NEW LEFT NOTES

S D S
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is there a VIETNAM WINTER ?

Michael Schaeffer
Amherst - Smith SDS

"Vietnam Summer is a liberal protest. It was initiated by top liberals, it acts upon liberal assumptions, it proceeds on liberal undemocratic methods of organization and leadership. The underlying purposes of this liberal strategy are to recapture leadership of the peace and civil rights movement, to blunt the awakening of our radical, anti-liberal identity, and finally, to lay the groundwork for leading us into a coalitionist liberal-progressive third-party movement."

So did an article in New Left Notes condemn Vietnam Summer. As a member and chapter officer of SDS and a field secretary of Vietnam Summer, I had mixed reactions to the statement, but in the end I think it is valid.

In defense, Vietnam Summer is as radical or as conservative in a given local area as each group makes it; there is no "liberal" ideology handed down by the national office to field secretaries or to local groups. And, contrary to fears expressed in NLN, the paid staff of Vietnam Summer is certainly as radical as that of SDS, if not more so. The problem comes from the constituency — the midle class. Can the middle class become a part of a radical, revolutionary (consciously revolutionary) movement in the US?

My goal here is to examine the answer to this question, particulary as it relates to the desirability of sending delegates from Vietnam Summer groups to the National Conference for New Politics convention Labor Day weekend.

First, what do I mean by " middle class"? Essentially, "middle class" is defined in economic terms (income, to pick an arbitrary level, generally above $5000); job terms (professionals, members of the "new working class"); status terms (white, suburban, affluent); and most importantly, in terms of its conception of itself (wholesome, mainstream, law and order personified). But these are just guidelines, admittedly imperfect — they accomplish only what they are intended — an outline of the Vietnam Summer constituency. (There are non-middle class groups being organized in Vietnam Summer, but the main focus and support is middle class, at least in my area, Western Massachusetts)

What are the problems in organizing middle class communities? Does the middle class have a radical potential? I link these questions together because, since I am interested in organizing the middle class specifically toward radical change, my difficulties arise due to the tendency toward mollycoddle liberalism. That this should be seems predictable. A group of people who are unaware of how bad the system is or how badly it uses them is not going to be gung-ho about destroying that system of which it is a part. "Domestic reality in the United States today," writes Clyde Grubbs in the New England VS newsletter Peacemeal, "is domination by large corporations." I agree, but I doubt many Vietnam Summer workers would, or if they do, would want to radically change that system. Thus, the main problem in middle class organizing is the lack of radical consciousness. This is especially true due to the single-issue basis of most Vietnam Summer work. The perspective is "End the War", without realizing that the War is only a manifestation of the depper cancers in the American system which must be eradicated. The reason multi-issue organizing is not happening in conjunction with Vietnam Summer is not really the fault of the staff, but it is because of the prgmatic fact that the bulk of the constituents either are not prepared for, or would not work for it. Yet, without a multi-issue based movement, "you ain't got nothing." Floyd McKissick related this at the Black Power Conference in this way:

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THE SCENE AT BELOIT

Convo YES - IBM NO!

Richard C. Shaner
Peter Dorman

> "Tenet IV: A government by the consent of the governed, constitutionally expressed."
>
> "The (Beloit) plan is based on the conviction that students are capable of self-education to a far greater extent than most educators are willing to grant. Beloit believes that when strongly motivated by stimulating and meaningful experiences on campus and off, students can generate and sustain a large part of the intellectual excitement that makes education possible."

So states the Beloit College Catalogue. So much for the Beloit College Catalogue.

As a means of generating intellectual excitement, the college requires all students, except those in their last two terms, to turn in IBM cards at ten "official" convocations and one or two clusters (three or more lectures on the same topic grouped in a period of two or three days) per fifteen-week term. A failure to meet the required number of IBM points automatically places a student on academic probation. When the program was first instituted, the number of points required was 40 per term. Two years ago, working through the student senate, the requirements were reduced to 20 points. The next year the number of required points was lowered to ten. Irrespective of the number, however, proponents of the point system have argued that if there were no such requirement, outside speakers would be insulted by low attendance and students could be deprived of needed external direction in their intellectual lives. Complaints, both from students and from speakers who objected to presiding over a captive audience, were ignored.

Convocation clusters had traditionally been planned by faculty and administration committees, costing $1500.00 per cluster. But during the summer term (Beloit is on a tri-mester program) a student group planned and financed, with a budget of $375.00, a cluster on "The New Left" which included as speakers Steve Halliwell, Ivanhoe Donaldson, Jack Newfield, and Warner Wick. The administration permitted this to be an "official" cluster (i.e. suitable for the collection of IBM cards after each lecture). Since the student-planned cluster was clearly developing into a far more popular and meaningful event than any of the recent clusters (often held to honor alumni and often financed directly by corporations as image-building devices), there arose a greater pride in student direction of academic programs. As a result, concern over the convo point system reappeared.

A private meeting of concerned students was held after the second lecture and it was decided that the students would be requested to turn in their IBM cards at the beginning of the third lecture instead of the end so that the cards would not be a measurement of enforced attendance and those not interested in the lecture

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State of Siege in the N.O.

We who work in the national office are facing a serious situation in Chicago and feel the membership should know the present circumstances.

The black rebellion has taken on major dimensions across the country, and Chicago, which has one of the worst ghettoes of them all—actually two of them, South Side and West Side—is in a very tense state. The only action so far has been sporadic burning and window smashing, but the police have been very active, arresting people off the streets in order to put "troublemakers" out of commission. For those of you who have not been to the national office, you should know that we are located right on the edge of the West Side ghetto in a building which also houses other Chicago area peace groups. Windows have been smashed in this building and nearby ones during the past week, and security precautions have been taken against destruction of our files and equipment.

But there is police harassment—we are watched from in front of the building a good part of each day—and in the last week there were ten arrests of SDS staff people and their friends. The arrests occurred on the West Side while people were riding through in cars, and the people arrested have had to spend the night in jail and post enormous bond (the charge of disturbing the peace, the one the cops are using all over the city, which normally draws $250, now draws $1000 bond). In addition, John Veneziale, one of our staff members, was punched in the face by a cop and as a result had charges filed against him of resisting an officer of the peace on the city and state level, charges which amounted to $5000 bond (if convicted, John could get 18 months). The police know the people arrested are SDS staff and are busily trying to put together some kind of conspiracy thing. (Why else would black people rise up in Daley's Chicagoland?)

The arrests have tied up $1100 of SDS funds, which means that we have depleted what was left of the general account and most of the special accounts for the draft and the Radical Education Center. We will eventually get 90% of that back, but not soon enough to cover immediate operating costs. We have no reason to believe that there will not be more arrests in the future, particularly if the ghetto rebellion hits Chicago; the cops may bust people in the national office even if things break in Uptown, where JOIN is working, and almost certainly if a rebellion breaks out on the West Side.

The legal angle has been covered—the ACLU is providing a battery of lawyers to challenge the ridiculous charges made against our staff people, but there is no certainty of what will happen in the Chicago courts. But the national office is now in a crisis state financially—we can carry on the work of this office while being harassed, but we cannot keep going if we are unable to fund ourselves. We need money immediately for a bail fund, and we need contributions to keep this operation going. We will need money for food for people in the ghetto if the police close down the whole area. As it stands now, we can probably pay the staff 2/3 subsistence ($20) one more week and buy printing supplies for a week, and then it looks very bleak.

If you read your New Left Notes, you know the convention in June passed a resolution calling for support of any left group under pressure. The national office is faced with the fact that it must operate in the midst of one of the most brutal and inhuman ghettoes in the nation, one that is run like a police state; to eliminate the risk of arrests and end the constant threat of police harassment would require our abandoning not only our physical location but also our purpose. If we accept this particular situation as one which is relevant to us all, then we must support the n.o. We know that we don't send NLN to the affluent elite of this country, but the situation of many of you out there is better than what we face here. Beg from your parents, miss a meal, skip a flick—everything will help to keep the presses running, the staff physically functional, and contact between people who believe in us all over this country flowing smoothly.

The N.O. staff

Letters to NLN

June 26, 1967

Dear Friends:

We were very happy to receive your letter and to know your radical movement against Vietnam War.
We of the J-A Students Committee against Vietnam War has come into being because of the escalation of Vietnam War.
Our general activity is:
to study and analize the status quo of Vietnam War,
to demonstrate against the war.
In Japan there are many American military bases, which uses for Vietnam War.
Take Sunagawa military base for instance, the expansion of the military base is carried out.
Many students and labours had the activity to stop its expansion, at that time one of the active friends who took part in this activities was killed by the hatefull national police.
We are very regretfull for the reality.
And we must make up our minds strongly to act the anti-war activities.
Finally we enclose the pictures of our activities.

Yours in the struggle,

Sizuo Sawagi
Communications

7/19/67
1721 S. Averill Ave.
San Pedro, Calif.

Gentlemen,

On page 8 of New Left Notes—July 10 issue, is a statement that "SDS condemns the U.S.S.R. for its role as a party to American aggression against the Vietnamese people & that the U.S. government with the help of the Soviet government is responsible for that war."

What in hell do you mean by such a statement? Which country, if not the U.S.S.R., is the main supplier of war materiel to North Viet Nam? Where are they getting their main supply of rockets, aircraft, etc.?

And about peace marches. I was so moved by what happened in L.A. on June 23rd that I am now participating more than ever. I'm even becoming a draft counselor. This is the benefit of a march. Not its effect on the policies of the government, but in moving people to act and so involve others. You guys are really missing the boat. But if you don't like the marches, don't knock them if the decision to hold one is what a segment of the peace movement wants.

Fraternally,

Bill Eisman

U. of KENTUCKY EDITORIAL

reprinted from THE KENTUCKY KERNEL
JULY 27, 1967

At their summer convention in Ann Arbor Michigan, Students for a Democratic Society, who in dress and physical appearance generally resemble hippies were outspokenly critical of and concerned about their image in the nation's press.

The Kernel used to think that only the establishment was preoccupied with image. But now it appears the student activists are too, and it is a degenerative shame.

Will SDS cast about with the $74 remaining in its national treasury after meeting current expenses and seek to hire a Public Relations firm to tinker with the organization's image? Will the SDS males at the University now begin to wear fashionably tapered seven button shirts below their short haircuts? Will the SDS females start wearing A-line dresses below their beauty-shopped hairdos?

If so, their images will improve, a little.

And the unwary will be unable to distinguish members of the establishment from members of SDS, at least by appearance. But the danger to SDS is that when it puts on the mantle of the establishment, SDS may adopt its mentality too!

What SDS members fail to realize is that the nation's press, except for the better newspapers, is a member of the establishment most generally to be found cheering in the stands instead of reporting impartially from the sidelines.

If SDS were to gain the goodwill of the national news media then SDS will have joined the team; and if joining the team sounds like it may be worthwhile let SDS be reminded that the average team member is paid thirty pieces of nickel plated copper which pass these days for silver.

Attention SDS members who have the time and financial resources.
The members of the Print Shop in Chicago, 1608 W. Madison St., request that as many of you as possible please come to help in a leafleting campaign against the war in Vietnam and the problem of mass arrest in the city.
Thank you.

new left notes

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VOLUME 2, NUMBER 28 let the people decide AUGUST 7, 1967

PEACE without SERVITUDE

Mike Colby

At 6:00 AM Friday, July 21, three cohorts from the New Orleans Draft Resisters Union and I arrived at the Canal Street Induction Center, where I was to receive my pre-induction physical. We dispersed ourselves among the other pre-inductees while friends outside began to assemble and distribute anti-war literature to the new arrivals. Using plainclothes infiltration tactics we, on the inside, approached the pre-inductees to see what type of support or opposition we were likely to receive. Most expressed doubts about serving, yet few could consider resistance.

Having briefed myself on reports of similar encounters, my legal rights, and my political and moral convictions, I felt prepared for my first confrontation with the military mind. Then a civilian opened the gates and told all "inductees" to follow him. I pointed out the fact that we were only PRE-inductees, but he said it was all the same. When we reached the pre-physical waiting room I began distributing leaflets which explained why I would not serve in the military and my feelings about the Establishment which demanded our lives in service to It. I told the group that I had tried to work with the law to obtain a CO classification and that I had been refused without explanation. They seemed generally sympathetic but did not seem to relate their situations to mine. My three friends voiced their support and challenged the pre-inductees to express an opinion. There was no response. I told them to observe (carefully) the ways my rights would be violated, because I was expecting the worst from the military. Then a Veteran-type officer demanded the leaflets, telling me I was in a Federal building and subject to military law. I told him that I was a civilian, that the leaflets were private property, and that the building was public property. He again said it was government property, and, therefore, not public property. The officer left to check Selective Service

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LAREDO ALERT!

Lardeo, Tex., is a Mexican community on the Texas-Mexican border. Its population is about 75,000. Lardeo has had the distinction for many years of being the poorest city in the U.S. It lacks all the basic community needs and services. The streets are mainly unpaved (paved only in the business district). There are no sidewalks, no adequate electric and water power. Over 90% of the housing is below any minimal standards set for any urban community. Wage levels are far below national averages—most people work for less than $1 an hour and many people earn only $10-15 a week.

There has been for sometime a VISTA project there. Several volunteers (3) of the project, appalled by the conditions, helped to organize and support a strike of restaurant workers who were earning about 35 cents an hour. As a result of this activity, the volunteers were fired and as a result the community became aroused and took action in support of the three Vistas.

Marches and protests were organized, and as a result, the beginnings of a real community organizing effort began to emerge. There is clear evidence that the opportunities for organization in the community are unlimited. The response has been excellent. There is a serious need for all things needed in the organization's work. Of greatest urgency are organizers that speak Spanish or who are willing to learn.

The project is presently staffed by only one of the former Vistas, with part-time help from several friendly people in Laredo. The area is prepared to move in a radical direction, but staff is needed desperately. Contact Neal Birnbaum, 1118 Price St., Laredo, Tex., or Irv Birnbaum, 11 S. LaSalle St., rm. 1219, Chicago, Ill.

Tell It Like It Is...

Barry Bluestone
VOICE

Even the corporate-liberal establishment is talking straight these days.

Last week VOICE attended another in a series of lecture sessions which are part of the University of Michigan's Sesquicentennial Birthday Bash. The bash, a series of disconnected events featuring the best of the American "University-Military-Industrial Complex" is part of a year-long 150th anniversary celebration of the University. Its sole function is to provide a gathering place for ancient alumnae to spill forth with gifts to the university, such as new golf courses for the faculty and research labs for the automotive and pharmaceutical industries. Interestingly enough, the big contributors to the Sesqui-fund have been General Motors, Park-Davis, and Dow Chemical!

The conference session last week on "The University and Research" featured such notables as James Webb, NASA administrator, Geoffrey Norman, ex-biological and chemical war researcher at the Army's Fort Dietrich and now vice-president for research at Michigan, and special "birthday bash" guest, Lee DuBridge, president and commander-in-chief of that bastion of humanist studies, the California Institute of Technology.

VOICE members have made it a standing policy to attend these illuminating sessions in order to raise questions which obviously would not be raised otherwise. They have "won" free question periods by threatening to "crash" the birthday bash with banners—what would have amounted to a "love-in"—and to shout questions from the floor. Free question periods are used to get the "man" to "tell it like it is!"

Case in point: "The University and Research" conference session dragged on for three hours before the short "questions from the floor" period began. At no time did panel members mention classified war research and other forms of chemical, biological, and traditional weapons development on the campus. As soon as the question period broke out, VOICE had full reign, for all others in the room (mostly octogenarian alumnae) had been lulled to sleep by the previous boring presentations. After several direct-hit questions on U of M's "Project Michigan", which involves the development of infra-red sensing equipment for jungle-flushing, we angered the special guest, Mr. Du Bridge, enough that he finally told the truth.

Dr. Du Bridge, obviously a man who has trouble keeping his cool, grabbed the microphone in response to a question, "Why war research on campus?" and bellowed, "Because it is Valuable!" "Valuable for what?" VOICE shouted back. In response, DuBridge gripped the mike hard and screamed that it is "Valuable for killing people" and stopped.

Norman, who was chairing the session, quickly adjourned it and ran, like other panel members, for cover from the press. But it was too late. That afternoon and the next morning it was pretty to see that the papers had recorded Mr. Du Bridge's dictum for posterity.

The Birthday Bash is not over yet, and we are preparing new questions for upcoming sessions. It looks like a pretty good idea to take advantage of every public program set up by the university. They get the people together for us and we get to use the soap-box. It's cheap and somewhat effective.

Demanding democratic procedure for free inquiry of all public speakers gives us an arena for expressing our outrage, not always in the most polite forms. Some people get turned off by our questions and our insistence that we get straight answers. But others are listening ...and the press sometimes does a pretty good job of recording the truth when it comes from the horse's mouth. We have to remember that polite discourse exists in society to keep people from expressing outrage. It isn't nice to ask Mr. Norman to explain what type of soil research he did at Fort Dietrich up till 1952. It isn't nice to accuse Mr. DuBridge of helping to burn Vietnamese children. It isn't nice to accuse Mr. Webb of helping to spend taxpayers' money on moon missiles when it should be spent on education and homes for earth people. It isn't nice...but it gets at the truth. It works.

PRAXIS

note from the editors

At the national convention in June part of the criticism leveled at the national staff by members concerned the PRAXIS supplement. People felt that the editorial board represented a specific point of view that had not been accepted or even widely discussed by the membership — the "new working class" viewpoint — and that consequently articles would be chosen for the supplement with a certain bias.

The concern would be a legitimate one were there a large number of articles coming in to New Left Notes for consideration. However in actuality, the editors have had to recruit articles for the supplement in order to publish the supplement at all, for the few articles that have been submitted (and all of them had been sent before PRAXIS began to appear) were sketchy and polemical in nature. We are aware that there is a built-in bias in the fact that we have recruited the articles, since the people approached are people we know and study with.

But there is a more important question: why do radicals not submit written work to a theoretical journal? If we all recognize the importance of new and creative thought, why are people so reticent? Or are they just not producing theory in the radical movement? Part of the answer must lie in the fact that many radicals are still very careerist in orientation and think that it is more important to publish their thought in more established left journals or withhold publication on things that are not of the strictest academic precision, no matter how creative the essay or article may be.

There is a deeper problem, however, in the attitude of movement people to "intellectual" work. Because the educational mills have been so effective in separating out the issues that are relevant to people's lives and presenting education as a business of learning the skills for a highly specialized position in the corporate wonderland, movement people — as well as most of the campus population — are estranged from the whole business of study, research, and theoretical thought. To most people, those concerns are as separate and "special" in the radical movement as they are in the multiverity. Movement "intellectuals" are regarded with a combination of awe and disdain, more frequently the latter.

In a way, this is a bad time to raise this issue, since the article published in this issue of PRAXIS is more technical than anything previously published here. Even the most earnest reader could be easily turned off by phrases like "the intersectoral balance of product flows." But if people are willing to treat the essay with the same demands that they treat other issues — the relevance of thearticle to the building of the radical movement in America — then this article and the other articles that appear in PRAXIS willprove to be of great value.

For in this article Nell is raising a lot of considerations that are of basic importance for young radicals. We are faced with the fact that we are seeking to build a liberation movement in a context very different from that which has faced any previous movement. In the age of the industrial revolution, the bourgeoisie were able to come up with a creative solution to the problems created by the introduction of machines and tools that were immensely more prductive than the systems of production that created the system of social and economic relations known as feudalism. The failures of that system of thought and values are evident to a generation that grew up with the fact of advanced technology and cybernation, and it is to that new set of possibilities that we must respond. In this essay, Ed Nell has attempted to deal with the problem of putting together a new system of societal organization that takes into account the facts of our age. He seeks to eliminate the market, which has been justified in bourgeois economics because of its assumed efficiency and flexibility; in so doing, Nell eliminates the whole business of basing a society on material incentives and presents a new division of society into sectors totally different from anything that now exists.

The essay raises many questions, for it assumes a great deal about the possibility of changing the relationships that tie men to each other as well as the nature of power in society. But that's just the sort of issue that the radical movement must face if it is to succeed.

Ed Nell is an assistant professor of Economics at Wesleyan University in Middletow, Connecticut. This paper was originally presented at the Princeton Conference in February 1967. All correspondence should be sent to: Praxis, SDS, 1608 W. Madison, Chicago, Ill. 60612.

— The Editors

Automation and the Abolition of the Market

Edward J. Nell

I. Technical Progress and the Market System

Traditionally, there have been two kinds of anti-technological thinking: the Neo-Luddite, which emphasizes the displacement of workers' jobs, and the Tory Romantic, which emphasized the shattering of traditional social patterns. The latter position has recently been developed in its extreme form by Jacques Ellul, who argues that the dominance of technique totally undermines the traditional moral concerns of Western culture (1). Both contain important elements of truth, but the first fails to recognize the potential for new industries and even a whole new matrix of social interdependence, in which nearly everyone's living standard is higher; the second denies the possibility of technology leading to a new form of social structure where technique would become a means for man to dominate his environment (2).

Nevertheless, to people who experience none or few of the benefits of technological change, or experience them only by accident or fate, technology will appear destructive, arbitrary, constraining, pervasive, and independent of human concerns. To the dispossessed, for example, technological progress means a better equipped, more efficient, quietly inhuman police, a more elaborate bureaucracy, and a more complicated environment. To them, and to many others, it means urban sprawl, air pollution, smog, traffic, noise, and unpredictable changes in the job market. Nor does technological change present this face only to the weak and downtrodden. The employee whose job is suddenly altered or abolished through a decision in which he had no part, the city official whose problems appear to multiply, exponentially and autonomously, the citizen suddenly aware of his perilous existence in the shadow of nuclear weapons, the housewife confronted by a bewildering array of pre-packaged foods, and everyone confronted by the mass media—all find themselves powerless to control and unlikely to benefit from humanly created power to shape—and destroy—our natural and social environment.

Both the distribution of the benefits of technical progress and the disposition of the power to control it depend on the social structure; in particular, on economic and legal or property relations. The primary benefits of new technical methods go quite literally to those who profit from their introduction; and the power to control technical progress rests largely with those who control the large corporations capable of underwriting research. For the most part civilian technical advances are introduced in response to market criteria—will the improvement increase profits, will it improve sales or secure the firm's competitive position or improve its public image? (This applies even to civilian government agencies which, with some notable exceptions, are obliged to operate with "economic efficiency"). Technical advances in military and space activities certainly involve market criteria where process efficiency is involved; but though decisions, say, as to whether or not to produce new types of weapons will depend, not on the market, but on military judgment, whatever that is. The market, in turn, can be influenced through the media of communication and by the use of appropriate sales and marketing techniques, and military judgment and Congressional appropriations can be influenced through lobbying. This is not to suggest that a small, unified group holds the technological destiny of America in its hands and directs it according to its own ends. On the contrary; a small, disunited number of men in key positions—primarily business leaders, but including political and military decision-makers—with divergent and conflicting interests, determine the technological future, and hence, to a considerable extent, the pace and nature of social change, as an incidental by-product of competitive decision-making on quite different matters. Technological change, and all the attendant social development and dislocation, emerge as unintended, often unforeseen, consequences of competition for market shares, profit and political influence. Technological change is determinate, but no one consciously and responsibly determines it.

New Kinds of Technological Change

The importance of understanding this can hardly be overstressed today, particularly since we may be on the verge of really major technological advances, which the market system, at least as presently constituted, may be increasingly unable to absorb. The claims of Theobald, Seligman and others that a Technological Revolution is actually underway may seem exaggerated (3), but there can be no doubt that a qualitatively different kind of technological change has appeared on the horizon. The statistical picture is varied (4). The average rate of technical progress (rate of increase in output per man-hour) from 1909-47 was 2%; during the years 1957-63 this rose to slightly over 3% (3.6% in 1964, 2.8% in 1965). One striking feature of the post-war period has been the remarkable performance of agriculture. In spite of relatively slight investment, productivity per man-hour increased an average 5.7% per annum from 1947-1963 (7.3% in 1965). In the non-agricultural sector productivity has tended to rise since 1957 at an average rate exceeding 2 1/2%, but while above the previous half-century average, this is not above the average for the boom decade 1919-1929. Productivity among production workers in the manufacturing sectors (where automation might be expected to proceed fastest) has increased most rapidly (3.5% per year, on average) but apparently less rapidly than during the period 1919-29 (5.6%). These figures hardly support a claim for a "revolution". But matters are different when we look at specific technological proposals (5). Major break-throughs have occurred in metallurgy, metal processing, machine tools, warehousing, printing and communications, transport and materials handling, design of industrial manipulators, and, of course, agriculture. Pilot projects indicate substantial and overdue progress in pre-fabricated construction of high-rise dwelling units. These developments are significantly linked; just as, historically, improvements in various industries all clustered around the substitution of mechanical (steam) power for human power, and later around both the assembly line principle and electrical light and power, so new improvements in industrial technique tend to cluster around the introduction of self-correcting automatic control systems—the principle of negative feedback. The substitution of mechanical for human guidance of tools in shaping materials marked the transition from a craft to an industrial economy. Mechanical control is nothing new. But automatic self-correction in such control is. This feature becomes even more significant when combined with the ability to calculate and solve problems, since then a flexible sequence of complicated operations can be programmed, allowing the computer to decide the appropriate order in which to perform them on different occasions. In this way mechanical decision making and mechanical calculation can be substituted for human. The social implication of this is that machines can now, for the first time, be expected to replace men in the services sector and at lower management levels. Previously these areas had absorbed labor displaced from manufacturing and agriculture. Now no sector can be relied upon to absorb displaced labor.

Productivity and Consumption

Nor is the new automation prohibitively expensive. Leontief has estimated its cost as 6% of total plant cost. He contends that while to date no great change in employment has taken place, the same could have been said for horses in 1909. Like labor today, their working conditions were better, pay higher and hours shorter than ever before. Projected, the trend showed a steady rising curve of affluence, and the automobile counted for no more than a fleck on the horizon. The analogy is disquieting—the more so when we consider that almost 3/4 of current research and development effort is channeled into war-related industries. If this were shifted to projects in the civilian economy we could expect an enormous increase in productivity of those industries whose goods appear on the market.

By contrast, military hardware is not marketed in the economist's sense of the term; there is no autonomous demand for it, nor can it be "consumed" in any reasonable sense. It is paid for out of taxes and the amount bought depends partly on military estimates of need (which are strongly influenced by the politics of inter-service rivalry) and partly on the effectiveness of defense-industry lobbies. Technical progress in military goods can be absorbed without displacing workers so long as Congress can be persuaded to foot a given size of the bill. This progress simply means more bang for a buck, and Congress seems willing to buy virtually any amount of bang.

But in the civilian market economy people are not always so agreeably willing to spend. If technological progress speeds up, their regrettable parsimony may lead to an impasse. With given wage contracts, technical progress (during a year) shifts distributive shares in favor of profits, and, except in times of acute labor shortage, the wage increases subsequently granted seldom restore the original distribution. But the recipients of profits normally spend additional income at a lower rate than wage-earners. Even if the additional income resulting from technical progress were evenly divided, higher investment (in absolute terms) would be required to absorb the higher savings resulting, but if a higher proportion of the extra income goes to profits, a higher ratio of investment to income would be needed to maintain full utilization of capacity. Investment, however, will be undertaken only if there is a reasonable prospect that the products of new plant and equipment can be sold. If consumer demand as a fraction of national income is falling, as extremely rapid technical progress would entail, the incentive to invest will be appreciably weakened, no matter how high productivity has become. The result will be a lower level of utilization of capacity, which usually means laying off workers. This, in turn, means a further fall in consumption expenditure, and, at least in non-union industries, pressure on wage rates, as employers can threaten to replace employed workers with unemployed ones at lower wages. Lower wage rates, if they come about, also mean a fall in consumption spending, and a still further weakening of the incentive to invest.

Government Intervention

In short, if a high rate of technical progress leads to a rise in profit's share of national income, and if spending out of additional profit income is less than spending out of additional wage income—both very plausible assumptions—then rapid technical progress will tend to lead to a slump. To avoid this, government intervention will be necessary. But there are significant limits to what government can do in a free enterprise system in which political activity must be financed by those who possess substantial income-bearing property. He who pays the piper calls the tune. Government spending will not normally be allowed to compete with private enterprise, either in the provision of marketable goods and services, or in the market for scarce factors of production. One suggestion, of course, is that the government could spend funds to eliminate poverty and improve conditions in the cities.

But a successful and widespread poverty program might well put a rather high floor under wages, particularly the wages of non-union workers, with adverse effects on marginal and small businesses. This suggests limiting the poverty program, e.g., to training and retraining workers for areas in which there is a demand. Perhaps more important, any poverty program that involves organizing the poor is bound to upset the balance of political power in the cities. A program that does not involve organizing the poor is unlikely to have much impact. The most acceptable way for the government to spend is to contract with private firms operating on a profit-making basis for goods which the government in turn will consume itself, and so will never put on the market in competition with privately produced commodities. The areas of government activity which most obviously meet these conditions are military and aero-space enterprises, and these accounted for nearly 70% of the 1966 $144 billion appropriations budget (current military: 53.6%; national debt: 8.9%; veterans: 4.8%; space: 3.4%, to which some part of foreign relations: 2.2% should probably be added).

The Limits of the Market System

This suggests that the market system, as presently constituted, cannot easily handle the impact of rapid technological improvement in a way that would permit any widespread sharing of the benefits. In addition, the market system fails in two important ways to provide adequate incentives to introduce technical progress. First, in advanced economies many of the most important innovations involve "public goods", goods that must be used or consumed collectively, and many of which must be produced by "natural monopolies", e.g., media of communication, systems of transportation, education, etc. But, as our experience shows, the market system is not well adapted to make optimal use of these; regulation and subsidies are required even for sub-optimal operation, but such regulation is usually easily influenced by industry's lobbying. Secondly, one important effect of automation seems to be to raise the proportion of fixed costs. In the face of a drop in sales a fully automated firm has little "flexibility"—it cannot lay off workers. It can shut down, but short of that it cannot easily adapt its current costs to its rate of sales. There may well be ways of avoiding this impasse (e.g. by installing a series of small plants rather than one large one), but to adopt them is to adapt technology to financial considerations—it is likely to mean choosing a technologically inferior system to provide financial safety, the course of prudence, but hardly a recommendation for the capitalist system.

Faced on the one hand with the inability of the market to respond to rapid technological change in a way that will spread its benefits and on the other with the market's inability in certain spheres to provide incentives to innovate, the liberal's solution is to try to reform the market system. Each difficulty is treated as a specific failure of the system to "work", for which specific remedies must be found. Liberals have had considerable success in this and their ingenuity must not be underrated, but it is on this issue that liberals and the New Left divide. The objection to the liberal program is not that reform is impossible, but that it is irrelevant; it is not merely the working of the society that is deficient, it is what it is working at. To the New Left the organization of the social production and distribution of goods and services around the profit motive is inherently objectionable, and the fact that it is working badly suggests that the time is ripe to consider an alternative mode of organization.

But if the New Left is to suggest this, it must be prepared to answer, in detail, two questions: First, and most important, what is to replace the market system, and in what ways will the new system be an improvement? Secondly, how is the change to be brought about? Oddly enough, it is the second of these that has traditionally received the most attention, perhaps because it seems easier or at least more concerned with the practical, even though it cannot be answered very completely until we know where we are going. Here I shall try instead to sketch an approach to the first.

II. Fully Automated Full Communism

The elimination of the market means more than the abolition of private income-yielding property. Such property — the right to perpetual or inheiritable or inheiritable unearned income — is the center-piece of capitalism, but even in the absence of such ownership rights net income — the value of the surplus of current output over production and replacement needs — could be distributed though the market, e.g., by paying each member of the labor or supervisory force a fraction of the surplus proportional to the market value of his contribution to production or, perhaps, if rapid growth is desired, paying in proportion to the increase in the market value of contributions.

But this leads to a bargaining relationship between central planners and income receivers that very closely resembles a market, and "market socialists" would like to complete the resemblance. Market socialism is not capitalism — there is no privately owned, income-yielding capital — but it has many of the same objectionable features, all of which derive from the reliance on material incentives.

What I shall try to do now is show just what the elimination of the market (entailing the abolition of income-bearing property) will and will not mean in an already advanced and rapidly progressing economy. I shall try both to indicate which features of our present economic system will be significantly changed and which will not, and to suggest how economic decisions could be made in the absence of a market.

A Simplified Model Economy

To this end I shall assume a simplified model economy, consisting of three sectors: a machine production sector, a human production sector, and a creative work sector. The machine production secont, I, is fully automated and rpoduces its own replacements and various kinds of automated equipment used by the other sectors. It also produces all tools, furniture, prefabricated housing, clothing, medical supplies, and all other artefacts needed for everyday life, as well as generates power, provides media of communications, and all necessary materials and supplies for the other two sectors. (Agriculture and food processing are included in the machine sector). The human sector, II, consists of all activities involved in maintaining a population and raising a new generation — medicine, public health, education, counseling, some branches of law. The creative work sector, III, consists on the one hand of pure and applied research and development in the natural, biological and social sciences, leading to technical progress in the two sectors just described, and on the other, of activity in crafts, arts and letters, in performing arts, and in competitive sports and similar enjoyments involving the development and exercise of skills.

In a model economy of this sort, production and exchange are simply extensions to society of the arts of industrial engineering. Industries are interdependent; they use each other's products, and they use them up at faster or slower rates depending on various circumstances. Exchange ratios — given a disposition of the surplus — depend solely on relative degrees of technical interdependence. If marginal costs are constant, as is commonly the case in advanced technologies, relative prices will be independent of demand. Given the method for computing such technically determined prices the surplus can be valued. With a method of setting a value on the surplus at hand, the social value of different investment projects can be determined once their technical characteristics are given. There is no need to appeal to the market. Once the engineering data are known, it is a simple mathematical calculation (for a computer

(for a computer) to determine which projects will most increase the surplus. Many decisions, of course, will not be so easy, because the relevant engineering data cannot be known. It may, for example, appear probable that one kind of project will open the way for a greater variety of further technical advances, though its immediate benefits are less. Nevertheless, there are a number of ways of handling such problems, though none can wholly eliminate the need for sound human judgment. Nor is there any reason to try to do so; the aim should rather be to confine such judgment to the areas where it is really necessary and valuable, leaving other decisions, which can be made, as it were, mechanically, to automated decision procedures.

Overall Functioning of System

There are two aspects to running an economic system of this sort. Given the technology used in each sector, the output of the machine sector must be adjusted first to produce the right amounts of replacement (both for itself and for the other two) and the desired amount of investment, and then to produce the desired composition of consumption output (output that will not be used to maintain or expand productive capacity). Similarly, sector II, the training sector, must train the right number of technicians, educators, doctors to man itself and I (given the rate of expansion), and must ensure that the population will have the skill and educational profile it desires. In other words, sector I and II must be coordinated in the light of both their technical requirements and the demands upon them for various kinds of consumption goods arising from sector III. Again, this sort of problem is well understood, and given the data, can be readily solved.

The second aspect of running the system raises a somewhat more difficult problem. The creative work sector, III, produces technological improvements, which must be introduced, perhaps simultaneously, in all three sectors, without unduly upsetting the intersectoral balance of product flows. The objective will be to obtain the highest rate of technical progress consistent with minimum disequilibrium. Clearly, depending on the nature of the innovation, it may not always be possible to avoid substantial disruptions, and certainly modern economies are a long way from handling this matter adequately. But I shall assume, perhaps rather too sanguinely, that the technology of the future will be more amenable.

Tasks and Activities

The three sectors involve very different kinds of tasks. In sector I, the tasks are concerned with programming and coordinating demands and innovations, and also with preventing and repairing breakdowns. Since much of this can be computerized, most of the work will be two or three steps removed, programming and puterized, most of the work will be two or even three steps removed, programming and coordinating the equipment that programs and coordinates production. Most of the decisions to be made will therefore concern production in the fairly distant future. In Sector II, tasks will be concerned with people, but they will be of two sorts. One will deal with the maintenance programming and coordination of equipment such as teaching machines, and medical diagnostic equipment. Man is a social product, and one purpose of this sector is to turn out, as efficiently as possible, the required grade of product, and tasks will be defined accordingly. But man is also a human being, a moral agent with aesthetic and emotional sensibilities, capable of good or bad judgment, and part of his education involves developing his sensibilities, his social awareness and his judgment. It seems likely that this cannot so easily be done by machines, and so another class of activities will involve direct personal contact in teaching, training, counseling, and dealing with psychological and psychiatric problems. (Though most of these activities will be in Sector II, there may be on-the-spot training in I and III). Finally, in Sector III, some tasks will again involve programming and coordinating hardware, but the bulk will be concerned with creative work in the various areas. Some of this work will be highly individual, some will involve extensive cooperation, but all will be concerned with the development and extension of man's powers and talents.

A system of notation will make reference to these classes of tasks easier. I shall call the class of those tasks concerned with the programming maintenance and coordination of hardware A, with a subscript to indicate the sector in which it is performed. A equals A(I) plus A(II) plus A(III). All tasks involving direct personal contact in training, teaching, counseling, medical care, etc., will constitute class B, and it will be useful to include here administrative duties such as personnel management, making promotion decisions, arbitration of disputes, settling points of law, presiding over committees, etc. Such duties will be indicated by a subscript lower case "a", for "administration". Hence B equals B(I) plus B(II) plus B(III) plus B(aI) plus B(aII) plus B(aIII). Finally C will indicate creative work, but, for simplicity, I shall define time spent in creative work as time spent in Sector III, even if the activity involves equipment properly allocated to other sectors.

The description has run in terms of "tasks" and "activities" rather than "jobs" or "roles", for two reasons. First, it should be clear that a given role could easily combine several kinds of tasks: a Director of Programming might well divide his time between A and B(a) tasks, a composer of electronic music between A and C tasks. Secondly, the term "job" strongly suggests remuneration, and this is precisely what is not relevant in this classification.

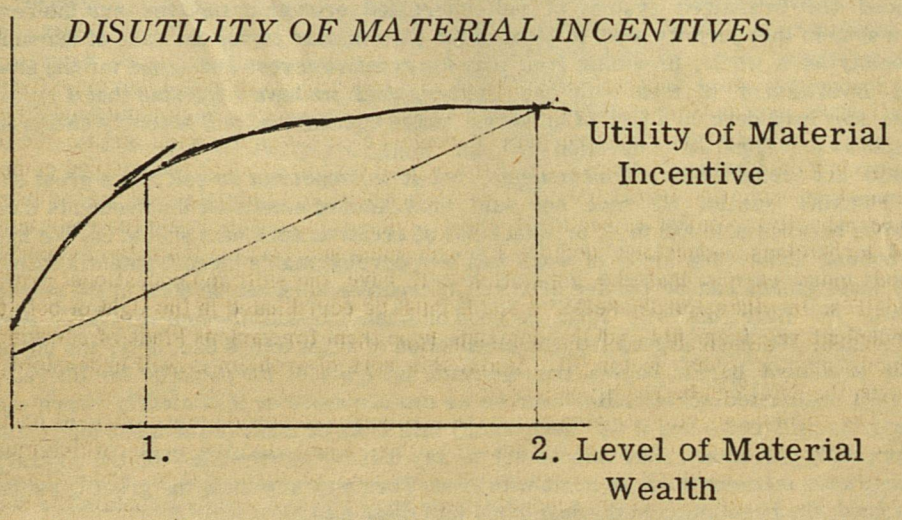
Eliminating the Market

The exchange ratios mentioned above need to be computed only for accounting purposes; they are necessary for comparing sets of goods made up of different items or in different proportions, but they need neither perform nor reflect market functions. (In economist's terms, they are "shadow prices"). Thus even though the products of Sector II, educated and trained personnel, will have shadow prices, these simply indicate the value of the stream of goods that must flow into Sector II from Sector I; they certainly should not be interpreted as the wage level for the jobs such personnel can perform. Payments to persons must, of course, provide them with what is needed to maintain the health and skill levels they have acquired, but this too can be considered part of the exchange between I and II. The question of personal income really concerns how much above this "socially necessary" subsistence level is paid, and whether it is provided as an incentive to work harder. Such incomes function in another way, also, in a market: they help to determine demand, by weighting people's preferences. The distribution of personal income is the way the market solves the problem of interpersonal comparisons of utility.

In theory the market is supposed to adjust production to consumer preferences; but these preferences are weighted, in turn, by contributions to productivity. Under capitalism, the possession by some of unearned income introduces an obviously irrational element into the system; but even under market socialism the scheme fails to make sense. For example, suppose already well-to-do producers increase their productivity and are rewarded with higher incomes. Being well-to-do they will most likely spend their extra income on luxuries rather than necessities; hence society's resources would be shifted into luxuries before all needs had been met.

To eliminate the market means eliminating the system of weighting consumer preferences by incomes paid as incentives to increase productivity, but as I shall show it does not mean that supply will no longer be adjusted to consumer preferences. There are two customary objections to eliminating the market. The first is that material incentives are necessary and/or valuable aids to growth; the second is that different people's preferences must be weighted somehow, since choices have to be made: not everyone can be fully satisfied, "marginal utility is always positive".

But as anyone, most of all economists, should know, benefits must be balanced against costs. Material incentives may be useful, but they also have socially harmful effects; moreover, the richer the society the less useful material incentives will be, since, it the principle of diminishing marginal utility holds, the stimulus they provide fall off. But the ill effects do not fall off with wealth; there will be the same pandering to corrupted tastes, the same tendency for commercial motives to undermine community spirit, the same failure to observe correct priorities (the neediest will seldom be the most productive). The balancing of the costs and benefits of a system of material incentives can be easily shown on a diagram:



On the vertical axis we plot both utility and disutility. At the initial low level of well-being, the usefulness of material incentives will be high, and with each unit increase in well-being the total usefulness of material incentives will increase, but at a diminishing rate. The disutility of material incentives will also increase, at a constant rate. Point 1 is the point of maximum utility; here the additional benefit from material incentives just balances their additional social cost; at point 2 the total benefit and total cost just balance. Clearly material incentives should be abandoned on the production of additional output after 1, and should be abandoned altogether after 2.

As for the other objection, that people's wants are insatiable, the best evidence is that, if we mean private or personal wants, it simply is not true. As societies become richer the emphasis in consumption shifts, from goods consumed privately or in the family, such as food, clothing and shelter, to goods which have to be consumed collectively, such as mass media, communications networks, public health measures, public parks and improvement of the environment. These latter normally come to make up a higher proportion of expenditure, and there is every reason to believe this will continue to be true as society's wealth increases (7). If so, then in a very wealthy society we could expect both to have passed the point where the advantages of material incentives are outweighed by their disadvantages and to have reached a stage where the great bulk of consumption involves goods wholly or partially collective in nature.

Under these circumstances the abolition of the market is a reasonably simple matter (8). Income amply sufficient to meet all anticipated personal needs and desires can be assigned to all members of society, with provision to appeal for an increase should it be needed. All expenses relating to work would, of course, be covered in the accounts of the transactions between the sectors of the economy. Money need not actually be employed; a system of accounting will do, for all that is necessary is to ensure that a balance is maintained between the output of personal consumption goods and their use.

Comparison of Market and Non-Market Systems

Now let us see what this accomplishes. How does this system compare with a society of equal productive potential run on strictly market principles—no work, no pay (unless you own capital), and pay in proportion to productivity (or amount of capital invested)? The non-market or purely "communistic" system has a number of distinct advantages over any kind of purely market system. This is not to deny that a modified market system would also have some of these merits, but it would do so only because the modifications restricted the working of the market principle, thus moving it nearer to pure communism. These advantages are:

1. Economic security.

In a market society income depends on having work, and getting work depends on having a marketable skill, and on the sales of the product. If technical change eliminates jobs, or if sales fall off, income ceases. But in a communistic system income is paid as a matter of right; hence there can be no question of economic security, nor can anyone be threatened with loss of livelihood.

Since income is both ample and secure, and since Sector II looks after the production and maintenance of appropriately educated, trained, and healthy persons, no structural unemployment will exist. By contrast, in a market society where the education, training, and health of children depend to a large extent on the earning power of parents there is no reason to expect that the distribution of earning power according to productivity will produce the distribution of skills required by the capital structure. Further, those who are least marketable are likely to be in the poorest position to bring up children with marketable skills—the more so if they themselves have no skills to pass on.

2. Rationality.

The problem of making interpersonal comparisons of utility is a difficult one, but it is hardly a step toward its solution to adopt a wholly irrelevant criterion for weighting different persons' preferences. Yet that is precisely what the market does. There is not only no reason to suppose that the needs of the most productive are more acute, more pressing, or more important than those of the least productive; there are good reasons to suppose precisely the opposite. Nor is this simply a conflict between economic rationality and justice ("to those that have shall be given"). It is arguable on strictly economic grounds that to raise productivity most increases in income should be given first to the least productive members of society, since they are most in need of better training, education and medical attention (9).

The market system involves another kind of irrationality. Its aim is profit from sale, no matter whether the purchaser subsequently finds he has bought something useless. Hence if methods of manipulation are cheap the supplier has a strong incentive to try to manipulate demand—to create wants rather than to satisfy them. The richer the society the more pronounced this tendency is likely to be.

3. Technical progress.

The communistic system removes many obstacles in the path of technological innovation present in both capitalism and market socialism. For example, there can be no question of a less productive technique proving more profitable. But in capitalism, if a technique were to displace a large number of workers, bidding wages down, then, if the anticipated gain in profit from lower wages outweighed the loss from the technique's being less productive, it would be adopted over a better one. Nor can there be any question of special interest groups' lobbying for retaining or establishing an incorrect social accounting system because it benefits them, as happens under market socialism. Most important, perhaps, if two societies start with equally productive, highly automated technologies, the one that adopts the market will, from a very early point, fall progressively behind the one that adopts a communistic organization. For a producer in a market economy must be able to reduce his costs when his sales fall off, but under automation a very high proportion of costs are fixed—marginal costs are constant and very low. Hence to obtain flexibility, producers, instead of building a few large plants, will build a large number of small ones. So when faced with a drop in sales a producer can vary his costs simply by shutting down one or more small plants. This permits flexibility of supply in the face of variations in sales rates (induced e.g. by uneven technical development). But a heavy price is paid in foregone economies of scale, which would be obtained in the economy described earlier, since variations in the rate of consumption do not there matter so long as full capacity is used in the long run. Nor does excessive short-run stock piling matter, even if costly, so long as such costs are outweighed by long-run gains. Since stock piling costs accumulate arithmetically and the economies of scale in question geometrically, the market approach carries a significant disadvantage. Nor is this drawback avoidable, for it arises precisely from the peculiar merit and advantage claimed for the market—its sensitive adaptation of supply to variations in demand.

4. Economic conflict.

A great deal of economic conflict is eliminated by abolishing the market. Clearly there can be no conflict between labor and capital; nor can there be attempts to use technical innovations as methods of increasing one's own income at the expense of others. Since everyone's livelihood is amply guaranteed and no one's can be threatened, the opportunities for organized economic crime—blackmail, protection, shakedown—are severely restricted.

But if a market society were equally productive, would these conflicts not disappear there, from lack of urgency? If material incentives could be done away with, then in an equally productive society which retains them, will economic conflict not simply evaporate? This confuses the fact that material incentives have no net utility in such circumstances with saying that they have no positive utility. They may still be powerful, even though their costs outweigh their benefits. Further, though personal consumption may be low, collective consumption will not be, and economic conflict could arise between groups competing for the funds with which to finance their projects. In the system described above such conflicts would not involve economic decisions, nor would the outcome endanger anyone's livelihood. The decisions could be made solely on the merits of the case, and need involve no irrelevant questions. (It does not, of course, follow that the decisions would necessarily be any better.)

5. Commercialism

In a market economy sale at a profit is the criterion of success. But man's work is not adequately judged by the criterion of profit alone, indeed commercial considerations are not always relevant at all. A strong case can be made for saying that scientific and mathematical discoveries, works of art, theatrical performances, perhaps creative work generally, should never be judged by such considerations, but rather on criteria internal to the activities themselves, and that the relative importance of different kinds of activities, physics and theatre, should be judged not by how much they respectively earn or add to output, but by how they contribute to human well-being in all aspects, not just the material. Again such a method of judgment does not necessarily mean the decisions made will necessarily be better. Wrong decisions can be made for right reasons, and vice versa.

6. Politics.

A whole class of political issues, including many of those most familiar to us, would disappear with the abolition of the market. The 19th Century dispute between farmers and railroads, the current controversy over milk prices, consumer protection, truth in advertising, labor-management quarrels, wahe-price guidelines, cheap money vs. sound money—all are inconceivable in the absence of a market. This is not to say that other kinds of difficulties would not replace these; the point is that these disputes involve attempting to secure an advantageous market position in order to raise one's income share, and there can be no such activities if income is not divided according to the market.

There will still, of course, be questions and disputes, for example, about which projects are to be funded first, or about where, how, and when social infrastructure investment should be undertaken. But automation significantly changes the nature of these decisions. Because of the high proportion of fixed costs, the high degree of interdependence and the complexities of maintaining intersectoral equilibrium, allocation has to be planned a long time in advance. (This does not mean that the future must be laid down with iron necessity as a single gleaming track stretching to the infinite horizon. Far from it. What has to be determined is rather the set of possibilities of action; in particular the material and social means of action must be provided. These means can be used for any number of different things, but it is necessary to have some idea in advance of what can be made available. In the absence of such planning the future may well be determined along a single track, by the narrowness of the possibilities open. Planning determines what can, not what will, be done.) The shift of forces to the future which automation brings both broadens the perspective of planners and reduces their personal involvement; the detachment of such a perspective should make it easier to discuss proposals on their merits.

Automation has another effect relevant to politics. It reduces, sometimes drastically, the amount of time needed to perform tasks. This, combined with a very much more efficient system of education, would tend to break down the concept of "a career"; people would tend to have several or many careers, following their talents in quite various directions. It is rare enough today to find an able man at the top of his chosen profession who does not also hold a distinguished post or possess significant talents in some quite different field or fields. Imagine this situation universalized and multiplied ten-fold or a hundred-fold. Under such conditions, particularly when one's personal income is guaranteed independently of one's career(s), the tendency to special pleading should be significantly diminished.

Remaining Conflicts

The elimination of the market clearly makes a substantial difference, but a number of important problems remain. For example, while economic conflicts of the traditional sort would be removed, administrative conflict, e.g. of the staff-line sort, would not. With the extension of planning and the consequent expansion of bureaucracy these might assume considerable dimensions. Personnel problems, appointment and promotion decisions, and questions of administrative organization all remain. Somehow a decision must be made on what the proper level of personal income should be, on what proportion of total output should be devoted to this. And decisions would have to be made regularly both on what kinds of creative work projects—physics or the theatre—would be relatively favored, and within each kind which specific projects would be given priority.

Except for the first, all these problems are, in an extended sense of the term, technical. And all including the first will also be present in a market society. But the market draws a veil around these problems, disguising them as issues of financial prudence and responsibility. The abolition of the market tears away the mystification, making it possible to discard irrelevant criteria of judgment, so that each of the problems can be confronted in its true form. Appointments and promotions, for example, involve matching qualifications against specifications—a technical problem, but one that necessarily involves judgment, preferably mature and experienced judgment. What is not relevant is how much a man was paid in his previous job, or what the market for people with his skills is (10). Similarly, decisions on priorities among projects and on the amount of personal consumption involve both technical or professional expertise, and some generally accepted (and usually disputable) judgments as to social priorities whether or not there is a market. At best the market could make no contribution to the solution of these questions except by reflecting individual decisions. But normally it will do more; it will impose an irrelevant and irrational weighting on these decisions and it will present aggregates of individual decisions as if they were collective decisions made by bodies accountable for their actions. For instance, the conscious and responsible decision of a society or group to save and invest, made collectively, in the light of full information, will normally yield quite a different pattern of average saving and investment from that resulting from the interaction of decisions taken individually.

There is, of course, no certainty that decisions made collectively by responsible and accountable bodies will be any better than the market's, but two considerations strongly suggest it. First, the decisions are taken consciously with specific objects in mind. An innovation will be introduced because it is thought that when all its effects are taken into account the social benefits outweigh the social cost more than in the case of any alternative, and not because, for example, whatever its other consequences, it might improve someone's bargaining position on another and otherwise unrelated question. Secondly, the bodies making the decisions are identifiable and can be held accountable. When people can be held accountable, or when decisions can be appealed, they are likely to be made more carefully.

Technology and Decision-Making

Eliminating the market helps, then, but the real contributions to the solution of the remaining problems will come from technical progress. Two points here are of particular interest to the New Left: the impact of technical progress on staff-line disputes and administrative hierarchy—the future of participatory democracy, in short—and the possibilities in the light of technical progress for a "post-scarcity society".

I have already mentioned the time-saving effects of automation and how this would tend to break down the norm of a single career. Men would be able to develop their talents on a broad front, while still concentrating on the things that interest them most. We should then expect everyone to pursue one or a few main careers and several subsidiary ones. It would be reasonable to expect to find people devoting the bulk of their time to those activities at which they are relatively better (compared to their other skills), and it is reasonable to expect to find people with less skill but more time and devotion rising further. One man may be better at everything than another, but the second may still come to outrank the first in some line of activity they both pursue. If this situation became at all general it would have the enormously important social consequence of establishing a kind of universal status equality, arising from the fact that the people whom you are above in one administrative hierarchy are above you in some other (11). This is perhaps less the establishment of equality than a dissolution of inequality.

But important as it is, status equality is not democracy; there remains the question whether those at the bottom of any administrative hierarchy take part in the decisions which shape their lowly roles. Here two aspects of technical progress are relevant. First, the more rapid progress is, the more frequently the administrative staff must consult those actually working with the changing techniques. Superiors will have to keep in consultation with their subordinates to know what is going on (12), and new methods of communication make this much easier. Secondly, new technological developments are tending to weaken and break down certain key hierarchial distinctions. In certain mass media, and the new theatre, for example, the barrier between audience and performer has begun to dissolve; instead of being passive recipients the audience must itself play a role, and help to shape, even to create, the performance (13). In a similar way the separation of the roles of consumer and producer is becoming less clear and pronounced. Those working in creative fields must often order to specification—they, in effect, design the product themselves. That this is possible now is largely due to the greater flexibility introduced into mass production by various kinds of cybernetic control systems. The distinction between the roles of consumer and producer is blurred in another way by the fact that many find their greatest satisfaction, even their recreation, in their work. If consumption involves yielding utility then, for such people, productive work is consumption. The point of participatory democracy is that those affected by decisions should play an active role in shaping them, and these developments suggest in each case that the traditional separation of function which prevents this is being undermined.

Abolition of Material Scarcity

Technological progress has a similarly important impact on the traditional conception of scarcity and economic choice. We have already seen the effect of growth in per capita income on material incentives. But we have also seen that economic choice will be with us even when the market is abolished under conditions of high and rapidly advancing technology. This is not surprising. Technology saves time, but it also presents us with more things to do. As long as there is more to do than time to do it, choices will have to be made—time, being scarce, will have to be allocated, and the marginal calculus might conceivably be useful in thinking through the allocation problem. But such a view of scarcity is very different from the traditional concept of material scarcity, a kind of scarcity that could be thought to justify the exploitation of alienated labor. Material scarcity means too little output to support the needs and wants of the population unless some people spend a major proportion of their time in unpleasant and degrading labor. It is this sort of scarcity that technical progress promises to abolish.

What would a society without material scarcity be like? It would be a society in which needs and wants could be satisfied without anyone's engaging in unpleasant or degrading labor. In terms of the model presented earlier it would be a society in which the proportion of A work to B and C work could be made indefinitely small. A society could be called "post-scarcity" if it met the following conditions:

increasing returns to scale in industrial research and development

initial A labor time a small fraction of total labor time

Then the ratio A:(B plus C) can be made to decline annually at any desired rate, up to that determined by the allocation of the total amount of C time to research and development. Define the "training period" as the average time it takes a child now leaving primary school to enter the labor force. If allocating all of C time to research and development during one training period would reduce A:(B plus C) to the point where the average annual per capita time devoted to A left enough time for a full career in a B or C line (making allowances both for one's own consumption time—eating, sleeping, recreation—and for normal time spent with the family), we shall describe the society as on the outer margin of material scarcity. It could, if it chose, provide everyone now leaving primary school with a career involving creative work or work both socially beneficial and involving other people, not only without sacrificing per capita output, but without sacrificing per capita growth in output. The time period chosen represents the period required before a labor force educated for the new conditions could begin to come on the scene.

The importance of trying to define "post-scarcity" is this: a potentially post-scarcity society is unlikely to realize its potential, or at least is unlikely to do so at all rapidly, if it is organized as a market society, because of the shortcomings of the market discussed above. In short, if society is to provide opportunities for humane and reasonable careers for everyone, then it must eliminate the market and introduce new technology at the highest rate consistent with reasonable inter-sectoral balance.

The Good, the Beautiful, and the Just

Now let us take stock. What has this argument accomplished? Starting from a simple three-sector model of an automated rapidly progressing economy, we have shown how to eliminate poverty and economic insecurity, unpleasant jobs without human or emotional contacts, and a large and important class of economic conflicts. We have replaced the organized system of self-interested economic motives and interests with a system that permits work to be done for its own sake or for the sake of humanity or society as a whole, providing free play for creative forces and scope for the emotional involvement of men with one another. And we have suggested that a system of this sort will develop a kind of universal status equality and will strongly encourage widespread participation in decision-making.

These are considerable achievements, but it is important to see that a great deal still remains unsaid. We have not said what kind of emotional involvements there should be between man and man, or what kinds of creative work man should do. We have said nothing about what kinds of work will best develop man's highest potential. Emotional involvement can be twisted or corrupt; creative work can be done in the service of evil. We have not said what is good or what is beautiful—and very little about what is just. We have argued for the elimination of a few things bad, ugly, and unjust.

This argument barely begins the economic analysis of the potential for liberation in a fully automated society. But even so we can see more or less clearly where such an analysis will end—and it will necessarily fall short of many of the most interesting and pressing questions. But this is not to say it is not worthwhile—on the contrary, the economic matters must be dealt with first. Then and only then, the great questions of the good, the beautiful, and the just come into their own.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ellul, Jacques. The Technological Society, trans. J. Wilkinson, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1965.
2. Technique as an extension of man's capabilities is central to Marshall McLuhan's view, in Understanding Media, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1965.
3. Theobald, Robert. Free Men and Free Markets, New York: Charles Potter, 1963. Seligman, Ben B. "The Spectre of Automation and Consensus Complacency", Dissent, May-June, 1966.
4. For papers surveying the problem, cf. U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Implications of Automation, U.S. Government Printing Office, September, 1965.
5. Cf. Seymour Wolfbein, "The Pace of Technological Change and the Factors Affecting It", in Manpower Implications of Automation, and Scientific American, vol. 215, no. 3, Sept., 1966, "Information".
6. Leontief, Wassily. "Machines and Man", in Essays in Economics, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966. Leontief, Wassily. "Primer for the Great Society", New York Review of Books, vol. viii, no. 10, Dec. 15, 1966.
7. The proportion of income spent on a good plotted against consumer disposable income is known as the "Engel curve" for the good, and is normally downward sloping. These curves have been extensively investigated by statisticians.
8. I do not wish to suggest that the market should not be abolished at a lower level of well-being; nor do I wish to imply that at low levels the usefulness of material incentives will always outweigh the disadvantages, many of which may not be quantitatively measurable.
9. In recessions, to obtain the largest multiplier effect, increases in income should be given to the poorest, since they have the highest marginal propensities to consume.
10. Suppose his skills were scarce. Then would not the market indicate the optimum allocation? First, the 'optimality' would be no better than the original assignment of incomes. Secondly, the scarcity of a skill is not an allocation problem, but a problem of sectoral balance, of seeing that the educational supply balances the educational demand. But in the absence of material incentives how can people be induced to acquire socially needed skills and choose appropriate careers? By any and all other sorts of 'incentives', including not least reliance on a cultivated sense of social responsibility. As a last resort job assignment may be necessary, just as in a crisis we now rely on conscription.
11. The relationships need not be direct. Y may be X's subordinate in all hierarchies to which they jointly belong, but he may be superior in some hierarchy to which X does not belong, to one of X's superiors. If every pair of persons, X and Y, could be connected, directly or indirectly, by at least two chains of status links, one showing X above Y, and another showing Y above X, then inequalities of status would appear to be abolished. But, of course, not all hierarchies are equally important, and not all his roles are equally important to a person. Hence certain kinds of distinctions might remain, but there would be no fixed and inviolable order of rank in society.
12. In a briefing session, the roles of superior and subordinate are temporarily reversed.
13. A point much stressed by McLuhan, in his distinction between 'hot' and 'cool' media.

VIETNAM WINTER?

continued from p. 1

"Even our friends in the peace movement find it too easy to look thousands of miles away from home and, with much indignation, see the extermination of the Vietnamese. On the other hand, they cannot see ten blocks away, where many black people are walking dead — dead in mind and spirit, because of lack of hope and lack of chance." This is the scrouge of single-issue organizing.

What then, about the radical potential of the middle class? It exists. I am a product of the middle class, and I have come to despise what the middle class stands for. —And I would say that most young white radicals are products of the middle class. This is most evident on college campuses, but the potential is also evidenced in non-academic bastions as well. Churchmen, lawyers, housewives, et al, are increasingly seeing through the government's lies and duplicity, and they need to work within a radical structure. This indicates to me that one can not just ignore the middle class as being totally barren. It does mean that they can not be transformed into radicals overnight; they may have to be frustrated liberals first. So while the middle class has radical potential, it is mostly unrealized and unrealizable unless we can relate the War to other issues here at home.

The greatest danger in middle class organizing is not that the people might be pushed too hard, too fast (this is a major problem), but that the organizers might become satisfied with too little. That is, while it is understandable why some Vietnam Summer groups work closely with a "Negotiations Now" petition, if this (or Congressman recall, or Community teach-out, etc.) is all the organizing accomplishes, then Vietnam Summer is definitely just "liberal" and damnably so. But this need not be the case. If the attempt begun this summer is not abandonned and if the middle class organizing is continued wihtin a radical and revolutionary perspective, then we might have accomplished something. But this means radicals must continue the work, and not leave it up to others.

Unfortunately, the answer often heard now to the question" After summer, the what?" is to attend the NCNP convention in Chicago and to work for a radical successor. This is a false and misguided move; it would destroy whatever foundations have been laid for formal radical organizing. There are many reasons for this and I will state them in order of importance. 1) To talk of new politics is to talk of working within our so-called democratic structure. Elections, especially at this time, are not going to result in either radical leaders or a radical program. The facts that elections are a fraud, that the people do not rule, that we do not have a voice in the decisions which affect our lives are still not recognized by the vast majority of the middle class and even of Vietnam Summer groups. Thus, to work in "new politics" on even a local scale, with few exceptions, will perpetuate the illusion among them about how things are changed in this country. 2) Because the NCNP convention will probably become ensnarled in a debate over the merits of a national "peace" ticket, there is no guarantee that it will produce a national organization dedicated to radical, grass-roots, community organizing. One is told that this is precisely why it is important to have "community" people go from Vietnam Summer groups to the convention. My response to that argument is first that, by and large, VS group representatives would either be bored by the meeting or would be easily swayed by more than one group. That is, they simply do not nave enough information or experience after three-quarters of a summer of anti-War organizing to be committed to the necessity of local organizing; many would revert to the easy path of liberalism. Second, it is important that the staff of community organizers present their position at Chicago, but this doesn't mean that it would be beneficial to compromise that position or to expect a bunch of left-libs to support it. All that is demanded of a delegate is that he could "conceivable, at some time" support an independent candidate. Even some elements of the Democratic Party are invited. 3) A third reason not to go to the NCNP convention is that the people who are organizing it are doing a bad job, and, more important, they do no know what organizing is about. If we need a national organization to continue community organizing, why not call a conference of community organizers, rather than try to make something out of a bad idea and a past mistake?

It seems to me that Vietnam Summer has to face up to the criticism expressed in New Left Notes. If it is just a liberal protest, if it is headed toward a coalitionist-liberal-progressive type of political activity, then it really deserves to be condemned. But if, on the other hand, it is the start of something creative in the way of radical organizing, using Vietnam as a guide for multi-issue analysis, then let's make sure we are not coopted and corrupted. If we believe grass-roots organizing (and even the middle class is exploited, although it may not see that) is the best way to prepare for the revolution, the let's stop thinking about "new politics" and start talking about the care of local organizing. Right now, we need to put this issue before our groups and talk about it seriously. And we need materials oncommunity organizing to work with. Above all, we need a better answer to "After summer, what?" than NCNP can possibly give us.

'Our Course of Action'

STUDENT NONVIOLENT
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
360 NELSON STREET S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30313
July 26, 1967

STATEMENT MADE BY SNCC CHAIRMAN H. RAP BROWN MINUTES BEFORE HE WAS ARRESTED IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. AIRPORT, JULY 26, 1967.

I am charged with inciting black people to commit an offense by way of protest against the law, a law in which neither I nor any of my people have any say in preparing. The law against which the protest was directed (the law which denies freedom) is the law which established this country. I consider myself neither morally nor legally bound to obey laws made by a body, in which I have no representation. That the will of the people is the basis of the authority of government, is a principle universally acknowledged as sacred throughout the civilized world and constitutes the basic foundation and is legally bound by the laws governing this country. It should be equally understandable that we, as black people, should adopt the attitude that we are neither morally nor legally bound to obey laws which were not made with our consent and which seek to oppress us. Nor can we be expected to have confidence in courts that interpret and enforce such laws. The white man makes all the laws, he drags us before his courts, he accuses us, and he sits in judgment over us.

Do not deceive yourselves into believing that penalties will deter men from the course that they believe is right. History shows that penalties do not deter men when their conscience is aroused, nor will they deter my people or the colleagues with whom I have worked.

We stand on the eve of a black revolution. Masses of our people are on the move, fighting the enemy tit-for-tat, responding to counter-revolutionary violence with revolutionary violence, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life. These rebellions are but a dress rehearsal for real revolution. Neither imprisonment nor threats of death will sway me from the path that I have taken, nor will they sway others like me. For to men, freedom in their own land is the pinnacle of their ambitions; and nothing can turn men of conviction and a strong sense of freedom aside. More powerful than my fear of the dreadful conditions to which I might be subjected in prison is my hatred for the dread conditions to which my people are subjected outside prisons throughout this country. I hate the practice of race discrimination, and in doing so, in my hatred, I am sustained by the fact that the overwhelming majority of mankind hate it equally. There is nothing any court can do to change in any way that hatred in me; it can only be removed by the removal of the injustices and the inhumanity which exist in this country. We seek to move that injustice from the political, social and economic life of the United States.

A stable and just society cannot mount a successful offensive action against a black youth who breaks a window and at the same time plead that it is powerless to protect black youth who are being murdered because they seek to make American democracy a reality. Each time a black church is bombed or burned, it is an act of violence in our streets. Each time a black body is found in the swamps of Mississippi or Alabama, that is violence in our land. Each time black human rights workers are refused protection by the government, that is anarchy. Each time a police officer shoots and kills a black teen-ager, that is urban crime.

We see America for what it is, and we recognize our course of action.

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it can happen here

The following is an excerpt from a release from the Community Action Center in San Pedro. They're SDS guys doing a range of community projects, including draft resistance and campus work at Harbor City College, and Hippie Cultural Revolution Consciousness Development, in San Pedro—the Los Angeles and Long Beach Port Harbor area. Their antagonists are the high school and post-high school gangs.

—Doug Norberg

We are a group of people who have organized very loosely in order to decide what we believe in and to take action on issues whenever we feel it is appropriate or necessary. We range in age from 14 to 26. We are primarily high school and college students. However some of us are employed and paying taxes. We meet at the Community Action Center, 1919 South Cabrillo Ave., in San Pedro. Five of us are residents at the Center. About 100 people use the Center every week as a gathering place.

First of all we would like you to know what has really been happening to us at the Center. On April 29, May 6, May 13, May 26, July 1, July 8, July 16, and July 21 windows were broken. On May 13, our building was unlawfully entered, and extensive vandalism created many of the building defects which we are now being cited for by the Health Dept. On June 7, two bullets were shot into an upstairs room narrowly missing those of us who were in the room. On July 10, four of the "boys" broke in and viciously attacked a 16-year-old boy, cracking two of his ribs.

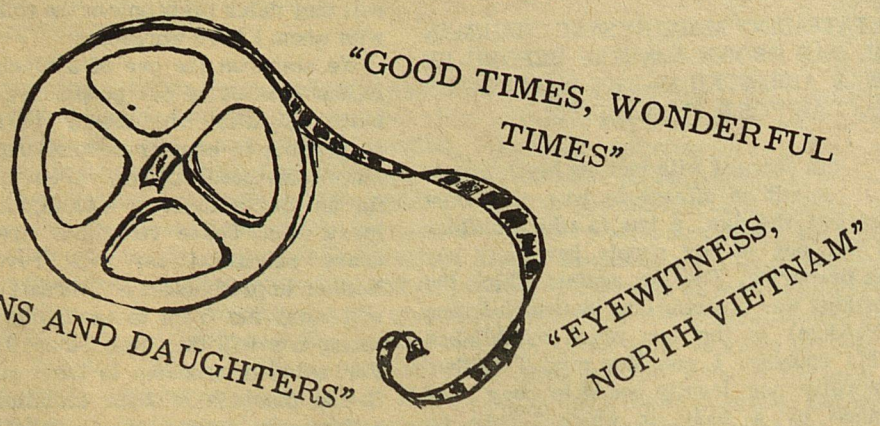
Finally, on July 20, at 5:00 in the morning, someone doused one of the downstairs walls with gasoline and set it on fire. Seven people were sleeping at the time. The fire burned up inside the wall and broke out on the second floor. It was very lucky for those of us who were asleep that a girl wpke up in time to get us out. The fire department put out the fire before it had done more than destroy one of the rooms upstairs. We have no choice but to consider this an attack on our lives.

We have told you now what is really happening in San Pedro. Can you believe this is happening here? You know a church was bombed and children were killed. But that was in the South. You have accepted the idea that people in Selma, Alabama are afraid to sleep at night. Well, let us remind you that no town, not even San Pedro, is immune to the kind of lawlessness and lack of respect for life that threatens us all.

WHEELS

After our recent request for a car for the national office, there were two cars donated. We will need about 15 more for organizers this fall, and we have someone setting up a repair shop on the East Coast. Seven thousand people receive this sheet, so we have not lost hope. Please help.

GOOD IDEAS FOR FRESHMAN ORIENTATION OR FOR GENERAL FUND-RAISING?.



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peace without servitude

continued from p.2

regulations and never returned. Next a forceful-type FBI agent flashed his badge and demanded my name. I told him and asked for his name and badge number. He left. I continued to pass out leaflets to inductees and Army personnel. Everything was going as planned. Then they shifted their tactics. Instead of continuing with typical military belligerences for which we had prepared, they resorted to non-interference and Ghandi-like pacifism. They let me talk and pass out leaflets for 15 minutes; they completely ignored me. Then they ushered us into the testing room as if everything were normal. When asked to leave, my friends all made short statements about militarism and Vietnam, but again there was no response from the groups and I remained silent, except for saying some things about free speech. I then began speaking loudly to the blacks sitting closest to me. I pointed out the class nature of the war and they all agreed it was unjust but were seemingly unconcerned. Meanwhile, instructors proceeded with the usual routine. At this point I was beginning to become discouraged. There was total apathy among those who would be killing men and dying without reason and without disturbance to conscience.

As the machine moved on, one felt as if Vietnam did not exist, and that nothing was actually happening to us. I refused to sign the Armed Forces Security Questionnaire, and upon completion of the standard examination I was interviewed by the Personnel Psychologist. He gave me a nice box-lunch and talked to me like an old friend. Again I had to make myself remember where I was and what they were trying to do to me. I told him I would do what was required by law until ordered to induction. I also refused to sign the personal inquiry statement and refused to sign a statement explaining why. Again I would not cooperate when two secret service agents interviewed me, but I freely expressed my opinion of militarism. No one seemed as interested in my views as in the completion of procedure. They finished the interview, and I left. I felt that I had furthered my cause and would be likely to receive a CO classification from the appeals court. Outside there were at least ten friends still picketing, and I was glad that this phase was over, yet at the same time I was astonished by the deceptive methods of the SSS and the indifference with which they were met. I wondered if the men of the military noticed the success of these non-violent approaches to their problems and if they were capable of extending such an approach to larger problems. I also wondered if they wondered why 40 people volunteered their support and efforts to work peacefully for a cause which they believed in without severe organization or involuntary servitude. Perhaps our efforts helped to demonstrate more clearly that peace is possible and that compulsory service is an insult to every citizen of this country.

Draft Resisters Union Local #3
Box 50791, New Orleans La 70150

CHOICE NOT CHANCE

WE WON'T GO

convo yes

continued from p. 1

would be free to leave. At least half of the approximately 300 students attending participated and their cards were counted with the rest. But the administration, in a hasty reaction, announced that only cards collected at the end of the fourth lecture would be given credit for that lecture. Since each student must attend all four of the lectures for credit for the entire cluster, and since most students needed this cluster to fulfill term requirements, virtually any student repeating the protest at the last lecture would necessarily be placed on academic probation. In spite of this warning, the protest was repeated by 140 students (Ivanhoe Donaldson was speaking and few of us left after handing in our cards). Directly following the fourth lecture we decided to continue the practice of collecting "anti-cards" at the beginning of every "official" event...thus nullifying the convo card system of enforced attendance for a large part of the student community. Rather than boycott the system entirely, we felt that an anti-card response would better demonstrate our interest in events on their own merit and not on the basis of a required accumulation of IBM "culture points."

The administration has not yet responded to us. In the event that this issue is a long struggle or that it leads into other areas, we are faced with the problem of continuing organization as many of our present participants will be off campus in the Fall when we will be faced with a school population mainly of incoming Freshmen. It remains to be seen whether an activist movement can survive the campus population shifts that take place in the Summer and Fall terms. Unless we can successfully force the issue during the remaining three and a half weeks of the term, our only alternative would be a protracted agreement. In any case, we are working not against the stated philosophy of the college but against the serious disparity between philosophy and practice.

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NAC MINUTES

July 27, 1967

Members present: Spiegel, Silbar, Buck, Mc Carthy, Segal, Pardun, Rossen, Halliwell

Members absent: Tepperman, Davidson

Others present: Gottlieb

Since Tim McCarthy is coming on staff, he will become one of the office members of the NAC. Halliwell will drop off. Kissinger will become one of the outside members.

John Dunn was accepted to work in the print shop.

The deal with WSO to set up the print shop was discussed. It was decided that someone would write up for NLN an explanation of the deal, and that Silbar would write up a summary of his objections to it.

It was decided that JOIN and CDS could use the addressograph machine for their mailings, at the cost of 50¢ per hundred cards, on the conditions that the cards not be prepared or stored in the office, and with the understanding that NLN has precedence in the use of the machine.

It was approved that Rossen, as a member of our "board of directors", write a fund-raising letter to our big contributors.

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NAC meeting, August 3
members present: McCarthy, Rossen, Spiegel, Tepperman, Buck, Pardun

members absent: Silbar, Kissinger, Segal, Davidson

others present: Halliwell, Gottlieb

Mike reported on the bail situation. A bail fund is being set up.

Since there is only $700 in the SDS account now, fund-raising mailings were discussed. An appeal for $$ is to go into NLN. Pledge reminders are to be sent to contributors who give monthly.

Mike reported on the financial situation with the JOIN paper. Their back bill with us is $425, and they have $125 worth of work upstairs now. It was decided that we will do no more work for them unless the cost of the issue plus $50 is brought in with each issue until the debt is completely paid. Jean abstained on this question.

Mike James made a written appeal of last week's NAC decision that the JOIN addressograph cards could not be typed at the SDS office. It was decided that we will lend JOIN the necessary equipment, but that they will have to do the typing at their office, since our typewriter situation is tight. This was seen as an exception to the rule we established last week; the rule still stands for other organizations.

Murray Levin, who is writing a book about the new left, wants to transcribe the tapes of the Clear Lake Convention. He will send us 200 mimeographed copies of them. It was approved that the tapes be sent to him.

We discussed whether we should set up a film library or should let AFSC handle our films, since they would keep them up. It was decided that we should keep the films within SDS, and that once the REC center is established a film library will be a part of its literature program.