

america and the new era

America and the New Era was prepared
at the June, 1963, convention of the
Students for a Democratic Society.

distributed by:

STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY
1103 East 63rd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

price 25c

INTRODUCTION

Our hope is human freedom. We care that men everywhere be able to understand, express and determine their lives in fraternity with one another. We seek to participate in the construction of a society in which men have, at least, the chance to make the decisions which shape their lives. Our quest is for a political and economic order in which power is used for the widest social benefit and a community in which men can come to know each other and themselves as human beings in the fullest sense.

Instead, the legacy of our generation has been the Cold War. Our lives have been shaped by the increasing tempo of militarization. Our hopes for the future have been corroded by the Bomb. Our reason has been blunted by Official ideologies which served to increase consensus and inspire passive acquiescence rather than an active quest for freedom and fraternity.

In America, the Cold War has been a time in which all values have been subordinated to the "long twilight struggle" against communism, all goals made secondary to the "national security"; a time when the human qualities of men were less valued than their loyalty to the state, and pressing social problems and political issues were universally avoided in the interest of national unity. It was, above all, a time when most Americans, not least of all our leadership, believed that the American Century was at hand -- that our potentiality for international political, economic and cultural influence was virtually unlimited, and that our gaudy prosperity was perpetually guaranteed.

Such national irrationality was compatible with a world in which American industrial and nuclear power remained unchallenged.

But it is now clear that a new era is upon us, and the simple categories and grand designs of the Cold War no longer serve.

A massive technological revolution is transforming the nature of war and making obsolete the established mechanisms of the economy.

A world wide social revolution is destroying the bases of established power and transforming the nature of human expectations.

The question for Americans today is: How are we to respond to the new era?

American leaders are presently engaged in a politics of adjustment, affecting the conduct of government, industry, the military and all other social institutions. This politics represents an attempt to manage social conflict and adjust in minimal ways to the forces loose in the world. But for those who seek new models of life based on commitments to human dignity, democracy and peace, these attempts to stabilize existing power arrangements and traditional institutions present grim images of the future.

But one lesson of the new era is that men of established power are not the only ones capable of shaping the future.

Each day provides fresh evidence that ordinary people do, in fact, make history.

Inspired by this fact, we need to ask: What is the nature of the new era? What are the potentialities of the future? What now are our possibilities as political and cultural actors?

THE ERA OF THE COLD WAR

From the end of World War II until the close of the Eisenhower Administration, the conception of an American Century seemed to be supported by reality. Enormous pent-up demands for consumer goods, a huge reserve of capital savings, and the added stimulation of defense expenditures resulted in an unprecedented expansion of the American economy. Immensely and increasingly rich, and faced with a world in chaos, it is not surprising that America moved quickly to assert its power and influence in every area. American power was able to dominate in Western Europe, to control events in the Middle East and Latin America, to stabilize politics in many parts of Asia.

For a generation, the single great challenge to American influence remained the Soviet Union and the closed, seemingly irreconcilable conflict between the two blocs created a world in which virtually every human value was distorted, all moral standards seemed weirdly irrelevant, all hopes and aspirations appeared utopian. For the Cold War resulted in an arms race in which enormous resources and human energy were squandered and preparation for the murder of innocent millions became basic policy, while the vast and elemental needs of these millions remained unsatisfied. It produced societies in which the requirements of huge military, industrial and political bureaucracies took precedence over all other social or individual priorities. It poisoned and corroded all aspects of intellectual activity. To it were sacrificed the essential ingredients of democratic process -- free debate, the right to dissent, political engagement and controversy. And its final outcome was a balance of terror so precarious and so infinitely dangerous that, in the end, all interests and all security were in jeopardy.

It is now clear that in the midst of the Cold War forces were being generated which were incompatible with the international system just described. Now, in 1963, these forces are verging and bringing into being a new world, whose shape and structure is surprisingly different from the one in which we have grown up.

At least four new trends are bringing to an end to the Cold War Era:

1. The emergence of the New Europe: Europe has rebuilt its pre-war power, in large part as a result of American economic assistance. Now Western Europe increasingly and successfully competes with American enterprise. The Common Market generates an expansive, supranational corporate power, and the vision of independent political, military and economic hegemony inspires movements. The Grand design, for a "civilizing" united, Americanized West, has never left the drawing boards.
2. The emergence of the Third World: The increasing pace of social revolution has created some fifty nations now more or less independent of the Cold War power blocs. The needs of these people are incompatible with the Cold War and its diversion of resources to destructive rather than productive ends. Moreover, the continuing revolutionary upsurge in the Third World constitutes an extreme danger to Western investment and exploitative trade arrangements in these areas.
3. The disruption of the international communist movement: Revolutionary upsurge and technological advance have destroyed the monolithic nature of the Soviet bloc as well as disrupting the structure of the West. The emergence of China as a great power, claiming to speak for revolutionary movements in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, challenges the Soviets' ability to manipulate revolutionary movements in their own interest. Meanwhile, Eastern European governments and some Western Communist Parties attempt to break loose from the economic, intellectual, and political strait jackets in which they have been imprisoned by the Soviet hegemony, while ferment threatens the stability of entrenched bureaucracy.

4. The obsolescence of nuclear weapons: The concept of nuclear "deterrence" seemed effective in a bi-polar world, in which conflicts could be managed by calculating and self-interested elites. But it has become clear that nuclear weapons cannot effectively deter popular upsurge and forestall revolution. It has also become increasingly clear that Western interests are endangered less by war in Europe than by anti-Western movements, revolutionary uprisings, and guerilla struggles in Latin America, Asia and Africa. In fact, the existence of nuclear weapons appears to have rendered the United States virtually impotent to effectively cope with such situations; for example, America's inability to destroy the Castro revolution, or to suppress the Viet Cong in Vietnam. Moreover, prospective proliferation of nuclear weapons will end the uneasy stability of the present, making obsolete our conception of the arms race as a bi-polar game. These, and many other factors, are forcing a deep re-examination of the usefulness of the nuclear arms race as a basic military strategy in both the West and the East, and producing new impulses toward arms controls and tension-reduction.

These four trends have now converged, and each day's newspaper brings fresh surprises to those still trapped by the cliches of the Cold War era.

If there is a way to define the new world into which we have come, it is to say that no existing mode of thought, nor entrenched institution will remain unchallenged.

AMERICA AND THE NEW ERA

Just as technological and social revolution have shattered the international system developed during the Cold War era, so too, have these forces undermined America's post-war economic prosperity and are beginning to disrupt the political and social arrangements which accompanied that prosperity.

The technological revolution occurring in the post-war period created a new type of automated production, one critical economic consequence of which is the shrinkage of the industrial labor force. Automation has sharply reduced the demand for employment in mass production industries, agriculture and many trade and service enterprises. During the fifties, for example, manufacturers were able to increase productive output by seventy per cent, with no increase whatever in the number of manufacturing workers.

Just when the need for workers was being reduced, a radical increase in the number of people needing jobs was taking place, due to the coming of age of millions of young people born during the war-time baby boom.

Thus advancing technology and an exploding population create an enormous employment problem. One measure of the problem is the fact that just to keep employment at its present rate, the Federal Government estimates, 75,000 new jobs must be created each week in order to absorb those who are in search of employment. The present rate of new job openings is 6,000 per week.

But it has now become evident that certain central feature of our economy operate directly to exacerbate the growing problems of stagnation and unemployment:

1. Poverty and the maldistribution of income: Despite the post-war boom, the impoverished fifth of the population still find themselves trapped in the same relative income position they held before World War II. One out of nine Americans is presently living below the level of subsistence as defined by the Department of Labor -- that is, they are members of families with income below \$50 a week. More broadly, 70 million Americans are living below officially defined minimum standards of decency -- with income of less than \$100 a week for families of four. These figures signify, in human terms, the fact that a vast portion of our population continues to exist in conditions of misery and hopelessness.

2. The Arms race and the maldistribution of resources: The defense establishment has

been celebrated as a major stimulant to the economy. It is now apparent, however, that the \$60 billion military budget, and the "permanent war economy" it represents, accelerates and makes more acute the worst trends in our economic system. One essential problem of the defense economy is that the new weapons systems put fewer and fewer men to work in the crucial centers of US industry. In the pre-missile age, the production of tanks, jeeps, guns, and bombers employed, directly and indirectly, vast numbers of skilled and semi-skilled workers. Today, our defense "requirements" have radically shifted, and the new technology of war, depending on the production of a limited number of missiles and electronic systems, employs many advanced technicians, but relatively few ordinary production workers. Further, two-thirds of American scientists and engineers are involved in defense operations -- depriving the rest of the economy of their modernizing and inventive skills. Those "gifts" that have come from defense research have come in spite of their purpose. It is clear that had technology been allocated directly to more socially useful and more employment-producing purposes, the results would have been more valuable.

In addition to all this, the defense economy has contributed significantly to the American social stagnation. About half of the investment in defense has come from the curtailment of social services and the diversion of resources from the public sector of the economy. While this country invested fantastic sums in the production of war and destructive hardware, and now promises to spend billions more for this purpose, cities continue to decline into squalor, millions continue to live in sub-standard housing, the education system fails to educate, fresh water and fresh air become increasingly rare, crime rates soar, urban traffic becomes intolerable, and a complex of other social needs remain unmet.

Thus, the extraordinary emphasis on "defense" and the profound neglect of our social needs has meant specific and severe deprivation for each individual, as well as contributing to the general crisis of our economy.

Oligopoly and the maldistribution of power: The post-war period has seen a major increase in the tendency for American economic power to be concentrated in a number of giant corporations. Oligopolistic control of major American industries is both a cause and a consequence of technological advance. It is, however, generally unrecognized that this increasing concentration of power has also contributed greatly to the crisis of the economy. Some consequences of this control include:

Administered prices have become common and optimal in corporate relations. As concentration of corporate power increases, competitive pressures within industries decrease, and corporations are able to set and hold their prices in order to maintain desired profit levels. The maintenance of high profit rates, while successfully thwarting the inflationary push has retarded industrial growth, and thus full employment.

The corporate attempt to maintain profits is the major factor in accelerating automation. Since automation presently serves as a mechanism for the maintenance of private gain, and since its uses are controlled by a private few, its primary visible impact has been to destroy jobs, and perpetuate and exacerbate inequality.

Concentration of corporate power has enhanced the political influence of corporate elites. These elites promulgate policies which, while serving narrow corporate interests, are profoundly anti-social in their effect. Immensely wasteful and dangerous defense programs are pursued because of the pressures of military-based corporations. Huge depreciation allowances and other perogatives which distort the tax system are granted the lobbyists for corporate power. Federal supervisory commissions are manipulated, "giveaways" of publicly owned resources are achieved, consumer-fairing legislation is blocked and the development of the public sector is hamstrung by the effective exercise of corporate power. And as the institutions of democracy are thus corrupted by private power, so also is the economic vitality of the nation steadily sapped.

These then are some of the dimensions of an American economy in crisis: the crisis is revealed by widespread, chronic and growing unemployment, by continuing poverty and public squalor. The crisis is due to the fact that the "engine" of progress -- technological advance -- when part of a conservative economic system which cannot plan for the total social good -- has become a monster rather than a promise of plenty.

It is important to note that, while America continues to ride on a surface of visible prosperity, the economic crisis has been most directly manifest for two groups in the society -- young people and Negroes.

America's youth, because of their increased numbers and because of an educational system and a culture which seems incapable of preparing young people for productive roles in the context of the new technology, are increasingly unemployed. Among those members of the labor force aged 14 - 25, one of seven is out of work (compared with one out of thirteen for the labor force as a whole). This jobless rate is especially acute for high school dropouts; increasingly, however, even high school and college graduates will feel the effects of automation. One estimate suggests that seven million young people will be unemployed by 1970. Our society is rearing a generation which will have literally no function. It is not hard to imagine the costs in personal dignity and social harmony which this neglect will bring.

While white America, at this writing, enjoys a mild upsurge in economic fortunes, Negro America is experiencing a prolonged and severe economic depression. Automation is eliminating the few unskilled and semi-skilled job categories which are accessible to Negroes in a discriminatory society. As a consequence the proportion of Negroes without jobs is today two to three times higher than white unemployment rates. It is important to realize that the present gap between Negro and white opportunity is wider and deeper than ever before in this country.

AMERICAN RESPONSES TO THE NEW ERA

We have described a variety of trends, long accumulating in effect which have now converged -- each interacting with the others -- their combined impact has been the shattering of established systems and power structures, of people's expectations, of the plans and designs of leaders, and of the hopes and aspirations of ordinary men and women.

It is now necessary to examine the responses which are being made to this emerging new era by various groups within our society. In this way we hope to achieve a clearer definition of the present political scene, so that guidelines for a democratic political strategy can be proposed.

The American political spectrum includes five main groupings: The "traditionalist Right", the "Establishment", "the labor movement and organized liberalism", "Negroes and the civil rights movement", and the "new insurgents". These groupings do not fit conventional categories based on party, but they do seem to reflect divergent bases of power, styles of political action, political ideology and political program:

THE RESPONSE OF THE "TRADITIONALIST RIGHT":

Today, as in the past, a variety of interests and groups in the United States coalesce around a right-wing ideology and political program. This right-wing coalition now includes various business interests, certain sectors of the military establishment, Southern racists and their political representatives, and large portions of the small-town and suburban middle classes. The ideology of the right ranges from "ultra" to "conservative" but its essence is resistance to policies and programs which threaten the power of these groups. The program of the right includes the weakening of social service programs, organized labor and the Federal Government; they favor tax programs which favor business and property-holding classes, protection of the power of the Southern power structure, and a "victory" posture in the Cold War which would bolster the sagging fortunes of the Air Force and taint the Democratic Party once again with the

odor of "softness to conservatism."

Presently, the institutional power of the right rests almost entirely in Congress, where ideological conservatives can count on the voting support of men who are blinded to general social interests by their day-to-day obsession with the politics of local gain. Congressional leadership rests largely in the hands of a right wing oligarchy composed of Republicans and Southern Democrats, who by virtue of the fact that they come from single party districts, enjoy the committee privileges that come with long terms in office. This Congress, led by men who represent the most backward regions of the country, structured by an archaic system of rules, has effectively blocked attempts to cope with domestic and international crises. Its response to the new era has been "business as usual" at home, and nationalistic belligerence to the rest of the world.

In addition to Congress, the right is extremely powerful in state and local government, in the South and the West, and, in view of the decentralized power systems which dominate American politics, this is significant. Conservative and reactionary politics is very well organized, and has adapted successfully to the political system. Currently, John Birchism is applying the lessons learned from the successful politicians of the right by concentrating on local issues, gaining power in school boards and state assemblies.

THE RESPONSE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT:---By the "Establishment" we mean those men who have direct influence over the formulation of national domestic and foreign policies. These include the President and his advisors, and major officials of the executive branch of the government, but the Establishment extends into private centers of power as well--mazny corporate leaders, foundation officials, some labor leaders, and some leaders of the Republican Party are decisive figures in the formulation of one or another aspect of policy. It is the function of any Establishment to formulate policy in such a way that the going system can be preserved and existing power arrangements can be maintained. As the Eisenhower Administration drew to a close, it became evident that these responsibilities were not being effectively met. That Administration, responding primarily to particular corporate and military interests, was plainly failing to cope with the colonial revolution, with the New Europe, and domestic economic and social need.

THE RESPONSE TO THE NEW FRONTIER:---The Kennedy Administration, with its campaign rhetoric of "getting the country moving again," and its style of a "New Frontier," explicitly recognizes the need for an Establishment capable of responding actively to the crises of the new era. The Administration has reasserted an active and managerial role for government, after the Eisenhower years of government subservience to narrow military-industrial interests. The emergence of an activist political elite is a reflection of the inability of a major social, economic and military institutions to agree on the means of pursuing the American mission. For example businessmen generally have taken little interest in the inequalities and deprivation which have brought on the crisis in the economy, while leaders of organized labor are acutely aware that their position is being weakened by the interacting pressure of business, conservative politicians and automation. Deep conflicts exist within the armed forces over issues of strategy and emphasis. These and other conflicts within American centers of leadership have created a need for an active, technically skilled, government elite--a need which is strongly reinforced by the rapid tempo of international events which demand quick administrative action. Thus the first characteristic of the New Frontier is that it is the central agency for strategy and decision making for the American Establishment. Because its principal function is a mediating, rationalizing, and managerial one, the

Kennedy Administration views its problems as technical and administrative, rather than in ideological or moral terms. For example, the President has repeatedly emphasized that the anti-business image of the Democratic Party is a myth based on irrelevant ideologies of the past, and that our economic problems are entirely technical. Basic social issues are thus reduced to problems requiring administrative manipulation; they are never seen as a reflection of the clash of opposing interests.

This distinctive style of the New Frontier is manifested in the major policies of the Administration. Everywhere policies are pursued that are aimed at adjusting to the revolutions of the new era in order that old order of private corporate enterprise shall be preserved and rationalized.

The New Frontier Abroad. From the commitment to a corporate America, follows a foreign policy aimed at creating and preserving general economic compatibilities and political influence in a world no longer subject to blunt American direction:

1. The New Frontier, while regarding the Soviet Union as its chief short-run problem now believes that political stabilization with the Russians is a distinct possibility on such matters as preventing thermonuclear war, controlling the arms race, and influencing the direction of social revolution in underdeveloped areas. Thus, the Cold War obsession with Soviet power has been reduced, because of the need for greater attention to developments in Western Europe and the Third World. These are so pressing that the Administration will strive for a tacit but definite detente with the USSR, if the detente can be achieved without critical alterations in the world balance of power.

2. The New Frontier increasingly regards China as the primary state threatening American interests. Thus military and political efforts are now being directed at "containing" the Chinese revolution. On the other hand, the Administration seeks to avoid irrational occurrences such as a Chiang Kai-Shek invasion of the mainland, although without, as yet, giving up traditional commitments to Chiang.

3. The anti-colonial revolution is accepted as legitimate, as is the policy of non-alignment. The Administration is anxious to support social justice through mixed economics and parliamentary institutions. On the other hand, every available means is used to redirect or coerce regimes and movements which are anti-western, pro-communist or perceived to be threatening Western interests. These means extend from anti-guerrilla military action, financing of opposition groups, heavy military aid to threatened regimes, to various diplomatic or economic assistance programs designed to persuade rather than coerce.

4. A deep desire to avoid general nuclear war is fundamental to the Administration's "rational military policies". One way to avoid holocaust, it is thought, is to have available a wide range of "options" to deal more effectively with military situations. Though since nuclear weapons do not deter revolution, special counter-insurgency forces are developed (presently being tested in Vietnam). An increase in conventional forces in Europe to forestall the use of nuclear weapons should war occur there; while at the same time, strategic nuclear superiority to the Russians is maintained in the contingency that, should nuclear war occur, the West might, in the end, "prevail". In addition, a variety of unilateral and multilateral arms control measures are sought, designed to further rationalize the military system and avoid unwanted consequences.

Finally, the Administration recognizes that some forms of agreement with the Soviet are necessary if nuclear war is to be prevented. Thus, it has accepted a test ban, and some measures to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and other first-step efforts at curbing the arms race. What is not on the agenda is general disarmament -- a state of affairs which, it is thought, would reduce the United States to impotence in the face of revolution, ideological and economic competition.

5. The Grand Design of the New Frontier involves at its bases an interdependent European-American community which would serve as the bastion of Western power and a renovating mechanism for the sluggish US economy. America, in the Grand Design, is to determine Western political-military strategy, while economic ties with Europe would both stimulate and prevent excessive competition with the stagnating US economy.

The New Frontier at Home. Internally, the New Frontier is moving toward the image of the "corporate state", following such countries as France and West Germany, in which government and business recognize that national planning by central bodies and strong programs of social welfare are necessary if social conflict which threatens the corporation economy flows from this conception:

1. The economic overview of the Kennedy Administration is a mix of Keynesian advocacy of government intervention (including military spending as a major pump-primer) with faith in the essential genius of the American corporate system. Present economic problems are seen as "frictional" or temporary cyclical troubles. It is recognized that unemployment will rise through new "welfare" programs. It is clear that as the troubles of our economy become more acute and more visible, the administration would lean toward "corporatist-bureaucratic" solutions rather than attempt to construct institutions of democratic planning.

2. The New Frontier is engaged in systematic and unprecedented intervention in labor management disputes, as a representative of the "national interest", to attempt to set guidelines for settlement of labor problems. The thrust of this policy has been heavily in the direction of tax and other incentives and concessions to business and strongly against the use of the strike by the labor movement.

3. The administration interprets the rise of unemployment as a "cost of increased productivity" and apparently feels that only conventional programs are needed to solve the problems. Thus the Administration claims that tax cuts, depreciation write-offs and other investment stimuli, plus minor welfare measures will do the trick. In actuality, the New Frontier is interested in maintaining unemployment at politically acceptable levels. Consequently, unemployment rates (officially) of six per cent or higher will be tolerated, so long as such unemployment does not become a political liability.

4. The Administration has no program for the alleviation of poverty. The medicare program, skimpy compared to Truman's National Health Insurance bill, represents the only major Administration commitment to help America's dispossessed. There have been no proposals which would begin the redistribution of income, no massive public works program; instead only business oriented plans and ameliorative social work in the form of the Domestic Service Corps are offered.

5. While being attacked by some business interests as "unfavorable" to business, the general trend of the New Frontier is toward the strengthening of large corporation power (while continuing to extol the free market system), and the courting of the business elite. Here are some examples of such Administration action:

The challenge to the steel industry involved not only in a freeze in prices but a freeze on wages as well; since then the steel companies have been permitted to raise their prices.

The telstar giveaway -- The Administration, over-riding liberal opposition, gave control of the international communications satellite to private corporate interests.

The series of Administration concessions on tariffs, tax reform, depreciation allowances, anti-trust actions, and administrated pricing practices.

5. As the Administration came to power, civil rights was regarded as a problem requiring a gradual yet necessary solution. The primary means of diminishing the problem was thought to be the process of voter registration in the South -- which the Kennedys supported financially and legally, as well as conceptually. This, it was thought, would keep the movement off the streets, and build up Negro voting blocs for the Democratic Party. The accelerating pace of the movement, however, belied these early Administration expectations. Redognizing now that officially condoned racism is a major barrier to US effectiveness internationally, and that legal segregation is a major spur to Negro mass action, the Administration now views the civil rights situation as a major and profound crisis, demanding more committment than initially hoped. But the basic goals and typical style of the New Frontier continued to be manifest. Although recognizing that segregation is a moral evil, to try to manage the civil rights movement into established institutions in the expectation that conflict will be contained and minimized. Meanwhile, Administration officials attempt to "work with" the civil rights movement -- as a last ditch effort to stave off a situation in which all palliatives and liberal strategies would be rejected by angry and militant Negroes.

7. It is crucial that the rationalizing, managerial and adjustive politics of the New Frontier does not have unanimous support within the Establishment, and that the Administration is vehemently opposed by the traditionalists of the Right. In almost each instance the Administration is in a degree of conflict with groups who have a stake in the lingering ideas of the Fifties and before. In the area of military policy, there still remain powerful voices in support of an unlimited arms race and forceful containment of the Soviets at any cost. In economic policy, there are those who continued to insist that the Administration has not gone far enough in the interest of private enterprise. In civil rights, key figures in both parties oppose any government action to deal with the problem. The Administration has decided, in essence, that such outlooks are irrational and against the long-range interests of established power. To develop durable support for their own power and vision, the New Frontiersman are seeking several important changes in the national structure of power:

They seek to greatly expand the power of the Executive in critical areas. This includes greater control of the military by a "civilian" elite of skilled intellectuals, politicians and managers. The goal is to make the planning of war a scientific specialty of Pentagon intelligentsia -- immune from Congress or any other public institutions which might interfere with rational military planning. The Administration also seeks the power to act, independent of Congress, in the following areas: setting of tax rates, regulation of public works and welfare programs, absorption of certain Federal Reserve Board powers with respect to fiscal policy, and tariff cutting powers.

The Kennedys seek to remake the Democratic Party in their own image. They seek to replace worn-out political machines in big cities, to control, redirect or suppress reform movements in key states, and to undermine the power of recalcitrant Dixiecrat congressmen -- all with the intention of creating a party permanently loyal to the New Frontier political style.

A number of trends, actively aided by the Administration, point to a remaking of Congress. Through pressure, and the financing of opposition by the Administration, plus the efforts of the civil rights movement, the power of the Dixiecrat controlled Congressional power is aided by the age of many of the senior members of the conservative coalition. It seems likely that the next few years will see a gradual transfer of power from the quarter-century old Dixiecrat-Republican oligarchy to a new group of men who are closer to the views of the White House.

This, then, is the essential shape of the Establishment as it strives to respond to the new era--it intends to be rational, active and adaptive, but its policies and style flow from its necessary committment to the preservation of the going system.

Critique of the New Frontier

For those who are, instead, committed to democracy and human dignity, two things need to be strongly emphasized.

First: In a world where countless forces work to create feelings of powerlessness in ordinary men, an attempt by political leaders to manipulate and control conflict destroys conditions of a democratic policy and robs men of their initiative and autonomy. The New Frontier is engineering a society where debate is diminishing and the opportunities to express opposition and create ferment are declining. When consensus is manipulated, when reforms emanate from the top while active movements for change are described, then the process of democratic participation has been defeated. In the short run, efforts to dampen social conflict and prevent popular upsurge limit drastically the possibilities for real reform and innovation in the society. In the long run, the encroachment of the engineered consensus will permanently frustrate the long human struggle to establish a genuinely democratic community.

Second: The policies of this Administration can be characterized as "aggressive tokenism". And tokenism, no matter how forthrightly it is proposed, is in its essence no more than measured adjustment by a faltering social system to radical demands from all sides. It is clear that, in the present situation, the New Frontier cannot solve the three most pressing needs of our time: disarmament, abundance with social justice, and complete racial equality.

Alternatives to the New Frontier

A peace-making foreign policy in which disarmament is the central goal is the first need. The program of the Administration is a dangerous attempt to make the world safe for limited and irregular warfare conducted under the stalemate of nuclear deterrence. Certainly all sane men will support the Administration's apparently determined effort to achieve detente with the Soviets. But they must face the fact that the resulting world is likely to be one of continued brutality and bloodshed. For the Administration has not yet abandoned its resolve to meet revolution with force if necessary, and this means the sure devastation of country after country in the Third World, as Vietnam, for instance, is now being destroyed. It means a continuing danger of escalation to full scale war. This turn of events is not caused simply by communist aggression, but by the basic inability of the US government to offer political and economic alternatives to people in revolutionary upsurge -- alternatives which can meet their needs for radical economic development under planning. The present "modernization" program of the New Frontier, which results either fully fraudulent or seriously inadequate redistribution of land and power and which has not even been applied seriously in many parts of the world, cannot meet the need.

The tokenism of the Administration with respect to unemployment, automation, poverty, and social stagnation is clear. No program has been offered which can begin to cope with these problems. The New Frontier has failed to experiment in government programming to meet the radical changes in the condition of production and consumption in America. Corporate power and its "ethic" have therefore grown, while the counter-vailing and creative possibilities of independent public intervention and development have been completely ignored. It is clear that old institutions and assumptions are not adequate to the technological revolution, and that central control, planning and integration of the economy will have to occur. Insofar as the Administration has moved in this area, it has been in the direction of supporting elitist, private industry-wide "planning" with the government ratifying these plans as part of the corporate "team". There is a different road -- toward bold new advances in democratic and responsible planning which makes production available to all the world and equally to all Americans. It is this road which the New Frontier seeks to close off.

Tokenism cannot bring racial equality to a society which is racially segregated, nor can it meet the increasing demands of the Negro freedom movement. Many Kennedy policies in civil rights need support if they are to be implemented, but it should be recognized that the essential demands for job equality, housing, and school integration and voting rights are hardly coped with by the Administration's program. It is also crucial to note that present policies make no provision for meeting, even minimally, the Negro demand for jobs and relief from economic distress.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The most direct, visible and powerful challenge to the status quo and established power in America now comes from the upsurge of Negroes. The general setting of this upsurge is the frustration of economic opportunity for both middle and working class Negroes--for the former, the professional opportunities which exist and few and low paying; for the latter unemployment has reached unprecedented proportions. A further enabling condition of the Negro movement has been the migration of Negroes into cities North and South, either to escape the terror and isolation of rural living, or because of the relative availability of work in the cities as compared with the rapid decline in agricultural employment. Inspired by the colonial revolution, and frustrated by the hypocrisy and tokenism of established political leadership, a sense of initiative and an impulse to direct action became widespread in the late fifties, climaxing in the student sit-in movement.

The student movement in the South has become more radical and impatient through its experience. From a direct action attack on segregated lunch counters, the goals of the student movement have grown to include economic equality and a more direct assault on the white power structure of southern communities. Moreover, the Southern movement now involves increased participation by Negro masses, including lower-class, unemployed and unskilled workers. In the six weeks between the Birmingham events and this writing, the intensity, scope and breath of the movement have grown enormously. In these weeks, for example, 10,000 people have been arrested in the South for participation in demonstration and the direct action movement has sprung up in at least 100 southern communities.

The inspiring and increasingly successful Southern revolution has converged with the increasing frustration and despair of Northern Negroes, to produce a vast upsurge of action in Northern cities. In the North, Negroes are confronted not with a system of legal segregation, but rather with a surface promise of equality which masks unemployment, squalid ghettos, "urban renewal" de facto school segregation, police brutality and a thousand other indignities. These conditions belie the liberal sentiments expressed by Northern politicians, and the outcome of a long history of patience, trust and hope has been a steady worsening of the lot of the Northern Negro.

Negroes have broken through the crust of apathy--and it is apparent that, unlike their White fellow Americans, Negroes are deeply aware of the meaning of the new era. The Negro movement is undergoing leadership tensions and changes in the content of its program; There is major debate about the depth of change in America necessary for the establishment of human equality. It is impossible to predict a "direction" for the movement at the present time. But it is clear that thousands are now in radical motion that the eruption is shaking the traditional seats of public and private power, that its dynamism continuously generates greater protest. Already the Negro revolt has intensified once-frozen conflicts between political reactionaries and the more liberal wings of both parties. And, more profoundly, the demand for the abolition of segregation and the liquidation of economic and social inequality has fundamentally challenged the ability of the Establishment to meet the test the President himself has posed: "We shall be judged more by what we do at home than what we preach abroad."

The Negro revolt poses a challenge to other groups as well. Particularly it speaks to liberals, to reformers, to trade unionists, and radicals. The question it poses has been well-phrased by Walter Lippman:

"Is the rising discontent which is showing itself among the 20 million Negroes going to change in important ways the shape and pace of American politics? Big popular movements such as Populism in the last century, the Square Deal and the New Deal in this century, had an explosive nucleus of popular trouble and anger. Does the crystal ball say, then, that there will be a new movement of internal development and reform -- without which the substantial grievances of Negroes cannot be redressed? "

THE DILEMMA OF LABOR AND LIBERAL FORCES

While the Negro population stirs itself, the traditional sources of power for movements for social justice find themselves on the defensive. The labor movement, and the institutions of liberalism have been caught in two eviscerating pincer movements: the automated economy -- the jobs it kills and the labor relations problems it raises -- strike at the heart of labor's power in the heavy production industries. And the capture of liberal rhetoric and the liberal political base by the corporate liberalism of the New Frontiersmen means that the reformers and the democratically oriented liberals are trapped by the limitations of the Democratic Party, but afraid of irrelevancy outside

The effects of technological and industrial changes, so strikingly expressed in the shifting composition of the labor force, presents organized labor with one of its greatest immediate problems, and perhaps its greatest single threat over the course of the next twenty years. In the late fifties for the first time, white collar jobs exceeded in absolute numbers blue collar industrial jobs. The traditional base of labor's power and social influence -- the production line worker -- is vanishing. Labor, however, has failed to achieve the kind of organizing successes with white collar workers that it did with industrial workers. Combined with imminent as well as actual automation of both these job categories, the percentage of unionized workers in the work force is decreasing.

The weapon of the strike itself, quite aside from labor's right to strike -- itself in jeopardy -- now affords many employers the opportunity to automate while workers are on picket lines and before new contracts are signed.

While desperately attempting to hold on to jobs that exist, the unions cannot begin to stem the increasing flow of young people to the ranks of the unemployed. A whole generation of young adults, potentially new blood for unionism, are now a growing pool of alienated and frustrated people, whose political direction could as easily be hostile as it could be friendly to the unions and their members.

The lack of jobs, and social misery, and the future threat of automation short-circuit the collective bargaining process and creates important tensions between labor and management. The leadership of organized labor predominantly favors continued allegiance to the President and the Democratic Party, but increasingly they have been politically weakened by the power of business and government and the unavoidable spectre of automation. Labor itself, however, is not unified: even though present leadership probably will remain loyal to the Democratic Party, many leaders of the industrial unions are urging a more militant labor attack on conservative economic policies. In addition, rank and file criticism of both its leadership and economic conditions is growing. More than half of all contracts negotiated between national unions and management last year were rejected when submitted to local memberships.

In fact, even a cautious prediction of the course of industrial relations in the immediate future would focus on a picture of an embattled and defensive labor movement. Strife is coming to be stimulated not by wage disputes as much as by automation disputes involving as they do, work rules and job gradings, and therefore job security for millions of men too old to learn new skills. Even apart from defense industries, labor will find itself continually stigmatized for action against or in ignorance of business-defined "public interest," as it fights increasing automation.

The political meaning of labor's dilemma emerges starkly: At a time when its base of support is declining, labor will find its fundamental right to strike threatened (as the railroad disputes clearly shows) by Congressional demands for compulsory arbitration.

Although it is improbable that a Democratic administration would support compulsory arbitration legislation, (though the current railroad proposal is) it is nevertheless predictable that labor will find itself in a defensive, political fight for its independence. The combination of Cold War justification for avoiding strikes and public intolerance of labor's demands, will confront unions for the first time since 1948, with the necessity for all-out political action for its most basic organizational prerogatives.

The Decay of Liberal Militancy. In power for a generation, Liberalism has adopted a neutral managerial role. Unable to disassociate themselves from the errors or the immoralities of Democratic officeholders, the major liberal organizations--and even more so, their public spokesmen--have abandoned the populist and progressive strands of their tradition; strands which dictated a positive, change-oriented political role with militant rhetoric. In its actions Liberalism no longer identifies as the critical targets of protest, the social conditions which it attacked during the "New Deal revolution." During the fifties Liberal social critics talked of problems of leisure, mass society and abundance. But all the while poverty and racial oppression, and public squalor and selfish interests continue to exist, neglected and unsolved by liberal organizations.

At present, the major liberal organizations devote their political energies to various kinds of lobbying operations, usually in support of policies emanating from the administration. Proposals are offered to the President or to Congress, with only rare efforts to organize popular support of them; blame for the failure of liberal programs is usually accorded to the Congress or occasionally to the Administration.

Organized liberalism, however, must take at least part of the credit for America's political stalemate. A style of politics which emphasizes cocktail parties and seminars rather than protest marches, local reform movements, and independent bases of power, cannot achieve leverage with respect to an establishment-oriented administration and a fundamentally reactionary Congressional oligarchy.

The mobilization of popular support for new proposals, the fomenting of local and national debate, the organization of disenfranchised groups for the effective exercise of their political power--in short, the recapturing of the populist inheritance of liberalism--these are the first principles of democratic action, and they are the only conceivable ways by which liberal programs could be enacted. It would be an occasion for much celebration if established liberals were to engage in such action.

Within the liberal organizations, at and below the middle levels of leadership there are many who would support more militant action and forthright positions. The views of these people may become effective as two processes occur. First, the intensification of our domestic problems themselves call for more direct and far reaching solutions than presently offered. But just as important, the populist impulse in labor and organizations of liberalism can be reinforced by the emergence of new popular movements, articulating their own programs in the face of the inadequate ones.

These changes would require a new spirit and new strategy for American democrats; they would require a new insurgency.

THE NEW INSURGENCY

In a growing number of localities a new discontent, a new anger is groping towards a politics of insurgent protest.

At present, the major resource for these efforts is a number of individuals who are thinking and acting in radical ways as a result of a variety of recent political events and experiences.

Chief among these are the activists in the civil rights movement. Discovering that mass protest is more effective than patient suffering, the Negro community finds that its efforts to achieve equality are bound in complex ways to more general economic problems of employment and economic growth. Behind local segregation there lies a far more pervasive pattern of national political, economic, and social oppression; slowly, the civil rights movement is learning that the demand for freedom is a demand for a new society.

Activists in the peace movement have learned that concentration of international power often is less important to American foreign and military policy than consideration of domestic power. Their demands increasingly take the tone of economic reform, and a redress of power abused in this society.

Students in the great centers of higher learning have learned though still in inchoate ways, that higher learning divorced from high purpose reflects a society in which initiative is seen as an administrative problem: and as the universities begin to approach the model of other institutions of the society--in their organization as well as their tasks--the problem of university reform takes on many of the same burdens as more general social reform.

Intellectuals, in and out of universities, have found that too often their skills are merely used, not cherished, their rewards are merely sops, not signs of esteem, their work is merely apology, not expression of an inner human reality.

Many liberals and radicals have discovered that the complacency, cynicism, and loss of political will which permeated the traditional liberal, reform, and radical movements and organizations are neither the price of victory nor the symptom of the end of ideology, but rather are the effects of bureaucratic perspectives and Cold War approaches to politics. Consequently it is becoming evident that the hope for real reform lies not in alliances with established power, but with the re-creation of a popular left opposition--an opposition that expresses anger when it is called for, not mild disagreement.

Some trade unionists have found that union reform depends on having an economic program which meets the demands of union membership. Thus, political pressures within unions impel many of them to positions, far more forthright than was ordinarily in the Fifties.

Thus, there seems to be emerging a collection of people who thought and action are increasingly being radicalized as they experience the events of the new era. Moreover, the radical consciousness of these individuals is certainly representative of wider currents of urgency and disaffection which exist in the communities from which they come. The militant resolve of Negroes North and South, the urgency and dedication of middle class peace advocates, the deepening anxiety of industrial workers, the spreading alienation of college students -- this kind of motion and discontent in the population has given new stimulation to the development of radical thought, and is leading to a search for new forms of insurgent politics.

The new insurgents are active generators of a wide variety of political activities in the neighborhoods and communities where they are located. Local insurgent actions include: mass direct action and voter registration campaigns among Negroes, political reform movements directed against entrenched Democratic machines, political action for peace, tutorials and other community based attempts to reach underprivileged youth, discussion groups, periodicals and research aimed at analysis and exposure of local political and economic conditions. Barely begun are efforts to initiate organized protest in depressed areas and urban slums, to organize non-union workers, to focus reform political clubs and candidacies on issues and programs directly relevant to the urban poor, and to involve slum-dwellers directly in political efforts.

The outcome of these efforts at creating insurgent politics could be the organization of constituencies expressing, for the first time in this generation, the needs of ordinary men for a decent life. Many signs point to a vastly increased potential for this kind of popular upsurge--and as Lippman suggests, the most crucial of these is the "exploding nucleus" of Negro protest. But the effort will be a long and difficult one. For one thing, the militancy of Summer, 1963, among Negroes is sure to ebb and flow - as with all popular movements. Second, the new insurgents need to learn ways of gathering the physical and financial resources to support their activities. Finally, and most important, an adequate analysis of the American scene, and a political program consistent with it have yet to be devised. Such analysis and such program are needed if there is to be relevant local and national political action which can effectly create the impetus for a democratic society and genuinely meet the needs of the new era.

Some Strategic Possibilities

As new popular upsurge in fact takes place in America's towns and cities, there are likely to be substantial effects on national politics. As new constituencies are brought into political motion, as new voices are heard in the arena, as new centers of power are generated, existing institutions will begin to feel the pressures of change, and a new dynamic in national social and political life could come into being.

1. A Reinvigorated Labor Movement? Issues now pressing the Labor movement seem to converge with those of urban Negroes fighting for equality, and middle class groups working for disarmament. First, with the arms race losing its ability to generate new jobs, the unions are forced to seek economic expansion in the areas that will provide the jobs they need. Second, the inability of established power to satisfy labor's now-modest demands for social service--like medicare and aid to education -- provides good reason for an increased tone and style of protest, and a heightened realization that the skewed priorities of the Cold War do not serve labor's needs. Third, job-destroying automation affects not only the employment chances of urban Negroes, but also the membership and power of organized labor.

It seems the case that, unless organized labor begins to take leadership in creating powerful demands for employment, for social service, for income redistribution, and for radical equality, the very institution of the labor union would become obsolete. It therefore seems likely that popular upsurge in many communities and the emergence of insurgent political movements which would move labor to become an independent center of power and leadership.

A reinvigorated labor movement could be a major force in the creation of the democratic social order. The labor movement--by connecting democracy and economic equality and security, and by fighting for participation in the formulation of work rules -- has had a nascent notion of industrial democracy. A resurgent labor movement could present to workers a qualitatively richer vision of what most men's lives would be like in a democratic society. And it could create opportunities for real human relations and democratic participation in the work places of our society. This, it would seem, is the new frontier for Americas labor movement. It is possible that no labor insurgency -- even though occurring outside the labor movement -- could move the unions to approach this frontier.

An End to Middle Class Silence?

The great American middle classes (real and imagined) -- the manipulated millions -- there are not irrelevant to a strategy of change. Even now some of the middle classes -- especially university people and some other professionals -- are breaking out of the apathy and complacency of the Fifties. To a great extent the specter of nuclear war and the effects of radioactive fallout from weapons testing has been responsible for the shift; and much of the work of the women's peace organizations can provide fruitful guides for a strategy of political education for middle class and educated constituencies. These are good reasons for an even further radicalization of these groups. First, as the tax burden on Americans increases, it is the middle classes and the marginal lower-middle classes whose standard of living is most immediately threatened. The sight of the abuse of the corporate privilege of the expense account, depreciation allowances, and tax loopholes generally, may bring many of these people to protest against an economy of selfish and vested interests. Moreover, it is in the present political economy that the salaried middle classes have lost most in terms of political and economic influence. Second, beyond the press of their own material problems a new populism, a democratic insurgency, could provide for many of these people a revived and inspiring vision of a humane society order - a vision that might stir them out of privation.

In each of the constituencies which might become the basis of a new insurgency, as in the labor movement, the major priority is the restoration of debate and conflict about goals and methods. In each there are varieties of opinion which now appear to be part of the great consensus of moderation. For a new politics to be born a new wave of real political debate about real issues must come to the open. This is the truth in the often-sloganed call for political "dialogue": issues which are now under the rug must become the floor of a new movement. Such a debate would have transforming effects on the political parties and the Congress.

A New Congress?

The combined effects of demographic shift, reapportionment, increased Negro voting in the South, and certain political maneuvers by the Kennedy Administration can force changes in the Congressional Establishment - so that the liberal wings of both parties would control the decision-making apparatus of the Congress. This will undoubtedly facilitate the enactment of the New Frontier program. It is clear that this program is going to be inadequate to cope effectively with unemployment, poverty, and the other defects of our social and economic structures. But the kind of local activity described above - especially if it were to eventuate in attempts to win Congressional seats and other forms of political representation - would have major effects beyond those already contemplated:

First . . . intensified activity by Negroes in both North and South will hasten the demise of the Dixie-crats; and as a result of this activity already, the New Frontier is being forced to promulgate some of the civil rights legislation it rhetorically promised.

Second effective political action by the peace movement directed at major party Congressional campaigns, could lead to the formation of a caucus of peace-oriented Congressmen, prepared to support disarmament initiatives and democratic foreign policy alternatives and to bring about debate in Congress on the defense budget and foreign policy.

Third local political organization of the kind described could provide the base for Congressional candidates and Congressmen who, regardless of their party label, could run on and stand for radical economic and social programs independent of the establishments of either major party.

Breaking the power of the conservative coalition, expelling racism from the seats of congressional power, forcing debate on Cold War policies, and bringing to Congress men who really represent those who are now disenfranchised - these would be major first steps in the effort to create a democratic society.

A NEW AGENDA FOR AMERICA

Political organization is meaningless without political program -- definitive and concrete proposals based on serious analyses of existing conditions and addressing coping with the troubles and problems of people.

The immediate need is for such social and political analysis and the formulation of such programs.

Historically it is important to stress the role that students and intellectuals have played in activating the new sources of social movement. The key roles of students in initiation and continuation of peace and civil rights activity need not be reiterated. (And in this respect it is important to note the reawakening interest by intellectuals in poverty, organized labor and traditional economic issues.) It has been the peculiar contribution of the intellectual community to these movements; centers of research and exposure, and loci for the expansion of local into national movements, of local issues into unified programs.

But during the post-war period the American academy turned inward. The "Silent Generation" was not simply a description of students and young intellectuals; it was the hallmark of a decade of introspection and defensiveness, as intellectuals were isolated in their "communities" and exposed to the pressures of post war affluence and the hegemony of Cold War ideology.

Despite the enthusiastic proclamations of public officials and college bureaucrats that the post-war era saw the consolidation of intellectual participation in the key institutions and centers of national life, it has been clear that independent, critical participation by intellectuals in the political process has been officially resisted and successfully undermined. The much-heralded service of intellectuals in business and government is simply an indication of the effectiveness of the American Establishment in intergrating the University system into more faithful service of the status quo. It is the grim irony of the Fifties that the supposed centers of innovation in the social system provided the man-power and organizational facilities which lubricated the efficient operation of the military-industrial complex.

This structure of quiescence is beginning to break down. The development of civil rights movements and other centers of independent insurgency has for the first time since the war created centers of power outside the university, to which intellectuals could turn for creative as well as political involvement. The beginning of a breakdown in the American consensus provides the possibility for genuinely critical and independent participation of intellectuals and students in national life. The bureaucratic and ideological structures of American institutions of liberal education have been penetrated; and with this breakout of significant numbers of students and intellectuals has come a freshening, an independence, a sense of effects on the University system as well as on the emergent centers of power in the social order.

While stressing the participation of university intellectuals in the new issue centers, it should also be emphasized that these centers have provided the meeting place for other groups that were isolated from one another by the experience of the Fifties. In particular, artists and writers as intellectual groups are being drawn to and resuscitated by the new movements.

This trend away from the hegemony of the establishment in the University should not be overstated. The organized university system is not effectively challenged by current movements. Although a few students and intellectuals have been able to escape from the dominance of the corporate university system, for the vast majority the restrictive university system has remained intact as the organizing force for daily routine and intellectual perspective. The new social movements and the centers of power they create nevertheless make possible attacks on the system itself.

Students, scholars, and intellectuals, then, have crucial interests and can play a crucial role in gathering the data, developing the theory and analysis, and creating the programs which will lay the intellectual foundations for a new political upsurge. This task can be accomplished in these ways:

1. Locally based movements need data about local social and economic conditions, about local power structure, the political life of the community, demographic facts, etc. For example, a group concerned with making peace a central issue in local political party will want data about defense economy, about other local effects of the arms race and cold war; a group concerned with fair housing will need data about real estate practices, about sources of profit from housing discrimination, about the proper content for a fair housing ordinance, etc.
2. In addition to research focussed on particular locales, there is an equal need for extensive analysis of aspects of the national economic and political systems. Studies of the economic and social effects of the cold war, critical analysis of existing economic programs with regard to poverty, unemployment, social services, public planning, education, cultural life, housing, scientific research - this is the kind of intellectual enterprise which an increasing number of American intellectuals need now to undertake.

These two kinds of research, though maintaining the integrity of the scholar and the subject matter, is nevertheless frankly partisan. In it, students and intellectuals enlist their skills not for the paper rewards of the degree or academic position but the human values.

3. Perhaps the most important contribution intellectuals can make to the construction of a new politics lies in the realm of critical journalism. The attack on corporate privilege, on vested interest, on conditions at the local level - these require independent journalism. Through their own journals, many of which have begun to appear in the last three years, the new radicals can and do engage in the kind of exchange which is essential for the construction of political pro-

gram and strategy for the next decade.

At a time when social science research seems increasingly trivial and microscopically focused, the return to a journalism of radical exposure would provide a model of cultural work for students and young scholars which could bring their efforts to an engagement with relevant politics. It would be as much an improvement in style as it would be to content if an effective alternative to managed news were independently created, staffed by independent scholars and journalists.

New Priorities

The political insurgency, the rebirth of a populist liberalism, would upset existing American priorities and could rewrite the nation's agenda. The international military and political commitments of the United States - particularly the continuation of the suicidal and wasteful race for quantitative military superiority - are incompatible with commitments to solve the crushing problems of unemployment, racial injustice, poverty and slum housing, medical care, and the thousands of other unmet needs of our society.

A serious effort by serious men attacking our domestic problems with the pressure of a popular movement behind them would be nothing less than a re-ordering of priorities for our society. In James Reston's phrase, "equal time for America," would require a vast shift of resources away from the arms race and away from attempts to implement an American Grand Design on the world.

This point should be emphasized: by concentrating attention on domestic problems, and by demanding the concentration of resources on their solution, the poor and dispossessed of the United States (and every other country) could force a cessation of the arms race. The objective meaning of their demands for goods and social services would be to make continued support for massive military programs untenable.

Even now, the growing revolt of American negroes is forcing the old question: What profit if America gains the whole world and loses its own soul? There is only one worthy answer which our generations of Americans can give - as James Baldwin puts it, we must "achieve our country" and thereby "change the history of the world."

THE NEW PROGRAM

American politics presently excludes and discourages more ideas about problem-solving that it attracts and uses. A new agenda for America would open the scope of alternatives which could be legitimately debated in political forums. And creative attempts to reach solutions to pressing problems are desperately needed. Proposals and policies adequate to the needs of the society have yet to be offered in political contexts.

Nevertheless, the nature of these programs is discernible; and it is essential that men begin to think of the issues. American politics could be considering, if it began to democratically represent those now excluded from its functioning. Such programs would include the following:

Towards a Democratic Economy

A new concept of full employment must be demanded, wherein people are fully employed in the fabric of a creative society and are as well "workers" involved in a productive system.

This would entail a society which plans publicly, not merely to handle "the new automation," but through general participation in decision making. Meeting the most basic and general material needs must be made part of the inculcation of democracy as an economic goal.

To obtain this goal will involve not only major governmental efforts to meet current needs, but also will entail radical changes in the social and economic structures. The question is not whether radical changes will be needed, but how and by whom they will be carried out, and to whom the new society will be responsible. The overall strategic goal is not merely the solution of problems by making incremental changes in the present structure, but the development of a revolutionary trajectory which starts with tactical demands built on the most elementary felt human needs, and advances to a through change in social and economic structure.

The agenda, then, is progressive, each step leading, hopefully, toward the society which is responsive to men's vision, rather than men's vision being limited by the conservative nature of society. The key is that not merely a "list" of liberal demands are pursued, but that all demands find their basis in human problems and human hopes, in dissatisfaction with the present state of human life and its socio-economic institutions.

Thus, at all levels of political life the issue of economic power must be raised. Limited "issue" demands will remain hollow unless they attack the sources of dissatisfaction. Thus educational reformers, as an example, not only must lobby for more funds for education, but must strike at the destructive economic forces which now wish to imprison the University in the Cold War and in anti-social pecuniary production.

The immediate strategic goals fall into a number of basic categories:

Solving the most crying problems of poverty, deprivation, and unemployment by making a whole range of increases in present programs and progressive changes in others. This includes a general redistribution of income as part of a guaranteed minimum standard of living for all people, this to be accomplished by a variety of mechanisms: progressive taxes without the dead weight of special interest loopholes, effective and realistic unemployment compensation, and a much shortened work-week. A program with these goals would also have to have a greatly expanded notion of the basic kinds of social services required: national health insurance for all citizens, an educational system capable of preparing American youth for the technological revolution and also guaranteeing advanced training for all who could benefit from it, a massive housing program whose minimum goal would be the replacement or renewal of America's 16 million substandard housing units - made available at rents and prices working people can afford. Such a notion of social services would have to include a sophisticated understanding of the effects of deprivation, and therefore would provide special aid to families with children whose education is curtailed because of financial restrictions, and would especially encourage minority groups families and children in their attempts at attaining education. Retraining programs for technologically displaced workers would be part of general governmental and private planning for automation, while other public programs, especially in depressed areas, would be greatly expanded. Finally, a vastly expanded foreign aid program with the goal of industrializing the developing nations would be crucial to the utilization of America's unused industrial capacity.

However, it must be realized that simply adding incremental programs will not even solve the most desperate and immediate problems, let alone lead toward the full reconstruction of society. Steps which would defeat the growth of corpor-

poration "government" in America and make more definite and more direct experiments in democratic planning and public social control, in the direction of building a true "public establishment", not to ratify corporate possibilities, but to counter and to serve as a counter-model for the rise in corporation power. These efforts would be aimed ultimately at the elimination of the islands of private elite control as the "solution" to our society's problems and as the "path" to our society's future.

This kind of program should be put in such a way as to confront the going system with increasing demands for genuine achievement of the goals. Reforms as mere palliatives on marginal "solutions" are reprehensible. But if the same reform programs are accelerated as steps toward more and more radical demands, they should be viewed differently. It is not simply the current "demand" by itself that tells the story: it is toward what it is leading that is important.

Much of this program depends on the way American society deals with automation. This would force leads to the possibility of a world of plenty. It could give America a chance to help the world while living at relatively prosperous levels. Automation could "give leisure" to all, and change the meaning of "work".

Its most revolutionary potential is that it allows general social control of enterprise without chaining men to terrible self-denial in order to achieve high-production levels. It frees workers - allowing them to decide to be at leisure, but without sacrificing basic consumer goods. It could leave time to participate in decision-making and self-development.

But the real question behind these possibilities is who controls the process, and how and for whom it will be used. Now it emphasizes an economy operating for the few, run by the few - it accelerates oligopoly and elite rule of economic life. If the promise of automation is to become reality, the celebration of "corporation government" as the new "American way" must be attacked at its core, and like other, older myths, destroyed by men and tools of reason.

The Abolition of All Forms of Racial Injustice

If the real needs of Negroes are to be met, there will have to be radical structural changes which extend beyond the question of color. To open up an inadequate system to Negroes cannot be seen as sufficient change. However, discrimination should be eliminated through such minimal governmental and non-governmental action as follows:

- a) the denial of Federal funds to states and communities where official practices enforce segregation or deny civil rights;
- b) the passage of the present civil rights legislation including the Public Accommodations section;
- c) the full and militant enforcement of existing civil rights legislation, court orders, and executive orders directed at abolishing segregation in schools, housing, employment, and public facilities;
- d) Federal protection -- military if necessary -- of civil rights direct action;
- e) further civil rights legislation, including at least:
 1. the permanent establishment of the Civil Rights Commission;
 2. provision of Federal registrars to aid Negroes encountering discrimination in registering to vote;
 3. a Fair Employment Practices Commission
- f) the activation of the 14th Amendment, involving the reapportionment of Congress and state legislatures;

g) the initiation of a mass literacy and general education program by the Federal government.

These are the demands which would be made upon governmental institutions. The movement itself must continue its demonstrations and educational programs.

It is absolutely essential that Negroes and other minority groups be free to organize and wield independent political power in their own interest. This is to be encouraged at every level of government and within private organizations such as trade unions. To seek such representation is in the best democratic tradition, and charges by white liberals about "racism in reverse" are strange, to say the least.

The Ending of the Nuclear Arms Race

The US ought to undertake a series of steps which would facilitate two essential goals: first, the achievement of sufficient detente with the Communist bloc that nuclear holocaust will be avoided and the threat of holocaust eventually abolished; second, the rechanneling of resources away from arms production to the fulfillment of basic domestic and world-wide social needs.

At least the nuclear disarmament of existing nuclear powers is necessary to stop China and other powers from developing nuclear arsenals, as well as simply to prevent a nuclear conflict involving one or more nuclear powers. While the resolution of conflict between the US and China -- will admittedly be very difficult if even possible, those conflicts must be manifested in non-nuclear ways. Thus opportunities must be grasped for reaching agreements with the Communist bloc to achieve an end to the arms race and at least nuclear disarmament. Specifically the US should announce immediately the permanent ending of all nuclear military testing programs; accept proposals to negotiate schemes for disengagement in Central Europe, and for nuclear free zones for Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific; halt all programs of militarization of outer space and negotiate its denuclearization. As one step, the US can now cut its military budget without impairing its deterrent or overkill (vide the Helman proposals for a \$22 billion arms budget reduction). The resulting funds could be utilized in the socially useful ways indicated above.

For Democratic Foreign Policy

American intervention in the affairs of other countries, when directed at forestalling or suppressing social revolution and protecting US property interests, must be ended. Instead, the US should support movements for genuine and far-reaching social reform, of the kind which directly and concretely benefit the people of the country involved. Especially, socialism and neutralism in underdeveloped countries should cease to be grounds for American suspicion and hostility; in many places such policies should be encouraged.

* * * * *

These international and domestic policies are merely first steps. They are essential, though -- without their realization we are faced with the prospect of deepening domestic and world wide economic hardship for Negroes and other minority groups, many small-scale guerrilla wars with the US supporting counter-insurgency

and eventual nuclear holocaust. Necessary for the eventual realization of the goals articulated here are structural economic, and political changes, though a good start can be made within the existing structure. But none of these changes will occur without the major efforts to mobilize the kinds of political action suggested.

Once the policies sketched here are instituted, then men can begin in earnest to construct the world to which they aspire. In our own country, a concerted effort to abolish poverty, unemployment, and racial inequality will be a prelude to the effort to bring into being a participatory democracy -- a society in which men have, at last, the chance to make the decisions which determine their lives and in which power is used for the widest social benefit. Throughout the world, the ending of the nuclear arms race will be a first step in a long effort to achieve universal disarmament and a warless world. The restrictions of big power intervention and imperialism will create the conditions under which the exploitation of two-thirds of the world by those who are rich, white, powerful, will have ended; and all men will begin to share equally.

STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

is an educational and social action organization dedicated to increasing democracy in all phases of our common life. It seeks to promote the active participation of young people in the formation of a movement to build a society free from poverty, ignorance, war, exploitation and the inhumanity of man to man. Won't you join with us?

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION TO:

Students for a Democratic Society
1103 East 63rd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

OR

Economic Research and Action Project
1100 West Ainslie
Chicago, Illinois 60640