

GROUNDSWELL

NEWSLETTER
OF THE
PRAIRIE FIRE DISTRIBUTING COMMITTEE

VOL 1 NO 1

FEB, 1975

Why GROUNDSWELL?

GROUNDSWELL is the newsletter of the Prairie Fire Distributing Committee. We are groups of activists in several U.S. cities who came together around Prairie Fire, the political statement of the Weather Underground Organization. We were in basic agreement with the politics of Prairie Fire, and saw it as important to reprint and distribute. We felt Prairie Fire was relevant to the many political projects we were involved in and to the growth of the revolutionary anti-imperialist movement. As our work has developed we have organized study groups, open meetings, forums and cultural events. We have helped to build many marches, rallies and demonstrations. We have begun political discussion with many groups and organizers around the Country. We want to contribute to building a mass revolutionary movement.

GROUNDSWELL is one of the projects we are initiating to meet the needs of the movement at this time. It is a form of communication between local P.F.D.C.'s and individuals and organizations committed to developing the unity of theory and practice as we organize. It will be a forum for charting our direction, for analyzing our work and for strengthening our ability to respond to the crises that demand our full, undivided energies.

We hope for debate and encourage the writing of articles that measure our work against some basic questions: How does our work develop revolutionary consciousness, mobilize masses of people, build organization, deal with racism and sexism?

GROUNDSWELL is aimed at overcoming the isolation of individuals and groups from one another which has contributed to cynicism among activists and

has thwarted the full force of our work. We want to be one of the many building blocks of unity. Many of these blocks already exist. Common discussions are taking place around the country. Organizers recognize the need to broaden the class base of our movement while growing numbers of working people become more and more conscious of their oppression. Everywhere, people talk of the need for strategy, a concrete analysis of conditions in this Country and in the world, and for organization. Hunger, unemployment, soaring prices, increased police repression, urban removal and racism in the schools are now being understood as interrelated parts of the crisis of the imperialist system. Women are organizing for their liberation in unity with anti-imperialist women's movements in other nations, and cultural workers are telling the stories of our struggles in their songs and plays.

Third World organizers have been creating strong bases, developing analyses, and building important organization. White organizers are beginning to learn from Third World revolutionary movements and to link their work to these struggles. All of us are becoming aware of the need for a national anti-racist movement which could effectively support the American Indian Movement, the black students and their families in Boston, and the farm workers in the midwest and west.

We need a national movement against imperialist war which would make it impossible for Ford and Kissinger to ignore the Paris Peace Accords. While Kissinger threatens military invasion of the Mideast oilfields, and the U.S. government continues to prop up aggressive Israel, we must set in motion an anti-imperialist resistance which will organize and inspire the people of this nation who don't accept another war as a solution to the domestic crisis.

We hope GROUNDSWELL will help our movement develop. GROUNDSWELL can be a useful way for us to learn from eachother's experiences as we develop a common practice and ideology. Write articles. Help us with criticism. Make GROUNDSWELL yours.

In This Issue . . .

The National Committee of the P.F.D.C. traveled through the midwest in November, and the south in December. Some examples of what they found, and their evaluation is on page 4. Their conclusions have influenced the

strategic development of the P.F.D.C.'s toward organizing work.

The speech delivered by Jennifer Dohrn at the Prairie Fire Forum (page 14) presents the general view of the P.F.D.C. An evaluation of the forum is offered on page 12.

Because we want GROUNDSWELL to be a tool for the entire revolutionary anti-imperialist movement, we intend to include articles and comments in future issues from people working in many different groups. A start in that direction is the leaflet on page 22 from the Oakland Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization. It was used to mobilize for the militant demonstration held in San Francisco on January 27th which included the occupation of the Thieu government consulate. The demands (Implement the Peace Accords and end aid to Thieu and Lon Nol) are being heard from growing sectors of the movement. They were raised in the VV/WSO demonstration as well as in the communique from the Weather Underground Organization that accompanied their attacks on the State Dept. in Washington and the Dept. of Defense in Oakland. We are printing excerpts from the communique on page 23 because of the responsibility of the mass movement to massify the effects of clandestine actions as we build a fighting anti-imperialist movement. Both of these articles reflect the growing rejuvenation of work around Indo-China as the peoples' struggles there as well as here enter new periods. Both integrate international solidarity with the domestic economic crisis.

The speech given by Barbara Reilly of our National Committee, at the Puerto Rican Solidarity Day Rally (page 11) is a forceful presentation of the interrelation of the liberation of women and national liberation in the era of imperialism on the decline. The speech covers two of the main areas of struggle of the P.F.D.C.

The leaflet from the Boston P.F.D.C. which was also done as a big wall poster, was part of the anti-racist campaign there and helped build for the march of 20,000 people against racism. It is a creative example of how to attack racism from a working class point of view. (page 18)

On page 19 is the report of the Bay Area P.F.D.C. It is both a summing up of the work to date, and a statement about the future direction of the committee.

ON THE ROAD

Report of the National Committee of the P.F.D.C.

The five of us came together from Boston, the San Francisco Bay Area, and New York to travel through the Midwest and the South during November and December. Our aim was to distribute Prairie Fire, learn as much as possible about what's going on in each place, and to take part in political struggle. This report is part of our attempt to communicate some of the work we found and our evaluation of the general state of the movement. We raise all criticisms in a spirit of comradeship. Our conclusions apply to the white sector of the movement. The Prairie Fire Distributing Committees are certainly not exempt from many of the same problems that confront the rest of the movement. We all need an honest evaluation of where things are so that we can develop strategy from an objective national overview of our real strengths and weaknesses.

The movement is not dead. People have begun re-grouping in the last few years, re-ordering their lives and priorities for organizing. However, the movement is generally isolated from masses of people.

People welcomed us and were open. Folks are hungry for news of what's going on other places which reflects the fragmentation within the movement between cities and even within cities. Many local projects and organizations want to be part of something larger. Organizers want to see increased power for people as a result of their work. They are grappling with the questions: "Who do we organize? where? around what issues? based in what politics? How to develop organization is on peoples' minds. How do we mobilize masses of people now, as well as collectivize the efforts of organizers willing to commit a lot to the struggle?

In the Midwest we distributed 560 books, and in the South, an area new to us, we distributed 50 books and took out several ads. Our journey took us to Detroit, Ann Arbor, Chicago, Gary, IN., Madison, WI., Kansas, MO., Minneapolis-St. Paul, Morgantown and Fairmont, WVA., Durham, Chapel Hill and Greensboro, NC., Atlanta, and Lowndes County, AL. We met with organizers, held open meetings, women's meetings, and met with Third World organizers and groups. We got to see some of how people live, work and struggle.

In Detroit we were awakened to the problems and possibilities of plant and community organizing in a city dominated by a single "cash crop" -- cars. We met with people who have organized in auto plants and a depressed community for

the past three years. Plant conditions and urban renewal are some things organized around. Recently, a rally was held there of 500 people in the community sponsored by the Congress of African People and other groups in response to the massive lay-offs.

Ann Arbor forces have joined in a movement against a war research think tank, ERIM (Environmental Research Institute of Michigan) which is county funded. ERIM helped to develop the electronic battlefield used against the Indochinese people. We went to a spirited protest which forced a county commissioner's meeting to vote for a referendum on the issue by the people of the county.

The Puerto Rican community is on the move in Chicago. Cha Cha Jimenez, of the Young Lords Organization, is running for alderman and raising the issues pertinent to poor people, like urban "removal." We joined in a militant protest led by Puerto Rican high school students and members of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party against the "transfer" of two popular teachers, Valentin and Burgos. They have taught Puerto Rican history and pro-independence.

In Madison we held two large meetings of 65 people each, as a result of publicity work done by people there, including a beautiful poster. The right to quality education for black children was discussed quite a bit and some sisters expressed their anger at the sexism within the movement. The Peoples History Project there has written and is performing a play "Wisconsin on Tap" for people around the state.

Two theater groups exist in the Twin Cities -- Circle of the Witch, a women's theater group, and Alive and Trucking Theater. Presently Circle of the Witch performs "Sexpot Follies" showing the process of women breaking out of sexist roles. We saw it at a Lutheran women's school. Alive and Trucking has produced "Battered Homes and Gardens" on urban "removal." The Powderhorn Residents Group (PRG) has brought young and old together to fight the state's attack on urban housing, and fifteen storefront cooperatives exist around their own co-op warehouse. The Means-Banks AIM trial, which took place there also, has forced the movement to direct its work toward racism against Native Americans.

The Mountain Community Union, in Fairmount, West Virginia is a young organization which concerns itself with issues affecting miners and their families and Appalachian poor people in general. It was set up for the purpose of communication and "more power through joint effort" among such groups as the Black Lung Association and Welfare Rights Organization. They publish the Mountain Journal which deals with Appalachian life.

More prisoners are on death row in North Carolina than all other states put together. They are mainly black and third world. Prison organizing there includes the defense of JoAnn Little, a black woman charged with murder. She was raped in her cell by a prison guard and struck back in self-defense. Owusu Sadaukai and two other members of his collective met with us. They organize hospital workers at Duke Hospital and work around an issue of kids drowning in hazardous creeks. They challenged us to proletarianize ourselves, to root ourselves in working class life by working proletarian jobs.

We met with the Atlanta office of Institute for Southern Studies. They publish a beautiful magazine, Southern Exposure, about southern life. We learned a lot about Atlanta. The Georgia Power Project has been fighting for several years against Georgia Power Company. The Georgia Power Project is widely known in Atlanta for this fight and has a petition campaign going to fight rate increases. They have tried to integrate an openly socialist position into their propaganda.

Lowndes County, Alabama is the third poorest county in the U.S. Four doctors serve a large area including 13,000 people. There's not one hospital. We visited a people's clinic which needs people, particularly medical but also others, to help out there.

Women's meetings were held nearly everywhere. They gave our work a boost and many different kinds of projects and organizations met with the women in our group. Women are leading the fight against sexism and much potential exists for organizing among women and in several places socialist feminist organizations are growing. Cass-Trumbull collective women in Detroit work in Women Organized to Move Against Alcohol and Narcotics (W.O.M.A.A.N.). The Chicago, Rising Up Angry women have close working relations with the Chicago Women's Liberation Union through work at high schools. The Twin Cities Women's Union has defined the issue of welfare as one of the main issues they are starting to work around. Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA) includes seventy-six members. They helped build a march of 1000 women in support of the Equal Rights Amendment and belong to a women's soft-ball league of mainly company teams. Some women within ALFA want to address issues concerning working women and racism as well as lesbian women's issues. Women's projects are organizing around women in prison.

We found activity on campus and interest in "Prairie Fire" and political discussions. Actions have gone on against Gulf recruiters and Ford's pardon

in Madison, against war research at the University of Michigan, around third world students' control of curriculum at a college in St. Paul, and world starvation at Duke and St. Olaf College.

Over all, the process of broadening the class base of our movement is in young stages. Rising Up Angry has a base on the North Side of Chicago among young people. They want to develop mass forms now as well as broadening their base to include more older people. The Wisconsin Alliance has a "strategy group" touring its organizing projects around the state to better understand what kind of organization they should build. The Alliance has a project which helps farmers at rough points in the growing cycle. These are two of many such examples.

We can make some generalizations about the work place and community organizing we found. The strength of this work among white organizers is a growing understanding of the concrete conditions of life of the white section of the working class and of its needs, aspirations and problems. There has been some joining in the day-to-day struggles of the people. There is greater understanding of the possibilities of trade unions, rank and file caucuses, tenants groups, etc. People from student movement backgrounds are proletarianizing their lives; a fundamental part of developing proletarian outlook, strategy and organization.

We also found some real weaknesses in the work place and community organizing. There is a tendency towards a narrow, short term and local strategic perspective. In seeking to be part of the concrete, immediate struggle, when we are not in a national organization, it is easy to lose sight of the broader goals. In many places revolution was not on the agenda. That is, how specific program builds a movement that can contend for power is not always a consideration within this tendency. The international situation or even the overall situation in the U.S. are often not taken into consideration. Strategy that comes from this view is often full of cynicism. This view only sees things getting worse. It doesn't see local events within the context of the severe crisis of imperialism on the decline and the world revolutionary tide.

Where this view is present we also found the related tendency towards economism; organizers thinking that people will only respond to their most narrowly defined economic needs.

Even for those doing "support work" (Indochina, prisons, Chile, trials),

the question of how their work moves us a step closer to the revolution is not clearly addressed. Overall responsibility for developing strategy for a revolutionary movement in this country is not yet seriously assumed by many.

Among anti-imperialist "support workers," there is a serious weakness to be overcome -- lack of connection to a base. Becoming "rooted in the class," developing a relationship to a community, to a workplace, to the daily lives of the people is an urgent necessity. Anti-imperialists have yet to develop a continuing presence among the people.

This reflects part of a more or less general division in our movement between "support work" and "organizing people around their own needs" (work place, food co-ops, tenants). Some groups are doing both kinds of work, but lack an integration of the two in the underlying analysis which results in a real separation between projects. We often fail to bring the politics of our support work to our organizing work either because we don't really understand that in supporting all those who are fighting imperialism we help ourselves move closer to socialism, or we're afraid that the people we are trying to organize will reject us if we are openly anti-racist or internationalist. In our meetings, we talked about the rampant racism in Boston as a clear example of the need to organize in an explicitly anti-racist way. Our understanding of the real victories won by the anti-war movement helped people break out of narrow views of what people can be organized around.

There is a serious lack of working relations with Third World groups. There is a great removal of anti-racist consciousness. There were some exciting exceptions, but they were exceptions. This problem and the lack of anti-racist program were just beginning to be addressed by several of the groups with which we met. By removing ourselves from working with Third World people, we lose their leadership and possibility for building anti-racist consciousness.

We found a lack of international solidarity work. Some work had gone on around Puerto Rican Solidarity Day, just as some anti-racist work was going on around Attica. This work was not a priority with many of the organizers we talked with. This work is especially urgent at a time when the U.S. is threatening both Indochina and the Middle East. Our ability to react to these threats can play a part in discouraging U.S. military adventures.

Work done now as part of our organizing work or in separate projects will put us in a much stronger position if U.S. invasions or escalations occur.

In general we found that mass work, work that reaches out beyond the already committed, is not intensely and regularly carried out. In a time of mass dissatisfaction, it is a vital necessity for organizers to reach out and recognize the transforming power of consistent mass work.

The many women's meetings that were held helped us to better see the role the women's movement is playing around the country. In some places (Chicago, Minn.-St. Paul, Chapel Hill), it is more organizationally developed than in others. This has increased women's leadership particularly against sexism, both within the movement and the entire society, as in the Chicago Women's Liberation Union's campaign against discriminatory hiring practices in the steel mills. The impact of the women's movement is visible everywhere. The same weaknesses in ideological and programmatic development that plague the whole movement are also present in the women's movement; low anti-racist consciousness and practice, lack of revolutionary strategy, etc.

In nearly every meeting we had excellent discussions about militancy, clandestinity and armed struggle. The absence of thinking in terms of making a revolution has lead to a lack of revolutionary practice. Questions and disagreements were often rooted in a lack of organizing against the state; of organizing the whole class to take power and the absence of a spirit of activism and confrontation.

We had some contacts with people who are members of groups from the "new communist movement". We were also able to see the effect of these groups on many of the people we met with and to discuss their impact. There are fundamental differences between many of these groups. Certainly the difference between the October League and the Revolutionary Union became most apparent during the Boston Busing crisis when the O.L. supported the struggle of Black people in Boston and opposed racism while the R.U. refused to make a stand against racism and attacked the leadership of the Black Community. However, there are some generalizations that can be made about their overall impact. By raising the issue of the need to build a new Communist Party these groups have pushed many people to take seriously the questions of organization, strategy, taking power, Marxism-Leninism, and the National question. Several people we met with had been in study groups organized by the Black Workers Congress, the O.L. or the R.U. Many more were now in study groups indepen-

dent of these organization, but were seriously studying Marxism-Leninism.

There were two criticisms of the R. U. and the O.L. that we heard most frequently. The first is that they tend to try to implement their national program in a mechanical way, without enough consideration of differing concrete conditions in different places. The second criticism was of sectarianism; an inability or unwillingness to establish relations with other groups based on equality, independence, and mutual respect. As a result, there were times when one of these groups had correct ideas but would still remain isolated from the larger movement. The other factor that contributes to this isolation is the still high level of anti-communism in our movement. Although often subtle, this anti-communism made itself most apparent when people would speak of an American Socialism, so unique to this country that it stops being an integral part of the international Communist movement.

To sum up: while we found great openness to struggle and the beginnings of important mass work, we also found some great weaknesses in our movement. The strengths include the rejection of dogmatism, the growing realization of the need to struggle against racism and sexism, the work around Attica and Puerto Rico, the beginnings of some real base building work. All are a strong base for revolutionary anti-imperialist politics to take root. The isolation, the localism, economism, the lingering racism and sexism are all serious impediments to the ideological and organizational development we need to make a revolution. To overcome these obstacles, we have to continue to struggle about ideas and implement our politics in concrete mass practice. Mass practice -- engaging in talk and struggle with masses of U.S. people whose lives are distorted and crushed by imperialism -- is a basis for advancing strategy and a way to test and deepen our politics. It can also be a source of revolutionary energy, and a corrective for cynicism.

To make a revolution, we need a communist party, an army, and many forms of mass organization. Our trip contributed to our belief that at this time we can and must build a mass anti-imperialist organization. Mass, so that we develop program that can mobilize and organize millions of people in this time of great economic and social crisis. Anti-imperialist, so that we can speak to the full breadth of our politics when we relate to specific issues. Organization, so that we can overcome the isolation of the last period and become a coherent national force that can begin to engage in struggle, and raise the goals of power and socialism.

Puerto Rico Solidarity Day Speech

Representing a group of activists in the North American Women's Movement, I greet 'los veinte mil', the twenty-thousand, you, the people who have come here today to fill this enormous house. It is not the spirit of spectators that fills Madison Square Garden today, but the fierce and fighting spirit of Lolita Lebron who said "Independencia ahora!" and she is still fighting.

We, activists from the North American Women's Movement, join hands and say: her fight is our fight. Why do we say that? We say that because, as we understand it, the question of liberation for women is profoundly linked to the question of liberation for all oppressed peoples. As long as the actions of the exploiters and warmakers, from ITT to Kissinger, from Gulf Oil to Rockefeller, and directed against people everywhere, our struggles are inextricably tied together. For it is their bombs, their racist laws, their sterilization programs for women, from South Vietnam to South Africa, from Puerto Rico to Manhattan which give our struggle its international character. But there is another link, a link more precious, more decisive for victory that connects all of us: it is an idea. The idea of Freedom. The idea of Dignity. An idea that releases the best in us because it returns us to history. To making our history.

It is this idea of freedom that women all over this country are seizing upon and by which we measure reality. The necessity for freedom is our yardstick, the tool which breaks the chain that imprisoned us, kept us voiceless and angry against ourselves instead of the conditions under which we live.

Not by accident, it is the mass media which attempt to reduce our fight to a silly, abbreviated thing called 'women's lib'. But the battle of women is not a battle for some abbreviated lib. It is a fight for liberation, unabbreviated, no short-cuts, no half-way solutions. Because women live under most difficult, often most miserable circumstances: servants to men, to families, to bosses -- servants to empire -- none of it our own free choice.

Women sit before typewriters like production workers stand in front of assembly lines. Women work in hospitals, underpaid and ordered about. Women work in every industry, sales-outlet, restaurant. Women work as housewives and mothers who bring up their children to get lousy education in racist schools, to be sent off to die in Mr. Nixon's war, to protect Mr. Rockefeller's fortunes or to wind up on the unemployment lines. In short: women in this

country have every reason to be angry. Every reason to fight. Every reason to win. WE DO HOLD UP HALF THE SKY! From New York to Guinea Bissau. From San Juan to Peking.

We, activists from the North American Women's Movement, say: Puerto Rico must be free. We cannot say that lightly. We consider it our responsibility to participate in that struggle. That means work so that millions of women will participate in it. Just as the question of the liberation of women must be a part of every oppressed people's struggle, so the question of the independence of Puerto Rico has to become more and more a part of the struggle of women here, in the belly of the beast, the seat of US imperialism.

INDEPENDENCIA PARA PUERTO RICO. PARA LOS HOMBRES. PARA LAS MUJERES Y PARA LOS NIÑOS -- PARA EL PUEBLO DE PUERTO RICO!

-- Barbara Reilly

N. Y. Forum

From its beginning, the New York PFDC has seen its political role as being broader than just distributing the book. We hoped to develop greater coordination among the anti-imperialist projects working in New York; we wanted to deepen our understanding of anti-imperialism so that we can apply it more organically to our daily work; we want to strengthen revolutionary anti-imperialism within the Left as a whole; and we wanted to reach new people -- if not with Prairie Fire itself, with the essentials of the politics. We have tried, and are trying different ways to achieve each of these goals, but our most successful attempt at combining all of them was an open forum we held on Dec. 13.

We chose a topic which we hoped would both appeal to a broad sector of people and would be educational for all of us -- "The Economic Crisis and Social Upheaval." Within this broad topic, we defined specific areas which we felt were politically important to concentrate on at this time; we then went to people that we felt could talk knowledgably and in a nonsectarian way about these areas. At the same time, we set up a small group within the committee to write a speech which would be a collective statement on the current world and domestic conditions and would outline our sense of the priorities for the Left during this period.

The process of building for the forum gave us important insights into the political functioning of the committee. Since September we have been divided into work committees (bookstores, mail orders, outreach, political groups) which function semi-autonomously. For many of us, this resulted in a sense

of political isolation, and the work of the committees suffered. The forum gave us a collective focus; it rejuvenated the work of the outreach and political groups committees. We set up leafletting teams of 8-10 people so that we could talk and get to know each other while doing outreach for the forum. We tried to engage people in discussion rather than just shoving a leaflet at them; we went to communities, campuses, shopping areas, and business areas. We tried to approach other groups in such a way that they could feel the forum was theirs and not just ours. Although at times we were worried that we weren't doing enough work, we later realized that in the four weeks before the forum, we saw and talked to more people and groups than we had in the preceeding three months.

And folks came, even though many people were leaving for the anti-racism march in Boston early the next morning. Some 500 people came, and although we didn't get all their names and affiliations, it seemed that most people weren't in any organized political groups. Some people came because of a direct interest in Prairie Fire; many came simply looking for some perspective in a time of rapidly changing conditions.

The program consisted of five talks and two cultural events. Harry Magdoff of Monthly Review spoke on the roots of the current stagflation; Sheila Ryan focused on the "energy crisis" and the oil companies; Olivia Taylor from the East New York Alliance discussed organizing women in times of economic crisis, and Wilbur Haddock from United Black Workers talked about organizing factory workers and the way racism is used to divide the working class. Jennifer Dohrn gave the speech for the Distributing Committee and focused on the need for mass anti-imperialist organization. The cultural performers were Michael Stout and Witchcraft Rebellion, a women's singing group.

The forum was a success -- we all left with a greater understanding of imperialism, of racism, of the current crises; we also left with a challenge to go out and organize. But we also felt that the program was not as strong as it could have been -- that we had too many speakers with too little time for questions and discussion. People not only wanted to hear speeches, they wanted to participate; that was an important lesson. Another important lesson was the ability of the cultural performers to establish a warm sense of community and spirit that transformed the whole evening.

We learned many big and little lessons from the forum, but perhaps the most important one is that we have both much to offer and much to learn from the people. It's this understanding that will guide our practice in the future.

To Build a Mass Anti-Imperialist Movement

We have come here tonight because each one of us has felt and been affected deeply by the crises and chaos which we see developing and spreading around us. It is not hard to be aware of the great disruptions and upheavals that are happening around the world because they have become manifested in people's daily struggles for survival at home. You go to the supermarket and come home wondering if there will be enough food to feed your family. Massive layoffs, which continue to spiral, make the lines at the unemployment offices lengthen each week, and the number of people who have given up looking for the possibility of work is staggering. I find when I ride the subways that looks on people's faces seem more and more desperate. More people walk the streets of New York this winter without homes. Headlines in the daily papers scream "Harder Times Yet to Come."

Most people realize that what was in the past, is not in the present. The future for many is filled with fear and uncertainty in the search for understanding and clarity in the chaos.

This economic crisis is accompanied by a profound political crisis. Because of the victory of the Vietnamese and the signing of the Paris Peace Agreements in January, 1973, the monopoly of power and wealth that has long been synonymous with the U.S. government has been challenged and weakened. Watergate -- the public exposure of the corruptness and bankruptcy of our government -- has broken the faith that many people living within this country had in the government and its ability to preserve order. This has produced chaos and hard times, but also the potential and growth of social movements of protest among the U.S. people.

Hard times are not new to Third World peoples, both within this country and internationally, for the system of U.S. imperialism has been built on their backs and their enslavement. What is different, is that because of the crises that the imperialists find themselves in, they have not been able to continue to satisfy the needs of great numbers of white, poor and working people in the same manner as before. Their base of support here at home is in question, at the same time that continuous blows are being mounted from the Third World. Guinea-Bissau achieves its independence; the United Nations recognizes the Palestine Liberation Organization, and recognizes the status of Puerto Rico as a U.S. colony; the Vietnamese refuse to accept neo-colonialism and continue their struggle. Thus the crises create new conditions of change for everyone.

The time is ripe for the development of great social movements of the people. The time is filled with revolutionary possibilities. What can we do? What are the fundamental tasks? What are the essential problems? What is our strategy to win?

Our objective is the destruction of the U.S. imperialist system and the construction of a socialist society. This would end the private profit of the few and the public poverty of the masses, and bring about a redistribution of wealth, food and power so that every human being would be able to lead a life where her or his basic needs were met in a state of humaneness and dignity. To achieve this goal, we need several things. We need to build a mass movement that is anti-imperialist in its outlook, and that sees itself as mobilizing all people who can be organized. We need to build our armed forces, our clandestine apparatus that allows us to strike, attack, wage war on the enemy, protect ourselves. We need to build a Marxist-Leninist Party to lead the people; we need a party because we believe that the people will be successful in their fight against the imperialists, and it is only through the direction and leadership of a party that we will be able to seize power and begin the establishment of a socialist society.

Tonight I wish to speak to the immediate strategy of building a mass anti-imperialist movement. This strategy grows out of our objective of achieving socialism and our analysis that imperialism is the main common enemy of all oppressed peoples. ... Our strategy, therefore, is the development of the strongest and most conscious anti-imperialist front, to link the movements of people within this country to the Third World movements for liberation, because it is this united attack at the weakest points of the system that will create higher conditions for revolution here and bring about ultimate change. ...

Strategically, the weakest point of the imperialist system is the Third World, and these countries, colonies, neocolonies, in their struggles for self-determination and liberation, have dealt and continue to deal the weakening blows. In this country there is no clearer example than Puerto Rico. Its liberation is on the agenda. ... New leaps have been made in achieving that goal: the bombing of banks in New York on Oct. 26, the day of Solidarity on Oct. 27, the massive strikes and bombings against the public utilities happening on the Island. Think of the enormous impact of the independence of Puerto Rico on the U.S. imperialists.

We need a *mass* anti-imperialist front (and here I stress the word "mass"). Anti-imperialist perspectives have existed for certain segments of the society during the past 15 years. They have been a part of Black and Third World peoples' struggles here. Remember SNCC's call for solidarity with the Vietnamese in 1965? We have seen in many places seeds of anti-imperialism—in the antiwar movement, in the youth rebellions, among women. But now we must nurture these seeds, grow them, transform them into their full growth. We must take our anti-imperialist perspective to the people; we must massify it, spread it as far out as we can. And we must seize upon those conditions and build a *mass movement*, whose objective is political struggle.

And we need organization. Mass organization is a means of uniting struggles, for bringing people fighting many issues into a common strategy. It gives us strength, power to challenge the state. It can plan strategy and implement it. It is a place to bring new people as we meet them and provide a direction for energy and discontent. It can overcome a local, narrow perspective and build a national front. Isolated struggles enable the state to fight us one by one. Together we can build a force, a prairie fire, that can seriously take us to a new level in the struggle.

So our strategy is a mass anti-imperialist movement. We deeply feel this lack at a time when people are in motion, when people are looking for alternatives, when social movements are developing, and the left itself is weak. What are the essential obstacles that we must overcome in order to reach this goal?

We must first not confuse our own weakness of the left with the strength and understanding of the people. One of the objective conditions that makes this time so ripe for real development of the left is the readiness of understanding among the masses; for example, the spontaneous reaction to Ford's pardon of Nixon. The 20,000 people in Madison Square Garden in solidarity with the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico was a leap in anti-imperialist consciousness, a victory towards building anti-imperialist unity. However, this readiness and movement among masses of people is not often combined with a clear definition of the common enemy and the unity of struggles. There are many contradictions among the people and within a single person; as well as tenacity and class hatred, there are backward ideas and habits. Racism more than any other force alone, prevents the building of anti-imperialist unity, and the unifying of the oppressed forces. Racism, sexism and national chauvinism are used to obscure the real enemy and fragment

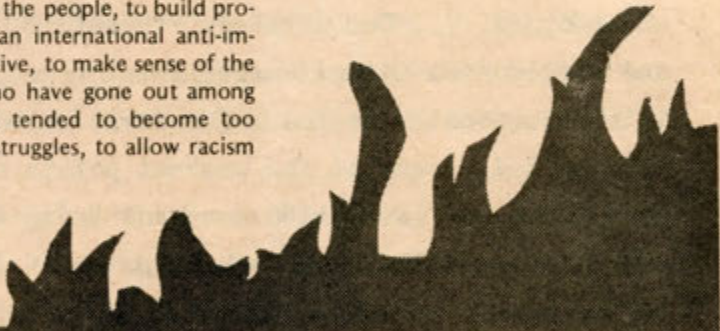
potential unity. Thus, many white working people, who are feeling the pressure of an empire in decline, feeling the massive layoffs and the high costs of food, turn their anger on Black Puerto Rican, Chicano and Native American and Asian people—all Third World people—as their enemies. So "Arabs" are the cause of the energy crisis, residents in South Boston see Black children as their enemy, employed fight the unemployed, male workers feel threatened by takeovers of women at their jobs. The uses of racism, sexism, and national chauvinism allow the imperialists to reorganize their power, to consolidate a base among sectors of the working class that will be built on fascist ideology and genocide of Third World peoples.

Another obstacle is the feeling of powerlessness, a distrust in the ability to change, a cynicism and fatalism about the conditions of people's lives and the possibility to make them different. This has been carefully developed in the American people, rooted in the concept of individualism, the disbelief in collectivity. People feel they can only fight for themselves. So you hear the statement, "Well, all governments are corrupt. There is nothing I can do." History is carefully distorted to erase and misexplain past people's movement, and we are left without the rich lessons to draw on.

We are also faced at this historical time with the lack of a unified left. The movement has tended to retreat in the past few years, has tended to become internalized, split, sectarian. It fights within itself; it fails to mobilize the people, to build programs, to bring an international anti-imperialist perspective, to make sense of the chaos. Those who have gone out among the people have tended to become too narrow in their struggles, to allow racism

to go unchecked for fear of becoming alienated from the people, to fight on purely economic issues without making connections to other struggles. And many of us have done work within the movement, but somehow have developed movement work to be separate from mass work. We have forgotten who we should be trying to organize, that it takes masses and masses of people to make a revolution, but first they have to be an organized force. Our movement has tended to lose its mass viewpoint, its belief in the ability of people to change and move forward. So we have endless meetings with each other; we work at a job to survive but do not see where we work as a part of talking to and learning from others. These errors must be corrected.

It is not that struggles among the people are not going on. The struggles and issues are there: school struggles, daycare issues, workers' strikes, layoffs, welfare cutbacks. But we as a unified force have not been there. This has allowed some struggles to be co-opted, to become reformist; others to be defeated, repressed; others to be instruments for the growth of racism. For example, I have lived on the Lower East Side for the past year and have not been involved in the fight around School District 1, the fight for bilingual education, the fight by Puerto Rican, Black and Asian parents for the right to educate their children decently.



There will soon be a high tide of revolution. . . . How . . . should we interpret the word "soon" in this statement? . . . This is a common question among comrades. Marxists are not fortune-tellers. They should, and, indeed, can only indicate the general direction of future developments and changes; they should not and cannot fix the day and the hour in a mechanistic way. But when I say that there will soon be a high tide of revolution . . . , I am emphatically not speaking of something which, in the words of some people, "is possibly coming," something illusory, unattainable and devoid of significance for action. It is like a ship far out at sea whose mast-head can already be seen from the shore; it is like the morning sun in the east whose shimmering rays are visible from a high mountain top; it is like a child about to be born moving restlessly in its mother's womb.

—Mao Tse-tung
A Single Spark Can Start A Prairie Fire

This is one of the most advanced anti-imperialist struggles in the city, tied directly to the issue of self-determination for Third World people. What has my life been about that could remove me from involvement in this struggle?

Historically, every people's movement for national liberation struggle has faced similar tasks as the one in which we find ourselves today: *the need for the mobilization of the masses, for work among the people, for practice becoming the immediate task.* In 1923 Mao Tse-tung set up a school in Shanghai to teach people how to go to the people, how to work and join in the struggles of people around the issues under which they were suffering. Amílcar Cabral, leader of the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and assassinated in January, 1973, talked at length of the struggle internally to develop people to go to the people. They practiced for months around what issues to raise, how to listen, and to learn what the people saw as their problems, and how to build programs. They argued with each other until they could each answer the questions. He said that this mobilization was far more difficult than the war itself. Once the people are won to the idea of revolution and change, they can endure anything. But to win people over, to wrest them out of the enemy's hands and ideology, is the most crucial task that faces us.

Our task, then, could perhaps be best expressed under the slogans, *Broaden the Class Base and Reach Out and Organize.* This is our strategy. We need a vision of mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people within this country, a real broadening of our base among the working class. We need to reassert our identification with the people, to return to the source. . . . Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam provided a model when he said: "You must conduct yourself in such a way that when you have not yet arrived, people are waiting for you; when you arrive, people will help you; and when you leave, people will regret your departure."

The Prairie Fire Distributing Committee intends to play an active role in this process. We are a group of activists who have gathered together to discuss and distribute *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism*, a book written by the Weather Underground Organization. We believe that the politics of *Prairie Fire* are the foundation of a successful revolutionary strategy for the U.S.: a true sense of internationalism, a commitment to struggle against racism and sexism, and a belief that revolution must be built through struggle. We have so far distributed some 20,000 copies of

the book across the country.

But we also know that ideas must be put into practice. We are each examining our own work self-critically. We are raising the idea of anti-imperialist unity in groups with which we work. As a committee, we hope to develop our own practice among the people while striving to build principled unity with all other anti-imperialist groups. . . .

We have much to learn from the people. Our contribution must be to give issues and struggles their world-wide significance. It means bringing an anti-imperialist perspective to the issues. We must develop carefully who is the enemy, who are our real friends with the people. For example, many are proposing a boycott of sugar. What would be the implications of this? First, we need to make connections that our enemies are not the workers in Puerto Rico, but the corporate interests who own and control the sugar industry, like Domino and Amstar—both controlled by Rockefeller. Nor is the enemy the people of Cuba. How will a sugar boycott hurt either of them? How do we demand the end of the blockade of Cuba? We should certainly ask, investigate. Our work in mobilizing the people must directly confront all forms of racism, sexism and national chauvinism. . . . The Vietnamese always made clear the distinction between their war against the U.S. government and their solidarity with the American people. It is only if we care for the future of those we want to reach that we will struggle with these contradictions in the people in the process of making the revolution. No one should expect anything else.

So, it seems we each need to begin to think strategically, to give close scrutiny to our lives to determine where we already are located so that we can begin this process of reaching out to people, to see where we need to change our work so that we can build a mass base. Where and how do we spend each week? Whom are we talking to? What broad bases are we trying to build? These questions we must ask ourselves. We must open up the projects we have worked on over the past few years, broaden the issues, make connections to the people. We should begin the challenge of engaging in existing struggles, like daycare, welfare, tenant organizing—fighting for the larger perspective, linking up the struggles. We should build campaigns around the issues of food prices, Con Edison rates, unemployment. We should become aware of the struggles against racism in education being waged in many communities in New York—perhaps make a city-wide focus of the fight

against redistricting. We should join in on-the-job organizing. The majority of women, both white and Third World, work as office workers within the city. How can we build a women's movement that bases itself amongst them and their daily needs? We should investigate the cutbacks and firings at the City University of New York and begin building campus bases again, particularly in working-class communities. We live in a city where there is strong support for the Zionist government of Israel. It is our responsibility to expose Zionism as a racist, imperialist ideology, uniting all forces to develop the pro-Palestinian movement. The Puerto Rican nation has one-third of its people living here; how can we further the solidarity movement for their independence that has been initiated? How do we see the building of solidarity work for Third World peoples' struggles as daily work in building an anti-imperialist movement? It is the responsibility of those who have gone out and involved themselves in these struggles to push the rest of us to break out of our isolation.

The ideas are limitless, if we are creative and begin searching and listening for the rumblings of the people. We need to re-energize our practice, to build bases among a much broader class of people, to be bold and honest in our approach. It is only through our practice, day by day, that we will be able to test, change and strengthen our ideology.

This challenge is huge, and time is crucial as we fight to bring the forces in struggle within this country in line with the revolutionary progress around the world. It means great commitment—hard work from each of us. We must fight against the frustrations that each of us often expresses, the frustration from seeing our goal and thinking we are too small and powerless to grow and reach it. It means a new outlook, a new patience, a casting aside of our own cynicism. It can only come from a true love for the people and a profound belief in the people's ability to change, in the process of revolution, and in our ability to be part of the great stirrings of people around the world. The forces of history and the great achievements of many peoples in our short lifetimes are the handwriting on the wall for imperialism. . . . a constant source of encouragement to us.

We call for going to the people and organizing, for broadening our class base!

We call for the building of a mass anti-imperialist movement!

We call for solidarity in all the work we do with the righteous struggles of Third World peoples! — Jennifer Dohrn

BLACK PEOPLE HAVE NOT:

WHAT IS THE ANTI-BUSING MOVEMENT REALLY ABOUT?

These are hard and confusing times. The news from abroad is of famine, of a possible new war in the mid-east. At home we face layoffs, food shortages and soaring prices -- with a government that can't and won't do anything about them. People are worried. People are angry.

The leaders of the anti-busing movement, such as John Kerrigan, Louise Day Hicks and Avi Nelson appeal to our desires to control our own lives and to keep our communities together in a chaotic world. But a fight against busing will never bring about the things we so desperately need -- food and jobs and housing, decent education, a government that is honest and responsive to its people. Mrs. Hicks got some publicity when she called for a sugar boycott in City Council. But when speaking at mass rallies each Sunday or cutting the ribbon at a new anti-busing information center, she is working for a very different goal -- to keep this city and its schools segregated.

The anti-busing leaders want to build a mass movement of working

- RAISED OUR RENTS OR THE PRICE OF SUGAR.
- SENT OUR SONS AND BROTHERS TO DIE IN VIETNAM.
- SPED UP THE LINE OR LAYED US OFF FROM WORK.
- RUN BOSTON'S ROTTEN SCHOOL SYSTEM. (FROM WEATHER UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATION STICKER)

class white people who are opposed to Blacks. They have the open support of Ford and Rockefeller and the tolerance of "liberals" like White and Kennedy. People all over the country are watching the Boston situation now. What happens here could seriously affect the many racial conflicts brewing in other places.

Roslindale and Hyde Park, it has become virtually impossible for Blacks to travel through communities such as these throughout the Boston area for fear of their lives.

The main issue in Boston today is racism. It is openly shouted in the streets, in our communities, and scrawled in slogans on our walls. We have to see it for what it is.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT ALL THIS?

*Educate ourselves to see through the web of lies and distortions put out by the leaders of the anti-busing movement and the School Committee. Even if the white boycott were successful and bussing ended, the quality of our education and our lives would not improve. They offer us a false solution.

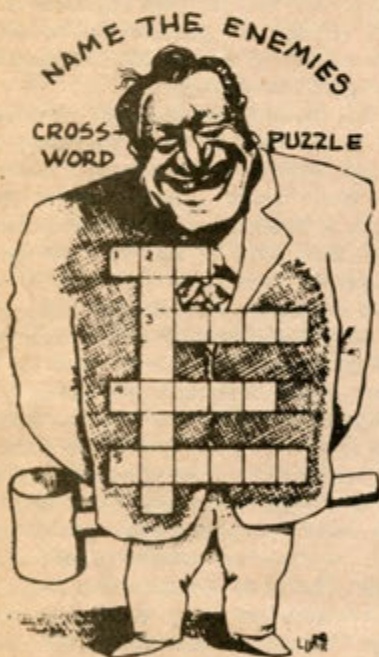
*Stop sitting back and letting the racists mislead and manipulate us into scapegoating Black and other Third World peoples. Oppose the racist attacks on Black school children. Oppose the white boycott, a major organizing strategy of the anti-bussing leaders.

*Support each other in taking a positive stand for everyone's rights to decent housing, good education, jobs and health care.

*Aim our anger at the people who really rip us off -- the landlords, crooked politicians, like the Boston School Committee, the oil and food corporations.

PREPARED BY THE **FRANKIE FIRE** DISTRIBUTING COMMITTEE.
136 RIVER ST., CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

A GROUP OF ACTIVISTS-ORGANIZERS WHO HAVE COME TOGETHER TO REPRINT AND DISTRIBUTE **FRANKIE FIRE**, THE POLITICAL STATEMENT OF THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND



1. HOODED ORGANIZATION THAT HAS LYNCHED THOUSANDS OF BLACK PEOPLE.
2. SCHOOL COMM. MEMBER, BILL LANDLORD & LEADER OF THE ANTI-BUSSING FORCES.
3. THE MAN BEHIND IT ALL. (RICHEST V.P. EVER)
4. CITY COUNCILSMAN FROM SOUTH BOSTON.
5. THE REAL ISSUE IN THE BOSTON SCHOOL CRISIS.

FIGHT AGAINST RACISM

Bay Area Report

PFDC began in the Bay Area with the work of collating the Oregon edition of Prairie Fire. This task brought together the core of people who would form the committee. The large number of people who helped in this work, and the lending of space to do it, showed the existence of support for our work and interest in Prairie Fire.

Three slogans were adopted to guide our work. They were: 1) distribute Prairie Fire widely. 2) deepen our political understanding. 3) broaden the class base of our movement. Slogans seemed to be a good method of developing basic unity. The unity of the slogans represent the need for study and mass work as well as pointing out where we should do our mass work. In order to distribute Prairie Fire widely, we went beyond the movement and to working people.

We formed three committees to carry out our distribution work. These were mail order, bookstores, and political groups. 40000 books have been distributed in the Bay Area.

The mail order committee began by filling orders that had come in off of the summer's work, especially from the National Lawyer's Guild convention. The committee also sent books free to prisoners and follow-up letters to see if the books were received. This has been spotty; some prisons have been more adept than others at keeping books out. Mail orders have continued to come in from stories about our work in the Berkeley Barb and other papers. As we did not do a large ad campaign with the first edition this work has tapered off somewhat.

The bookstore committee tried to take the book to a wide variety of stores in the area. Primarily the stores that were interested are left, women's, and student-area stores. Some inroads were made in other areas.

The political groups committee began by setting up tables at movement rallies and events, including those around the anniversary of the fascist coup in Chile and China's national day. After some initial contact with organizations we decided to shift our focus more to general outreach, and set up tables at two community colleges (one in Oakland, one in SF) and at the Alameda County Flea Market. We also went to grocery stores and a food stamp line. Because

of a shortage of people power, we decided to concentrate on this form of outreach and have ceased our formal interorganization contacts.

From the beginning, study groups were part of the work around Prairie Fire. People were organized into study groups as part of outreach. At this time, 75 people are involved in study groups. A study guide including questions for each chapter and a method of study for a group to follow has been developed by study group leaders through the experience of their group.

People in the study groups have been encouraged to do PFDC work, and some are joining the work of PFDC committees. Study groups have been a place for people to organize themselves to leaflet, poster, and talk to people concerning Vietnam events around the Second Anniversary of the signing of the Vietnam Peace Agreement.

In the fall, several of us joined the Puerto Rican Solidarity Day Committee and helped coordinate the event in the Bay Area. We felt that this work stemmed directly from our politics. We did some propaganda work and shared in the tasks of the event, as well as printing and distributing a bi-lingual pamphlet of the section of Prairie Fire on Puerto Rico.

The recently formed anti-imperialist focus group of the Berkeley-Oakland Women's Union organized a large event to make the anniversary of the Vietnam Peace Agreement. Women from PFDC, also members of the group, worked hard on the event.

PFDC decided as a whole to build for the Women's Union program and a VVAW/WSO demonstration to demand the implementation of the Peace Agreement. We went out to unemployment lines, the Telephone Company, and downtown shopping areas to talk to people about the war. This was our first coordinated outreach work around a common focus. Our discussions with people gave us a lot of food for thought, especially on how to connect the economic crisis to the continuing war in Indochina.

The Women's Union program was highly spirited -- a women's dance group, children's and women's chorus, a spokeswoman from the Union of Vietnamese, as well as Arlene Eisen-Bergman talking about her recent trip to Vietnam. A special Children's Event was held, a great departure from the usual "childcare provided."

Breaking through the inaction of this period, the VVAW/Wso demonstration was the most militant in the Bay Area in several years. It involved the occupation of the Saigon consulate and subsequent confrontation with the police.

Recognizing the importance of this period in Vietnam-U.S. history, the VVAW/WSO demonstration helped shatter the myth that the US government can continue the war in Vietnam without paying a price in domestic tranquility. Right on to those who occupied the consulate!

Throughout the last period, the PFDC has been involved in an internal discussion over the direction which will be summed up in the next report. The result of this discussion was the passage of a proposal which in part stated: "PFDC is a political organization which aims at spreading, studying, evaluating and organizing around the politics of revolutionary anti-imperialism summed up in Prairie Fire." The proposal outlined the need to get organized, continue to study, and went on to state that "PFDC stresses outreach... The entire movement needs to reach out and organize." The proposal stressed the need for a common program of work to unite the organization. Three work committees were formed: book (reprint and ad campaigns), political education and outreach; in addition there is a steering committee which is "the political leadership body of the organization," which "plans and evaluates the work of the PFDC."

The outreach committee has decided on a program of outreach on the theme of Vietnam and the economy, and has prepared an initial leaflet to go to unemployment offices and community colleges. The committee is bringing this work to the new steering committee and hopes that it will become the work of PFDC as a whole at this time. As part of this program, we intend to mobilize for a conference called Hard Times which will be held at a local community college at the end of the month. This meeting will provide a way for many people to gather to discuss the economic crisis, and we plan to be an active part of it. We hope to work with other groups in leading one workshop, as well as running one of our own.

The new steering committee is just being formed as this report is prepared, and its first item of business will be the evaluation of the work we have done and of our current strengths and weaknesses. We will then make decisions about future program and direction for the PFDC.

IMPLEMENT the PEACE AGREEMENT

END ALL AID to THIEU and LON NOL

January 27, 1975 is the second anniversary of the signing of the Paris "Agreement on Ending War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam". Yet today in South Vietnam: there are still over 200,000 political prisoners - thousands of people have been moved into concentration camps (strategic hamlets) - US planes drop US bombs on the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) controlled zones (but with Vietnamese pilots) - thousands of US "advisors" remain in Vietnam - Thieu remains in power refusing to recognize a coalition government. While harvests are increasing, schools are reopening, and the economy is starting to recover in the liberated areas; the economic and political conditions in Thieu controlled areas are so bad that the large "neutral" force has joined with PRG supporters and many former Thieu supporters in frequent "illegal" demonstrations involving thousands of people. These rallies and demonstrations are occurring weekly and sometimes daily, and are focusing on such demands as stopping inflation, freeing the political prisoners, the end of press censorship, and the ouster of the Thieu regime.

The revolutionary forces are clearly on the rise in Vietnam. The only thing that can keep Thieu or any US puppet in power in Vietnam at this point is US military aid. The same situation generally holds true in Cambodia and Laos. The Phnom Penh and Vientiane regimes use the major portion of US aid not for rebuilding their economies but for paying an Army to barricade themselves in fortress capitals. This typifies the role of US aid, and when "aid" is not enough to maintain control (like in Indochina) the US military has been used frequently in the past and may well be used again (like in the Middle East).

The international solidarity against the US intervention in Indochina has resulted in precious victories: The signing of the Paris agreement, withdrawal of US ground forces, ending of the air war against North Vietnam, establishment of a viable coalition government in Laos, and the total isolation of the Lon Nol clique in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The struggles of the Indochinese people have helped to open the eyes of millions of Americans to the nature of the Imperialist system. Many of us have learned that Vietnam was not a "mistake". US Imperialism is forced to expand into new markets and find new investment outlets for its stagnating economy or face certain ruin.

The setback in Vietnam has grave repercussions for the Ruling Class at home. Runaway inflation, mounting unemployment and the ever deepening "recession" are all products of the systems rapid decline. The rulers are caught between the rising storm of National Liberation movements abroad and the steady advance of the growing Anti-Imperialist movement within the US. The only way that the system can temporarily hold out is for the capitalist class to shift the burden of this new crisis onto the backs of working and Third World people at home in the form of rising prices, union busting and increased police repression in order to hold us down. But the people are fighting back! 1974 saw the greatest number of strikes in US history. The American people are increasingly unwilling to sit back and pay the price for this Imperialist crisis. The Indochinese people are fighting the same rotten system that oppresses us here. Join with VVAW/WSO on January 27 to demand that the US implement the Peace Agreement on Vietnam! End all aid to Thieu and Lon Nol! Single type discharge for all Veterans! Demand Universal and Unconditional Amnesty for all Vets and War Resisters!

WEATHER UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATION

JANUARY 28, 1975

Tonight we attack the Agency for International Development in the State Department in Washington, D.C. and the Department of Defense in Oakland, California.

Through them, the US government continues to wage war against Vietnam and Cambodia. Unable to resolve the deepening economic crisis and suffering at home, the imperialists mobilize for further war. Official policies of secret military intervention and threats are escalating. We honor and celebrate with our acts and words the Paris Peace Agreement. We act in solidarity with the people and liberation forces of Vietnam, and in harmony with the millions of US people who are actively struggling to demand that the US get out of Indochina.

The defeat of Thieu and US-backed policies will mean that the Vietnamese people can rebuild their country, go back to their homes, grow their crops, hold elections, permit 220,000 prisoners to go free, and heal the wounds of a long and cruel war of foreign aggression.

And for the US people, this could mean a chance to organize ourselves to confront a weakened government and ruling class, to build our opposition to a government which is unable to provide decent jobs but carries out torture, starves, bombs, burns and rapes a gentle and beautiful people who have been fighting for freedom for 2000 years. The defeat of US policy in Vietnam will advance us a further step along the path to revolution in the US.

The war in Vietnam and Indochina was a culmination of imperialist expansion. We have been told that empire and war are good for the economy, and good for us. War has brought temporary and illusory prosperity to some sectors of the population here. Yet basic needs of the people are not being met, and a humane and decent society has not been built. The plunder of empire served mainly to strengthen the ability of the imperialists to rule and control. The agonizing consequences of the Vietnam war make this crystal clear.

Furthermore, the long Vietnamese resistance has been a spearhead to national liberation movements, challenging US domination of the world economy. Third World countries are beginning to demand equitable prices for their natural and human resources, to recover some of the wealth that has been stolen by imperialism. Now US corporations can no longer reap unlimited profits for these resources. Rather than settle for less profit, the imperialists make the people pay for their defeats. Oil companies continue to make record profits, while forcing up the prices of essential heating oil and gasoline. First Nixon, and now Ford and Rockefeller are trying to reduce the war deficit by cutting welfare, old age benefits and veterans payments.

Setbacks to US imperialism have opened the way for us to join the

struggle against the common enemy, the struggle to build a socialist society.

For decades US policy has been to use any and all methods to subvert liberation struggles. In South Vietnam this included attempting to impose a pro-American military dictatorship. When colonial war and direct intervention were defeated in Vietnam, the US was forced to sign the Paris Peace Agreement, halt its terror-bombing, and withdraw its expeditionary force. This was a great victory along the road to liberation and final victory. Still, over-all US neo-colonial plans have not changed. It will subsidize and use the Thieu administration to cover US involvement and interference in Vietnam. From the moment of the signing of the cease fire agreement, the US has continued its military involvement and intervention in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

The imperialists who run this country are responsible for hunger, unemployment and racist repression against Black and Third World people. They condemn freedom fighters like Ruchell Magee to life imprisonment. They hold Puerto Rico as an outright colony despite the struggle of its people to be free. And they continue to wage war in Vietnam and Cambodia. The people and nations who are struggling to liberate themselves completely from imperialist control have exposed the horrors of empire and the true nature of the class society we live in. We face a common enemy.

The government that divides us against each other through racism, also tries to divide us from the people of the world who are liberating themselves. We cannot allow the government to turn to war again -- in Indochina or in the Mideast -- to paper over the crisis of imperialism.

Our responsibility is to force the US government to implement the Peace Agreements, to contribute to healing the wounds of war and the reconstruction of North Vietnam, and to completely withdraw from the land of the Indochinese people. Mobilizing for imperial war is no solution --
OPPOSE IMPERIALIST WAR!

Prairie Fire Distributing Committee
P.O. Box 411
Times Plaza Station
Brooklyn, NY 11217

This is the first issue of GROUNDSWELL, the newsletter of the Prairie Fire Distributing Committees. We are printing 3,000 copies. Your first issue is free, but it will be impossible for us to continue producing and mailing it out without your financial support. We hope you will fill out the subscription blank and send it in right away. Please send comments, and articles .

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In addition to the New York Prairie Fire Distributing Committee there are two other regional committees:

PFDC -- Boston	PFDC -- Bay Area
c/o Redbook	P.O. Box 40614 Sta. C
136 River Street	San Francisco

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