

10 NAM - New American Movement

YOUTH LIBERATION PROPOSAL

It is certainly the duty of the movement to try to educate and organize the adult mass. Now is the time to recognize that it is equally our duty to serve the revolt of the young in whatever way we can. Very young people in this society are ready to move but they have no power, no rights, and no resources. Are we in NAM preparing to help and work with them?

Part of the answer to this question is provided by the fact that there are almost no people under 18 at this conference. To our knowledge NAM has never solicited youth membership or related to youth oppression in any of its programs or media. Is this because we feel that working with youth will alienate NAM from other groups we want to influence? Are we willing to mirror the age chauvinism of the dominant culture in order to organize? Are we so interested in the material repression of people that we are willing to ignore unjust human relationships? We might as well recognize right now that the liberation of youth will be just as hard for people to accept as the liberation of women. And just as inevitable.

We of the Youth Liberation workshop believe the revolution can only be made through a united struggle of all oppressed people. We believe that the movement is holding itself back by failing to seriously recognize the revolutionary potential of the youth mass.

Out of a total American population of around 210 million over 70 million people are under the age of 18. Fifty-one million people are imprisoned in public schools. They do not have even ~~xxx~~ a vote on the insanity around them (or a real voice in the left which is supposed to provide an alternative.) It is from among these people that capitalism and imperialism must find the replacements for their ranks of workers, managers, housewives, and armies. That is why they find it necessary to force the young into training institutions such as the school and the family. These institutions serve the established order - they contradict the real interests of young people.

Of all the people in America young people are the most easily convinced of the need for deep and continuous change. The system has destroyed less of their real selves simply because they have been alive only a few years. Young people already intuitively understand that the world is such a mess that their chances of dying of old age are slim indeed. As this thought begins to hit home more and more young people will begin to realize how really oppressive it is. The next realization will be that we must survive - the system of death will be brought down.

Young people know that their real interest lies in real changes. Spontaneous rebellion by the young must become a coherent, determined struggle to decide for themselves what to do with their lives. We must tear one fact into our consciousness -- that if those in power can create another generation roughly like the present generation of adults then there is nearly no hope at all for life on earth. The opposite side of this coin is that if radical youth could truly unify the mass of their generation around the need for revolt we would surely see the revolution before this century is gone.

The New American Movement should move right now to firmly support youth struggle. We can begin by incorporating the following into our analysis and programs:

- 1) The New American Movement must thoroughly publicize the Recommendations and resolutions of the 1971 White House Conference on Youth. This conference was nearly the only forum available for young people to express the beliefs of a generation. Their recommendations are profoundly radical. The nature of the origins of these resolutions and the authenticity of the politics involved make the Rec. and Res. a realistic program for youth unity in the United States

- 2) We want the immediate end of Adult Chauvinism in the New American Movement and American Society. We believe that ideas should

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be judged on their merit and people on their wisdom or kindness. Age in itself deserves no recognition.

a. Chapters must see to it that radical students in all local schools have access to a printing machine, a place to meet, and other basic necessities of organizing. A major reason (and an example) that young people have no power over their lives is that it is now almost impossible for them to gain access to the tools of struggle.

b. NAM media must devote space to youth oppression roughly in proportion to the percentage of young people in this society.

c. A minimum of one person under the age of eighteen must be a member of the national interim committee of NAM

d. In conjunction with the Youth Liberation organization NAM will sponsor a young peoples conference during 1972. Major items for discussion will include implementation of the Resolutions of the White Hse. conference on youth and the development of a permanent youth voice in national affairs.

THE C. L. P. FOR YOUTH LIBERATION

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