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Nixon's Decisions

After half a year of painful agonizing, of backing and filling, of puttering delays, the pattern of decisions of the Nixon Administration is finally becoming clear. It is not a pretty picture. In every single case, the Nixon Administration has managed to come down on the wrong side, on the side of burgeoning statism.

In Vietnam, *the war goes on*. A simple statement, which the American public hasn't seemed to understand ever since the negotiations began in Paris last May. The United States has been using the negotiations as a smoke-screen cover behind which to step up the war in South Vietnam, where of course the war began. But first the initial euphoria led Americans, even most of the young anti-war activists, to proclaim that the war was over. And then everyone waited to "give Nixon a chance" to end the war. How long must we wait for this "chance"? How long must we wait to proclaim that the Emperor has no clothes, and that the war goes on? The peace forces in Congress are beginning at last to wake up, and indications are that the anti-war movement will rouse itself from its year-long sleep by this fall. Disgusted by Nixon's deliberate delays, the National Liberation Front has finally formed the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam which has already been recognized by many countries. The final step in the NLF plan will be to form a provisional coalition government of all anti-imperialist and neutralist forces, which will deliver the final hammer-blows that will shatter the Saigon puppet regime.

In the vital area of the draft, Nixon put on a typically Nixonian performance. After muttering about replacing the draft with a volunteer army and appointing a committee to study the subject, Nixon finally came out in favor of a lottery-draft, the old Kennedy scheme which would replace the current selective slavery system with slavery-by-chance. Hardly an improvement. But, once again, the smokescreen of reform befuddles the public into thinking that a significant improvement is being made.

The military-industrial state has proceeded apace, and the arms race stepped up with the Nixon decision to go ahead with the ABM and MIRV missile boondoggles. Chemical and bacteriological research and experiments continue despite some public exposure. In the field of civil liberties, we shudder in expectation of Burger Court reversals of the excellent landmark libertarian decisions of the Warren Court. The Administration continues to speak about crackdowns on student dissidents, and Deputy Attorney-General Kleindienst spoke of rounding up student dissenters and placing them in "detention camps". And now the Depart-

ment of Justice, in a memorandum submitted in the infamous trial of the Chicago 8, brazenly asserts the right of the President or his aides to invade illegally the privacy and property of Americans through electronic snooping if the President in his wisdom and majesty should decide that the people spied upon might be acting against some form of "national security", foreign or domestic.

In the sphere of economics the Nixon Administration had been highly touted among conservatives. It was supposed to herald a return to the free-market and a check upon galloping inflation through monetary restriction. Again, nothing has happened. The much publicized monetary tightening has been half-hearted at best, and provides no real test of the effectiveness of monetary policy. For the Administration has been doing precisely what its spokesmen had been deriding the Democrats for doing: trying to "fine-tune" the economy, trying to cut back ever so gently on inflation so as not to precipitate any recession. But it can't be done. If restrictionist measures were ever sharp enough to check the inflationary boom, they would also be strong enough to generate a temporary recession. Furthermore, the basic Nixon Administration commitment to inflation is revealed by its devotion to the world inflationary Special Drawing Rights, and its refusal to consider any rise in the gold price, much less any return to the gold standard.

Instead of cutting back on its *own* monetary inflation (generated by Federal Reserve purchases of government securities), the Administration has perpetuated the tyranny and the red herring of the 10% income surcharge, another statist heritage of the Johnson Administration. What happens is that the federal government pumps new money into the economy through Federal Reserve expansion, and *then*, when the people begin to spend their new money and prices begin to rise, the government proceeds to denounce the public for "spending too much" and levies higher income taxes to "sop up their excess purchasing power"--thus levying both a swindle and a double burden upon the long-suffering public. Spending and government fiscal policy, furthermore, are irrelevant to price inflation, which is determined by the supply and demand of money. And even if it were *not* irrelevant, it is surely unmitigated gall to assume that a *tax*, a payment for which the consumer receives no service in return, is somehow worse than a *price*, for which the consumer at least receives a product in exchange. To advocate higher taxes in order to check higher prices is like advocating a person's murder in order to cure him of disease.

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SDS — Two Views

I: Liberated Zone

The chickens came home to roost for SDS. The SDS national convention was in the process of being taken over by the Progressive Labor Party when SDS split in two in June. By its ability to move its members to key national meetings PL was in a position to take control of the national convention which most SDS members avoid as irrelevant to the real political work which occurs on the local level. SDS chapters are independent of the national convention and disregard its decisions.

PL as a Communist organization was welcomed by the trade union wing of the SDS old guard who wished in 1966 to counterbalance the overwhelming flood of students who had joined SDS to oppose the Vietnam war. Committed to clearly radical anti-imperialism rather than Marxist reformism, the mass infusion of youth had already brought about the election of newcomer Carl Oglesby as SDS president in 1965.

PL had made original contributions to the black liberation struggle, student freedom and support of freedom of travel to Cuba. When the May 2nd Movement was founded in the spring of 1964 to oppose the dangerously escalating American intervention in Vietnam by sending medical aid to the NLF, PL members participated in its work. In 1965 when M2M played a leading role in developing a consciousness of opposition to the draft while SDS leaders fumbled the issue, PL members tried to restrain this radicalism and replace anti-imperialist struggle by a trade union fight for socialism. While M2M members viewed Lin Piao's "Long live the victory of people's war" as the crucial analysis for anti-imperialist struggle, PL adopted the sectarian and trade unionist socialism associated with the anti-Mao Communists in China. PL forced the dissolution of M2M in order to work in the wider recruiting ground of SDS, but many PL members in M2M, viewing this action as Stalinist, resigned from PL to continue the struggle against the draft and imperialism.

PL had come to oppose the NLF and Ho Chi Minh as capitalist, black liberation as nationalist rather than socialist, Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution because of the 26th of July Movement was no socialist, Castro was not a Communist and Cuba not a Marxist State. Clearly PL was a crippling counterweight to the revolutionary mass of students in SDS. But, the trade unionist SDS old guard was ousted at the 1966 Clear Lake, Iowa convention by "Prairie Power", an anarchist trend that swept in from the trans-Mississippi Great Plains region. Although increasingly militant against the draft and university complicity in the war, SDS was held back by PL's conservatism which fears alienating trade union workers by 'adventurous' anti-war action.

The 1968 East Lansing, Mich. SDS convention met in a crisis situation. PL paralyzed the convention, and sought to deflect SDS from anti-war action to a Worker-Student Alliance. SDS national leadership found itself unable to challenge PL effectively. Strong opposition to PL was presented by the SDS anarchist groups whose many black banners of libertarianism were rallying standards against PL. Finally, a lengthy criticism of PL was launched in which former M2M members took a leading role. As a result PL's attempt to elect members to the SDS national committee was defeated by a narrow margin.

The warning of these events did not effectively penetrate the SDS national leadership. The three national officers ultimately split into three different directions. One became allied with PL, which gained supporters because it empha-

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II: Continue The Struggle

There is no question about the fact that the PL cancer had to be excised. In structure, PL was imposing upon a previously open and warm-hearted movement the rigid party discipline and the manipulative maneuverings of a typical Marxist-Stalinist cadre. In content, PL had become systematically counter-revolutionary; every struggle, whether it be for black national self-determination, national liberation against U. S. imperialism, against ROTC and the draft and the war in Vietnam, for student power or the People's Park, every one of these struggles was hampered or seriously crippled by PL's opposition, in the name of the sainted Marxian "working class" and because the "working class wouldn't like it." In the end it became clear that PL and its WSA satellites would have to go.

The problem is that in the course of this injection of PL and the reactive battle against it, SDS might have been poisoned permanently. For in too many quarters, especially in the vocal national leadership, the old 1966-67 libertarian spirit had been replaced by the virus of Marxism-Stalinism. The mere excising of PL is not nearly enough to insure healthy survival; continuing struggle is necessary to save the "old" SDS.

For while the virtue of the old SDS is that it had an open libertarian spirit rather than a dogmatic Marxian ideology, this very absence of positive theory left a vacuum which, inevitably, Marxism came to fill. For in the course of struggling against PL's invasion, too many of the "New Left" opponents of PL began to adopt their enemy's ideology, to call themselves "communists" (even if with a "small c"), and to take on more and more of the trappings of Marxism and socialism. The most infected group within the newly purged SDS is the "Factory Faction" or the "RYM-2" group, headed by Mike Klonsky and Bob Avakian. The Klonsky clique, while being worshippers of the Panthers, place major emphasis on student permeation and conversion of the industrial working class--probably the most reactionary group in the country today. The Klonsky clique also wants to convert SDS into a Marxist-Stalinist cadre organization--a fate which would be equally as bad as becoming a Progressive Labor front. While it is true that the Factory Faction was defeated in the election of officers of the purged SDS, it still remains a menace, especially for its working-class ideology.

Another irritant within the new SDS is the Trotskyite-Draperite Independent Socialist Club, which, like PL, hurled nearly all of its members into SDS and into voting at the national convention. Dogmatically Marxist and so "third camp" as to oppose national liberation struggles, the ISC remains a danger in the wings; its power to manipulate and destroy was well seen last year when it showed itself able, despite being a tiny minority, to control completely and thereby in effect to wreck the fledgling Peace and Freedom Party.

Leonard Liggio has mentioned uncritical "Panthermania" as another large continuing problem for SDS. A further problem, inherently absurd but growing as a menace because nearly everyone in the movement has been too chicken to fight it, is the hokum of the "women's liberation struggle". The women's liberation movement is *not* a rational and sensible battle against discrimination against women in employment, or against the "feminine mystique". These positions are scorned by the women's liberationists as akin to "white liberalism" and "integrationism". Insisting on a total analogy with black liberation, the women's liberationists claim that women, too, are systematically oppressed

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CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE — (Continued from page 2)

by men and that therefore a separate women's power struggle is needed against this oppression. This idea seems to me absurd, and probably at least as good a case could be made for the view that *men* are oppressed and exploited by parasitic women (e.g. through divorce and alimony laws). But, at any rate, the insistence on analogy with the black movement is even more absurd, for the logical conclusion of the women's liberation struggle would then be . . . women's nationalism or separatism. Are we supposed to grant women an Amazonian state somewhere? Men-and-women, happily, are inherently "integrationist" and one may hope that they will remain that way.

In practice, women's liberation seems to boil down to (a) girls allowing themselves to be as ugly as possible; (b) conning the husband into taking care of the baby; and/or (c) a neo-Puritan ideology of crypto-Lesbianism. At any rate, in allowing women's liberationism to grow in influence unchallenged, SDS is in danger of making a mockery of its own principles.

But the major problem in SDS is that in order to expel PL, SDS found it necessary, for the first time, to lay down ideological requirements for membership. Until now, there have been no such requirements; now SDS has adopted two principles which every SDSer must support. These are the principles which Leonard Liggio cites in his article. There is nothing wrong with them; on the contrary, they set down an excellent line of support for national liberation struggles, both foreign and domestic, external and internal, against U. S. imperialism. But the problem is that if *good* principles can be adopted as conditions for membership, then so can bad principles, and it behooves us to be on guard against them.

In fact, waiting in the wings is an expanded set of "unity principles", which were introduced by the Klonsky clique, but happily rejected by the rank-and-file of "old" SDSers at the convention. But these five principles now get referred to the membership and the chapters for discussion, and it is imperative that at least "point 5" be rejected. Points 1 and 3 are essentially a reaffirmation of the already adopted two points: support for national liberation struggles, internal and external, against U. S. imperialism. Point 4 is an innocuous repudiation of red-baiting. So far so good. But Point 3 fully endorses the women's liberation hogwash, e.g.: "The struggle for women's liberation is a powerful force against U. S. imperialism. We are dedicated to fighting male supremacy, to destroying the physical and spiritual oppression of women by men . . . We encourage the formation of 'women's militias' to ensure the fulfillment of the program of total equality for women."

But if Point 3 should simply be defeated in the interests of sanity, Point 5 is intolerable for any libertarian. Point 5 is a flat-out commitment for socialism: "Recognizing that only through socialism, the public ownership and control of the means of producing wealth, can the people be freed from misery, we declare ourselves a socialist movement . . . Further; . . . socialism can only come through the leading role of the proletariat." Here is the sticking-point; no libertarian can be a member of an explicitly socialist organization, and one, furthermore, that would make socialism a condition of membership.

But in the meantime there is no cause for despair. The five points failed of adoption at the SDS convention. Furthermore, at Chicago a group of "anarchists, libertarians, and independent revolutionaries" met, symbolically at IWW hall, to form a separate third-force caucus. This group is still in SDS, and remains to continue struggle. That struggle now begins for the minds and the hearts of the local campus chapters, where the membership resides, and where Marxist-Stalinist sectarian factionalism is at a minimum. A particularly shining opportunity appears in those areas (such as New England, and parts of New York City and the

LIBERATED ZONE — (Continued from page 2)

sized the necessity of winning over the major part of the American people and opposed excesses of Panther-mania, which not only supports the Black Panthers against police repression but uncritically accepts the excessive posturing and the Stalinism that had developed since the jailing of their founder, Huey Newton.

This Panther-mania was created by Mike Klonsky, a second national officer acting as a self-appointed white nominator of the vanguard of the Black liberation movement. Emerging at the 1969 convention as the Revolutionary Youth Movement II, this position views the proletariat as the main force of revolution. The third national officer, Bernardine Dohrn, identified with the Action Faction which denies the leading role in revolutionary struggle to the industrial working class. Recognizing the validity of the revolutionary nationalism and right to self-determination of the Black and Spanish nations in America, they consider the international context--United States involvement in imperialist adventures--as central to undermining the monopoly system and creating the basis for revolutionary action. At the 1969 convention its position paper was called "Weatherman" after its slogan taken from an anti-authoritarian folk song--"You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." The paper declared:

As imperialism struggles to hold together this decaying social fabric, it inevitably resorts to brute force and authoritarian ideology. People, especially young people, more and more find themselves in the iron grip of authoritarian institutions. Reaction against the pigs or teachers in the schools, welfare pigs or the army is generalizable and extends beyond the particular repressive institution to the society and the State as a whole. The legitimacy of the State is called into question for the first time in at least 30 years, and the anti-authoritarianism which characterizes the youth rebellion turns into rejection of the State, a refusal to be socialized into American society.

SDS split into two conventions at Chicago. One is dominated by PL's Worker-Student Alliance and includes the SDS Labor Committee. The New Left SDS includes about a dozen tendencies including the Action Faction, RYM II, Praxis Axis, ISC, Marxist humanists, old guard SDS populists, Prairie Power activists, anarchists and libertarians. (One SDSer's reaction to the convention was, "Us anarchists have got to get organized.")

The New Left SDS has adopted two basic principles at its convention: "One: We support the struggle of the Black and Latin colonies within the U. S. for national liberation and we recognize those nations' rights to self-determination (including the right to political secession if they desire it).

"Two: We support the struggle for national liberation of the people of South Vietnam, led by the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, led by President Ho Chi Minh . . . We support the right of all people to pick up the gun to free themselves from the brutal rule of U. S. imperialism."

Having been on the defensive for some time because of PL's dogmatic hegemony, the original movement spirit has re-emerged in SDS. The ultimate result of the 1969 New Left convention was the reaffirmation of native American radicalism as part of the international anti-imperialist revolution.

— Leonard P. Liggio

San Francisco Bay Area) where SDS chapters have been dominated by PL. Here, an opportunity arises to form new, libertarian-oriented "true" SDS chapters in competition to Progressive Labor.

Even more does the crisis in SDS provide a striking opportunity for the growing student libertarian movement to organize itself as a radical, militant movement free at last

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NIXON'S DECISIONS — (Continued from page 1)

And waiting in the shadows, for the time when the income tax surcharge clearly will have failed--as it already has--lies the spectre of price and wage controls. Secretary of Treasury Kennedy has already threatened us with this spectre, this program for economic dictatorship which is at the opposite pole from anyone's definition of the free market. Not only is it dictatorship, but it doesn't work, only serving to add massive economic dislocations to the inflation that proceeds on its merry way. Why, one might ask, does powerful multi-millionaire businessman David Kennedy ponder price and wage controls? *Not* because he has been somehow brain-washed by "leftists" or because he suffers from capitalist guilt feelings, as conservatives like to

believe. But because the business community is beginning to turn more and more to price and wage controls, as a means of using the power of government to clamp down on wage increases. For in the later stages of an inflationary boom, wages begin to catch up to price increases, and this has been happening in recent months. One more example of the present-day "partnership" between government and business!

In addition to this pattern of statism, the Nixon Administration, led by leading conservative-liberal Daniel Moynihan, is seriously considering proposing a nation-wide guaranteed annual income through a "negative income tax". Both conservatives and liberals have become enamoured of this scheme in recent years--a scheme that would inevitably cripple the incentives to work and earn and thereby wreck the American economy.

So what do you say about all this, Mr. "Libertarian-Conservative"--you who looked forward to a "Fabian" rollback of the State during the Nixon Administration, you who put your trust in all those Chicagoite and Randian advisers? When are you going to abandon your reformist illusions? When are you going to face up to the necessity for *real* opposition to government?

In the meanwhile, it has now become evident that everywhere, down the line, foreign and domestic, there is no difference whatsoever between the Johnson and the Nixon Administrations (even unto the repeated attacks on the "neo-isolationism" of the critics). The only difference is in style and personnel, the replacement of vulgar Texas cornpone by bland uptight hypocritical Northern WASP. And even in esthetic repulsiveness, it is very difficult to choose between them.

Recommended Reading

NEW AMERICAN REVIEW, NO. 6. (New American Library: Signet paperback, \$1.25. \$4.00 for four issues.) Editor T. Solatoroff, of this paperback periodical, writes that the word that best expresses recent trends of thought is "libertarian". Particularly recommended in this issue are:

Jane Jacobs, "Why Cities Stagnate", an excellent and perceptive libertarian analysis of the vital importance of the free play of small, innovative entrepreneurs in a city's healthy growth. A keen attack on government planning and public housing while the same government prevents blacks and other urban dwellers from launching their own activities.

Emile Capouya, "The Red Flag and the Black": how anarchism has been reviving, particularly during the French revolution last year.

Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, "The Merger Movement: A Study in Power", *Monthly Review* (June, 1969). A highly perceptive study of how the Established corporations have used the political arm to cripple and harass conglomerate mergers and their "new men" entrepreneurs. Why don't free-market economists have as keen a sense of political realities?

Tiziano Terzani, "Storming the Institutions", *The Nation* (June 16, 1969). Important article on the revolutionary situation that is rapidly developing in Italy--provides a good background to the current Italian political crisis.

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from any possibility of socialist subjugation. Radical libertarians are becoming strong enough to organize themselves into a separate movement for the first time. Already, there are two militantly radical libertarian organizations in the field: the Radical Libertarian Alliance, and the Student Libertarian Action Movement, centered in Arizona and with chapters in Georgia and Colorado. There is also a strong possibility that anarcho-libertarians increasingly persecuted in the Young Americans for Freedom will split off after the YAF national convention on Labor Day and form their own organization, freed at last from YAFite fascism. A merger of these three organizations could form a powerful force on the nation's campuses next year.

— M. N. R.

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