

U R G E N T

"We are entering the stage of war propaganda--watch for it and insist on doing your own thinking." W. Morse 3-3/65

To: SDS Chapters, March coordinators, other local groups  
From: Paul Booth and Todd Gitlin for SDS

Brothers and Sisters:

The March is over, but not forgotten--not by those who were there. Never have so many demonstrated over so much. Never, we think, have so many understood how much they must do, and why. We must now talk about: how. And we must talk about it together, for we are in this together, and there is no turning back.

The upshot of the March has been odd. On the one hand, press coverage was spotty, often insulting (NBC's Brinkley implied we were 'loiterers'), often vicious (the Scripps-Howard editorial called SDS 'highly suspect'). But the State Department today felt compelled to announce that it would drastically increase the number of its Explainers ready and anxious to visit the campuses promulgate the 'truth'. And a Gallup Poll indicated that one-third of the sample were in favor of the Johnson swamp, or for deeper immersion; one-third were for negotiations (presumably with fewer conditions than Johnson's present intention) or withdrawal; one-third 'didn't know.' And Senators Fulbright and Aiken have opposed bombing of the North.

On the other hand, the scale of those bombings has mounted; Marines at the Da Nang base have seen some action, if small scale; the guerrillas have won a major victory 28 miles south of Da Nang; the rainy season, in which counter-insurgency gets dampened, is but 10 days or 2 weeks off; there are rumors flying of more U.S. ground troops, and "Dien Bien Phu"; the Russians and Chinese make more noises about 'volunteers,' in a manner more than dimly reminiscent of the autumn days of 1950 in Korea; we may be on the brink. "While the leaders speak of peace, the mobilization orders are already being written out."-- Brecht knew.

It is our job now to show that those 25,000 hard-talking opponents of U.S. policy did not go home to sleep; that we do believe in that movement we applauded; that we are organizers, not self-congratulators.

Saturday night after the March, some 70 local coordinators met and came up with a number of proposals for short- and medium-range follow-up. The SDS National Council, meeting the next three days, augmented the list. The plan for action in the coming weeks includes the following:

I. END THE WAR IN VIETNAM WEEK \_\_\_\_\_ MAY 3-8

SDS is calling on all opponents of the war to engage in intensive activity through that week. It was recommended that the most impressive activity be staged on the 8th. A city-wide demonstration is being planned for New York for this day, but this is a local option event, and the following list may suggest some possible "options".

\* Teach-ins

\* other campus educational activity--speeches, debates. A pretty thorough collection of educational materials from many different organizations and publications is going out today in a 3rd class mailing.

\* organizing in the dorms. Going & doing door-to-door in the dorms (or anywhere else for that matter) to organize opposition to the war cannot be improved on.

\* movies: a film of Wayne Morse denouncing the war can be obtained from the SDS national office; the May 2nd Movement (Box 153, Villiage Station NYC 14) has a film made by the National Liberation Front.

\* petition drives: a copy of the Declaration of Conscience is coming with the 3rd class mailing. May 2nd is circulating a similar statement. Another petition proposal is for local petitions directed to Senators urging them to join Fulbright in the proposal to end the bombing. This is especially appropriate for the members of the

of the Foreign Relations Committee: Fulbright, Sparkman, Mansfield, Morse, Long of Louisiana, Gore, Lausche, Church, Symington, Dodd, Smathers, Clark, Pell, Hickenlooper, Aiken, Carlson, Williams of Delaware, Mundt, and Case.

\* community outreach: an intensive effort could be made to send student or faculty speakers to rotary clubs and the like to speak on Vietnam. Every time a State Department speaker comes to town, he should be challenged to debate. Each outfit that offers him a platform should be asked to ~~give~~ give a faculty member equal time, preferably on the same program.

Rotary and civic clubs are not the only places where this should be tried. Try local union meetings. Better, go to the bars and pool-rooms and talk to draft-age non-student kids about the war they don't want to fight.

\* major rallies. SDS will help find speakers for major rallies. Contact us at 119 5th Ave. NYCity or 1100 E. Washington, Ann Arbor, Mich.

\* Demonstrations and civil disobedience. It is recommended that these actions be directed at symbolic targets. The most important of these are aircraft plants making helicopters (Convair, Sikorsky, others), jets (McConnell, North American, Grumman), and Douglas Skyraiders for use in Vietnam; chemical weapons plants and research centers; draft boards and recruiting stations; west coast dockyards from which materials are shipped to Vietnam.

\* threats of bolts from the Democratic Party. The idea here is to push and pull local Democratic Party committees and political aspirants into public opposition to the war; this can be done by urging--sending speakers to meetings, or by circulating pledges among Democrats to the effect that they will support no candidates who favors war. Especially worth approaching are liberal and reform clubs.

## II. May 9 Conference on Summer Program

Swarthmore SDS is hosting a meeting to discuss the content, location, etc. of summer programs to combat ~~the~~ the war. The meeting will be especially concerned with full-time projects. It will discuss the desirability of community organizing and of direct action; it will outline the strategy for the projects. (Another committee is meeting on the question of SDS participation in a joint US-Canadian mission to Vietnam)

It is of the highest importance that each local group send one or two representatives to this meeting, as it will be the major attempt to have discussions of strategy and establish communications about future plans. Paul Potter's speech at Washington asked "I wonder what it means for each of us to say we want to end the war in Vietnam..." We are called upon to make serious decisions about our lives, and we cannot put them off. In that light it is not unreasonable to ask and expect that all the local committees which sent scores to Washington will be able to send one or two to Swarthmore.

Write soon to Patch Delliger, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa. 19081, and tell him if you're sending a representative.

## III. National Teach-In

The National Teach-in will be held in Washington on May 15th. It will begin in the morning with three speeches by prominent academics. Bundy and other prominent administration spokesmen have been invited to come in the afternoon to speak, and answer questions from the audience and a reactor panel, where they stand a decent chance of being academically impeached. In the evening, the audience will divide into seminars; as well, congressional leaders and be questioned on their views.

The "Inter-University Committee for a public Hearing on Vietnam" is calling for simultaneous local teach-ins around the country. These can revieve, via an AT&T hook-up, the four-hour confrontation between the administration spokesmen and the reactor panel. Radio stations should be persuaded to broadcast the speeches and debate.

The hook-up can be arranged for only \$60-80 for a hall seating up to 4000. ~~Contact~~ Contact the committee at Box 1383, Ann Arbor 48106, or (313) NO 3-4242 or 4243. You may call collect if necessary.

IV. CHRISIS RESPONSE.

SDS invested a committee of its National Council with the responsibility for formulating strategy for crises. This committee will meet Monday, April 26 in Chicago to set up a structure and contingency plans for a nationally coordinated reaction to a crisis in Vietnam. These plans may involve ~~xxxx~~ the circulation of a pledge to commit civil disobedience. They may also involve some selection of targets for action in the event of a world crisis over Vietnam. The committee's proposals will be communicated to the Vietnam coordinators list in the next week.

If there is a major crisis in the next few days, you should set up a regional communications structure; a national emergency meeting will be held very quickly in that event, and we will be in touch with you.

There is some debate as to whether the threat of national civil disruption should be used only in the event of a U.S.-initiated crisis. It is suggested that American escalation has gone about as far as it need go, and that the continuation of the present level of warfare will result in a response from China that will unleash major war. That line of argument suggests that once China retaliates we will be in a very isolated political position. Therefore, our threat to the government, and pledge ~~xxx~~ around which we organize people in the next few weeks, should be a demand for some unilateral American initiative by a certain deadline--"pre-emptive disruption". This could be a demand for a halt to the bombings, or some other demand around which significant support could be mobilized.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is much that could be said about the march, about our hopes and, yes, our fears; about the movement needed and the pressures now; but we have gone on long enough for now. Enough to say that want to hear from you--ideas, reports--(write to SDS, rm. 308, 119 Fifth Ave. New York City 10003); that we'll write again after the contingency-planning meeting Monday, and, again, that all of us are bound by knowing, if the New York Times did not know, the full meaning and challenge of that March we all made.

roll'em...?

Paul Booth  
Todd Gitlin,  
for SDS