationalization of the US economy meant the reconstruction, the unexpected and unintended modernization and the rapid growth of the capitalist economies of Europe and Japan—initially a great boon to American exports until they began to compete with us in all, including our domestic markets, and quite frequently with goods produced abroad by American multinational capital. Only very recently have American unions begun to see that they would have to pay dearly for their breezy view of the Cold War in lost jobs, high taxes, high prices and, now frozen wages. The militarization of the economy meant jobs, of course; but nowhere near as many jobs as earlier war experiences had led us to believe they would, for the new technology of slaughter gives more bang for a buck and creates fewer jobs for the buck—although more high salaries, and more profits. And the militarization meant one thing it always means, unless taxes go up enough and in time: inflation.

(continued on page 13)

FRONTIER WAGES

WAR

(continued from page 1)

the war in Vietnam, right now, to prevent further massacre of the Vietnamese people, and to lay the foundation for a socialist movement that will oppose American capital and support the liberation of all colonies.

Victory for the Vietnamese is not a defeat for the American people. It is a defeat for the American ruling class and for President Nixon. Everyone who wishes to see socialism in the US must work to end the war now. And everyone who wants to end all colonial wars must come to realize that this can happen only with the defeat of corporate capitalism and the creation of democratic socialism in the United States.

We urge all NAM members and others opposed to the war:

- to support, by participating in, all anti-war coalitions, and to try to build the broadest possible movement around an end to the war and total US withdrawal from Indo-China.
- to put our perspective forward in all such actions: that although the people of Vietnam and the United States may be able to force an acceptable end to this particular war, the United States will continue to wage open and secret wars against colonial liberation movements as long as corporate capitalism exists in this country.

To be anti-imperialist means to be part of a movement for democratic socialism. ●

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