

NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

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Impeach Nixon

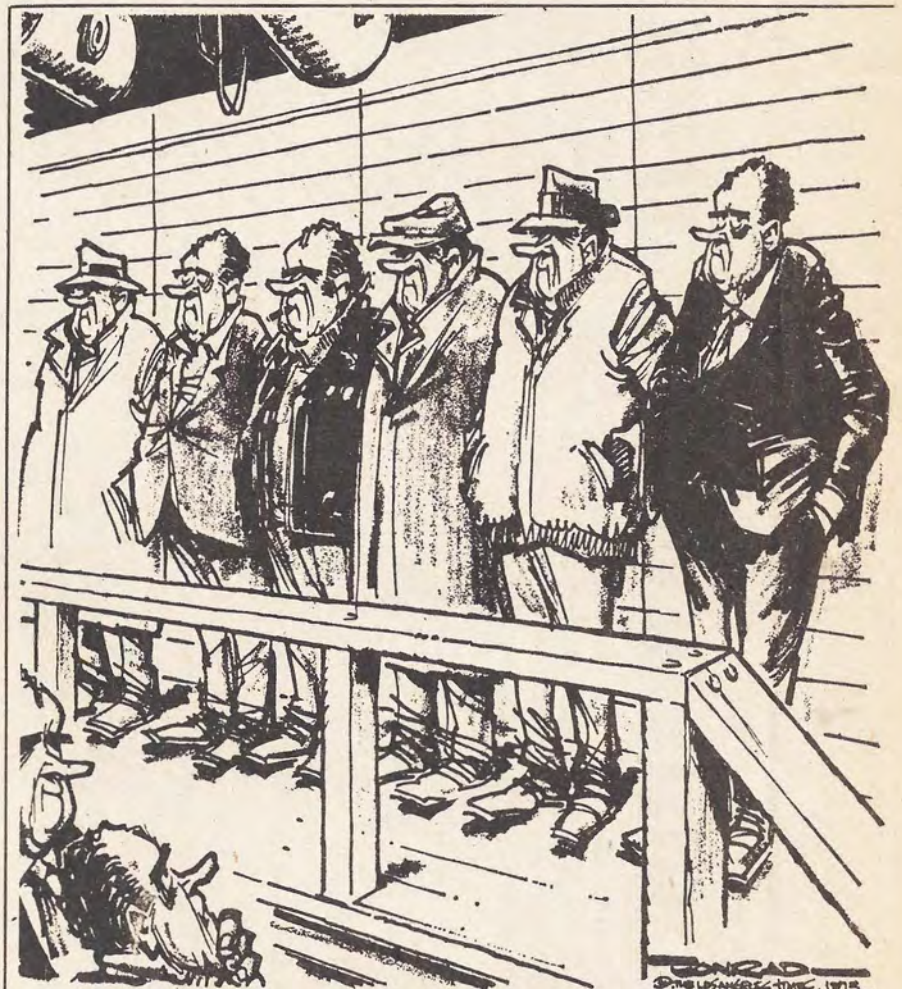
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Zionism



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"I'm sorry—I don't recognize any of them...!"

Zionism & Socialism

by Martin Blatt, Medford, Mass.

WITH THE GROWING energy crisis in the United States and the failure of "Vietnamization," the Middle East will become increasingly important to the American ruling class. The Persian Gulf countries provide more than 50% of the oil supplies for Western Europe, Japan and the United States. The area's strategic importance is obvious. American defeat in Vietnam, combined with the growing strategic importance of the Middle East oil supply, means that the United States will do much to bolster its two regional policemen in the Middle East: Iran and Israel. The Shah of Iran has recently concluded the largest single arms deal in United States history, totalling over three billion dollars. Many readers may accept the notion that Iran is an American "cop" in the Middle East, but be very hostile to the idea of so including Israel. After all, they may say, Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. Thousands of years of suffering and persecution entitle the Jews to a homeland of their own. These arguments must be answered before there can be any discussion concerning the current role of the State of Israel.

Let me cite two examples of Israel's role as American policeman. First, in September of 1970 when King Hussein was busily wiping out the Palestinian resistance, Israel made a commitment to Jordan and the United States that if the Jordanian regime was threatened in any serious way, Israeli troops would move in and "restore order." Second, in the case of the recent fighting in Lebanon between Palestinian guerrillas and the Lebanese Army, Israel is committed to the preservation of the current regime and would move militarily if the situation in Lebanon were to change drastically.

For the remainder of this article, I will try to sketch out what I consider to be the fundamen-

tal nature of Zionism together with some historical background. Only when people begin to have some basic understanding of the real history of Zionism, can the current status of Israel and the Zionist movement be considered with any critical insight.

It is my presupposition that most people in the United States approach the topics of Israel and Zionism with much caution and a very different attitude than towards Vietnam. Many Americans, Jews and non-Jews, feel guilty over the holocaust and thus support Israel uncritically. Serious analysis of the direction and history of the Zionist movement is replaced by emotional reactions and a reliance for facts on such shoddy works as Leon Uris' *Exodus*.

"Zion" means, quite simply, Jerusalem. There is a tradition in the Jewish religion that calls for the ending of the dispersion of the Jewish people and a return to Zion, the ancient homeland of the Jews. This return (from the *diaspora*, exile or dispersion) would be triggered by the coming of the messiah (Christ was *not* the messiah for the Jews), and general happiness and goodwill would inhabit the earth.

All of the above is quite distinct from Zionism, a political movement which started about 100 years ago. (The Jewish religion has a history of thousands of years.) The aim of Zionism is and always has been the creation of a Jewish nation-state in Palestine. Zionism has always sought a privileged Jewish position in Palestine. It is interesting to note that the most religious segments of the Jewish people are opposed to the Zionist state of Israel as a secular manifestation that is not the Zion of their prayers.

Theodor Herzl, a frustrated assimilationist Jew who was shocked by the Dreyfus case in France, wrote *The Jewish State* in 1896 and launched the Zionist movement in 1897 with the first Zionist congress. Herzl's book called for the founding of a



Jewish state in Palestine to solve the Jewish problem, namely, anti-semitism. Anti-semitism has always been assumed to be an inevitable part of the non-Jewish world. Herzl wrote that it is an error to think that anti-semitism "can be refuted by reasonable arguments. . . We naturally move to those places where we are not persecuted and there our presence produces persecution. This is the case in every country and will remain so, even in those highly civilized--for instance, France--until the Jewish Question finds a solution on a political basis. The unfortunate Jews are now carrying the seeds of anti-semitism into England; they have already introduced it into America."

Herzl met with the Sultan of Turkey, the Kaiser of Germany and British leaders in his attempts to secure a Jewish homeland. His goal was to make an arrangement with a leading power in the region for Jewish hegemony "over a portion of the globe sufficiently large to satisfy our just requirements." This aspect of Zionist policy culminated in 1917 with the Balfour Declaration in which the British made a partial commitment to the idea of a Jewish state. Of course, in November 1947, the United Nations, an international body, actually authorized the creation of a Jewish state. Herzl saw Palestine as becoming "a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism."

Herzl initiated the Zionist movement, but the bulk of the people who made Zionism succeed came from Eastern Europe. The Jews of Eastern Europe were bitterly divided in the face of virulent anti-semitism and the decay of capitalism. Many opted for a perspective of international socialism and joined the Bund, a Jewish socialist grouping. Many others were inclined towards socialism but also wanted to build the Zionist cause. These people, the labor Zionists, immigrated to Palestine in great numbers in the early 1900's. The Bundists and labor Zionists were diametrically opposed to one another.

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The New American Movement (NAM) exists to help organize a movement for democratic socialism in the United States. Our aim is to establish working-class control of the enormous productive capacity of American industry, to create a society that will provide material comfort and security for all people, and in which the full and free development of every individual will be the basic goal. Such a society will strive for decentralization of decision making, an end to bureaucratic rule and participation of all people in shaping their own lives and the direction of society. We believe the elimination of sexist and racist institutions and the dismantling of American economic and social control abroad are central to the struggle for socialism.

For more information on NAM, please write:

NATIONAL OFFICE:

New American Movement
2421 E. Franklin Avenue So.
Minneapolis, MN 55406
621-333-0970

NEWSPAPER:

New American Movement
P. O. Box 5061
Berkeley, CA 94705

Philadelphia Welfare Rts

By Philadelphia Area NAM

WELL INTO THE SECOND day of the founding convention of the National Unemployment and Welfare Rights Organization, Tony Chaitkin, the Labor Committee candidate for mayor of New York, rose to speak. All through the weekend panelists had been stressing the necessity for Welfare mothers to abandon their old ways of organizing and to embrace a new, "communist" one. Chaitkin wanted to underscore the point by contrasting the old methods to the new.

"Some of you may think," he began, striding back and forth across the aisle, cradling the microphone, "that the way to get ahead is to march down to the local welfare office, throw up a few pickets, kick a little ass, raise a little hell and demand what's rightfully yours!" He paused for dramatic effect, and then added the rest of his statement: "But we all know that the day of the effectiveness of such tactics is past!"

But his split-second hesitation was enough. A murmur swept through the crowd and applause quickly broke out. The welfare mothers had misunderstood: they thought that he was praising the old ways--and they agreed with him. Chaitkin sensed the reversal and he spat out the rest of the statement to try to recapture his lost advantage. But many in the audience had not missed the point. The Labor Committee had hoped to convert, in two days, the fifty welfare mothers into so many "communist" organizers. They had failed.

Now, several weeks later, that failure has become the failure of the NU-WRO to take up its task as a united front organizing vehicle. This setback is a serious one, serious not only for the Labor Committee but for all of us who, as NAM members and other independent socialists, supported the NU-WRO organizing effort on the basis of our agreement with its classwide principles. For all of the mistakes of the Labor Committee, it is still true that many of the arguments its members presented in planning that weekend are valid: the economy is headed for a period of deepening austerity; the welfare population will be among the first and hardest hit; welfare recipients will be forced, through the mechanisms of Work Incentive and similar programs, to engage in open union busting and so aid in driving working class living standards still lower. It is also true, just as the LC argued, that the only hope for the welfare mothers is in their organizing not only the old NWRO constituency, but also trade unionists in order to unite the employed and the unemployed on a classwide basis in opposition to government austerity. Our dismal failure to bridge the gap between ourselves and the welfare recipients is serious because the welfare population and the other layers of the working class will be able to defend themselves against enforced austerity only through socialist methods of organizing.

Over the past few years, it has become more and more obvious that different groups within the working class were being played off against each other, to the benefit of employers, management and the Nixon administration. When welfare victims are forced to sign up for workfare and are then used as scabs in municipal jobs, only the bankrupt city administration and the banks to which the city owes millions in interest on municipal bonds come out ahead. Welfare people are forced to work for slave wages; and union members are kept out of "frozen" jobs. But the bosses are usually capable of convincing both groups that they are each other's enemies, rather than mutual victims.

How, then, did NU-WRO, which managed to bring together over fifty welfare mothers from around the country with trade unionists, socialists and students, and which was founded on an excellent statement of principles and initially gained support not only from the Left, but from labor groups as well, become no more than a paper organization, an artificial limb of the Labor Committee destined for the scrap heap of sectarian memorabilia? The answer lies in an understanding of the process by which non-socialists like the welfare mothers or trade union militants become socialists.

The Labor Committee has an answer to this problem, an answer which is the key to its continual failure to recruit from any but student layers of the population. The LC correctly recognizes that the capitalist economy, unable to invest in expanded production of goods and services and committed to the support of an inflated debt, is in danger of collapse. They believe, however, that the fact of this coming collapse means that *only* people who are capable of throwing off their bourgeois, particularist, "my group first" methods of organizing and embracing classwide socialist programs are capable of realizing themselves as organizers and real revolutionaries. Thus they continually rub peoples' faces in the failure of their old organizing, breaking them down until they can believe in nothing but the LC's proffered classwide organization--NU-WRO.

It is not surprising that the LC is left with a pitiful handful of confused "organizers" who, in the process of throwing away their bourgeois organizing, have also isolated themselves from their constituencies. Faced with this problem, the LC justifies itself ideologically and avoids dealing with the problem. They can only draw off the key "ones and twos" right now, they say. When the depression hits, *then* masses of people will see the light and come into the fold.

The application--and bankruptcy--of this theory of socialist organizing became apparent time and again during the weekend conference. "What can I tell my neighbors when I go home?" the welfare mothers were asking. "Tell them that they are wallowing in the mud of their own organizing, that the future is concentration camps, that they must join NU-WRO if they want to save humanity," was the Labor Committee reply. "If they join, what will they do?" "Tell them to go out in the community and organize others," the LC answered. "But in my community there are problems of evictions, stolen welfare checks, day care cutbacks. What will NU-WRO do about these problems?" "We can't win any concessions under capitalism, and we don't have the forces right now to face down the gov-

ernment, so people have to build the organization," replied the Labor Committee over and over. The welfare mothers understood that the LC was expecting the impossible: "I can't tell starving people that this new organization doesn't care about their next meal--they won't listen after that!" "Then," stormed the LC, "you and they are not willing to become socialists, not willing to become full human beings, and you are destined for the garbage pail of history!" Small wonder that most of the welfare organizers who came to the conference ready to do classwide organizing left confused and demoralized.

People do not become socialists by being personally attacked, surrendering all of their former selves and then going out to repeat the process on somebody else. They become socialists as they participate in organizations and social movements, led and organized by socialists, which bring together previously antagonistic parts of the working class behind a common interest program, and when they realize that *this* formation and *this* program can win victories that are meaningful in terms of their daily lives. People become socialists when, as welfare mothers, they support a strike on the basis of the union's demand that forced work be abolished; when as students they refuse to scab on striking cafeteria workers because the workers demand that pay raises be taken from capitalist profit, not from hiking tuition; when as social workers they refuse to staff offices that shuttle welfare recipients into unionists' jobs; when, in short, they work and struggle together as a class around issues immediately relevant to their lives under the direction of a serious, competent socialist party.

A socialist organization such as ours must demonstrate to *all* sectors of the working class--employed and unemployed alike--that they have similar interests. We must point to the banks and to the huge profits made off wasteful production as the possible sources of the money needed to rebuild society and provide all people with a decent standard of living. But we can't do this

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LABOR COMMITTEE CONDEMNED

THE NATIONAL CAUCUS of Labor Committees has recently unleashed a wave of vicious physical attacks and beatings on other radical groups, particularly the Communist Party and the Young Workers' Liberation League, but also including the Socialist Workers' Party and the Young Socialist Alliance.

On April 11 a YWLL meeting at Temple University was attacked by 12 to 15 NCLC people who were armed with lead pipes and other weapons; six people required hospitalization. On April 30 some 50 NCLC goons attacked a CP meeting in New York City with numchucks (jointed wooden clubs); several were injured. On April 26 another attack occurred at Temple. In Chicago various radical bookstores and offices have been subject to vandalism. On May 5 an SWP meeting at Wayne State University in Detroit was attacked by the NCLC with the result that a paraplegic wound up in the hospital. On the same day a Young Socialist Alliance leader was beaten up by the NCLC while he was walking alone on the New York University campus.

New Solidarity, the NCLC paper, brags openly of these exploits. Calling the American left a "stinking, Menshevik swamp" they claim that "Operation Mop-Up" will eliminate the swamp and present the NCLC with the "awful responsibility" of organizing a force that will be capable of instituting "workers' governments throughout North America and Western Europe" within five years. Their paper has to be seen to be believed.

The NAM newspaper collective condemns these tactics in the strongest possible terms. First of all, these tactics play into the hands of the right wing who can use this kind of hooliganism as an excuse for cracking down on radicals generally. This has already happened at Temple, where the NCLC attacks were used to prevent the Black Panthers from coming onto campus. Second, one wonders whether police agents may not have infiltrated the NCLC--the recent Watergate revelations have exposed to some extent the wide use of this age-old police tactic by the Nixon administration and the whole thing seems like the work of agents provocateurs anyhow (though lunacy may be a better explanation). Third, the pretentiousness of the NCLC's claim to be the revolutionary vanguard is pretty absurd. Finally, this is not the way to settle political differences--it is more reminiscent of Hitler's Brownshirts and Mussolini's Squadristi than of Lenin's Bolsheviks (whom the NCLC claim as their model).

—Michael J. Spencer



by Ron Radosh N. Y. Westside No. 1 NAM

BY NOW, RENNIE DAVIS' road show has played Berkeley, New York, Boston, and preparations are under way for the big shindig at the Houston Astrodome. Rennie's transfer from the "Movement" to the "Perfect Master," Guru Maharaj-ji and his Divine Light Mission (with 50,000 American "Premies" already enrolled) has received the expected media attention.

And the Left has shown consternation and horror that Rennie Davis, one of the most respected and dedicated Movement personalities during the 60's should, as his *Divine Times* newspaper proclaims, now be "dedicating all of his energies to serving the Lord." That the Lord is a 15-year-old Indian boy, who urges his followers to take The Knowledge, gain perfect bliss and give the Mission all their earnings so that he can drive a Mercedes and a Rolls-Royce, only compounds the fascination with the appeal of the young Guru.

Kathy McAfee has shown, in a definitive account and critique of Guru Maharaj-ji (*University Review*, May 1973), that the followers are joining in order to partake of the fraternity to be found in a community of True Believers:

I was beginning to understand the appeal of the guru scene as an answer to the alienation of white American youth. On the simplest level, if you are lonely. . . you can always go to an ashram and find bliss. . . There, the prescribed discipline and the sense that you are all part of something Bigger brings you together and enables you to interact with a minimum of overt conflict and pretense.

The Guru movement gives activists an organization to build and a world to be converted. It stands opposed to the dominant materialism of the American culture. Yet, as with many other ancient Indian phil-

osophies, it preaches a hierarchical, sexist and wholly reactionary world view. This makes it all the more a mystery why a major figure of the New Left would adopt as his own a social practice that, as McAfee writes, is essentially "the fantasy of an elite;" a view that allows disciples to take advantage of their class and racial privilege (premies are almost all white and upper middle class) rather than to transcend it.

In New York, a key theme of Rennie and his Mission was an appeal to the old constituency of the New Left. As *Divine Times* admits, "peace movement groups, liberation groups of all kinds. . . and other organizations striving to improve the life of humankind" will be the focus of the Guru's American campaign. Their new broad magazine, *And It Is Divine*, will have a "political thread" running through it. Their articles, in other words, will be sympathetic to "the Movement." But they will stress that after

the Year of the Guru

Knowledge is taken, "then maybe the bombs wouldn't fall, and if they did, they would turn into flowers."

Rennie and ex-Movement personage Susan Gregory, kept repeating that they have found a practical way to realize their old dreams; that the way to end racism, sexism and imperialism is by believing in Guru Maharaj-ji. No need for concern with strategy, tactics, organization and building a struggle to change the oppressive conditions of everyday life. Leave it all to Guru. As Rennie tells it, the problems of war and imperialism will end in a year or two, once the masses take The Knowledge.

To hear these claims is perhaps enough to laugh them off as absurdities. Most commentators have already done so. But there are other messages buried in the Guru cult, messages that point away from Rennie Davis' personal freak-out. First is the obvious point that the Guru phenomenon affords its adherents a much-desired sense of community missing from both American life and from the hardened Left. It produces bliss to touch with your kin in the period of common singing and chanting. The Divine Light "Premies" remind one of the young white Left singing "We Shall Overcome" in the early 60's. Once again the reverence, righteousness of cause and naiveté.

Second, we have to face up to the role, position and nature of a media leader. Rennie had become a leader without a movement. As Barbara Garson has commented, "He is still up there on the stage." Once more Rennie can call press conferences, appear on TV, summon the followers, hold the rallies, command the attention to which he has undoubtedly grown accustomed. Instead of jumbo jetting to Madam Binh, he flies Divine Light to Guru Maharaj-ji.

BUT PERHAPS SOMETHING else links the old New Left to the "new" super hype mystical religious

cult: the New Left version of American pragmatism, Rennie's long-term brand of the power of positive thinking. Take Mayday, perhaps Davis' most important organizational-political effort. As an action, it used militant means of non-violent civil disobedience. If only because it revealed that Nixon's attempt to cool the youth of America had failed, it was important. But its demands were as reformist and mild as the broad Trotskyist-sponsored march that had taken place one week earlier.

What was also different about Mayday was Rennie Davis' heavily inflated rhetoric about the action. Rennie believed, and said time and time again, that if enough people came out Mayday would bring down the U. S. Government and end the war. Organize for the one dramatic cataclysmic action that would do it all. Rennie showed sincerity, charm and charisma—and few challenged his analysis. It was enough that his charisma could get the people out. The logic that says corporate capitalism would collapse by one day of taking over the streets is the same that tells us, as does the Guru, "Give me your love and I will give you peace. I am the source of peace in this world." But the Movement wanted the people out on the streets, and Rennie's analysis went unchallenged.

Rennie Davis has given the Movement one "theoretical" article. In the June 1969 *Liberation*, he ran a piece called "Facing Up To Repression." Again, the scenario for America was both simplistic and apocalyptic. Predicting mass repression of the Left and the outlawing of revolutionary organizations by the Nixon Administration, Rennie gave his own reply: "As the government becomes more repressive in its attempt to maintain order. . . as expulsions from universities for political activity begin to reach the tens of thousands, the number of people who are willing to support insurrection will grow."

Insurrection? One gags at the word staring out on the printed page. No need to build an organization sufficient to the task—one that could wage the long-range struggle for ideological and political hegemony. Instead, Rennie insisted that the rulers fear only "the force of insurrection," and he added: "I use the word insurrection deliberately." Moving towards the cataclysmic event was to Rennie the Movement's "best defense." The supposed alternatives facing America: repression or immediate insurrection.

Perhaps Mayday was his final try for that millennial goal, for a new world to be created by a simple act of will. But for those of us who understand that the day of insurrection (or of Judgment) is not around the corner, it should be clear that commitment to socialist revolution means careful, thoughtful and serious political work. It means commitment to the "long march through the existing institutions." It means work that is not always as dramatic and exciting as Mayday, or a trip to the Guru's ashram in India. It means that we have to speak out when proclaimed leaders, effective as they may be as organizers, base their politics on grabbing the golden ring of immediate insurrection. Why criticize Rennie Davis for turning to the Guru when we did not speak up about the nonsense he was peddling a year or so earlier. If we are clear about this, Rennie's new path will not reflect on the rest of us. ●

panther in runoff

by John Judis and Nick Rabkin
Berkeley-Oakland NAM

To no one's surprise, Bobby Seale lost to John Reading in the runoff election on May 15 for mayor of Oakland. But in getting 36% of the votes (43,719 to Reading's 77,476), Seale substantially increased his support among Oakland voters, and opened the way for greater support for the Panther Party and its survival programs. The question is, what will the Panthers do with this newly won support.

THE RUNOFF BATTLE

Seale's strategy during the runoff was to get the 65,000 registered voters who did not vote in April to vote for him, while pressing his candidacy among the 40,000 people who had voted either for Black liberal Democrat, Otho Green, or white liberal Democrat, John Sutter. Seale apparently succeeded in getting black democrats to vote for him: his vote is al-

most exactly the total of his own and Green's votes in the first election. But he did not succeed among whites who voted for Sutter.

An indication of the obstacles Seale faced among these voters came when he tried to get the endorsement of Democratic groups and politicians. Congressman Ron Dellums, who had earlier supported Green, did endorse Seale, as did Oakland's radical American Federation of Teachers. But AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education (COPE) and the Building and Construction Trades Council (BCTC) supported Reading. Lamar Childers, secretary-treasurer of BCTC, gave their reasons: "The mayor is a solid candidate for re-election, and we're not at all satisfied with the role of Bobby Seale and the Black Panther Party as a faction of the Democratic Party in Alameda County. We are not ready to be a part of any revolutionary movement, which is part of the Black Panther Party program."

Under this pressure, Seale suggested that the Black Panther Party would dissolve and become part of the Democratic Party. In a May 4 press conference, he said, "I see the possibility right now of the name and title 'Black Panther' actually being phased out and something else, a broader community organization, with broader community participation developing." This continued the campaign's movement toward the right—away from an identification with the Panther Party and with socialist politics.

It can be expected that the Panthers will continue as a separate organization. As Panther spokespeople are quick to point out, their entry into the Democratic Party would depend upon their ability to transform it into a "people's organization." Seale's defeat of Green and Sutter in the April election indicated that this might be possible in Oakland. But past history says otherwise. In the next election, the regular Democratic organizations will not allow themselves to be divided between two candidates, as they were in April.

The Panthers will have the choice of remaining a separate organization or of dissolving altogether. If the Panthers tried to become simply a "community organization," all that would remain would be allegiance to particular individuals like Seale, Brown or Newton—and in the absence of a national party with district socialist politics, that would not be much.

It is certain that in the immediate future the Panthers will continue to complement their survival programs with a political struggle for control of state resources. In his post-election "victory speech," Seale stressed that the Panthers would continue to use the "political machine" they had built in Oakland. The campaign offices would stay open as community centers, and the Panthers would immediately begin an initiative campaign to place significant parts of the Seale-Brown program, including the proposal for a trade center, on the November ballot. ●

neither snow nor rain

by Joan Bodner
San Francisco NAM

THE CONTRACT OF THE five unions which represent 600,000 postal workers runs out on July 20. The postal workers have a number of demands on the table which they consider crucial to a new contract. These demands do not involve any major wage increases; almost all of them have to do with working conditions--conditions which affect their ability to provide adequate postal service to the people of the United States. To find out about these conditions in detail, I talked with Donald S. Hackett, President of Local 214 of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) in San Francisco. The NALC, with 200,000 members, is the largest of the unions representing postal workers.

The letter carriers have been severely affected by the cost-cutting policies of the national postal service administration, but they haven't had any say in deter-

they talk about--savings. . . They brag about how much savings they made.

There was complete labor-management relations before; now, it's they tell you what to do--they don't ask, they don't discuss. Morale? There isn't any more morale. There's no morale at all; people just don't care. . . Nobody's asked a thing; everybody's told what to do. Like a bunch of kids. The people say they're in a cubicle now; chains are on their way. . . This is the attitude of the rank and file people today.

These reactions are the result of several major policy changes: first and foremost, the hiring freeze (recently lifted because of the public outcry about poor service), which reduced the payroll by 63,470 employees from July 1970 to February 1973. Over the same period, the mail volume increased by 2.3 billion pieces of mail; the total volume last year was 91 billion, the largest in the world.

Every program they have is arranged to eliminate jobs. It's all to save money. Well, naturally, if you have 1,000

49 government agencies it surveyed.

Another major "cost-cutting" measure is centralization of delivery and processing. So far, this has resulted in a reduction of service, an increase in the travel time of letter carriers to and from their routes and further congestion of crowded city streets with additional mail delivery trucks--250 trucks have been added in a pilot program in San Francisco alone. Machines have been brought in without adequate testing or training of employees.

They just bring these big multi-million-dollar machines in. Some fat cat, who knows somebody in the administration, sells it to the post office, and they just put it in--nobody knows how to use it. They don't care, they just put them together and say, "Starting such and such a date, that's what you'll be using."

They're trying to do too many things too fast. They just tell the postmaster, "DO IT, or else we'll get somebody else." It's just that simple; that's the bad part of all the changes. Automated ideas are good for the post office if they're increasing and bettering service, and the union won't fight this sort of change. But when it's done on a promiscuous basis without any regard for the public or the employees, we're going to fight it.



mining these policies. According to Mr. Hackett, before the formation of the U. S. Postal Service Corporation, post offices were run by the local postmasters themselves, who would consult with union representatives and allow time for rank-and-file response before instituting policy changes. Now, everything is run by the national administrators; the local postmasters have no control.

They just tell the postmaster, "Do it, or we'll get someone else to do it." So they just do it whether it's workable or not. It doesn't make any sense at all for our union to sit down and complain to Postmaster Lee because Postmaster Lee can't do anything about it. . . no flexibility at all. . . They say "I want you to do this by such and such a date and I want facts on how it was done and what kind of savings were made." That's all

letter carriers and you eliminate their jobs, you've saved \$100,000--that's easy mathematics. But who's going to do the work?

Last Christmas they wouldn't give us any overtime to move the mail, and we were still delivering Christmas cards in February because they hid the mail and stacked it up, in railroad cars and vans, sometimes even forgot it was there.

Then, since Christmas, in San Francisco they started giving overtime--compulsory overtime. Nobody wants to regularly work ten hours per day, even if you are getting overtime--your body couldn't stand up under it. . . In our craft alone, nationwide we had almost 400 heart attacks last year, 50 of them fatal. . . We're talking about *on the job*, people dropping dead. . . It's because of this speedup in handling the mail.

In a recent survey, the General Accounting Office found the Postal Service to be the most dangerous of

In addition to all this, postal service administrators seem to want to make individual jobs less varied, more like ones on a factory assembly line. The stated goal is for letter carriers not to sort their own route's mail--they will just pick it up and deliver it for eight hours straight on the street. This would put an incredible physical strain on the letter carrier and is in opposition to the current trend in most industries to try to make jobs more varied.

In contrast with these "cost-cutting" measures, two of the postal service's policies are self-serving to the upper-level administrators. First, the number of high-level jobs excepted from civil service--those ranging in salary from \$15,000 to \$60,000 annually--have in-

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socialist faculty caucus at C.U.N.Y.

by Alan Charney
New York Westside No. 1 NAM

On May 5th approximately 60 members of the instructional staff of the City University of New York held a conference at City College on the prospects of organizing a socialist caucus within the C. U. N. Y. system. Two local chapters of NAM, the Westside Chapter No. 1, and the Interborough Chapter, played an instrumental role in the planning of this conference.

THE CITY UNIVERSITY is by far the largest municipal university in the United States. Its 21 campuses service over 218,000 students, and its faculty numbers 15,000. Most students are from low-income working class families.

CUNY's governing body, the Board of Higher Education, determines and oversees a master plan for the entire system. Composed of prominent educators and "prominent citizens" (corporate leaders and politicians), the Board stands apart from the squabbles of municipal politics and is mostly independent of the Board of Regents.



Members of the Board acknowledge that the function of CUNY is to satisfy business and government needs. The Master Plan states that instructional areas within the University must meet the occupational demands of corporate capital. In effect, the University is a vast vocational school training workers in health services, engineering technology and clerical and sales work, as the proliferation of community colleges offering two-year terminal programs attests.

During the 1960's, black, Latin and Chinese students, with the support of trade union and other groups, spearheaded mobilization on campus for Open Admissions. The Board of Higher Education, which had been planning to institute Open Admissions in 1975, accelerated their plans and began in 1970. That year 35,000 freshmen were admitted compared to 20,000 in 1969. But in 1971 35% of the new students were flunked out or left and this rate of attrition continues. Today students call Open Admissions a "revolving door."

The major immediate problem is lack of money. Open Admissions placed an incredible strain on the CUNY budget, which was already severely constricted because of the New York City fiscal crisis. The situation reached a crisis this year when the New York State Legislature

slashed its financial aid to CUNY. The state has offered to bail out the University, but only if it has greater control and if a uniform tuition is instituted at all public colleges in the state. If this happened, most white students at CUNY would probably go to other state colleges and leave the City University a higher education ghetto--further dividing the working class in the city along racial and ethnic lines.

ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS affect the instructional staff, which has no all-inclusive union and is working without a contract. The major union is the Professional Staff Congress, which is the recognized bargaining agent, but which represents mostly senior staff. The PSC is tied closely to the orientation of the American Federation of Teachers. Internal democracy in the union is almost non-existent, but there are dissident caucuses within PSC. The new union constitution is up for ratification and elections for all union officers begin soon. And the PSC is talking about a strike next October.

There is a transparent need for a socialist caucus at CUNY to articulate and implement a socialist alternative to the present crisis--a socialist group that could formu-

Continued on page 11

A NAM member recently received this letter from a prisoner in the U. S. Medical Center, Springfield, Missouri:

Dear friend:

I am writing this letter in an effort to obtain your assistance in putting a stop to this neo-Nazi brainwashing S.T.A.R.T. Program here at the U. S. Medical Center, Springfield, Missouri.

S.T.A.R.T. (Special Treatment And Rehabilitative Training) has been in operation since Sept. 1972. I have been here for some time, and I can honestly state that this "program" is only punishment under the guise of treatment; I have personally seen fellow prisoners drugged and brutally beaten for having the courage to stand up as men.

We need your help; you can help in the following manner.

1. Write to Norman A. Carlson, Director
U. S. Bureau of Prisons
101 Indiana Ave. N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20537

and ask him to either abolish S.T.A.R.T. or make it voluntary.

2. Write to the U. S. Magistrate
U. S. District Court
Western District of Missouri
Springfield, Missouri 65801

and ask him to rule in behalf of the prisoners who are challenging this "program"

We sincerely thank you in advance.

Peace & Power

(Name withheld)

Letters

May 19, 1973

NAM Newspaper Collective

Dear people,

In my article "What is to be Undone?" there appeared this sentence:

"As for myself, I will assert as self-evident that it is *possible* for socialists to be effective in the real world without being dirty and corrupt --for if it is not, then socialism is impossible and the capitalist 'scientists' who assert the corruption of human nature are right."

When you printed the article, you changed "possible" to "impossible" making the sentence meaningless at best, making it sound as if I were advocating corruption at worst.

Accordingly, I think a public correction is in order.

fraternally,

Ed Clark
member, New Orleans NAM

WELFARE

Continued from page 3

by talking alone, or by simply telling people that interest group organizing will fail. People will be convinced of the correctness of socialist program as they become involved in struggles for working class demands that call for taxing profit rather than the wages of other workers. It is the task of socialists to help construct organization that will put forth these demands and unite different groups within the class in struggle around common interest programs.

The Philadelphia NAM chapter is now trying to organize the kind of grouping that we thought NU-WRO could and should have been. Working with some key labor contacts, we are calling for the formation of an organization of human service employees to fight cutbacks and layoffs across the board and to link up with other members of the working class who, like welfare victims, are involved both as consumers of services and as potential scabs in municipal and state jobs. We hope that through this organization we will be able to engage in strike support and educational work that will actually result in the bringing together, behind a program of common interest, of segments of the working class who previously thought of each other as adversaries. We will continue to inform NAM members and others of the progress of our organizing through the pages of this newspaper. ●

P.O.W. con game

by Bruce Johnson
Minneapolis NAM

"WE NEED A NATIONAL campaign to explain 'Peace with Honor' to the American people," President Nixon told the South Carolina State Legislature last January after the Vietnam ceasefire was signed. The campaign has been quickly assembled. The carefully orchestrated return of American POWs from Vietnam has been the prime means through which Nixon attempts to distort the last decade of our history, suppress the doubts which the war raised for many and prepare the way for new intervention.

The POWs have been kept under careful military control from their release in Hanoi to the Pentagon-designed and coordinated press conferences where 30 POWs described their torture in Vietnamese prisons and denounced the anti-war movement. It is ironic that our vision of the war should be shaped by career military officers who were isolated from each other and from most news sources for many years of captivity. But the POWs are being used by Nixon--with the cooperation of the corporate mass media--to rewrite the history of the war and provide a glossy cover of "heroism" for American defeat. No similar nationally televised spectacle or flood of gifts and glorification greeted the hundreds of thousands of Vietnam veterans who have returned to this country often maimed and embitter, and certainly the nation was not asked to watch a televised return of the 50,000 American GIs who were shipped home in "body bags."

Only a minority of American POWs have spoken publicly thus far. But the specific charges leveled by some POWs against the Vietnamese and against the anti-war movement must be questioned. Were the POWs tortured? Despite the mass media's coverage of the Pentagon's news conferences, a majority say they were treated well. Some, no doubt, were handled roughly when they parachuted into villages on which they had dropped thousands of pounds of anti-personnel weapons. Some, certainly, were injured and scarred when they ejected from their jet fighter bombers. Some were kept in isolation and shackled after attempting to escape. But there is no evidence to support the claim that torture was the systematic policy of the Vietnamese. One POW leader Commander Jeremiah Denton, told the



New York Times that some POWs "forced the communists to be brutal" by their total non-cooperation in order to provoke international opinion. Other POWs may now be cooperating with the Pentagon to avoid court martial. One prisoner of the National Liberation Front who was released in 1967 to anti-war organizers told Tom Hayden that informal military policy was for captured U. S. military personnel to collaborate when captured and then to repudiate their activities when released by claiming that they had been coerced and tortured. Commander Pitzer,

now a leading POW spokesman and an ardent Nixon supporter, told Hayden that he had helped to translate anti-war materials for the NLF, taught NLF cadres to speak English, helped to draft leaflets urging U.S. GIs to desert, etc. When he was met by U. S. officials on his return home, he immediately began denouncing torture mistreatment by the NLF. Other lies have certainly been told by POWs to protect themselves from imprisonment by the U. S. military.

The POWs' tales reinforce a racist image of Asian peoples as maniacal masses with, as Averill Harriman once said, "a lower sense of morality than most Americans." They are meant to defuse and blind us to the situation of the more than 200,000 South Vietnamese political prisoners still brutally confined in Thieu's U. S.-built tiger cages in South Vietnam. They are meant to justify continued imperial domination of the peoples of Southeast Asia and the genocidal American military policies that meet popular struggles for self-determination in those countries. The POWs' attacks on the anti-war movement are also designed to isolate the left when the lessons of the war and the struggle against it must be understood and taught to prevent its continuation in a new form.

These men are for the most part career military officers who willingly participated in an unprecedented campaign of terror bombing against the entire people of Indochina. As ex-POW George Smith says, "they weren't picked up on a golf course." Most may be considered, by accepted international definitions, war criminals.

Some POWs have now formed a corporation to sell their tales. Some are speaking in grade schools, churches, small town halls and newspapers throughout the country. The corporate mass media is anxious to report their every word.

The POWs now represent and are the leading spokesmen for a defeated officers' class in the United States military. Some have called a political convention to be held in Las Vegas this summer to form a new reactionary political organization. Such groupings, and the sentiments they create and appeal to, have formed the core of fascist movements in other countries that have reached a point of imperial decline--Germany after World War I, France after the defeat in Indochina. The glorification of American POWs threatens not just the left in this country but the future of the United States. ●

Impeach Nixon!

The New American Movement has begun circulating a petition demanding the impeachment of Richard M. Nixon as President of the United States. The National Interim Committee of NAM made this unanimous decision on May 12th at its meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, and made plans for the immediate circulation of a petition by our 40 local chapters.

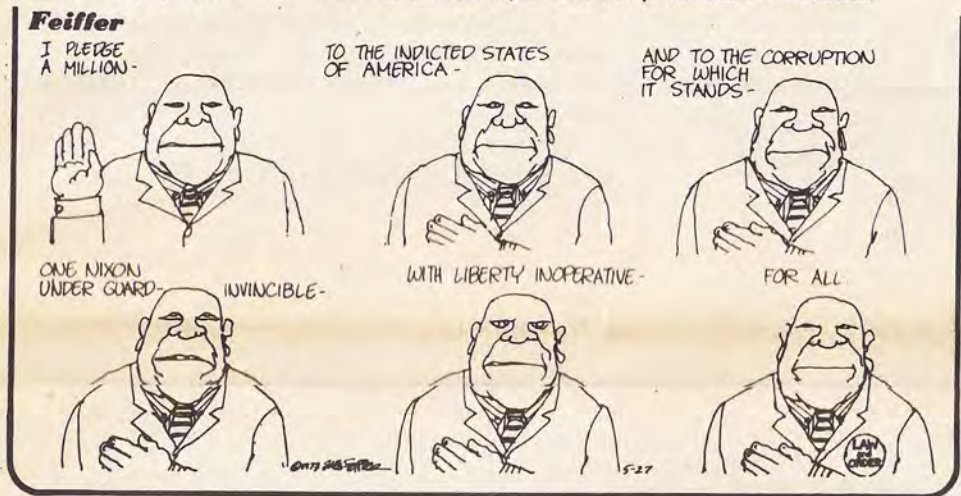
The demand for Nixon's impeachment is based on his administration's complete disregard for the rights and collective interests of the American people in pursuit of its own narrow, self-interest and that of its corporate sponsors.

Specifically, we cite several situations that connect with one another:

1. **NIXON'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR WATERGATE:** The Watergate break-in and falsification of opposing party campaign literature involves more than a mere case of "bugging." It represents a full-scale attack on and deep-seated contempt for the established democratic process.
2. **NIXON'S CONTINUATION OF THE WAR:** The President and Pentagon have continued to bomb Cambodia and indulge in direct violations of the letter and spirit of the January Ceasefire Agreement in the face of overwhelming opposition from the American people. This continues in spite of a recent resolution passed by the House of Representatives to cut off funds for further military actions in Southeast Asia.

The Nixon administration and several major corporations are supplying billions of tax dollars worth of aid to the dictatorial regimes of Lon Nol (in Cambodia) and Thieu (in South Vietnam) which could not survive a week on their own because their people do not support them.

3. **NIXON'S BUDGET CUTS AND HIS FISCAL CRISIS:** Nixon has refused to spend money allocated by the Congress for needed social services--claiming that the government's fiscal crisis makes it necessary--yet his new budget allocates more money for armaments than ever before.
4. **NIXON'S WAGE FREEZE AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE LIVING STANDARD OF WORKING PEOPLE:** Nixon's New Economic Policy (better known to us as the "Wage Freeze") restrains needed income increases for working people while allowing prices to soar and corporate profits to inflate to record-breaking levels.
5. **NIXON'S DECEIT AND REPRESSION OF POPULAR PROTEST:** The resources of the Executive branch have been used repeatedly to repress the anti-war movement--most recently, to subvert the constitutional rights of Daniel Ellsberg and Tony Russo during the Pentagon Papers trial. The Nixon administration is willing to use any maneuver (or trick) in order to continue the deceit of previous administrations in hiding the truth about American intervention in Indochina--even including well-orchestrated press conferences featuring selected POWs' testimonials. Although the Pentagon Papers reveal that several consecutive Presidents have lied to us about the Vietnam war, *lying has been raised to an act of patriotism by this administration.*



The above charges are not "chance illegalities," nor are they simply the result of "personal ambitions." They result primarily because of the need by politicians and corporate capitalism to hide their true self-interests from the American people and to obscure the behind-the-scene decision-making by the President and his corporate sponsors like ITT.

Under our present system, public politics rest largely on personalities so that the real issues, the policies at stake, can be avoided and the majority of us kept in ignorance. The Republican's and Democrats' basic goal is the same: to protect corporate capitalist investments and to create new areas for profitable investment at home and abroad.

The basic needs of the American people--material well-being and security, the right to self-determination and creative life/work--are subordinate to these corporate interests and are undermined regardless of which party holds power. Another group of capitalist politicians will not resolve the present crisis to our satisfaction. But currently, the Nixon administration is more openly the partisan of big business and corporate policies, which are detrimental to the lives of working people and the unemployed.

The Nixon administration's contempt for its own much-heralded policy of "law and order" is in line with its attacks on wage earners and poor people. Its refusal to live up to its commitment to peace and complete withdrawal from Indochina is one more example of the hollowness of its claims to represent "honor."

Any weakening of Nixon and his governmental machine is to the advantage of the American people whose interest lies in stopping the administration's attacks on working people and in peace.

Our demand that Nixon be impeached means we believe the *people*, whose collective hopes and aspirations should determine America's direction, can begin now to gain the initiative.

We stand *for* constitutional rights, socialist democracy and peace, and *against* Big Brotherism monopolistic profit-making and continued war.

The National Interim Committee and national office suggest the following activities and goals:

1. **USE THE ABOVE STATEMENT AS A PRESS RELEASE** or prepare one, using it as a basis. Send or deliver it to all local newspapers and radio or television stations. If you are planning a press conference, try to coalesce the broadest coalition possible while setting it up. Add to the press release whoever plans your chapter or group has for action. Even if you don't take demonstrative action, send the press release to area newspapers, local wire-service outlets and the electronic media. Always supply a local chapter address. If you're planning a press conference include the name of a media coordinator who can be contacted.
2. **REPRODUCE COPIES OF THE PETITION**--xerox, reprint or mimeograph--and notify as many people as possible, either by mail or by phone, that a campaign to impeach the President is underway and the petition is available.
3. **CONTACT OTHER GROUPS**, local organizing collectives and rank and file labor or community groups. Talk to them about our statement, the impeachment demand and NAM's petition. This situation should present ample opportunities to talk about NAM and its political perspectives and activities.
4. **SET UP Impeachment Information Centers** where appropriate--tables on campuses, public places, at community meetings, etc.

women & 3rd world world

by Michele Russell
Labor Defense Coalition (Detroit)

The fundamental political issue facing the women's movement in the U. S. in the 1970's is how to become revolutionary. In the past five years of our developing consciousness and activity women's liberation has been put forward most forcefully by college-educated young white women. The fierceness with which they revived the cause of women's rights stemmed from feelings of powerlessness, self-contempt, marginality and, in many cases, their exploitation and oppression in New Left organizations like SDS. They took up the banner of self-determination as an absolute. They rebelled against their "objectification" by the men they lived with and American capitalism, both of which kept them bound in feudal roles in the home and in menial positions in the labor force.

Often, men became the focal point of their rage and women inveighed against their mates more heatedly than against the system that sanctioned and reinforced male chauvinism. "White Male" began to be as hateful to women in the Women's Liberation Movement as "The Man" was to Black militants. In fact, the similarity between the rhetoric of the Black Power Movement and the growing anti-chauvinist consciousness of white women provided a basis for feelings of solidarity with the cause of black liberation.



Russell

In time, sisters tried to put this new emotional energy and subjective consciousness into a theoretical framework. They had begun by finding the watchwords of black outrage appropriate to their situation. They heard echoes of their own experience when blacks spoke of the way Marxism had been used to manipulate them and relegate their struggles for self-determination to the realm of "these things take time." Constantly having been put down for their so-called "emotionalism," women's liberationists began to identify all statements concerning objectivity with bourgeois mystification. They had little knowledge of history of women's struggles and the only revolutionary models they felt they could trust and receive inspiration from were the anti-imperialist struggles of the Vietnamese and Afro-Americans. They saw themselves as colonial subjects, found the focus of their oppression and exploitation in physical abuse to their own bodies and, in some cases, employed "dialectical" thinking to try to prove that sexual antagonism was the principal contradiction in the world. Starting from the position of "de-classed" intellectuals and "chicks" who gained status from their men, many women sought liberation by becoming "de-classed" feminists. Their rallying cry became "Sisterhood is Powerful" just as the most elemental expression of Afro-American solidarity in the sixties was "Black is Beautiful"--true, unifying, at one level, but devoid of programmatic content and class orientation.

Continued on page 12

by Jain Simmons

Our daughter, Malik, is now 22 months old--she is still breastfeeding. In this article, I will attempt to share with you the various bits of knowledge I have accumulated through this experience.

Breastmilk is the most nutritional food a mother can offer her baby. The act of breastfeeding offers a baby security as the baby attempts to deal with the new, frightening world. And it's best for the mother, too. Breastfeeding completes the cycle of pregnancy and birth. It allows the mother's body to get back into shape and it provides one method of birth control--a breastfeeding mother does not renew the menstrual cycle for at least four weeks. Some cases demonstrate that the menstrual cycle does not resume until solid foods are introduced to the baby's diet. (This is not to say, of course, that other methods of birth control should not be used.) A further advantage is that the breastfeeding mother is less likely to develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

A breastfeeding mother need only carry an extra diaper when she travels--no worry of bottles becoming too warm or too cold. And when the baby wakes for that 4:00 a.m. feeding, just bring the baby into bed to breastfeed; no need to run to the kitchen and prepare the bottle while the baby screams for nourishment.

Allergies are rare for the breastfed baby. The consistency of the milk is just right--no formulas to experiment with. The breastfed baby doesn't need solid foods until about the fourth to the sixth month; this is in sharp contrast to formula-fed babies for whom doctors must encourage solids at four to six weeks. At this age, the baby's digestive system is not properly developed to readily accept solids--thus the mother who complains of a "messy eater who can't keep a thing down," and the doctor who complains of a baby with a "poor weight gain." More often than not, a formula-fed baby transforms into a "Gerber-baby." Just as it was supposedly convenient to use simlac or enfamil, so, too, is it supposedly convenient to open a jar of starches, salts and little proteins. In the long run, the bottle-fed baby suffers with a frequency of colds, too much weight or not enough weight, poor teeth, etc.

Given the above health advantages to breastfeeding, why do so many mothers today still use formulas and bottles? The reasons are abundant.

Perhaps the most inclusive cause for the continued trend to bottle-feed is the lack of information on the subject. In most medical and nursing schools, breastfeeding is an elective in the course of study. If a doctor does not suggest the alternative of breastfeeding to a pregnant woman, she follows the doctor's advice on which formula to choose. Every obstetrics office I visited before and after the birth of our daughter

BREASTFEEDING

was fully equipped with brochures from the leading formula producers. At most, there was one leaflet discussing the art of breastfeeding.

This influence pervades not only the clinic or doctor's office, but the hospital as well. The nurseries are staffed by nurses who have instructions to offer a bottle of formula or sugar water to the hungry baby who awakes outside of the scheduled feeding time. This creates a difficulty for the mother who wishes to breastfeed. If the baby has been satisfied with sugar water, it's very difficult to encourage the baby to take the breast to feed. Such discouragement during those first few days causes many a well-meaning mother to resort to the formula supplied by the hospital when she and the baby leave for home. (Fortunately, some hospitals have established rooming-in facilities allowing baby and mother to be in the same room. This gives the mother the prerogative to not comply to rigid hospital routines.)

If a mother makes it through the hospital ordeal, she is usually challenged by relatives at home. Most mothers of the depression and post-World-War II eras bottle-fed their children. If it was good enough for their children, shouldn't it be for their grandchildren? The father of the child often adds to the frustration of the breastfeeding mother. Fathers, in general, experience some remorse over the amount of time and attention a new baby requires. "Wouldn't it be easier to

put the baby in bed with a bottle? We'd have more time together." Breastfeeding requires a woman to be steadfast in her decision. After all, a baby is only a baby for a short time in our lives. Frictions with family members can be avoided somewhat if the decision to breastfeed is discussed openly beforehand. During those first trying weeks a mother needs support, not disagreement.

The working mother may be very hesitant to "get tied down" to her baby by breastfeeding. Such an attitude is not necessary, however. Breast milk can be easily hand-expressed 24 hours in advance and refrigerated, thus allowing for babysitters to continue the healthful nourishment of the breast milk. A friend told me of a family who was sharing the responsibility of breastfeeding: when the mother was away at work, the father would feed the baby the bottled breast milk and then allow the baby to suck at his nipples.

What about the "premie" or twins or the caesarian-delivered child? Perhaps most vital to the premature infant is a healthy diet. Again, the breast milk can be hand-expressed and given to the incubated baby with a bottle. Once the baby is out of the crisis stage, the mother can breastfeed--she has developed her milk supply to meet the baby's needs by hand-expressing. Twins? No problem; in fact, it's probably easier than keeping track of the sterilized bottles and appropriate formulas. It is possible to breastfeed both babies at once. There is even a case in point where a mother of triplets successfully breastfed.

The caesarian delivery does not at all affect the mother's milk supply. If she can convince the sometimes over-concerned doctors and relatives of her strength, she too can be successful at breastfeeding.

The only common deterrents to the lactating mother are fatigue and tension and poor diet. Rest and relaxation are the greatest assets to the successful lactating mother. Fluid and protein intake are very essential also, and the breastfeeding mother requires more daily protein than the active athlete.

It's distressing to note that the majority of women breastfeeding today are young, white, middle-class and college-educated. Keeping up with the modern American suburban housewife has influenced many third world women to bottle-feed. This is true not only in our country, but even more so in countries suffering from American intervention. The ways of the white American doctor are considered superior. The simlac, enfamil, Gerber corporations are, thus, making a vast profit.

Attempting to disseminate information on breastfeeding is a group of mothers known as the La Leche League. LLL is an international organization with its headquarters here in the U. S. Their address is: La Leche League International, Franklin Park, Ill. 60131.



PEOPLE AROUND THE COUNTRY RALLY TO SUPPORT FARAH WORKERS —John French

"The struggle of the 3,000 Mexican-American Farah workers continues and will continue until victory." This was the general message brought to the Western Massachusetts area by two women strikers and organizers, Rosa Flores and Margaret Quesada. Their speaking tour around the country showed strong support exists everywhere for this cause. This was certainly the case with the meeting organized by NAM and other groups and people in the Northampton area of Massachusetts. Despite the short notice, over 60 people gathered on May 3 to hear these women talk about the conditions at Farah and details of the continual boycott campaign of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. The meeting had strong local labor support--the Northampton Labor Council bought a large ad for the meeting, and many local union members, students and interested community people attended.

Watergate: the people speak

by Kay Cole and Joel Parker
San Francisco NAM

THE WATERGATE SCANDAL continues to develop as one of the great crises in U. S. political history. Each day new evidence surfaces exposing deep-seated contempt for the "democratic process" by Nixon's "law and order" administration. Yet, the whole scandal has been remote from the activity of the American people. It has been a struggle between Congress, the Nixon apparatus and the media-popular demand did not launch the investigations, nor has there been evidence of widespread action to affect the course of the investigations. The whole drama has been played out over working people's heads, and in many ways has only increased general feelings of powerlessness.

We felt that it was important to get some sense of how working people perceive the Watergate events. The following interviews were conducted on Saturday, May 20th, outside a supermarket in a working class, multi-national neighborhood. People were chosen at random. About half the people asked refused to respond; several indicated by their gestures that they were upset by all the attention that Watergate was getting.

The questions we tried to ask in each interview were:

What does Watergate mean to you? Do you think President Nixon was involved? Has it undermined your confidence in the government's programs? Do you think the Democrats would be any better? Do you think Nixon should be impeached if he is linked to the affair? (We didn't identify ourselves until after the interviews were complete.)

Retired registered nurse, white female; supervisor in Public Health Service for 30 years:

I think the investigations will be helpful. I think they are needed and I hope and pray it will expose the guilty and make them all equal in receiving judgments. From the American people as well as from the courts. I don't want to prejudice but I think he [Nixon] could never have surrounded himself with the type of people he had in his very inner circle without knowing what kind of people were working for him. I've been in a supervisor's job. I had the power of hiring and firing and it seems to me incredible that he wouldn't know what was going on. . . The corruption revealed by Watergate has been reflected in the area of his trying to change the operation of the democratic process as regards the press, as regards the cabinet. He did not, at least until the exposure, have very much contact directly with his cabinet. It all seemed to be syphoned through his immediately responsible counsel, advisers. I don't like that. . . I was anti-Vietnam all the way. I didn't like the way Johnson handled it, nor Nixon. I think it was an immoral, indecent, unnecessary and terrible thing to happen. . .

Middle-aged white woman: (Question: What is your opinion of Watergate?)

A.: Go to hell.

Boris, 45-year-old Turkish restaurateur:

I strongly believe that the President will have to do something to prove that he is innocent. Otherwise we have to be very careful next time to vote for anybody for president. . . I strongly believe you have to be proved guilty. Every one of us has to be proven guilty before we make any accusation. We have to respect our president because he is our president. No matter what we think he is still our president. If he is linked to the affair he has to prove that he is still with us. I don't know what the process is.

Oriental man, 70; helps run a Senior Citizens' Center:

I cannot say. I don't know. I don't vote. Everybody is interested in the Watergate.

Janet, Black student and housewife, about 30:

I think the scandal is disgraceful. I think personally that the president is involved. . . The entire administration is subject to great scrutiny now. People are afraid to deal with them now. Nobody really has the ins to government that they had before those guys that are controlling things and now there's a vacuum—a void—something like a mid-level of government doesn't exist anymore. I don't know what is going to happen. . . I don't think much of impeachment. It's just a matter of censure. He should be removed from office. That's another process.

60-year-old white housewife with a strong southern accent:

I don't want to answer because I don't think that people that are investigating know all about it themselves. They are trying to find out who is the instiga-

tor of the whole thing and trying to implicate Nixon. The man hasn't been proven guilty. You can't blame anyone until he is proven guilty. In a way I don't think President Nixon really knew when it happened. I don't say he might not have known about it later. And I'm a Democrat. . . No. I don't think Nixon ought to be impeached if he is proven to be linked with the scandal. You cannot let anything like this deter your mind from the government. I think that would be the worst thing people can do. The Democrats were not so good this time either. Did you hear McCord and what went on with being paid to have our veterans to demonstrate down there through the Democrats? They had things fixed up where they were gonna bomb buildings and everything down there. They've got a bunch of them arrested now. . . If you don't believe in the government now you might as well forget it and let it go to the left.

20-year-old white man:

Well, I'm against Nixon's advisors. I'm not against Nixon at the moment; I was.

Two white women, 20-25 years old, one with a baby:

Woman No. 1: They are going to do what they want to do anyway. I haven't really formed an opinion to tell you the truth. No, I really don't think people have any power.



Woman No. 2: I don't think so either. Yeah, sure I think the president was involved. Sure.

Woman No. 1: Definitely. Most definitely. But then we're in for trouble if he is impeached. We better get rid of Agnew because then we'll have the same thing all over again.

Woman, about 30, with a child; white, typist for public relations firm; formerly political reporter:

I'm glad it's come out. It's important to get back to the way things are meant to be run. Instead of the whole idea of executive power taking over and running the whole country. As a voter I have nothing to say about who is a presidential assistant or who is a cabinet officer. . . This could happen under any power-hungry president. I'm a Democrat. . . I never had any confidence in Nixon's administration. But the fact that Watergate is being pursued so vigorously has substantiated my confidence in the overall system that the country's supposed to run under. But I don't think any president has been paying any attention to that for about twenty years. . . I can't believe that he didn't know. I'm not convinced that he knew before the break-in. But I think he ok'd that type of thing—the political espionage. . . I think he should be impeached because I think that is part of the system that should be tested out. I don't think we can say the system works if one of our checks and balances is considered untouchable. If we keep backing up and saying that it's not horrible enough for impeachment then we're not using the whole system.

Culinary worker, white, some 60 years old, ill and a little drunk:

I think the whole thing STINKS! The whole Washington is so rotten and corrupt. It's unbearable. That damn crap. I think the president was involved in the planning. I think he knew all this and he should be impeached. This won't be straightened out for a long time. In the first place they had this war in Vietnam. I think our president is not up to par. . . I'm doubtful he will be impeached. I wouldn't approve of it myself. He will suffer within his own category. . . He's a hypocrite too. He said how poor he used to be. . . We work our asses off and the big executives get everything.

Supermarket employee, Black man, about 20 years old:

I haven't done too much thinking about it. I always did have the idea that the government was corrupt so it just proved the point. The president could have been involved. Usually a man who appoints people knows what they are doing. Yes, I think Nixon should be removed from office if he is proven to be involved.

Hospital worker, Black woman, about 50 years old:

I think it should all be out in the open. The American people should know what's going on. . . Ummhuh. Ummhuh. It has affected my confidence in the way the government works. There's a lot of high officials involved which shouldn't be—the FBI and the CIA, the president and the attorney general and all the aides. I really couldn't trust our president's integrity anymore. . . If he is linked to these events I think he should resign.

Eli, 35-year-old psychotherapist in mental health clinic, editor of magazine, Towards Revolutionary Art:

It shows where the government is at now and I think things like Watergate have always been true. We've always had a corrupt society. It's part of the crumbling of America. . . There's no alternative as long as capitalism exists. The alternative would be socialism. I think impeachment is irrelevant.

Arthur, 65-year-old restaurant owner (chili bowl), white:

I told them a long time ago Nixon was a crook. The biggest crook we ever had. Sure he should be impeached but he won't be because he has too many crooks around him. . . I voted for McGovern. I couldn't get anyone else to vote for him. Now I can't find anyone who voted for Nixon. . . The people ought to wake up. Everybody voted for him, almost everybody except me. We had another Republican crook before—Harding—but he was nothing like this. Nixon's the worst ever!

Carpenter, Irish accent, about 40 years old:

I think the president is guilty. You can't trust politicians.

Domestic worker, Chicana, about 45 years old, with children:

I'm glad to see it happen. It's a shame and if Nixon is guilty and involved he should be removed from office. I have followed the hearings from the beginning. . . I think Democrats would be better. But the war was bad. Bad.

65-year-old retired white man; former supervisor in the Navy:

I'm sorry our country had developed into such a state. When you reach a peak you're going to start sliding down. All countries do it. I think eventually this country is going to be a third-rate power. I don't think the Democrats would do better. I believe in the two-party system. When you try to destroy one party you are destroying the two of them. . . There is no difference between the two parties. . . I don't think Nixon is involved. I was a supervisor in a department where there was a lot of stealing. The FBI came in there and said you should know what is going on. But when you have a lot of people working for you you don't know what's going on. . . If he knew about the cover-up I wouldn't be a bit surprised. But this has not hurt my confidence in his policies. . . A lot of people don't like Nixon because of the Hiss case. I say that it's Nixon's country as well as ours. . . But what is he going to do about his slush fund that he's got on San Clemente?

75-year-old woman, Russian refugee:

My grandfather was a chemist for Alexander III and my father was a cossack in the Czar's army and this country says on its coins "In God We Trust." But Marxism is running this country and it's Russian sabotage in the universities. Nixon is not going left but the country is. ●

If any NAM people wish to do a similar questioning of working people on a question of national interest, please let us know well in advance that you are planning it and around what issue.

Electoral Discussion

1)

A PERSPECTIVE ON ELECTORAL ACTIVITY

by Jim Weinstein
San Francisco NAM

1) THE NECESSITY OF electoral politics in building a majority movement for democratic socialism must be considered in the light of a) our ultimate aim: to create a society in which every person can participate fully in making social decisions and in which all involuntary divisions of labor are eliminated, and b) the specific nature of corporate capitalism in the United States. A socialist movement has two principal tasks. Through a party it takes state power from the capitalist class. And it must begin the process of creating new social relations and new ways of making social decisions. The ultimate goal is to eliminate the state as we know it, and to make a party unnecessary. But to do that a party must be built and the seizure and temporary utilization of state power must occur.

2) IN THIS CENTURY, with the development of large corporations and monopoly, the state has become increasingly central to capitalist rule. Regulation and coordination of corporate investment have become increasingly necessary and centralized in the federal government. This has also been true of other aspects of social life. Education (originally centered around the church and the workplace), police (formerly elected or hired by individual corporations), welfare (formerly private "charity"), health care (formerly a private relation with doctors, nurses and midwives) have all been standardized and made directly dependent on the state by a class conscious ruling class. As a result, struggles that have started within various institutions--in the workplace in general, in factories, schools, health care facilities, welfare agencies--have constantly been forced beyond the limits of the institutions themselves and into "politics," into confrontation with various elected or appointed government officials.

Any social movement that hopes to make real changes within the capitalist system, let alone to overthrow it, must confront state power. This is true because the state is the central regulator of capitalist interests and is the pivot of struggle for the allocation of resources.

3) ACTUAL POLICY making on all levels of government is further and further removed from direct determination by elected officials; policy is increasingly made by informal ruling class groups acting through the executive branch of government. Yet the capitalist class legitimates its rule through the electoral process and elected officials have at least nominal power to make basic decisions. The ability of the ruling class to govern with little or no effective opposition to its basic policies is a result of the constant renewal of its mandate through "free" elections, in which all are urged to participate. The purpose of socialist participation in elections is to interfere in this process and to force public discussion of basic questions.

Under liberal capitalism (as contrasted to fascism) the right to contest for power exists formally through the electoral process. Elections provide a degree of democratic participation that is open (although unequally) to all groups in society. Any capitalist politician or party that claimed the right to rule without being elected would be opposed by the overwhelming majority of Americans, not only because such a claim would violate established order, but also because the right to participate in elections, to vote, has been the historic battleground of oppressed and exploited classes in the United States. This was true first of propertyless workers, then of women, then blacks and most recently youth. On what basis could a democratic socialist move-

ment claim the right to take power without interfering in this central mechanism of capitalist rule, without going through the electoral process? It could not claim to rule as an elite minority. And if it claimed to be a majority how could it explain the refusal to participate in elections?

4) THE ARGUMENT AGAINST a focus on electoral politics points out that the state is remote from people's everyday activity and that elections perpetuate passivity. Electing socialists to office, even if they remain true to their principles, cannot change the function of the state or make any fundamental changes in our everyday lives. Furthermore, people experience exploitation and oppression in their places of work, or as students, sick people, on the highways, watching television or walking on the street. To abandon organizing within these institutions, particularly the workplace, is to give up the day-to-day struggle against capitalist social relations in its most immediate and oppressive forms.

This is all true, but the other side of it is equally true: organizing within the workplace, in any other institution, or around anti-imperialism tends to lead to a narrow interest-consciousness and to contesting within the system in competition with other sectors of the working population. It is sometimes possible to link issues and to create limited alliances between sectors of the class--as in the fight against workfare, which might link welfare recipients with unionists in defense of the union wage. But good as such alliances are, their effectiveness depends on changing both the state budget (to increase welfare allocations) and the tax structure (so that workers won't end up being taxed to pay for welfare increases). These demands require intervention in the electoral process and if socialists are not contesting around them they provide the basis for strengthening liberal politicians who take up particular demands when they become popular and arrange partial and distorted "solutions" to them. Organizing and agitation around government policies can effect some changes--the anti-war and civil rights movements are the most obvious examples--but the result of this activity as long as it is not a coordinated part of a socialist movement contesting in the electoral arena has been to strengthen liberals like the Kennedy's or McGovern. Civil rights and the war were considered radicalizing issues, which they were, especially when both major parties opposed them. But when the radicals generated enough support, liberal Democrats took them over and defined them in limited terms within the system.

The contest for state power at this stage of the development of a socialist movement can be popular only if it takes place within the electoral arena as well as in other institutions. Armed struggle is elitist and self-defeating since it concedes opposition to the great majority who continue freely to acquiesce in capitalist rule. Workplace and other institutional organizing (syndicalism) does not address state power. The need, then, is to combine particular struggles (workplace organizing, anti-imperialist activity) with electoral politics. It is not a question of one or the other, but of the necessity for both to be done simultaneously within a long-term perspective. Within that framework it is impossible to predict the final path to power. If socialist power grows within various institutions as electoral strength increases, electoral activity may be a partial path to power. But reliance on elections alone will guarantee failure. Organizing must go on in all institutions to enable us to contest for power throughout society, not just in the formal government structure.

Such activity is essential for another reason: the beginnings of new social relations, new concepts of work, of education, of health care, of community and living arrangements, cannot be worked out in election campaigns or by minorities in state legislatures. This

These two statements on electoral politics conclude the pre-convention discussion on the subject. We have printed all statements we've received.

must be done in the day-to-day struggles within the workplace, etc. The social decisions of a socialist society will be made largely in and through various local institutions. Under socialism, decision-making will be decentralized, while the administration of things--the carrying out of policy decisions--will require greater centralization. It is thus necessary for a socialist movement to help create local councils as embryonic forms of future government, while building a party that can contest for state power now.

5) IN THIS PERSPECTIVE, electoral activity must be explicitly socialist. It must make socialism the public issue of the 1970's. And at the same time, it must be popular, it must win majority support. As a start, that means electoral coalitions around socialism that are non-sectarian and constantly related to institutional struggles and existing groups--union caucuses, health care and teachers' organizations, student groups, rent control movements, anti-imperialist struggles, etc. And clearly, this does not mean abandoning existing activity to transfer into elections. It means unifying the two. ●

2)

ELECTORAL POLITICS

by Jim Livingston and Don Shankman
DeKalb NAM

I. LARRY LYNN'S AND Milissa Upton's paper on electoral politics is enormously significant: we support their argument for an electoral focus because we see it as the most effective strategy for building a working class socialist movement in the United States.

An electoral focus makes sense first because working people see "politics" in terms of elections and political power in terms of holding office. The decisions made by congressmen and councilmen have a measurable impact on how they make a living, how their children are educated, etc. Working people's rejection of George McGovern was a rejection not of politics but of programs that they saw as threatening to their own physical and economic security and to their children's education. It is not important, therefore, that the working class "like" politicians or elections; it is important merely that working people *already* understand the effect of electoral politics on their lives.

Politics are significant in a larger sense, and this can be made clearer in the process of elections. Federal, state and municipal governments are crucial to the continuous functioning of capitalism in the United States: these governments extract tax revenue from working people and use it to sustain the social and economic power of the very corporations which dominate their lives. Further, these governments are presently the arenas in which interest group consciousness is continually reinforced by allocating resources to different sectors of the working class on a competitive basis, thus dividing the working class against itself. Control of government budgets is therefore a concrete means by which socialists could *unite* these diverse and often hostile sectors of the working class.

Moreover, asserting democratic political control over the economic determinants of people's lives challenges the bourgeois definition of society, a definition that conceives of human relationships in economic terms.

II. It is essential to realize that adopting an electoral focus doesn't imply immediately running candidates. Indeed, to do so would be totally to misunderstand the need to identify ourselves as *serious* contenders for state power. First we must have begun to develop a



late a solution to this crisis guided by socialist principles. The Westside Chapter No. 1 of NAM thinks that this socialist group should not be a mere coalition of radical and ethnic organizations. Student and anti-imperialist movements of the 1960's were limited precisely because their coalitions were not "independent class formations." At CUNY the basis for a "class organization" that could agitate for autonomous "class programs" is the working faculty. The instructional staff performs a crucial productive function. It educates whole sections of the working class and trains future wage earners. Working faculty at CUNY are compelled to recognize their function because their conditions of work come more and more to resemble the conditions of mass production. The junior faculty do not have the option of emphasizing professionalism and find it increasingly difficult to choose academic isolation as a personal alternative.

At CUNY the working faculty already has a class organization, the PSC. In fact the function of a trade union as the protector of the rights and living standards of workers is a necessary precondition for systematic and thoroughgoing socialist activity by any stratum of the working class.

The Westside Chapter No. 1 views an autonomous socialist caucus of faculty as a force that could unify the dissident faculty throughout the City University. Accordingly, it sponsored several planning meetings before the actual conference and invited former members of the New University Conference (most are socialists) and other NAM chapters in New York City to participate.

Most of the faculty members had not been politically active since the demise of NUC. Isolated from one another, they had seen the need for a socialist group, but had been hesitant to constitute such a group themselves. The participation of NAM members, therefore, was important, not so much for programmatic leadership or to provide "clear socialist vision and politics," but as a unifying force. Indeed, the main contribution of NAM members was the continual bringing to light of the principles and proposals upon which to base a durable consensus. Because NAM is an autonomous socialist organization its members were in a position to point out the basis of unity among the faculty.

At the conference, Sam Bowles, an economist recently fired from Harvard, provided theoretical underpinning for the day's activities with an opening talk on the political economy of higher education. Bowles argued that education is the "frontier" in the corporate liberal state. The educational institutions reproduce the class structure of corporate capitalism and distribute students accordingly. Before the current crisis in higher education, the

universities did promote class mobility to a great extent. However, the current crisis marks the "closing of the frontier." The post-secondary institutions come more and more to resemble large-scale productive units that provide the commodity of occupational training. In response to this transformation, the faculty must not look backward to some "golden age" of academia, but must put forward a socialist alternative as class-conscious workers.

After Bowles' presentation two members of the Professional Staff Congress offered alternative proposals for union activity. The representative of a dissident group within the PSC argued that only a total housecleaning could transform the union. The current leadership must be voted out. They had "sold out" the members during the current contract negotiations. They had

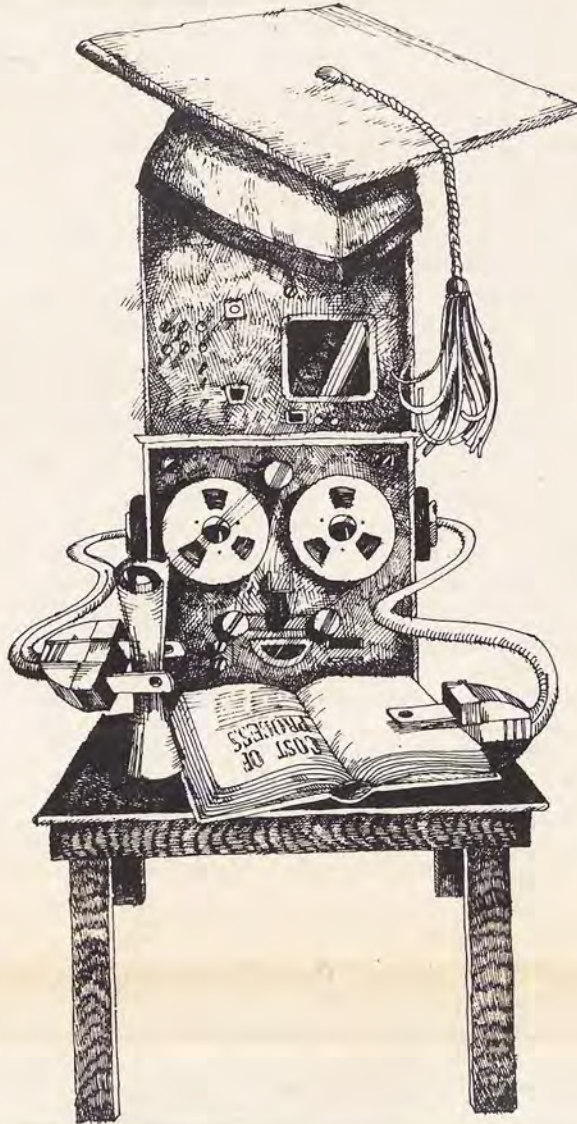
totally ignored the exploitation of the junior faculty, especially the adjuncts. Their inefficient, selective leadership could lead to the permanent weakening of the union. He invited the socialist caucus to work with his group within the union as one prong of its activities. The second speaker was only mildly critical of the union and received a chilly reception.

In the afternoon session a member of Westside No. 1 analyzed the competing, ruling-class strategies for the future of the City University. A member of the Interborough Chapter examined the political implication of these strategies for a socialist caucus: "Clearly our perspective must go beyond the union, and must deal with the inadequacy of interest-group demands. The union lacks power--but it is not alone. The entire community of the city--students or faculty, union or non-union--are busily fighting among themselves to try to meet their individual needs. Each individually has no power."

To go beyond these divisions the Interborough Chapter proposed that the conference plan a city-wide convention to start a campaign for a democratically elected Board of Higher Education to represent the interests of the entire working class, not the ruling class--and to discuss other projects.

Faculty members objected to this proposal, however, because the autonomous socialist caucus that could pull together such a campaign had not yet been born. A substantial majority of the faculty favored a socialist caucus within CUNY. Nearly all the participants wanted the caucus to be active both inside and outside the union on a wide variety of issues. The socialist politics of the caucus would be "up front" during all its future activities. The faculty members emphasized that any socialist caucus must always carry on its practice with a view toward the unification of the working class. But most important, the faculty members saw themselves as members of the working class, highly educated, yes, but workers none the less.

The newly-formed socialist caucus is preparing to intervene within the PSC. It is willing to make its presence felt among the instructional staff. It has invited members of NAM to participate in these activities. Both the Westside Chapter No. 1 and the Interborough Chapter have chosen to continue working with the socialist caucus. ●



believable socialist platform, our concrete plan for using society's resources to meet its people's needs. In other words we must begin to gear ourselves to wielding power long before this becomes an immediate practicality. People support a revolutionary alternative not because they're desperate but because they see it as eminently *practical* and urgently *necessary*.

Second, before we run candidates we must have been engaged in a continuous dialogue with our working class constituencies about social needs and ways of meeting those needs. It should be obvious that existing projects including workplace and neighborhood organizing, anti-war work, etc., are areas where this dialogue can take place. However, these projects reflect the current division of social life into distinct and often conflicting activities (work, leisure, education, family), instead of analyzing each as an *aspect* of class rule. Electoral politics can bring a comprehensive, explicitly political expression to what might otherwise remain interest group demands.

Furthermore, an electoral focus ought *never* to mean restricting our political activity to "running candidates" and "holding office." The idea that the relationships of a working class constituency to its elected representatives must be passive and deferential has no sound factual or theoretical basis: it is a caricature even of bourgeois reality in the United States. From Shay's Rebellion to the Bonus March, to the Civil Rights and Anti-War marches on Washington, popular protest movements have been part of the actual political process of the United States. Bourgeois attempts to define these movements as illegitimate represent their wishful thinking rather than their perception of reality. For socialists these movements are part of a rich experience on which we can draw in our building of a *socialist* democracy.

Holding office and popular struggle can be mutually supportive. Even the IWW welcomed socialist victories in city elections, since it meant control over the police

--and however one interprets what is happening in Chile, it is clear that Allende's presidency has coincided with an intensification of class struggle in farms, mines, factories and newsrooms, as well as in the national legislature.

III. Thus far discussion of electoral politics within NAM has concentrated on the municipal level. There is much positive in this focus, for it represents our acceptance of diversity and commitment to decentralizing political and economic power. But it is necessary that electoral activity not *remain* exclusively local, because we face a nationally-based ruling class. Direct assaults on capitalist control over "their" property, for instance, could hardly be successful on a purely local basis, for obvious reasons. Therefore we should have in mind campaigns for Congress as soon as we are able to do so convincingly (in terms of the criteria in section II). We should do this in part because Congress is an institution capable of being used for democratic, socialist ends. Here it is important not to confuse the institution with the bourgeois congressmen who now sit in it, a distinction which our programs and propaganda ought to make clear. What follows is a *sketch* of the themes of such a future campaign.

1. The United States is now governed by executive tyranny. Watergate, Nixon's impounding of funds, imposing of budget ceilings and disregard for Congress in the continued bombing of Cambodia are simply the latest episodes in a process that goes back at least to the turn of the century. This executive tyranny has been made necessary by--and works to maintain--the centralization of economic power in giant corporations. (In the nineteenth century, Congress was capable of shaping national policy because it represented the diversity of property interests that characterized competitive capitalism.)
2. Congressmen committed to capitalism will never

attack the centralized economic power that underlays centralized political power.

3. We need therefore to elect socialist congressmen committed to the following program:
 - a. Redistributing income and wealth and providing decent social services.
 - b. Financing these programs by effectively taxing corporate profits.
 - c. (The crucial step that only socialists are willing to take.) Where capitalists retaliate by striking (or in their words "withholding investment due to the unfavorable climate for business"), place corporate-controlled resources into the hands of working people willing and able to maintain and expand production to satisfy democratically determined human needs.

IV. A serious consideration of socialist electoral politics becomes imperative in the context of Watergate. In the absence of a real contest for state power between bourgeois parties and socialists, the only alternative to the present morass of corruption is a conception of politics offered by corporate spokesmen and ideologues which divides society along functional lines (e.g., businessmen, labor, public), and sees the political process as one which develops out of "equal" representation from each of these functional groups. This sort of anti-political scheme has been and is being hailed by corporate liberals as a way of avoiding the squalid dealings of politicians--the grand efficiency of it is staggering to those who conceive of society as relationships between *economic* beings. Only socialists can challenge this definition of society; only socialists can assert democratic political control over economic resources and thus begin to build a society of *human* beings. ●

women

Continued from page 7

Feminists emphasized activities and organizational forms that offered the most immediate possibility for self-affirmation. In the left-wing of the movement, psychological groups, consciousness-raising collectives, karate classes, newsletters and guerrilla theatre bands flourished as alternatives to hierarchical political organizations and workplace organizing. There was a conscious retreat from strategic thinking. These women asserted the priority of getting themselves together as exemplary social units before doing "outreach work" much as certain elements in the black struggle resorted to reviving primitive communal forms in order to construct supposedly healthier social relationships than capitalism allowed. Most of the energy of this segment of the Women's Movement was expended on personal transformation, sexual exploration and symbolic politics. These were most popular because they involved short-term, emotionally gratifying activity in which the validity of one's politics was judged by the "groove" of one's life-style and the only demands made on the participants were a commitment to love, honesty and collectivity among small groups with similar socio-political and socio-economic backgrounds. The only institutional arrangements challenged by this particular political thrust were monogamous marriage and the bourgeois nuclear family--structures that had been disintegrating among whites under capitalist socialization for the previous twenty years.

In the more conservative sections of the women's movement, there was an upsurge of national organization and program. Women in NOW identified openly with the upwardly mobile values of the dominant society and found it easy to tap the energy the left had aroused and channel it into reformism. They engaged in consciousness-raising around sexist and chauvinist oppression, while championing schemes for legal abortion, zero population growth, government-operated day care centers and equal job opportunities for themselves in professions and industry. Like the Suffragist Movement of the Nineteenth century, their goal was simply to get a larger piece of the pie, not to create a new recipe with different ingredients.

Unfortunately, from the viewpoint of white and third-world working class women, it was often difficult to distinguish between the utopian experimentation of the left wing and the pragmatic opportunism of the

right. Both seemed remote to the needs of women at the bottom of society who had neither the luxury nor the desire to "drop out" into "free zones," nor the means to rise in the labor force. Their problems were different. Many of them knew their husbands were chauvinist pigs and often wished they'd never begun having children (at least not at age fourteen) or consented to marriage (somewhat later); but the realities of their situation dictated that whoever could find a job worked outside the home, and whoever couldn't worked to maintain the household. The conventions of the market-place were the rules to be obeyed. Their work was as heavy as men's; the hours long. They could see the justice in demanding equal pay scales, but they saw working class men to be as victimized as they were. Still they were clear in refusing to let men take out the frustrations of their lives on their wives and children. For working class and particularly third-world mothers, government operated day-care centers meant just so much more racist brainwashing of their children which they had to undo.

Black women with some history of political involvement expressed the most antagonism toward the Women's Movement. They saw in white feminists of the left and right self-indulgence, ego-tripping, a threat to their own efforts at self-improvement and a vamping in style on the black struggle itself. The consciousness of these black sisters was contradictory. But they were correctly skeptical of the understanding with which radical feminists identified with black liberation and said "Dig, supporting Angela Davis is cool." They were calling for some objective demonstration of the power of sisterhood, requiring white sisters to come to terms with their material privilege as well as their psychological oppression. They were trying to remind people that solidarity is not a sentiment. They went further. They said, "We can understand that many of you radicals think SCLC is ripped, that many welfare mothers are not ideologically prepared to embrace Marxism-Leninism or feminism. But look at history. Look, at least, at the last ten years and understand that women such as Fannie Lou Hamer in the context of the South, and organizations like National Welfare Rights, by their practice and class and national composition, are in the objective leadership in the struggle for women's rights."

They said, "Analyze your own practice, your own preoccupations with self-fulfillment and political purism in light of that, and chart a course that puts you in a position to develop a movement to deal with and help shape the present historical reality in America. When you talk of leadership, don't reveal your bour-

geois orientation by speaking only of individuals; analyze the social forces that they embody.

Women who are feminists must understand that their liberation is directly tied to making a revolution. Making a revolution entails seizing state power. If the transfer of power is to revolutionize the productive and social relationships of society, it must be led and controlled by forces with a proletarian outlook. Personal transformation is necessary in revolutionary struggle, but the most politically useful form of self-transformation comes through engaging the state in battle. Leadership in that struggle belongs not to those who are most thoroughly excluded from and oppressed by society; it belongs to those who can develop the capacity to apply organized social force against the class responsible for their exploitation. The organization of women into a revolutionary force in America will require developing consciousness... not only of our oppression, but of our power. Rather than experiencing highs off slogans like "trash the nuclear family," rather than destroying or giving men responsibility for all the social arrangements that constrict our activity, the creation of revolutionary consciousness will involve expanding our appreciation of the institutions, services and industries we want to control so that they can be shaped to meet our needs.

We must also remember that revolutions take a long time. In order for the organization of the revolution to be sustained even when its momentum is temporarily lost, we must think strategically. We must set ourselves short-term and long-term objectives based on the condition of American capitalism and the social forces actively antagonistic to it. We must understand that objective conditions have produced progressive political formations in the areas of health, education and welfare where working class women are in the leadership by virtue of their position in society. We must recognize their struggles as objectively advanced and align ourselves in outlook and activity with their organizations. However, we must also realize the spontaneous nature of some of the struggles, the many levels of consciousness that motivate them, and struggle to improve our own understanding of revolutionary history and theory so that we can help them and ourselves develop a consistent proletarian socialist practice. We must always strive to bring women into objective alliance with one another, on the basis of their position in the society, as well as develop subjective allegiance with one another on the basis of our common oppression, exploitation and self-interest. Without a class standpoint, it is impossible to build up a distinctive women's movement. ●

nor heat

Continued from page 5

creased from 84 to 1,846 in the past four years. Second, the postal service is conducting a three-year, 17.5-million-dollar advertising campaign promoting itself. The campaign is being handled by two New York advertising agencies. Union President Hackett has trouble seeing the sense in this, especially in the face of cutbacks in jobs and consequently in service:

What the hell are they advertising? They've got a monopoly. All you have to do is give the people service and they won't have to advertise. You don't have to advertise that this is the best mail service available; this is the *only* mail service available.

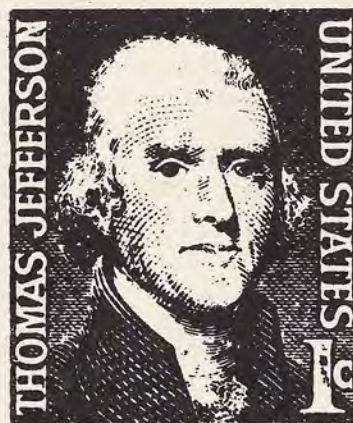
The postal workers object to the fact that the only mail service available is operating at such low efficiency; they want to provide good service and feel that they are prevented from doing so by the indiscriminate cost-cutting policies of national postal service administrators. Mr. Hackett stated the issue this way:

This commodity in the U. S. Post Office is service alone; that's all they manufacture--service. . . They tax the people to have postal service; they charge them another tax to handle the mail--stamps. Now they're going to tell them, "We're not going to give you service anymore." Up until the Postal Service took over, the post office operated at 85% efficiency--very high for a service organization. When a first-class letter cost three cents to mail, business areas received four deliveries a day; most now receive only one. Now you're going to tell these people that you're going to charge them eight cents and only deliver their mail once a day. And we as letter carriers have to tell the people when they ask where their mail is, "Well, you'll get the rest of it tomorrow, I guess; this is all I could bring today."

This will be a strike issue--service. Either you're going to let us give the people service, or else. And we're sure the public is going to back us up, because we're sure the public wants service.

In the contract negotiation, there is a wage package, but it is not considered a strike issue by union leaders. However,

All of our working condition demands would be a strike issue. . . because our working conditions are that bad.



nostalgia

Most of the working condition demands involve numbers of jobs. They are presented within two contexts--providing good service and the federal government's responsibility to provide employment.

It is demanded that there be hiring until there are at least as many employees on the rolls as when the hiring freeze began in March 1972 in order to provide adequate service. It is demanded that the no-layoff clause of their present contract be retained. A thirty-five-hour work week is demanded, and the unions want any jobs created in this way, or by other increases in service, to be available first to Vietnam veterans. They feel that the Postal Service, as an agency both of the government and of service, should bear part of the responsibility to create jobs for the unemployed.

When you create more service, you create a job. . . That's what our taxes are for. It would be like the welfare department saying suddenly, "We're not going to pay welfare any more, but we're going to keep on taking tax money for welfare. The public won't stand for that. And that's what the U. S. Postal Service is doing. They're saying, "We're going to take your tax money, but we're not going to give you service, and we're still going to charge you for your stamps."

The national convention of the NALC determined last year that any contract negotiated must be submitted to a vote of the entire membership. If 51% vote to strike, there will be a national strike. In addition, if *any* of the five unions votes to strike, all the other unions have stated intent to support them in a unified effort.

As federal government employees, postal workers are prohibited from striking. There are presently several bills pending in Congress to give them the right to strike, but no action on them is expected before July 20. The postal unions, however, feel the need for the option to strike--legally or not--if they find the provisions of their negotiated contract unsatisfactory.

We don't care what happens--it's just that simple. . . You can't negotiate without the right to strike, so these people take advantage of this fact. . . They take advantage of the fact that we can't get up and walk out of the room and say, "We'll see you in the streets." . . . These programs they've been instituting--they wouldn't have been able to do these things--no way; we'd have told them, "That's it; out we go. . . We'll talk, but this program's not going in until we talk." We can't say that now.

The penalty for striking by a federal employee is \$1,000 fine and a year and a day in prison. Mr. Hackett described his feelings on the subject like this:

People like myself who are full-time leaders, we may end up in jail; but those of us that I've communicated with--this is on a nationwide basis--we couldn't care less. I have my toothbrush already packed; I'm ready to go, because I know my people just aren't going to take it. . . ●

Welfare Organizers

by Sally Avery
C. P. Gilman NAM
Durham, N. C.

"You actually took a job from the welfare department replacing a regular worker?"

"I had to, just to get my welfare check," responded a New York NAMer to a Philly NAMer's question at a NAM workshop on welfare organizing held on May 5 in New York. Participating in the workshop were twenty people from four cities, most of them workers in the social services who have been active in organizing around welfare issues. During the workshop people analyzed their different experiences and discovered areas of agreement. At the end of the meeting the group formed a NAM Task Force on the Social Services to continue the dialogue on organizing strategies with the goal of establishing a national program around the social services.

In New York City the situation in the social services is becoming more and more critical. One out of six people in the city are on welfare, and one out of eleven people work for the government bureaucracy that administers social services. A New York NAM welfare worker explained that even though the forced-work laws undermine civil service unions, the union leadership has sold out the workers and recipients by bargaining with the state: in return for the civil service union's cooperation in administering the forced-work laws the state pays the union benefits for welfare recipients as if they were regular union members. So the recipients become second-class union members because of their status as half-time low-wage workers. The state and union leadership cooperate in enforcing the laws. Civil service jobs are frozen, denying workers jobs and the unemployed become recipients forced to work for their welfare checks. Such is the situation in New York where state forced-work laws are setting the way for future national forced-work programs.

Participants from Boston, Philadelphia and Durham reported that although in their cities there are no state forced-work laws, bureaucracies are being set up to administer the federal forced-work law, the Talmadge Amendment. Recipients are not yet feeling the effect of forced-work, but they are being driven from welfare rolls by other repressive policies, cutbacks and the bad image of being on welfare created by vicious fraud investigations.

A socialist program around the social services is critically needed. While all working class people are feeling the effects of inflation, frozen wages and unemployment, those who must survive on welfare are especially suffering. The situation is made worse because recipients facing repressive welfare legislation have no unified national organization to fight for their rights. The National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), which for seven years represented welfare recipients in struggling for increased services, has been greatly weakened recently by external attacks and internal decay.

NWRO WEAKENED

Founded in 1966, NWRO grew quickly as thousands of welfare recipients across the country organized themselves into local groups that confronted welfare departments. The national office provided information and strategy, urging people to learn what their rights were and to demand the services they deserved. Recipients, often assisted by OEO, Vista and Legal Aid workers, spread information about the requirements to receive welfare and urged all those qualified to get assistance. The conscious efforts to organize recipients in the context of riots and demonstrations of the sixties resulted in greatly liberalized welfare rules. Recipients in general did not receive substantially more money, but they did get more services (such as Medicaid), and easier eligibility requirements swelled the rolls.

Within a few years NWRO became the largest poor peoples' organization in the United States. Its loose structure and minimal membership requirement (\$1 a year) allowed it to expand quickly, but also was an ultimate weakness. As times changed and repression instead of liberalization became the norm, the expecta-

tations that people had of their national organization were not fulfilled. People felt they had little if any influence on the national organization. As a result, the national lost much of its enthusiastic support from local WROs.

A more important weakness was NWRO's lack of class politics. NWRO operated as an interest group out to get a "piece of the pie" for welfare recipients. This lack of a class perspective eventually resulted in frustration. Welfare departments gave a few concessions and learned how to handle attacks from militant recipients. So, after a while the NWRO strategy of confronting the welfare department stopped yielding results and, as welfare recipients alone, WROs could not win substantial changes on a local level. If NWRO had strategies for building alliances with other progressive working people's groups to demand increased services from local institutions, both recipients and other working people would have benefitted. Such alliances were formed in some localities, but not by NWRO.

NWRO did advocate building coalitions on a state level to fight for increased welfare benefits and against repressive welfare legislation. But the coalitions placed welfare rights at the center, backed up by "liberal support groups." The support groups tend to be liberal church and women's groups, operating out of a sense of guilt rather than from self-interest. On a national level also NWRO acts as an interest group, trying to win support from liberal politicians for programs that are usually only for welfare recipients and that would be paid for by increasing taxes.

Poor black women, the majority of NWRO's membership, argue that a coalition that is not fighting specifically for welfare reforms but gives equal attention to broader reforms will be dominated and used by the other groups. The problem is that groups with narrow constituencies and narrow programs cannot succeed for long. Alliances between different parts of the working class are difficult, and domination of one group by another must constantly be fought; but

class alliances are the only possible way for people to win increased services. NWRO's inability to realize this has seriously weakened the organization.

Some people in NWRO's national office did feel it was necessary to broaden their base, but this concept was not shared by all and led to an internal power struggle. Ultimately, George Wiley, NWRO's founder and director, left the organization to form a new group, the Movement for Economic Justice (MEJ). MEJ is focusing on tax reform and attempting to organize low-income taxpayers. (It will be interesting to see if this group has more of a class analysis.) Losing Wiley was a blow from which NWRO has not recovered. Coupled with an attack from the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), NWRO is now in bad shape. NCLC claims it has "rebuilt" NWRO into a "class formation" of welfare recipients, unionists and socialists. Their new organization, the National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization (NU-WRO), is dominated by the Labor Committee and its only visible program is beating up members of the Communist Party.

Welfare recipients, therefore, have no single organization to fight for their rights. Instead, there are presently three groups: a weakened NWRO continuing to operate with interest-group politics, a NCLC-dominated NU-WRO that claims to have class politics but to date has no program, and MEJ whose program does not speak to welfare issues. The New American Movement held its workshop on welfare organizing in this context. Perhaps it is the first step towards a program that could begin to build a movement to unite social service workers, welfare recipients and other parts of the working class around demands for adequate social services for all. It will be a long and difficult process, but people at the workshop feel that it is important to start.

If you are interested in working with the Social Services Task Force formed at the workshop, write: New American Movement, 926 Dacian Ave. No. 7, Durham, N. C. 27701.



welfare mother in NWRO office

S.F. Socialist Coalition

A COALITION OF socialist groups is forming in San Francisco with the intention of running socialist candidates for the Board of Supervisors in November. The coalition grew out of activity against the Pacific Telephone rate increase request earlier this year. After three meetings, members of San Francisco NAM, the Union for Democratic Socialism, Peace and Freedom Party, Bay Area Radical Teachers Organizing Committee and an independent or two have tentatively agreed to conduct a campaign aimed at building a permanent socialist coalition in the city with the long-range intention of gaining control of the city government.

The immediate purpose of the campaign is to unite as many of the socialist groups and special-interest

organizations as possible around a socialist program for the city. Coalition members plan to concentrate on four or five issue areas—taxes, public health care, education, municipal transit and child care. We plan to involve groups or individuals already active in these areas in developing program and to use the campaign to strengthen the activity of these groups by giving widespread publicity to their demands and by unifying the various programs within an overall proposal for the redistribution of the city's resources. Present plans are unclear about the number of candidates, but the coalition may run candidates for all five seats open this Fall. People interested in working with the coalition may contact NAM at 388 Sanchez Street, San Francisco 94114.

The following agenda was prepared at NAM's National Interim Committee (NIC) meeting on May 12th. There are two items on the agenda that have not been discussed in most chapters--mergers and structural changes. The reason for putting them on the agenda are explained below, along with possible proposals. These proposals do not reflect a consensus on the NIC. They are presented for consideration by the members, but not as formal NIC proposals.

THURSDAY

- 12:00 -- 1:00 Adopt Agenda
- 1:00 - 3:00 Panel on NAM's Past and Future
- 3:00 - 5:00 Small Group Discussions
- 5:00 - 7:30 Dinner and Caucuses
- 7:30 - Program Workshop

FRIDAY

- 9:00 - 10:30 Panel on Building an Interracial Movement
- 10:30 - 12:30 Small Group Discussions
- 12:30 - 2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 -- 3:00 Socialist Feminism Plenary
- 3:00 - 6:00 Women's and Men's Caucuses
- 6:00 - 7:30 Dinner
- 7:30 - Plenary on Mergers and Structure*

*NOTE: A proposal on structure will have to be adopted at this plenary so that the new NIC can be chosen consistent with the structure.

SATURDAY

- 9:30 - 10:30 Panel on Electoral Politics
- 10:30 - 12:30 Small Group Discussions
- 12:30 - 2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 - 4:00 Program Workshops
- 4:00 -- 6:30 NIC Nominations
- 6:30 -- Dinner and Dance

SUNDAY

- 9:00 - 10:30 NIC Elections
- 10:30 - 3:00 Plenary for Adopting Resolutions

Convention Information

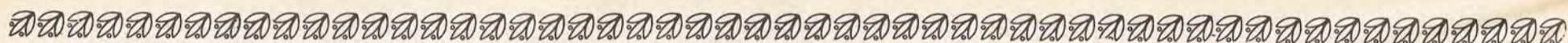
Mergers

NAM'S PERSPECTIVE AS an organization is to be part of the process that will lead to creating a majority movement for socialism in the United States, and eventually to taking power from the corporate ruling class. It has always been unclear what NAM's long-term fate will be--whether it will be the basis of such a movement and form itself into a party when appropriate, or whether it will be one

of many organizations that will come together to form a mass party. In any case, most of the NIC members think that we should always be seeking ways to enlarge the organized movement of which we are part. That means that where possible we should seek out alliances with other organizations or even mergers with them if our politics are similar. The terms of such mergers would depend on many things--relative size, desires of the affected organizations, etc.--and cannot be decided unilaterally or in advance. The basis of such mergers, however, must be substantial political agreement and a common long-range perspective.

In the last several months the question of merging with other organizations has been raised by Harry

Boyte, and in discussions in the NIC several possible organizations have been mentioned (among them Union for Democratic Socialism and People's Party). No proposal has been made to merge with a specific organization. The proposal is to begin talking about the principle of merger and, if possible, to agree on a general political basis for beginning to conduct merger talks. The NIC thinks that this must be discussed at this convention, so that the new NIC will know how to proceed, on what basis to conduct talks with other groups, if any. If this happens and talks take place over the next year, then a specific proposal would have to be submitted to the convention in 1974.



THE NIC AS NOW constituted consists of 13 people from all over the country. It meets about once every six weeks. It is the only elected political leadership in NAM between Convention and National Council meetings, and it is responsible for most of the political and administrative decisions.

The National Office consists of two paid people and has day-to-day responsibility for carrying out NIC mandates. In fact, it has been the only continually functioning body on a national scale and has often been forced to respond to immediate political events. But the NO has no authority and no formal responsibility to the membership and has taken lots of flak for the initiatives it has taken (or been forced to take by events).

Because the NIC meets so infrequently and for so short a period of time, and because it must handle all of the administrative problems of the national organization, it has been virtually impossible for it to spend time in political discussions or to discuss the more general and long-range problems of NAM.

There simply has been no time at the meetings and the NIC members themselves have been part of no continuous collective political process. The result has been a political vacuum at the center of NAM and a minimum of political presence for the organization on a national scale. This, in turn, has affected the chapters negatively since they have been unable to

Structure

have any sense of being part of a nationwide political movement. There has been no movement, except on the chapter level.

ONE PROPOSAL TO help solve this problem is to change the size of the NIC and to elect a full-time political/administrative committee to be located with the national office (probably in Minneapolis). This proposal was discussed at the May 12th NIC meeting but there was no general agreement on it. It is: 1) To elect three people to function as a full-time paid collective political/administrative body

responsible for developing NAM activities and responding to day-to-day events. This group might include one of the two paid NO people, and one or two of them might be used as program facilitators (travelers). 2) The NIC would be composed of 13. Three would be the full-time resident collective. Ten others would come from local chapters. The three would be responsible for its activities to the NIC as a whole, which would meet at least every two months to review the work of the resident collective and discuss political proposals made by it. This would permit the NIC to function better as a political leadership and vastly raise the level of NIC discussions.

NOTE: None of us is wedded to this proposal, although many of us think it moves the right way. If your chapter does not think so, please try to come up with alternative proposals. A proposal will be adopted at the Friday evening plenary before NIC nominations.

Building an Inter-racial Movement

by Sally Avery

THE PURPOSE OF THIS panel is to stimulate the development of strategies to (1) build a multi-racial socialist movement and (2) to support liberation movements in third world countries. One approach to the first part of the panel might be to discuss the relationship between black and white radicals in this country over the past decade. It's been an often painful history: the idealism of "black and white together" of the civil rights movement soon deteriorated as blacks, and eventually white

women, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and Native Americans felt the need to develop their own autonomous organizations. We are now experiencing the development of a socialist movement (of which NAM is a part) whose goal is to bring together these radicalized groups. But to make this a reality we must explore the feelings involved in the events of recent movement history, the pain, the guilt, the discovery of identity, the potential for developing healthier "liberated" relationships in our growing movement.

The success of such a discussion requires a dialogue

that starts before the convention. It would be helpful if people started thinking and writing about their experiences during the civil rights movement, student movement, demonstrations, riots, the "war on poverty," the anti-war movement and in the black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Native American, women's and gay movements. NAM chapters should write about their attempts to develop alliances with different oppressed national groups.

From the study of our past experiences we can move into strategies for building a multi-racial movement. We can discuss different models for the development of NAM as a multi-racial organization and/or the building

The labor Zionists were motivated by a socialist, utopian vision combined with a strong sense of Jewish nationalism. They hoped to revitalize the Jewish people in the ancient homeland. The tremendous spiritual value of manual labor was stressed. The labor Zionists founded the first kibbutzim and felt themselves to be socialist pioneers.

Despite the often sincere and lofty ideals of the labor Zionists, there was and is a serious contradiction in their philosophy. Socialism and Zionism are two concepts that cannot be synthesized. Socialism, very simply, means equal distribution of resources and equal rights for all. Zionism is a movement based on a privileged Jewish position. The two are incompatible.

This contradiction has at times been expressed. David Hacoen, for many years a leader of the Mapai Party (Israel's ruling party), stated in a speech in November 1969: I remember being one of the first of our comrades to go to London after the First World War. . . There I became a socialist. . . When I joined the socialist students—English, Irish, Jewish, Chinese, Indian, African—we found that we were all under English domination or rule. And even here, in these intimate surroundings, I had

to fight my friends on the issue of Jewish socialism, to defend the fact that I would not accept Arabs in my trade union, the Histadrut; to defend preaching to housewives that they not buy at Arab stores; to defend the fact that we stood guard at orchards to prevent Arab workers from getting jobs there...To pour kerosene on Arab tomatoes; to attack Jewish housewives in the markets and smash the Arab eggs they had bought; to praise to the skies the *Kereen Kayemet* (Jewish Fund) that sent Hankin to Beirut to buy land from absentee *effendi* (landlords) and to throw the *fellahin* (peasants off the land; to buy dozens of *dunams* (one *dunam*= .23 acre) from an Arab is permitted, but to sell, God forbid, one Jewish *dunam* to an Arab is prohibited; to take Rothschild the incarnation of capitalism, as a socialist and to name him the 'benefactor.' To do all that was not easy. And despite the fact that we did it—maybe we had no choice—I wasn't happy about it."

Zionist policy in Palestine in the 1920's and 1930's, which was controlled by the labor wing of Zionism, put forth three central slogans or aims. The first of these was *Kibush Hakarka* (Conquest of the Land), which means that the soil of Palestine was to be made the property of the Jewish people. Only Jews were to own and work the land. The second was *Kibush Ha'avodah* (Conquest of Labor). This meant, in practice, that Jewish employers were strongly encouraged to hire only Jewish labor. The Jewish community virtually boycotted Arab labor. The third aim was *T'ozteret Ha'aretz* (Produce of the Land). This meant the maintenance of a strict boycott of Arab-produced goods. Jews were to buy only from Jewish-run farms and stores.

It is clearly impossible to present here a really thorough discussion of the history and aims of the Zionist movement. (Interested readers should see the following: *The Other Israel: The Radical Case Against Zionism*, edited by Arie Bober, Doubleday Books; *Israel and the Arab World*, Ahmad el Kodsy and Eli Lobel, Monthly Review Press; *Israel and the Arabs*, Maxime Rodinson, Pelican Books.) What has been presented here is only a brief glimpse at some of the forces that shaped Zionism. However, Herzl's political approach and theoretical underpinnings, combined with the tactics and strategies of the labor Zionists, were the compelling forces behind the Zionist movement.

The American left must begin seriously to study the history of Zionism and the State of Israel. If the American empire, as a result of losing in Vietnam, is going to direct its attention to other parts of the globe, then the Middle East must become an important focus for radicals. The strategic importance of oil in the region has already been stated. American government money and military hardware combined with private donations (which enjoy a tax-exempt status) prop up the State of Israel. Israel is totally dependent on a huge inflow of foreign capital to maintain its position in the region. In addition to these factors, the Arab masses in the region are becoming more rebellious. The resistance of the Palestinians is well known, but the Arabs living under feudal or bourgeois nationalist regimes may soon begin to take direct action.

Finally, if we are trying to develop internationalism and brotherhood among peoples, then Zionism must be openly and critically scrutinized. Zionism, a theory and practice based on Jewish exclusivism, must be rejected. The American left, while committing itself unequivocally to fighting anti-semitism and all other forms of racism, must totally reject the notion that anti-semitism equals anti-Zionism. An ominous development on the current political scene is the collapse of Judaism into Zionism. Judaism and Zionism have never been and are not today synonymous. The horrors of Bergen-Belsen and Auschwitz must not direct us to support a policy that is inherently unjust. It is time for us in America honestly to confront our long-held beliefs concerning Zionism and the State of Israel. ●

Continued from page 14

of alliances of autonomous organizations that share our class analysis.

The second part of the panel will focus on liberation movements in third world countries. The discussion could center on the necessity to see ourselves as part of a world-wide socialist movement, a movement whose success in other countries is related to and crucial to our success here. We need to take courage from the efforts of socialist countries to eradicate institutionalized racism, and to learn from the struggles of liberation forces to build multi-racial movements.

Again a dialogue starting now is necessary for the success of the panel. People from third world countries and from the U. S. involved in supporting liberation struggles could write about their experiences, ideas and strategies. The panel, of course, cannot go into the specifics of the many different movements. Workshops can be set up, however, to continue the discussion begun in the panel. Some workshops could be on different countries and others go into specifics of building a multi-racial movement in this country.

If you have other ideas about the focus of the panel, or if you want to be part of the suggested dialogue, write: Sally Avery, 926 Dacian Ave. No. 7, Durham, N. C. 27701.



NEWSPAPER COLLECTIVE

Joan Bodner
Kay Cole
Bob Jackall
Lisa Murphy
Jean Nute
Joel Parker
Jain Simmons
Mike Spencer
Jim Weinstein

NAM CHAPTERS & PRE-CHAPTERS

NAM chapters are numbered; pre-chapters are starred.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1) Cambridge NAM
161 Raymond Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02140 | 20) D. C. NAM No. 2
2332 19th Street NW
Washington, D. C. 20009 | 19) Cleveland NAM
1816 Chapman Ave.
East Cleveland, O. | 28) Berkeley NAM
2417 Webster Street
Berkeley, Ca. 94705 | ** Knoxville NAM
310 16th Street
Knoxville, Tenn. 37916 |
| 2) Boston Area NAM
Rm. 308, Heller School
Brandeis University
Waltham, Mass. 02154 | 11) Pittsburgh NAM
P. O. Box 2202
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15230 | 20) Chicago NAM
c/o Trinkl
1940 N. Cleveland
Chicago, Ill. 60614 | 29) San Francisco NAM
388 Sanchez Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94114 | ** Nashville NAM
112 29th Ave. N.
Nashville, Tn. 37203 |
| 3) Amherst NAM
Box 1329, Sta. No. 2
Amherst, Mass. 01002 | 12) Lexington NAM
454 So. Ashland
Lexington, Ky. 40502 | 21) DeKalb NAM
839 N. 11th Street
DeKalb, Ill. 60115 | 30) Los Angeles NAM
P. O. Box 26303
Los Angeles, Ca. 90026 | ** Atlanta NAM
310 9th Street
Atlanta, Georgia |
| 4) Vermont NAM
P. O. Box 645
Middlebury, Vt. 05753 | 13) Asheville NAM
P. O. Box 8486
Asheville, N. C. | 22) Iowa City NAM
509 Davenport
Iowa City, Iowa 52240 | ** Maine NAM
c/o Rensenbrink
RR No. 2
Bowdoinham, Me. 04008 | ** Norman (Okla.) NAM
c/o Switzer
1014 College, Apt. 6
Norman, Okla. 36109 |
| 5) New York NAM No. 1
2076 Turnbull Ave.
Bronx, N. Y. 10473 | 14) C. P. Gilman NAM
920 Dacian Ave., Apt. 7
Durham, N. C. 27701 | 23) Minneapolis NAM
2421 E. Franklin Ave.
Minneapolis, Mn. 55406 | ** Hartford NAM
c/o Lerner
Dept. of Philosophy
Trinity College
Hartford, Conn. 06106 | ** Bloomington NAM
1130 W. Sixth Street
Bloomington, Ind. 47401 |
| 6) New York NAM No. 2
42 West 65th Street
New York, N. Y. | 15) Chapel Hill NAM
630-C Hibbard
Chapel Hill, N. C. | 24) Honeywell Project NAM
2421 E. Franklin Ave. S.
Minneapolis, Mn. 55406 | ** Albany NAM
c/o Pollak
28 Winthrop Ave.
Albany, N. Y. 12203 | ** Normal (Ill.) NAM
c/o Palmer-St. Robert
Bellarmine Bldg.
502 S. Main Street
Normal, Ill. |
| 7) Queens NAM
Box 117
Kew Gardens, N. Y. 11415 | 16) New Orleans NAM
P. O. Box 2647
New Orleans, La. 70126 | 25) Nicollet Ave. NAM
Rm. 4, 1502 Nicollet Ave.
Minneapolis, Mn. | ** Long Island NAM
488 New York Ave.
Huntington, N. Y. 11743 | ** Macomb (Ill.) NAM
RR No. 4
Macomb, Ill. 61455 |
| 8) Philadelphia Suburbs NAM
220 N. Jackson Street
Media, Pa. 19063 | 17) Austin NAM
c/o Guinn
1100 W. 22nd Street
Austin, Tx. 78705 | 26) Lawrence NAM
1304 Tennessee
Lawrence, Ks. 66044 | ** Philly NAM
5108 Newhall Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19144 | ** Kalamazoo NAM
412 W. Vine
Kalamazoo, Mich. |
| 9) D. C. NAM No. 1
1717 Swan Street NW
Washington, D. C. 20009 | 18) Mad River (Dayton) NAM
810 Ferndale
Dayton, O. 45406 | 27) Boulder NAM
3305 E. Euclid
Boulder, Colo. 80303 | ** Reed NAM
c/o Ratliff
Box 867
Reed College
Portland, Ore. 97202 | |

THERE ARE FOUR REASONS why *The Harder They Come* is a great movie to see. The first two reasons have to do with how much fun it is. For one thing, it has really good music and, for a second thing, it has an exciting story.

The other two reasons have to do with how much you learn while you're enjoying yourself. The film was made in Jamaica, and you learn a lot about life there (in fact, this is the first feature film ever made by Jamaicans). Most of the people who act in the film are not professionals—they are from the streets of Kingston, Jamaica, and they play themselves. You hear their music—called reggae. You see the conditions of their lives. And the other thing you learn, the fourth reason why I loved this film, is about politics and economics and the way Jamaican society is structured.

There is a little scene in *The Harder They Come* that tells you what it is all about. Ivanhoe Martin returns to the preacher's house to get his bicycle. Ivanhoe built almost the whole bicycle. It was a complete wreck when he started, but he worked hard for a long time, fixing it and decorating it, until it was a fast, beautiful bike. Now, the preacher has left word that he will keep the bike as his own, that Ivanhoe is to be sent away without it, that it is the preacher's property. True, the wreck from which Ivanhoe built a bike belonged to the preacher. But it wasn't worth a thing until Ivanhoe put a lot of his work into it. It was his creativity, and his sweat, that made it valuable. But the preacher "owns" it, because he owned the original supplies, and because he owned the tools that Ivanhoe used. The preacher did not work at all. And, in its small way, that scene is the same as what happens to all of us. We work, but someone else makes most of the profit off of our work; and that someone else can do because at some point in history their ancestors got hold of most of the property. In its small way, that scene shows just how capitalism works.

In Jamaica the economy is controlled by capitalists who are from a richer country, the United States. Of course, this is typical for third world peoples. In *The Harder They Come*, the main economic resource is marijuana. But that's just an example. It could have been oil, or fruit, or copper or sugar.

Ivanhoe Martin discovered these things in stages. First, he saw how capitalism worked locally, when he tried to make a living by writing and singing music. He found that one record producer had a monopoly on all record distribution and that he couldn't get his song sold unless he let that man, Hilton, do it for him. As a result, he could only get as much money for his work as Hilton was willing to pay him, and that was \$20.00 for a song that was going to be a smash hit. When Ivanhoe first begins to find that out, he is dripping with perspiration from the effort of performing his song, while Hilton, who hasn't done a thing, stands by coolly and dictates the conditions.

After Ivanhoe finds out how monopolies work, he is forced into another way to make a living. That is when we see him become a marijuana worker. When he reads in the newspaper about the crash of a plane headed for the U. S. with a load of marijuana, and the newspaper article mentions the amount of money the stuff would have sold for in the U. S., he learns his second lesson about capitalism. He adds it all up—the small amount of money he and his fellow Jamaicans get for their marijuana and the large amount it sells for—and he knows that someone in the United States is making a lot of money. He is discovering what happens when capitalists go to another country and practice imperialism. And he sees how small and powerless the local capitalists are compared to the ones who control Jamaican business from the U. S. The Americans control the big money to be made from Jamaica, so that the Jamaican bourgeoisie, the black capitalists, are mainly left with corruption as a way to strike it rich. They get payoffs for looking the other way when the marijuana goes by. That's why we read so much about corruption among the elites of poor countries—it's one "business" that isn't controlled by a multinational corporation.

Ivanhoe sees all this. And he doesn't like it. He's going to rebel, we just know he's going to rebel. We know it because we can see he's got that kind of spirit. And, just in case, the filmmaker gives us a couple of other hints. Once, when there is a scene of Ivanhoe waking up after a night of sleeping in the streets, we see that the wall that he's been sleeping against is painted black, green and red—the colors of black liberation. And, when Ivanhoe is cutting his record, he is wearing a tee shirt with a yellow star in the middle that looks a lot like the flag of the National Liberation Front in Vietnam. The shirt isn't exactly like that flag, but it's close enough that you might think of it, and when you do you get the feeling that Ivanhoe is close to fighting against the invaders in his country just as the Viet Cong did in theirs.

And Ivanhoe Martin does rebel. *But he does it the wrong way!* And that's one of the most interesting parts of the whole movie. Ivanhoe makes two mistakes when he rebels. The first is that he rebels by himself. He doesn't organize any of the other people who are cheated by the same system. If he had, maybe he would have succeeded. He had a wonderful chance to do it. The marijuana dealers with whom he worked were willing to accept his leadership; they even hoped for it. For a long time, they refused to continue with their work in expectation of being led by Ivanhoe, and they helped to hide him when he needed it. True, they

just wanted to continue the old system, with a mere replacement of their old leader by Ivanhoe. But if Ivanhoe had shared his insights with them, had taken advantage of their willingness to listen to him, he might have turned them to changing things.

Ivanhoe's second mistake is that he did not attack the whole system that oppressed him. He only attacked individuals within it. And the ones he attacked were lower-level people, because they are the only ones he knew. He didn't know the people at the top, who were so far away.

Why did Ivanhoe make these mistakes? Why did he wage an individual fight? Why did he use the method of assassination? Why was he bent on revenge? The reason is that he had come to accept a myth taught to him by American culture, the myth of the cowboy. He not only accepted that myth, but he admired it. He wanted to be it. He went to the movies and he saw one of those cheap westerns, the kind with Clint Eastwood or somebody, and he got the idea that it was romantic for one man to try to murder a whole herd of bad guys. He not only identified with the romance of it—he even got it into his head that it was possible! He didn't want to organize his compatriots to fight a system. He wanted to do it all by himself.

When he turned into a rebel, he immediately started to live the western myth in obvious ways. That was the way he fought. He even had photographs taken of him in cowboy clothes, posed with a gun in each hand, and sent them to a newspaper so as to make sure everyone understood his image. But that myth had been implanted in his psychology long before then. When his rebellion started, he *lived* the cowboy legend, but even before that he had *fantasized* it. Early in the movie, the preacher was searching the car hulk that Ivanhoe used, looking through Ivanhoe's few possessions, and found among them a toy gun. To look like a cowboy, you need only two things: a gun and a horse. Ivanhoe had that gun, and he had a "horse." His bicycle. There was one graceful scene, photographed beautifully, of Ivanhoe out on his bike in the evening. At one point, he stops to look in a store window, but he does not merely halt the bike. He slows down and, in one motion, he lifts the front wheel of the bike until the bike is vertical, the rear wheel still on the ground and Ivanhoe still nearly on the seat. It is a perfect pirouette—the horse lifting its front legs high into the air and hesitating, while the Long Ranger gets a good look around and a thrill of height and control at the same time.

There is no doubt about it, Ivanhoe is under the spell that has been woven into his head. In the end, it kills him; and it kills the revolution he might have started, too. He calculated how the ruling class controls our pocketbooks, but he never found out that they often control our minds, too. He saw right through economic imperialism, but he never understood cultural imperialism. There are different ways of having that kind of ideological and psychological control over us. Early in the movie, in an exciting and powerful scene, we saw how religion is the method used on many people. I watched that scene closely and I saw the building rhythm that robbed the people of all their energy, of all their frustrations, pulling it out of them and then leaving it there, in the church building, where it couldn't be turned into a political force. At the beginning of that scene, it looked silly to me. No one could be fooled by that. But as the scene went on, and the intensity increased, I found myself moving, being tempted into the release, being set up to forget my worldly troubles. It works. It works on lots of people. It's easy to get into it, just as it was easy for Ivanhoe to believe that being a cowboy would show them. After all, he wasn't the only one tempted by that image; the whole populace loved it, and they loved Ivanhoe for being it. They cheered at his escapes from the police and laughed when he taunted the police. They even wanted his autograph, and they loved him all the more because he was doing it all single-handed. They had bought the propaganda, too, and Ivanhoe lived it, battling alone and being admired for his courage, just like the lonely knight, Ivanhoe, of English folklore.

Ivanhoe's failure to see the cultural side of the control of his people is probably the real reason that he missed the boat that would have taken him to Cuba. Ivanhoe's intellect had worked hard and he had found out a great deal, just as he swam hard to reach the boat. But, in both cases, he did not go far enough. In Cuba, they have not thrown out the American businessmen merely to replace them with a few native businessmen. Instead, they are trying to create a whole new society. Ivanhoe was not ready for that. He was content to still accept the old values. He even looked at the opportunity to go to Cuba as if it would be a way to extend his cowboy image; he responded spontaneously to the romance of being a "revolutionary." Ivanhoe was a rebel, but he was not yet a revolutionary; he was not ready for the hard work of creating a new Cuba, or a new Jamaica.

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