

# join gets rent strike contract

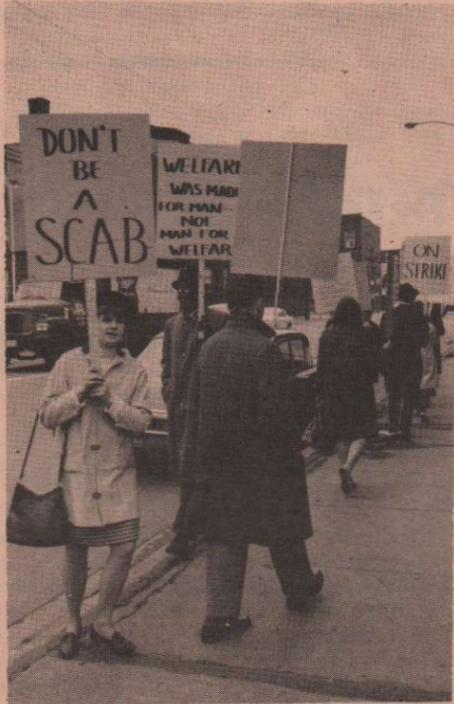
Michael James

During the past two weeks Chicago's JOIN Community Union has thrown most of its energies into rent strike and welfare activity. The rent strike, waged against the owner of many slum buildings, resulted in the signing of a comprehensive contract between the owner and JOIN, the bargaining agent for the tenants. The welfare activity was conducted in conjunction with a strike held by the Independent Union of Public Aid Employees against the Cook County Department of Public Aid.

Southern white and spanish speaking tenants, originally aided by VISTA volunteers brought Max Gutman to court on several occasions; each time Gutman was granted a continuance by the presiding judge. Tenants and VISTA workers turned to JOIN organizers latter received orders from on high to halt their activity in the building. JOIN organizers spent a week in the building in preparation for a Saturday rally of tenants and residents of the neighborhood. At the rally, attended by more than 100 and well covered by news media, tenants demanded that the landlord agree to make a myriad of necessary repairs, or they would turn over the rent they had withheld to Mayor Daley: "If the landlord won't fix up, then the city must."

At a Sunday meeting Gutman gave verbal agreement, but refused to sign the contract. A picket line was maintained in front of the building for the next few days. Gutman increased his harassment of tenants and then tore down the large sign hung from the third floor that read "Tenants on Strike," and "Viva la Huelga."

The next day the size of the picket line increased, and late that evening someone serupticiously went to Gutman's wealthy neighborhood. Leaflets with pictures of the building were stapled to every tree and placed in everyone's mailbox. They read: "Max Gutman owns a slum; Your neighbor is a slumlord; We have come to protest: rats, roaches, faulty wiring, leaky plumbing, falling plaster, etc; all we want is home and a decent place to live



iupae strikers

-like you; Please Help Us."

At 6:30 a.m. the next morning Gutman - en route to temple - called and agreed to settle. The contract calls for seventeen specific repairs, 15 to be made by the end of June, one by the end of July, and another by the end of one year. The contract also provides for grievance procedures, a union committee in the building and binding arbitration. Tenants, both present and future, can at any time call an election to select a bargaining agent of their choice. In the press release of their victory they stated that "through this action we hope other people who live in the

## sods new left notes

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# chicago public aid workers on strike

neighborhood will join in with JOIN to do something about bad apartment conditions. If we can do it, so can other people who live in our community."

On the welfare front, the striking IUPAE requested support from organized recipient's groups throughout the city. For nearly a week JOIN members receiving public assistance flooded the Northern District Office whose employees are by far the most conservative in Chicago's large welfare complex. On Monday May 23rd, JOIN maintained a picket line outside the office of Raymond Hilliard, head of the Cook County Dept. of Public Aid. The leaflet that was distributed read: "We have come to tell Hilliard that we support the striking caseworkers who want to help us reform Chicago's welfare system. We have come to tell him of the big office he runs that refuses to treat people with dignity and respect. And we have come to get action on specific cases."

Instead of helping the people who had been given the extended run around at the district office, Hilliard sent three of them to jail. Released from jail on bond the following day, they joined the picket line that had resumed at Hilliard's office. Favorable action on the part of the welfare office has resulted in each of the three cases.

On May 25 the striking caseworkers voted

to return to work after 13 days out. The strike was expected to end sooner, but the Cook County Board of Commissioners voted to put letters of commendation in the files of all non strikers. The strikers felt this to be in contradiction to the first resolution the board passed, which included the right to organize, no reprisals, dues check off, and a fact finding board to investigate the questions of collective bargaining and the possibility of an election making IUPAE sole bargaining agent for Public Aid employees. AFL-CIO local 73, with close ties to the Daley machine, had claimed to represent the caseworkers. Some view Daley's willingness to permit the IUPAE victory as a move to placate civil rights and liberal groups in hope of winning support for his much criticized bond issue.

Regarding JOIN's direct action, continuing after the strike was falsely reported as being settled, Daley told the press "Oh they're not case workers; they're recipients from JOIN, an outfit that works out of a telephone booth." Daley's comment seems to have been countered by a very good relationship between JOIN and the growing IUPAE. IUPAE President Al Kaplan expressed the view that JOIN had been more helpful to the striker's cause than any other group of recipients.

# oglesby replies to criticism

Carl Oglesby

Ann Arbor

Partly to accept my lumps but partly to lock fraternal horns, I want to enter a chastened defense of the "mishmash of factual error, false impressions and baseless predictions" which Brother Saul Mendelson says I have brought back from Italy.

Saul murders me on the questions of the 1963 election figures. But I'm afraid he murders himself in the act. I gave the Social Dems half a million; Sauls gives them one and a half; the State Department (in "World Strength of the Communist Party Organizations," Bureau of Intelligence and Research) gives them 1, 874,379. Saul wins. I gave the Republicans one million; Saul gave them half a million; the State Department gives them 420,746 Saul wins again. I gave the Socialists three million; Saul agrees on three; the State Department gives the m 4,251,966. Both Saul and I lose. I gave the Communists eight million; Saul six; the State Department says 7,763,854. I win for once. I gave the Christian Dems nine million and so does Saul; the State Department gives them 11,732,796. Saul and I should go hang our heads in shame.

Murdered again on PSIUP, I answer (weakly) Left generally could have taken power then. Neither did I, not even in my own notes, where Saul apparently sees such claim. Togliatti's decision in 1960 was essentially whether or not he should demand the portfolios or ministries - i.e., the place in a new coalition - which the general strike had made it possible for him to demand. It was of course not a matter of taking over Italy; it a matter of taking or not taking a piece of power in a setting laden with opportunities for making trouble and veri-

ifying widespread fears that the CP was opportunistic, coercive and anti-democratic.

Is it senseless, as Saul says, to remark that the CP doesn't want 51% of the votes? Taken literally, maybe - but maybe not. To have a majority is to obviate coalition and hence to operate without formal constraints; and that would mean either violence or a communist government that defaces itself. But more to the point is the CP's recognition of the very same socio-political realities that Saul describes so well: boom and glitter in the big cities haunted by recession everywhere and wretchedness in the south, dramatic but grossly disparate economic growth, technology's goods and monopoly that the important point remains intact: namely, that it was Nenni's coalition with the nondescript centrist Moro which agitated the Leftists in his own Socialist Party and gave PSIUP a major jolt of popularity. It is still of course a small party; but in many places, it's the party of young people and it will probably have an important impact on other segments of the Left. Of course, events may develop otherwise, Maybe PSIUP - whose connections with the CP are a bit novel - will turn out to be nothing but a kind of political gym where the young-at-heart work off their militancy prior to becoming well-dressed CP members.

Saul's reading of French Leftists but not Italian and his (I hope) accidental misreading of my notes have led him astray on the matter of Togliatti's moderation during the Tambroni government's crisis of 1960. First, the French and the Italian Leftists have had a small feud on for a long time, sufficiently intense that one should stand back somewhat from French commentary on Italian Left politics. But the second

point is more important. Saul writes: "Never did I read a claim that the Communists or the ly's evils, growing professionalization but backward universities - a set of prospects and problems which are indeed quite like America's in many respects and which put Italian radicals under a strain quite like what we experience when we find our criticism vastly outstripping our invention. And it seemed to me that the little slogan about the unwanted electoral majority put in a nutshell the meanings of that setting. Saul's comment on this is helpful and very much to the point. I am only surprised that he offers it as rebuttal instead of elabora-

tion. I had imagined that the central idea was fairly clear in the passage I quoted from Luigi Longo's speech to the party congress.

Saul's comments on the coops and the unions are at least as "impressionistic" as my own "impressionistic mishmash." I suspect he very well knows that GGIL is not the AFL-CIO, that Chavez we know and love, that the industrial and agricultural coops are progressive and not reactionary, and that there is nothing perverse in an elected Communist government's assigning administrative jobs to Communists instead

(continued on page 3)

## nac minutes

At the Nac meeting members Booth, Webb, Bennett, Speck, and (sometimes) Kindred were present.

Finances: We are broke; the two fund raising events in Chicago did not raise any large amount of money; the average daily income is now below the 100 dollar point. This week there will be a letter sent to the contributors list.

Staff: The NO is down to a staff of 7 people

and there was a general discussion of who the next national secretary might be (Any long range view of retaining or recruiting new staff after some of the present staff leave depends upon some general idea of who the potential national secretaries are.). Paul Le Blanc was switched to fund-raising and Paul Booth and Bob Speck will split the responsibilities for keeping the books.

# join news

## fight welfare run-around

JOIN picketed the office of Raymond Hilliard, head of public aid in Chicago on May 23 and 24. About 50 recipients from Uptown demanded that Hilliard himself solve three specific cases that the Northern office on Lincoln had failed to deal with. When the cases weren't handled by the end of the day, three JOIN members voluntarily went to jail overnight to protest the welfare run-around. Welfare had been sitting on these cases for over a month without doing anything.

The brave JOIN members who were arrested for trespass by Hilliard were Dovie Colemand, Dovie Thurman and Harriet Stulman. Mrs. Coleman has a back injury and welfare has failed to give her the back brace and mattress that she needs to go back to work and not be under the thumb of public aid. Dovie Thurman, whose husband is serving in Vietnam, was trying to get the rent money welfare has promised her. Harriet Stulman was representing Albert Coleman, JOIN'S present

## why I went to jail

My reasons for going to jail was to prove that welfare recipients have a right to protest for a humane welfare, as well as caseworkers. Welfare recipients should have a union that's able to demand collective bargaining and to be able to approve any welfare laws that are passed by the legislature. I feel the only way

## rent strike victory

Tenants at 4107-15 Broadway with the support of JOIN have won a rent strike. Max Gutman, the landlord, has signed a contract with JOIN agreeing to paint the entire building, exterminate the rats and roaches, replace the leaky pipes and make the many other repairs needed. This is the first comprehensive tenant-landlord contract ever signed.

The Broadway tenants went to Chicago courts with their complaints but they got no help from the city. So they asked JOIN to help them organize. A majority of the tenants agreed they would hold back rent together. JOIN supported the rent strike with a picket line in front of the building to discourage the landlord from trying to collect rent. It worked.

A tenant's statement said: "We the tenants of the 4100 block of Broadway whose building belongs to Max Gutman are hereby on strike as of today, Saturday May 14. The reason for this action is to get improvement of living conditions which are dangerous and hazardous to all concerned. In the past tenants have held back rent by themselves, but they got picked off with five day notices and are taken into court. So now we are putting our rent together and holding it back from the landlord for three

## tenants can get action

### if they stick together

We fought Gutman for 9 months and he didn't give us action whatsoever. Anytime you would want anything, he would give you some sort of sad story. Finally, we got together one day to talk about trying to get the building fixed-up, but there never was enough people to make a go of it. VISTA helped us and then introduced us to JOIN. After JOIN Community Union heard of our many problems, they agreed to help us.

Now that the landlord has signed a contract with JOIN, there has been many improvements. There is now a committee of tenants to see that the things the landlord promised us will be done.

I worked hard on the rent strike and I want to say that I think the woman should stand up for their community as much as the men. Women can help organize tenants. That way we can work together to have better homes

## urban progress?

What I'm really doing here is making a comparison of two organizations. One organization full of well salaried people; the other working on their own time, unpaid, working long hours and going miles and miles of foot work.

The urban progress center is approximately a year and a half old. What have they really done? I want to make the statement that they have done no good at all. Because any organization no matter how bad, is bound to do a little good. Especially with approximately \$41 million a year to spend (mostly for salaries.)

The JOIN Community Union in approximately 1 1/2 years has done more to really help the poor people, and I mean help. The members

chairman, who was not sent his check this month because of welfare's own mistakes and foul ups. Mr. Coleman couldn't go to Hilliard's office because his children were sick with pneumonia.

JOIN's trespassing trio were bonded out of jail 18 hours after their arrest and immediately went back to Hilliard's office to continue their protest. Fifty others backed them up. By continuing to put pressure on Hilliard we have gotten about the fastest action that office has ever done.

The JOIN picket was also supporting the striking IUPAE union of caseworkers and public aid employees. JOIN supports their strike because these caseworkers want to change welfare -- to make it fair and humane. They are against midnight searchers and invasions of privacy, against low recipient budgets and against welfare trying to run people's lives for them. With JOIN'S help, they are winning their strike and we will work with them in the future.

## by dovie thurman

people are going to know how bad conditions are for recipients are for recipients to stand up and protest for their rights, even if it means going to jail. I'll tell you one thing, the matrons in prison treat you better than some of the caseworkers. And they see to it that you get baloney sandwiches which welfare sometimes doesn't allow.

days to see if he will make the necessary improvements. If a three day rent strike does not work and bring the landlord to his senses, then the rent of all the tenants will be sent to Mayor Daley then perhaps more drastic action will be taken. If the landlord won't fix up, then the city must.

Through this action we hope other people who live in the neighborhood will join in with JOIN to do something about bad apartment conditions. If we can do it, so can other people who live in our community."

To kick off the rent strike, JOIN held a mass rally on Saturday in front of the building. 100 people attended. The rent was not sent to Daley because on Saturday, May 20, the landlord bowed to pressure and signed a contract with JOIN and the tenants, agreeing to make the improvements needed.

JOIN hopes that other tenants will organize themselves to get better apartment conditions. JOIN will support tenant organizations that want to work to enforce city housing codes and to force the landlords to put rent money into buildings instead of their pockets. For information, call 334-8040 or come to the JOIN office at 4533 N. Sheridan.

## by orphia pitzenbarker

and schools and a cleaner place to live. I think it would be nice if the parents and all the children would go together and try to keep the yards clean as much as possible. But the city and the landlords have a responsibility the same as the tenants. The city should see that the streets are clean and that the landlords are doing their duties towards the ones that are renting their apartments. The city must not allow their inspectors to be paid off by the landlords. The courts should be fair and listen to the complaints of the tenants because they're the ones who have the problems. The Mayor should listen to the poor the same as the rich. The landlords should learn that the hillbillies and the Puerto Ricans have as much right in America to decent apartments and living conditions as anyone else. When they learn this, landlords will start helping to make a better America.

## by marshall

have donated their time and energy to see that the poor get a fair deal.

It is my understanding that the urban progress center is supposed to look buildings over and see that they are inspected and that the buildings are made livable.

The building at 4107-15 Broadway is a good example. I'm sure an urban representative has at one time or another visited that building and I'm sure if they did they wrote up what they saw. But action is still waiting. JOIN members seen the building conditions and in 10 days got results. So why do we need an Urban Progress Center that won't work! Let the people do things for themselves.

## NEW LEFT NOTES

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Editor, Speck

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## ncup:

# insurgent political action

The Newark Community Union Project on May 10, provided the margin which enabled Earl Harris, an insurgent Negro candidate for councilman from Newark's South Ward, to defeat a machine-sponsored Negro and earn the right to face the conservative incumbent, Lee Bernstein, in the June 14 non-partisan run-off election.

The victor will represent the city's most populous ward, composed in about equal numbers of poor Negroes, middleclass Negroes and well-to-do whites.

Councilman Bernstein is a conservative Republican with obvious appeal to property-owning whites who fear the impact of a Harris victory on their pocket book.

Bernstein is known to have received substantial money support from slumlords who own buildings in the ghetto. He has been a right-wing critic of Newark's War on Poverty. His chronic red-baiting attacks on NCUP included a charge that NCUP people who picketed a slumlord were a "disgrace."

Harris has aligned himself with a Negro insurgent movement, which recently rocked the city by winning an impressive 16,000 votes after a shoestring campaign. The insurgents are united by a contempt for the establishment Negroes who have made common cause with the city administration. The Mayor, former liberal Democratic Congressman Hugh J. Addonizio, has been sensitive to Negro demands for a slice of the patronage but unable to reverse the deterioration in education, housing and other services. His main areas of strength, curiously, are in the Negro community and in the among whites most fearful of the "black tide."

The primary election on May 10 permitted Harris to distinguish himself from the Mayor's Negro candidate, who emphasized his personal attainments and the "need" for self-help programs. Harris, on the other hand, asserted his independence from city hall and campaigned for rent control, enforcement of housing codes against slumlords and relief from overcrowded schools.

Harris' responsiveness to NCUP participation and NCUP thinking has been a pleasant surprise. NCUP is directing his campaign in the eight poorest districts of the South Ward. The NCUP districts turned out the highest margin for Harris in the primary.

If elected, Harris, who is one of the few urban Negro politicians to oppose the Vietnam War, will fight for OEO funding of a neighborhood community service center, a major NCUP project for the past year. He has joined NCUP in advocating decentralized Poverty Program governed by residents who know about poverty from personal experience.

NCUP will sponsor a South Ward Congress, in which community people will meet with Harris the night before City Council meetings to discuss issues and grievances. A victory would project Harris as the leading critic of Newark's mafia liberalism. He will have his hands full as a loner tilting with two establishment Negroes and a host of uncomprehending whites on City Council.

The organization and insurgent Negro forces would command about equal strength if Harris wins. If he doesn't, it will be very difficult to counter the foreseeable build-up of an organization Negro for the 1970 Mayor election

in this city which already is predominately Negro and Puerto Rican.

NCUP therefore feels there is considerably more at stake in this election than Bernstein's defeat, yet the decision to become involved in ward politics was not reached easily.

Most of the student organizers came to Newark with a fundamental dislike for politics. This predisposition was reinforced by the politicians themselves, who regardless of race, creed or color are mainly avaricious fools.

Moreover, history unfeelingly reminds us us that radicals 12 years ago helped to elect Irvine Turner, now an eviscerated appendage to the city machine.

While NCUP has clearly gained a sympathetic acceptance in the community as an organization which is for direct action against landlords, welfare supervisors, politicians, etc., it has not yet developed an active, broad-based constituency -- the kind that we have put forth as the model for radical politics in the ghetto.

NCUP might have left politics alone and concentrated on forging an audacious constituency whose demands would be to the left of what Earl Harris or any councilman would or could satisfy (because so many ghetto problems are not resolvable at the municipal level).

By allowing itself to be swept along in the tide of insurgent politics, NCUP people may find it hard to maintain an outsider's viewpoint if Harris and a few others win office. Certainly, many Newark liberals look at NCUP as a brat which is now being socialized.

Many NCUP staff people, however, feel that successful organizing, can be done around politics. It is extremely distasteful for white radicals, whose reason for being in a black ghetto is always ambiguous, to show up at somebody's door during an election campaign and say some version of, "I'd like to sell you a politician who is really different."

So, organizers will visit people several times to discuss neighborhood issues as well as the more general question of how to keep politicians, including Mr. Harris, honest.

Out of election organizing, it is hoped, will emerge more community people eager to confront the system after the election is over.

Harris, may very well lose this election. Although registered Negro voters outnumber whites two to one, whites with property at stake, will undoubtedly produce a higher voting percentage. Furthermore, Bernstein has done favors for some Negroes ("what else is a councilman good for?") and a few Negroes no doubt think it's a little uppity for a black man to seek elective office.

So, I'll close with a pitch. If you have at least a week free before June 14 and want to work on the campaign, let us know. You can probably help. Address: NCUP, 444 Clinton Ave., Newark. Tel. 242-9329. We need money too.

A friend who has been in the movement several years was telling me recently that his estimation of what's "important" has diminished considerably. Newark certainly won't change very much if Earl Harris is elected.

But it is a little cheering to note that the New Left, which hasn't had an awful lot of success with wars and presidents and, even, deans, may on June 14 in Newark, N. J., give birth to its first city councilman.

# electoral action in detroit

Detroit area activists, seeking political forms of organization and education, have chosen the Seventeenth Congressional district in which to launch their efforts. The congressional campaign, with attorney James Lafferty as the candidate has already begun.

The district, located in Detroit's Northwest side, is predominately white (85-90%) although the percentage of Negroes (mostly middle-class - replacing fleeing whites) continues to increase. Most voters are either working or lower middle class. There are, however, concentrations within the district of high and low income. Normally, the district is 60% Democratic. It contains large numbers of conservative, homeowner oriented voters as well as the nucleus of Detroit's middle class liberals, labor officials, academics, church executives and the like. (Note: Almost all of the relevant demographic data and recent election results have been compiled and analyzed; it is presently being assembled for a longer strategy paper.)

The incumbent, Mrs. Martha Griffiths, has held office for six terms. She gained her seat in 1954 by defeating, in the Democratic primary, the AFL-CIO backed Thomas Poindexter who has gone on to become a nationally known defender of "homeowner's rights".

She has distinguished herself by a consistent hawk line on foreign affairs, strong support of labor legislation, weak and begrudging

support of civil rights legislations and atrocious record on civil liberties and a powerful position on the Ways and Means Committee. She has not been opposed in the last two Democratic primaries. She has strong support from the COPE machine. (Michael Kerman, the UAW's number one professional Detroit politico, has indicated that COPE will strongly oppose any effort to unseat her.)

The 17th District Democratic Organization, a generally liberal and weak group, will undoubtedly endorse Mrs. Griffiths even though many of its members are willing to admit privately that they do not agree with her on much of anything. Martha disdains the regular party group anyway and maintains her own campaign apparatus independent of it.

Mr. Lafferty, who has served as Chairman of Citizens for Peace in Vietnam, is running, of necessity by Michigan law, in the Democratic primary, scheduled for August second. Initial response to the campaign has been very good.

## STRATEGY AND PERSPECTIVE

The campaign platform is multi-issue with emphasis on Vietnam as a symbol of American foreign policy, advocating immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, a complete reappraisal and reshaping of foreign policy, radical changes in the structure and content of domestic

politics and radical approaches to domestic problems.

A series of position papers is being prepared by professors, primarily from Wayne State University and The University of Michigan as well as others both local and national with particular expertise. These papers will be issued as they are received and will also be distilled into one page leaflets for widespread distribution throughout the district.

There are, as would be expected, two major categories of campaign supporters and volunteers. Democratic party malcontents, old leftists and the less radical church, peace and civil rights forces compose the first group. They are joined by younger activists from SDS, the Detroit Committee to End the War in Vietnam (DCEWV), CORE and others. Tension between the two groups, high at the beginning, has been reduced by agreement that the nature of the district, the incumbent, the platform and the times make it possible to accommodate the longer range more radical objectives of the students as well as the short range, "win the election" oriented goals of the first group.

The DCEWV has voted to make the campaign their major focus for the summer. They will concentrate on intensive organizing in one area of the district.

## STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

There are presently four committees, averag-

ing fifteen or more members per committee. The finance committee has raised several hundred dollars and is proceeding with a number of other efforts. A petition committee has already gotten nearly half of the 1,250 signatures necessary by June 14. They are seeking a total of 5,000 signatures on nominating petitions. The education committee is responsible for public relations, propaganda and establishing and maintaining relations with other groups. It has already set up numerous speaking engagements, prepared bumper stickers, buttons etc. and will be responsible for preparing and widely distributing campaign literature. The research committee is responsible for the preparation of position papers and for collecting and analyzing demographic data, previous voting results and the like.

A steering committee, composed of committee chairmen, liaisons with other organizations (church groups, human relations councils, block clubs etc.), fulltime staff, and anyone else who wishes to come meets weekly to coordinate, plan strategy and set policy for the campaign.

An office has been opened and is staffed by volunteers. Paid staff (subsistence) will be selected as soon as funds and personnel are available.

Dena Clamage  
Frank Joyce

14406 Grand River  
Detroit, Michigan  
48227  
313-273-6540

# leadership conference on vietnam

Dear colleagues:

The feeling has been growing among a number of people who are concerned about the Vietnam war that there is a need for more intensive discussion and coordination among the nongovernmental organizations. We are writing to you to invite you to consider the possibility of forming a group which might be called the Leadership Conference on Vietnam. We will discuss this at a meeting at the National Council of Churches Conference Room, first floor in The Methodist Building, 110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D. C. at 2:00 p.m., Thursday, May 26.

We would suggest as a basis for discussion the following formula:

We support efforts to achieve a speedy end to the Vietnam war through an internationally guaranteed negotiated settlement based on self-determination of the Vietnamese people. We believe the possibility of such a settlement would be advanced by a halt to further military escalation. Consideration may be given to ways in which reduction in military activity might lead to improved prospects for negotiation.

Within this broad policy framework, there will necessarily be a wide spectrum of opinion. The purpose of the group would be to hold regular meetings, share information, discuss policy and strategy, and consider possible joint action, but any statements would be issued in the

name of individual organizations. No statements would be issued in the name of the Leadership Conference on Vietnam.

We hope you will be able to send a representative to the meeting on May 26.

Sincerely yours,

Vernon Ferwerda  
National Council of Churches

Curtis Gans  
Americans for Democratic Action

Sanford Gottlieb  
SANE

Rabbi Richard Hirsch  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

Dean William Moran  
Catholic Assoc. for International Peace

Sandford Z. Persons  
United World Federalists

Edward Snyder  
Friends Comm. on National Legislation

Rix Threadgill  
National Student Christian Federation

Philip Sherburne  
National Student Association  
Herman Will, Jr.  
Methodist Div. of Peace and World Order

May 22, 1966

"Leadership Conference on Vietnam"  
c/o Herman Will, Jr.

Methodist Division of Peace and World Order  
100 Maryland Avenue NE  
Washington, D. C. 20002

Dear Friends,

Regretably, SDS will not be able to be represented at your meeting Thursday to discuss formation of a "leadership conference on Vietnam". We do have some interest in the direction your discussions take, as we take a great interest in bringing an end to the Vietnam war.

Our misgivings concern the ambiguity in your letter about the relationship between the proposed Leadership Conference on Vietnam and the movement to end the war. Of course you will acknowledge that the "formula for discussion" is not at all representative of the movement to end the war, and it would be extremely dishonest to pass it off as such.

The formula seems to be somewhat to the conservative side of SANE's position, and the turnout at the recent March on Washington has demonstrated to our satisfaction that the bulk of the anti-war movement takes a very militant position on the question of negotiations and U. S. military presence in Vietnam.

SDS and other movement groups have a good deal of experience with the problem of how grass-roots movements are represented to the public, and we think this problem involves important principles. Our view is that the movements themselves should determine the nature of their representation in Washington; in the case of the anti-Vietnam war movement, this would mean trying to reach some kind of consensus through consultation with SDS, the Inter-University Committee for Debate on Foreign Policy, the 5 Beekman Street pacifist groups, Women For Peace, Massachusetts PAX, and the National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam, the Friends Service Committee, as well as SANE (the only of the groups issuing the invitation for Thursday's meeting which speaks for a large section of

the anti-war movement). The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Citizens Crusade Against Poverty are two examples of groups which function as Washington brokers for grass-roots movements, and which excite hostility from the more militant grass-roots organizations. Instead of functioning as allies of the Negro movement or the movements of the poor on the terms of the grass-roots outfits, these brokerage agencies have substituted their own timetables and priorities when speaking before Congress, before the Executive Branch, and to the public.

The very name "Leadership Conference on Vietnam" arouses doubts and misgivings among the "followership" of the movement, a lot of which can be found within SDS. I hope you will agree, then, that the proposed "leadership conference" should not become the arena in which statements are developed for later release by organizations, or the arena in which strategy of the opponents to the war vis-a-vis Capitol Hill or the White House is worked out.

As well there should be clarity on the relationship of a DC-based group to the rest of the movement. The DC "kernel" can play an important role in organizing the logistics of a March on Washington, but it should neither be the group that issues the Call, nor should it make decisions about the political direction of the March. To be very specific, there is some talk out here in the hinterlands about a March some time shortly after the November election. Political responsibility legitimately for the followership of the movement to end the war (the groups mentioned above) as well as other groups that might wish to join in such a March. As the war continues, we should count on other voluntary organizations wanting to be part of the end-the-war movement and make provision for their full participation.

I hope your meeting is fruitful, and once again convey my regrets at not being able to attend.

Fraternally yours,

Paul R. Booth  
National Secretary

## oglesby replies

(continued from page 1)

of to Social Dems. Saul also gives us a certain negative impression about CP democracy. There may be much to say for his impression. The Italian CP is, like all political parties that I know about, a centralist organization whose chiefs are in more or less perpetual struggle with factions. But his assertion that internal dissent takes "very restrained and indirect forms" is certainly no truer of the Italian Communists than of the British Labourists or, for that matter, the American Democrats; moreover, it would surely be most amusing news to those now taking part in the Radice-Havemann debate, which so far as I can tell is open, important, and cantankerous.

Finally, was I wrong or right about a turn to the left for Italy? It should be of little consequence that I am or am not; I reported only that the radicals feel pretty strong and by no means answer to Barzini's portrait. If Saul wants to argue the point with them, that's

quite all right with me. In fact, I wish he would write a long piece on Italy and France. I'm sure it would be informative, and if he could distinguish between my "impressions" and these of certain Italians, I'd be able to read it without getting a stomach ache. But I suppose, all in all, that I do think there is a kind of leftwardness afoot in Italy - in fact, throughout Europe, maybe to the Urals. That, however is another matter.

While I'm about it, a brief comment on Stan Aronowitz's comment. Is the American worker progressive or not? I have a hunch that he isn't and that this has more to do with his material comfort than his leadership. Stan holds the leadership more to blame and argue further that this material comfort may start to break up one day. I'm not fighting for my hunches. I hope to hell that Stan's right. Comfort is no good when it's stolen, and the world seems to stand in grave need of an American Left.



Nearly 1,000 students jammed the University of Wisconsin Administrative building, on May 9, during sit-in protesting ranking for selective service draft.

## community and struggle at u. of wisconsin

Jack Kittredge

A week ago tonight it was different. The radicals here were isolated, faction-ridden, in-grown, and weary. The epitome of the modern University, Wisconsin is liberal to a fault. Free expression is protected, paternalism minimized, and bureaucracy benevolently distant. Madison complements this soothing veneer with her scenic beauty, middle-class affluence, and 18-year beer-drinking age. One finds neither the blatancy of Mississippi nor the fury of Watts, neither the poverty of DeLano nor the ineptness of Berkeley in this concretization of the American Dream. At most, one finds the desperation of the intellectual in the age of the automaton.

But now that's gone. One does not speak of community easily, but if that means strangers speaking freely with one another, if that means hundreds of people being able to meet and decide crucial questions openly and well, if that means dozens of individual actions flowing into one another, then that has been experienced in that protest. And one does not speak of a movement lightly, but discussions are beginning where before there was hostility, people are discovering a mutuality of interest which outweighs old polarities of style, and

an earnestness is in the air which can open the way to change.

That in so seemingly content a place as this, the abstract moral concern of a few could snowball into an action involving over a thousand students thus far, with the representative support of the majority of the student body and possibly the faculty as well, suggests far-reaching consequences.

Very little of this dynamic can be attributed to conscious planning. The anti-war groups were talking to themselves, the civil rights issue was dormant, agitation for student rights had become established, and community action was negligible. One sensed a hierarchy of power and status, a complex interlocking system of games and rewards, which in fact sterilized individuality.

Then one morning all male students got little blue cards in the mail which they were told to sign and return if they wished their grades and class rank to be reported to the Selective Service. Next, they were advised to sign up for a special exam which would determine their eligibility, if in the lower class percentiles, for military action. Now most people got the message. The distance between

what you do learn and what you want to learn isn't half as important as the distance between what other people think you and the guy next to you learned.

Most people felt some resentment of this, but opposition was slow to spread. SDS decided to pass out the counter-exam, people talked of a sit-in at the exam center, and the left struggled to find a tactic which would convey a point rather than seem self-righteous and personally threatening. Only upon hearing news of the University of Chicago sit-in was that method latched onto in a kind of last-minute desperation.

To find the confluent elements in the success of the last two days is relevant both for broadening what we have here, and repeating similar efforts elsewhere in the future. Almost every American higher educational institution honors the tradition of liberal education. This is essentially a moral postulate about the value of man. Such fundamental egalitarianism is the key to the success of the new left within the academic community, and an issue which speaks to it is the *sine qua non* of any movement on the campus. Thus the responsiveness to opposing the discriminatory nature of the

draft system within both the student community and the society at large. Secondly, the position against such a bias conflicts with self-interest on the part of the protester, and leaves no room for ad hominem attacks on sincerity of motivations, as does, for instance, opposition to the war.

Opposing University complicity with the draft effectively combines appeals to many disparate groups. Arising because of a war and in part as a means of making its prosecution more difficult, the protest naturally attracts anti-war support. But discrimination in the draft is clearly a concern of civil rights and anti-poverty groups, as well. Because the student is relating to the draft through the University and its administration, the issue also rallies people fighting the *in loco parentis* battle. Finally, the point about university complicity with the draft provides new areas of action in the community such as teach-ins, petition campaigns, organizing statements of support etc. As all community members are involved, there are ample reasons for continual outreach.

That the issue is immediate to every student and is literally a life and death concern, is key to its becoming the question on campus. That it is also a relatively new point helps to undermine a retreat to hardened positions. Support here has come from unlikely fraternity and dormitory circles as well as the religiously and politically inclined.

Tactically, it has been vital that we are able to turn the question away from individual freedom to comply with the draft and direct it to organized, institutional complicity. While the individual may be free to participate in a discriminatory national policy, no University can do so and call itself free. This leads to the value of limited, possible goals, i.e. the end of compilation of class rank and the sending of grades to local boards, the refusal to hire out University facilities for the draft exam, and a statement by the University against participation in a discriminatory selection process; rather than demanding the abolition of 2-S on a national level. While the goals can be attained, and thus militant action has the potential of effectiveness, they remain symbolic of the larger disorder.

## draft exam - brooklyn college

Sue Siminsky

The picketing of the draft examination at Brooklyn College provides another example of how an unexpected and relatively minor unjust act provides the opportunity for rallying widespread student participation in a protest movement. The administration had been until

recently one of the most McCarthyite in the country, and it was no great surprise that

at this carry-over from the fifties only fifteen students arrived Saturday morning to protest the exam.

An hour later (9 A.M.) the campus police showed up, and one of them gave the protesters fifteen minutes in which to leave. When he returned twenty minutes later and found the demonstration continuing, he confiscated the picket signs and tore them up. Upon being questioned by the students, he declared that while they were breaking no law, "This is the week-end, and I'm the law. I don't need nothing writted. I don't need no proof. I don't have to show you nothing."

The group decided to retreat to a nearby snack shop and return when the test ended.

In the meantime, they set about making new signs, drafting a statement, calling radio and TV stations, and trying to reach as many other students as might be interested. This resulted in a group of demonstrators numbering fifty—three times the original group. While there was a second and larger conflict with the campus police, the students stood their ground and stayed to distribute the SDS test.

While fifty students may seem to be a small number compared to other campuses, this demonstration may well prove to have been a crucial one on a traditionally quiet campus.

# new politics and old problems

Bob Ross

On January 15, at Chicago's McCormick Place, a significant portion of that harried group that is Chicago's liberal and left community met to found the Committee for Independent Political Action. The phrase most repeated then and now in describing CIPA is that it is the "electoral arm of the protest movement (s)." It is not yet that; and those of us concerned with a serious new politics are revising our notions of the possibility and timeliness of certain coalitions. Our rhetoric has soared far beyond our actuality and we stumble on the old problems confronting the new politics.

From the outset three rough groupings have been discernible within CIPA: the peace activists, the civil rights activists, and the older generation of students, more or less described by the SDS community. The peace activists brought to CIPA an urgent, overwhelming concern with the War in Vietnam. Organizationally they came from Voters for Peace, Sane, and the Faculty Foreign Policy group. Their primary criteria for candidates, platforms,

and agitation has been a desire for rapid withdrawal from Vietnam by the United States.

The civil rights activists are of two types, which coalesce in terms of their programmatic and ideological impact on CIPA. First there

are a group of young Negro militants, who speak in the accents of conflict, urging power against the machine. Despite a certain fixation on this theme, they are the only group in carefully attuned to the problem of beating the machine at its own game - delivering votes.

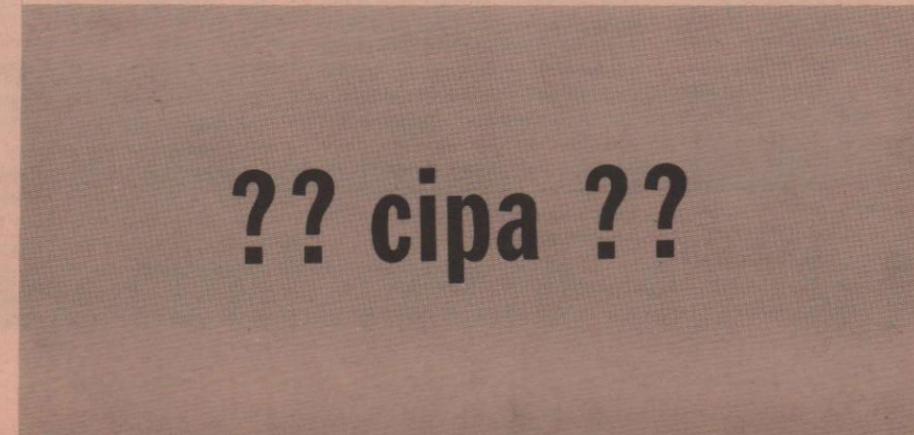
Allied with these militants, are a group of white, middle class civil rights radicals, centered mainly around the remains of the Friends of SNCC organization. Their conscious identification is that of the left wing of the civil rights movement. This group speaks of organizing in communities, grass roots participation and control of CIPA, and strategically, sees the new politics emerging primarily, if not exclusively, from the ghetto. Thus far this has been mainly rhetoric partly because of their social position, partly because we are all inexperienced in putting these ideas into electoral practice.

The group of "older students" roughly grouped around SDS (of which the present writer is one) has sympathized -ideologically- with the civil rights activists. However, they see an added responsibility and have a slightly different outlook. Simply put, this is to maintain

the coalition of peace and civil rights activists, ghetto militants and middle class radicals - to keep these groups together in the hope that the painfully obvious differences would be worked out in time and with experience.

Given these groupings, in the specific context of the immediate past history of Chicago's left, a number of problems have appeared. The most significant of these is that the new politics are being built by people who are by no means new to the (left) political scene. They bring with them five or ten and even more years of acquaintance with one another and mutual frustration in Chicago. More simply still, personality conflicts, old antagonisms, the scars of unforgotten factions lie close to the surface, inhibiting most every discussion.

Related to this is a problem of organizational loyalty. CIPA really is nobody's organization. Aside from a few individuals, most of the people involved in CIPA at the Congressional District level, or in city-wide discussions, have other more pressing and profound organizational commitments - commitments which bring



them to CIPA because it is a relevant arena to advance those other organizational and ideological notions. Besides the problems this presents in terms of the availability of human resource, it has much deeper importance in the face of the fragile nature of the coalition which must become real if CIPA is to have any meaning. A new politic cannot simply be the extension of the single issue concerns of formerly disparate organizations. At present, however, both the civil rights and peace activists come to CIPA with the same programmatic, ideological, and organizational demands which they would ordinarily make upon their separate organizations. That is, *there is little conscious, planned use of the new possibilities of coalition of these movements.*

A number of severely inhibiting consequences flow from the neglected opportunities for using a coalition of the movements as the base for a new "mix" in municipal and Congressional politics. In part, these are based upon objective differences in the community experience,

development, and bases of the different movements. Whatever the particular proportion of causal factors, the fact is that CIPA, at a city-wide level, is "factioned" along civil rights vs. peace interests. Often this appears to be Negro vs. White conflict, tainting discussion with rancorous and frightening tones. With both sides feeling the other is exploitative, "downtown (city-wide) CIPA" discussions have reached a stalemate. To the extent that anything is "happening", it is in the Congressional Districts and wards, where people feel their differences are small enough to stay together. The graduate student-SDS group, whose orientation is to maintain the coalition is handicapped in its fence-tending role by a) its rhetoric, which is overly intellectual and romantic, and opaque to most CIPA participants; b) its lack of experience in Chicago, including its ignorance of the history of other attempts to build inde-

generation, free of the last one's tendency to personal factionalism? Is it in fact the case that the urban Northern Negro movement is prepared to "risk" its political potential by becoming involved in radical foreign policy criticism? Are the protest movements ready for politics?

In Chicago's CIPA, those of us committed to an independent political expression of the new movements are acting under the assumption that timeliness cannot be decided a priority: one must try before defeat is acknowledged. When men say it is too early but it will work later, it means that people like us have been trying and laying the groundwork through frustrating years until the moment, unexpected, when hope is power, and the possible has happened.

Post Script:

This was written in early March, '66; it is now late May. In that time CIPA has ceased to exist at all except for the group in which Clark Kissinger has previously reported in NLN. Unfortunately, my implied predictions were correct, the moment is not at hand.

## cornell referendum

The Cornell chapter of SDS was instrumental in getting a referendum called on questions relating to the Vietnam war and the draft. We were promised an in-depth analysis of the vote, but it has not materialized. Tom Bell phoned in the results, which were as follows:

- 1) Whether support should be withdrawn from the Ky gov't.  
Yes 3688; No 2700; Abstain 267
- 2) Whether the U. S. should support U.N.-sponsored free elections.  
Yes 5665; No 906 Abstain 84
- 3) Whether bombing should cease in North and South Vietnam.  
Yes 3497; No 2994; Abstain 164
- 4) Whether the draft should be re-evaluated.  
Yes 5009; No 1557; Abstain 89
- 5) Whether the U. S. should establish an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal.  
Yes 3118; No 3371; Abstain 166
- 6) Whether ranking should be abolished.  
Yes 3242; No 3300; Abstain 113
- 7) Whether the draft test should not be held on campus.  
Yes 2138; No 4423; Abstain 94

# boston sds announces summer project

There will be a number of organizing projects involving SDSers in the Boston area this summer. Volunteers are welcome on all the activities; in addition, a number of workers will be paid at subsistence for participating full time on the project. There follows a list of the various projects.

Labor I. Several people are needed to continue work on hospital workers' organizing. The idea is to form unions at Boston hospitals along the lines of an industrial union: all the nurses, orderlies, cafeteria workers, all the people who work in the hospital in one union. Several SDS people may want to take summer jobs in various hospitals, (1) to find out what it's like, (2) to see if we could get something going among the people there, and (3) to put interested workers in touch with the Association already started at one Boston hospital. Other SDSers will continue working with the Association.

Labor II. The UE wants SDS people to take jobs in unorganized shops. These workers would be paid of course, and the UE would train them to be real labor organizers.

Mothers for Adequate Welfare. MAW needs a good full-time person, and two others pretty much full-time plus any part-time volunteers

that are available. This would involve working with welfare mothers to fight for their rights, in the context of a healthy grassroots organization originally part of the ERAP project.

MAW also needs money to hire community people who are ready to go on staff; some dedicated souls might work for pay and give the \$10 a week they don't need to MAW - they could come to MAW meetings and spread the word to rich community groups to get additional funds.

Campus. Summer school campuses in the Boston area are pretty hard to organize, but it is good to have chapters in order to show films; have teach-ins, etc. We could use one or two people part time (especially if they're in summer school anyway) to get this going and provide a liaison to the campus during the summer school term.

Town Meeting on Vietnam. The activities of speaking and leafletting we already engage in should be deepened by ongoing contacts with various groups, especially in the Inner City. A trade unionists for Peace committee should be formed with SDS help. The focus would be International Days of Protest, with an attempt to involve many more types of people

in actual protest activity than before. This project could involve 6 or 8 people, one full time, and it could be accompanied by study

groups for organizers and interested folk. If there are really as many as 8 organizers they could meet frequently to compare notes about their experiences and try to learn something from wrong approaches.

Political Activity. There is a definite need for peace people to become involved in radical politics. The issues that concern us must be linked to community issues, publicized and brought close-to-home for the Great White Middle Class. One way to do this is through electoral campaigns. However, the scene is a bit bleak this year - something must be done on the grassroots level to educate people so that a real people's candidate might emerge from this area in two years. Meanwhile, there are some halfway decent people running who deserve our qualified support and who will pay us to campaign for them.

Radical Education Program. A number of people have already begun work on projects called "The Theory of Imperialism" and "Socialism Communism and Participatory Democracy". People who will be in Boston for the

summer should think seriously about undertaking some research or participating in Free

University workshops. The emphasis in this type of activity is on small-group, seminar-type discussion leading to a collectively written paper.

Community School. A group of mothers in Roxbury is setting up a community school. They need a couple of part-time helpers for library building and fund-raising.

All these projects will be tied together by a committee for the Boston summer project, composed of representatives from these areas of activity plus any others it decided to adopt over the summer. The project committee will talk over how things are going on the various projects and how they interrelate. There will be a projects office with a staff person or two (2076 Mass. Ave., 547-5457). -Projects committee meetings will be open, and hopefully people coming to town can drop in on these and get inspired by reports from the projects (as opposed to getting turned off by the horror-show of struggling pluralism).

If you are interested in working on the Boston summer project, please drop us a line at the above address and specify the area of your interest.

# our first fight is here

Ed note: The following speech was given at a demonstration in front of the SRA building in Chicago. (the SRA is the group which got the contract for the draft exam). James Osborn is a resident of Uptown in Chicago, and a member of JOIN.

As I was coming to this rally today, I was wondering how great it must be to afford to go to college, or to be lucky enough to get into college. I was wondering how I'd feel if I were in college and I were taking this exam to dodge the draft. Would I feel sorry for the people that can't take this exam, or would I even take this exam to stay out of Vietnam? It brings a good question to my mind: does middle-class people have any feelings for other people at all?

Middle-class people or people that's in college have asked me this question before. Are you afraid to fight for your people? My answer sometimes is given: But who are my people? I consider every individual as my brother and I can't myself, see why I should kill someone for college students - that's what it all amounts to - while they can take one little exam and if they're intelligent get

out of the whole thing.

But who is to say which one is really intelligent? Is it a junior in college or is it a person that hasn't went to college? Don't get me wrong. Books are good, but people are good and great too. I have an inspiration to go to college sometimes, but is college more important than people at this point, or is people more important than college?

This guy that I know had to go to Vietnam. He said, "James, the war is sick. Do we really have to fight." And then tears came to his eyes. He said, "I'm not ashamed of being scared. Anyone that says they're not scared about the Vietnam situation are sicker than the war itself. I hope to see you in a couple of years, James. Or maybe I won't. And then he shook my hand and said good-bye. And that's when I really started thinking about this college exam. Was the government really being fair? I don't think so at all. It's giving people that are middle class a way out, but for people like me and ten thousand others, they have to go and kill hungry desperate people. And that's why I think the government isn't fair. It goes back to what I said before.

Are you afraid to fight for your people? But I am fighting now. My first fight is here, and the fight I'm fighting is the war on poverty fight. Poverty in Uptown Chicago consists of slum buildings, a slum landlord, the rotten welfare system

- like how a person has to be here for a year before they can get assistance - schools, to make schools decent, the day labor agencies - The day labor agencies, in case people here don't know what it is, it basically consists of winos that don't have an education. Those places hire them for a dollar and a quarter. They get what remains out of the three dollars and a quarter. And people says, what makes winos? Here's one good example.

We have other things that happen on Wilson Avenue, that is not quite poverty, but is like cops beating your head in with billy clubs. A friend of mine was drug by the hair of his head for two blocks just because a cop slapped a girl and he took up for her. They beat him so bad we couldn't recognize him in the newspapers. I have been beat by cops also, for whistling at a girl.

You're probably wondering how this fits in, all of what I've talked

about on Wilson Avenue. But are we fighting in Vietnam to create another Wilson Avenue?

The war in Vietnam is incompatible with the war on poverty. People say how great the war on poverty is doing. The fact of the matter is it's doing so great it pays an Urban Center director \$22,000 a year, and a person

without an education \$4,500. Is that really getting down to the grass roots, or is it taking money away from some other poor person? That's how great the war on poverty is doing.

But I think my first fight is here. Maybe I'm wrong, maybe I should just forget about the poor and leave them in the gutter. Why should the poor have to fight for the rich? Why should we defend them?

They have a lot of words for the war in Vietnam. I want to quote this from something written by the Rev. Robert W. Castle, Jr.: "Lord, they call this thing war - they got a lot of strange names that they use when they talk about it, like bombs, bazookas, F-87's, carriers, napalm, tanks, machine guns, generals and privates. The other words like destruction, starvation,

starvation, corruption, disaster, mutilation, killing like dead, Lord. Like Lord. Nobody ain't kiddin me and I know sure as hell they ain't kiddin you."

And this: "We got mens with guns everywhere - in Vietnam, in Germany, France, in Formosa, Dominican Republic, and Watts - are those guns there to give us freedom, or to keep us from having freedom? I don't know, Lord, do you know? I guess you know and I guess we all kind a know. You don't make no freedom, Lord, with guns. So Lord, I got to say to you that this prayer is about getting some real peace in the world. It's about ending the war in Vietnam. It's about letting people make thier own decisions." And that's the way I feel. Why don't we get the hell out?

In ending this speech I'd like to say that the college people will be taking this test all over the country, and I beg them to just think about other people fighting for them. Just ask yourself one last question, not for me and not for poor people, but for one people who doesn't believe in wars and his name is God: are you right of wrong? Thank you very much.

James Osborn

by or for the poor

by carl lorig

(continued from page 2)

I went to the Brenneman school P.T.A. meeting and heard such remarks as, "They accuse us of having no sympathy for the poor" and "I could tell you tales about being poor that would curl your hair" and "This has become just a clash of personalities." The funny thing is my hair is curly. I wonder if that is the reason I personally don't want their sympathy. I can't wear it or eat it and it won't keep me warm or even buy me a better education. About the clash of personalities, I think the lady was right because some people there refuse to give us any respect or try to understand our views. It is just like the War on Poverty run by the middle class for the "poor" Why not with the poor. Aren't our ideas any good. Your social worker knows best. We think we are adults and as such should be treated as equals. I personally don't agree with their ideas. Social workers have tried to rehabilitate me for two and a half years and now have finally given up. The middle class makes all the rules. They refuse to accept any of mine. They won't play if all the rules aren't theirs. I have decided I could refuse to play too. The middle class don't understand that. It just isn't done.

**to the  
c.p., U.S.A.**

Ed. note: The following letter was sent by Paul Booth to Mike Zagarell, Youth Section, Communist Party, USA, in response to the receipt of six invitations from him for the CP convention. His intention was for the NO to dispense the invitations as we saw fit.

S.D.S. will not be sending organizational observers to your convention, although we thank you for the invitations. However, a number of SDS leaders have expressed interest in attending the convention as observers, and have agreed to report on your meeting to SDS through our newspaper *New Left Notes* and in the other media open to individual members. These three, then, would attend as individual observers, and I am returning your invitations with the suggestion that the following people receive invitations:

C. Clark Kissinger, 6303 N. Lakewood, Chicago, Steve Max, 420 Riverside Drive, New York City, Bob Speck, 1103 East 63rd St., Chicago, Ill. 60637

I may have an additional name or two for you in the coming days.

Paul R. Booth

## in support of mcnamara

Irving, Calif.

Radicals must occasionally recognize the existence of the government in order actually to achieve the ends they have been working for. It is our feeling that Mr. McNamara's speech in Montreal May 18 is one of those occasions, and that sds chapters should encourage a nationwide massive letter-writing campaign in support of his proposal on the draft. When the chief of the Pentagon recommends as government policy a draft program that sds has been recommending so long already, it is time to stand behind his proposal and if necessary forget our pride and pretend it was his idea. It is probable that the sds protests, most recently against the Selective Service exam, have influenced his decision directly or indirectly - but who cares whose idea it was as long as it is made policy? Like teaching, protest has succeeded when it is no longer necessary.

Feeling that this is too terribly important an opportunity to miss, we would like to suggest that every sds chapter try to get each of its members and associates to write individual

letters immediately to McNamara, Johnson, and Senators and Congressmen, expressing wholehearted support of the proposal, and recommending that the Senate study the possibilities of its implementation and that Congress vote for it when the draft is up for reconsideration in 1967. A deluge of letters from all over the country is also far more effective than petitions.

Chapters should also wherever possible contact other peace, civil rights, and civil liberties groups in their areas and ask them to write letters too (or send telegrams), also immediately. Students could also present a request for letters and telegrams at the school's next faculty meeting. Signs could be posted on campus explaining how to address letters to local representatives and pointing out the urgency of the campaign since the draft will be reconsidered by Congress soon. Perhaps letter-writers should be encouraged to sign freedom draft cards at the same time; it might be particularly effective if girls signed them, indicating a willingness to work for mankind

if young men are given the option of building not burning. Letter-writing parties could be held, and chapters with money could provide the stamps. It is better, though, to send all letters in separate envelopes, so there will be a more impressive bulk and more will be read.

Finals are coming up of course, but certainly for a decision of such extreme moral importance, which could be the culmination of the many many hours sds people have spent working on the draft, an hour for letter-writing can be spared.

We do not, of course, think that other draft activities should cease; on the contrary, this is the moment to intensify them. But we do think that when someone in government has recognized and approved our position, it is time for an overwhelming positive response - partly because it can help get the proposal made into law, partly to show that we are not exclusively protesters. We appear perhaps too often to have only positions against.

SDS-U. of Calif. at Irving

## national meeting locations

Ann Arbor, Michigan. Pre-N.C. Conference on Electoral Politics will also be held in Ann Arbor, beginning Wed. afternoon of June 15th. The conference, mostly on a theoretical plane, will be aimed at developing SDS understanding of electoral organizing, its goals and its practice. Several electoral candidates will speak, and organizers from Committees for Independent Political Action and SDS-ERAP community unions will lead workshop discussions and will make general presentations.

The National Council meeting goes from Friday through Sunday (6-17-19) and will set the political priorities for summer action, the educational program in preparation for the summer convention; the new national secretary will be chosen at this NC as well.

These meetings will be followed by the New Politics School organized by the National Conference for New Politics, in the same location. The School will be a training session in electoral organizing, open to people planning on working this summer in electoral campaigns.

Travel subsidies will be available for people attending the New Politics School, and for NC delegates. This will be done through the regional offices, which will arrange transportation.

In Ann Arbor, report in to the VOICE office, rm. 2534 Student Activities Building, on Maynard (NO 3-6610).

Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota. The Sixth Annual National Convention of SDS will be held for five days at the very end of August (pre-

cise dates not yet selected) at the Minnesota Summerhill Community School, on Spray Island in Lake Minnetonka. Spray Island is reached from the Spring Park Landing on the Lake, within half an hour commuting distance from the bus and train stations in Minneapolis.

The convention is the policy-making meeting of SDS. This convention will adopt a statement of the organization's political perspective. All members are urged to participate in the Convention. Past practice has awarded two votes at the convention to elected chapter delegates; chapters are entitled to elect one chapter delegate for each five members. Delegate selections should be sent by the chapters to the national office to establish credentials.

by Ed Hamlett

Pensacola Beach, Fla.—A bunch of white folks from New Orleans, Nashville, and Ala. are here to talk about white community organizing. The informal meeting was called by people in New Orleans who gave up their apartments to black folks for a weekend meeting to talk about Black Consciousness.

I said BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS, not BELOVED COMMUNITY. Movement people in the South don't talk about the latter so much anymore. They're less idealistic (some would say less naive) than they used to be. The reasons for the dampening of idealism are not difficult to discover: Some restaurants open to middle-class Negroes (lower-class white places remain off-limits); A few hundred thousand newly registered voters—with the same old "Segs" running and winning; a few thousand Negro kids in previously all-white schools—learning about the blessings of the white man's civilization, white history, and white accomplishments; and the vast majority of the other Negro kids in all-black, still inferior, white-controlled schools—and they learn about the white man too, in many cases from textbooks discarded by whites years ago.

#### THE MOVEMENT'S BELOVED COMMUNITY

But, you protest, the Beloved Community was to have been built first within the Movement, if not immediately in the larger society.

So what about that "band of brothers and circle of trust"? The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which is what I'm talking about mainly, has always had whites on its staff. They were there, initially, for at least two reasons: 1) To demonstrate in the South that whites and Negroes could work together under any circumstances to build the

"Beloved Community"; and 2) To utilize their vitally needed skills and labor. The first two whites were from the South; soon northern Negroes and whites came in to work. In early days there was a good deal of talk about and feeling for the Beloved Community, which, everyone hoped, was being built. Victories came frequently.

ONE THOUSAND WHITE YANKS In the fall of 1963 it was discovered in the Freedom Vote campaign in Mississippi that the presence of northern whites in fairly large numbers brought protection to the work from the federal government, that it had never given to black workers. Additionally, because SNCC had all but deserted its early black campus base. Negroes could not be recruited in sufficient numbers to meet the projected personnel needs for the work in voter registration, freedom schools and general community organizing. Thus, the call went out for 1,000 northern volunteers to help open up Mississippi in the summer of 1964. By the previous spring many local Negroes had begun to carry on organizations—doing mimeographing, typing, and leg work.

And then the volunteers came. They were more "efficient" in almost every way. They meantwell; they tried hard; they had been invited to come; but some of the hosts soon had second thoughts.

#### BENEFIT OF LIABILITY?

Nevertheless, most of those involved will admit that that

# black consciousness

volunteers were instrumental in helping to secure the basic rights of blacks to organize, picket and vote. But the "flood" of whites produced serious problems. It took almost a year for local participation in daily work to be built up again.

Antagonisms between local, black staff and white volunteers produced psychological damage to some in both groups that was slow to mend, if at all. Whether the above advances could have been accomplished by blacks alone, thus avoiding the liabilities of white participation, is a question which can never be answered.

I stated earlier that there were initially two primary reasons for

service by training local people to perform them.

If these reasons for white involvement are no longer important, what about the other, past justifications? Many blacks say that there are absolutely none; in fact, some say that for whites to remain would be extremely detrimental. And here we must look at the question of Black Consciousness, and what it is.

Blacks, all blacks, must be aware that they are not inferior to whites. They must know that black people have made significant contributions to world civilization over the centuries, including here in the United States. It is their being aware that whites, in many cases,

County, Alabama must be disabused of the belief that Mr Calhoun,

the recent black candidate for sheriff who lost in spite of the fact that Negroes outvoted whites by a huge majority, can do as good a job as sheriff as the white man that the Negroes put in office, and maybe better. Many blacks assert that this will not happen if whites continue to help to do the organizing, the research, and all the other things.

It is increasingly contended that the very presence of whites has a very serious intimidating effect on the masses of black people. Because they have been taught it all their lives, many continue to be-

#### WHAT WHITES CAN DO

1) There is much talk by whites about an interracial movement of the poor. But there is no movement of poor whites with whom the thousands of organized Negroes may ally themselves. Most blacks in the Movement realize that poor Negroes need allies, and that over and above the questions of black consciousness and unity, there must be class unity. But they question whether poor whites, who do the dirty work of bombing and beating, can be organized. None of us whites are demonstrating to them that they are wrong; but we are agreed that whites must do it. (Many Negroes argue that disaffected middleclass whites have been taking the easy route and escaping to the black community.)

2) There is also the problem of racism in America which pervades all classes of whites. That is must be eliminated is obviously. This means that whites too must be made conscious of Negro history, African contributions to man's culture, and all the other things discussed above. The implications of this task for our educational system

at all levels are far reaching.

Furthermore, those of us who cherish the idea of an integrated society, whether we be white or Negro, must ask ourselves if it is integration or assimilation that we are about at present. If it is the latter, and I think it is, then perhaps we must wait for real integration. The whole discussion of integration has to do with absorption, not with sharing. This must stop!

3) The Blacks who say that the war in Vietnam is a racist, white man's war assert that whites must end it. A corollary of this is that they will admit of no responsibility for participation in the Peace Movement as such.

#### some serious questions

In the last analysis, I must admit that I have serious questions about much of what I have tried to relate in the above. When I heard about the recent all-black meeting in New Orleans, I was not hald joking when I suggested that we whites must hold "sit-ins" at the affair to protest and "obviously unjust situation." The injustice is not so obvious to me now. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that many, many in SNCC and in the community do not hold with all or even part of these views. Others accept them as a temporary tactic, some as a long-range strategy.

There are several questions, some implicit in this paper, which I am not prepared to deal with at this time, but which must be answered soon:

1) Who is "black"? Those advocating Black consciousness now accept the white definition. Is Ralph Bunche "black"?

2) How can blacks be unified so that BG can be developed in such a "white" land?

3) Is there danger of an ideology of Black Superiority developing from this?

4) Where is the "Beloved Community"?

Much rough road will be traveled in the thrashing out of this whole thing in the South. The Northern Student Movement was at this point two years ago. It is now all black with many white friends. SNCC and other viable parts of the southern black Movement appear to be heading in the same direction. Wailing and gnashing of teeth is senseless. What is needed is a serious attempt at understanding and openness; and much work in the white community.

## white organizing: new odyessy

White civil rights workers throughout the South are now navigating difficult currents in their journey home. On one side of their frail craft lies the Scylla of Black Consciousness (see article in this newsletter), with the implication that whites cannot continue their present role in the Negro freedom movement; on the other side lies the stark statistical Charybdis of the Alabama Democratic primary, in which at most 3% of all whites voting chose Richmond Flowers, despite the fact that he was the only candidate who offered a platform geared to the interests of the poor.

The only existing Southern organizing project involving whites is the Southern Mountain Project of the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF). The SMP will attempt to build an interracial movement of the poor, using an integrated staff to organize around permanent unemployment pay, better medical care, effective anti-poverty programs and more responsive elected officials. Their East Tennessee based experimental project has been in operation since last June, chiefly familiarizing the community with them and vice versa. It is still too early to judge its potentiality.

While accepting the basic SMP program most civil rights workers are inclined to believe that, even disregarding the importance of building black consciousness, initial interracial organization is an Achilles Heel which foredooms the project to failure.

Some find the siren song of rural white organizing most enticing, and would like to begin in one of the poorer counties of Appalachia, either in Kentucky or East Tennessee. Others favor initiating a project in a Border State city, such as Louisville, Wheeling or St. Louis, with the idea that knowledge and Deep South migrants found there would make eventual organizing further South more fruitful (a sort of human Trojan Horse technique).

white participation in SNCC. 1) To demonstrate that blacks and whites can work together to build the Beloved Community; and, 2) To secure the needed skills. It is now clear to most people in the South that the first is true. With regard to the second, the vital functions of typing, printing, and research can be done, and in many cases now are being done, by Negroes. It

is agreed that those whites who are still performing these tasks can do the Movement a valuable

Those with personal experience cite obstacles beyond the racial question which make white organizing more difficult than work in black communities. Poor whites, particularly in rural areas, are extremely suspicious of outsiders. Also, despite their oppression, they tend to identify more strongly than Negroes with the existing community leadership, making it more difficult for them to perceive the broad patterns of exploitation and build a competing organization. In the Negro community the clergy has often been important in beginning movement groups; this would be unlikely in a white community. For these reasons an urban community, where rural in-migrants are themselves strangers, socially dislocated and unrelated to local power elements, seems a more likely starting point.

The actual location of a project will probably be determined by the proclivities of the organizers. At its April Conference, SSOC voted to support a white community project whose organizers seem capable and committed, without specifying location. Even Alabama and Mississippi were not excluded, since SSOC sees, as Odysseus with the Cyclops that in the land of the one-eyed the two-eyed is king. Two young men who have worked with SNCC in Alabama have expressed a desire to begin a project, but neither can commit himself for longer than 3 months and SSOC is attempting to find someone who could begin with them and continue the project for at least a year, with the (If you are interested please write immediately).

In any event, it looks like a long trip and young Southern white activists are presently hesitant to attest that any Penelopes are eagerly waiting to welcome them.

For more information, application blanks, etc. contact: SSOC, Box 6403, Nashville, Tenn.

are bad judges of the value of these contributions. It is their being conscious that even the English language is, at times, inherently inadequate for describing Africans or Afro-Americans, their achievements and culture. (Check Roget's *Thesaurus* for synonyms for "black" then look at those for "white.") And it is more. It is not only having facts and knowledge about history, and sociological statistics, etc.; it is also believing and feeling in one's GUTS that they are true. For example, the Negroes in Wilcox

believe that "if you're black, stay back," and that "white is right." Thus many black people have developed the habit of setting the whites take the initiative. So militant blacks want to remove this impediment. "Let whitey do it" is saved for white organizing and fighting in Vietnam.

If you do not readily take to this line of reasoning, as I did not, you are offered other compelling arguments for confining your work to the white community. Let me state three more that I know.

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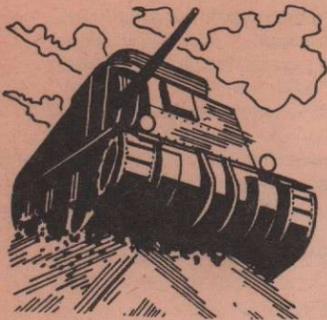
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