

February 15, 1969

TC ANTIWAR DIRECTORS AND ORGANIZERS

The following information may be of immediate use in the coming week. A more thorough report, analysing the exact situation regarding April 6 and the general antiwar movement will follow shortly.

1. National Mobilization Committee. A meeting of the "expanded steering committee" of the NMC was held Feb. 7-8. Present were: Norma Becker, co-ordinator, Parade Committee; Irving Beinin, the Guardian; Eric Weinberger, Parade Committee; Dave Dellinger, chairman, NMC; Rennie Davis, NMC; Barbara Bick, Washington Women Strike for Peace; Sid Lens, Chicago Peace Council and an officer of the NMC; Sid Peck, Cleveland Area Peace Action Council and an officer of NMC; representatives of the CP, SWP, SMC, and some others, mostly pacifists.

The Dellinger wing of the antiwar movement had no proposal to make for action in the spring. Lens, Peck, and Bick expressed strong dissatisfaction with the course of the NMC in the past period and indicated the need for rebuilding the antiwar coalition nationally, though not by re-organization of the NMC. Bick said that the NMC no longer had any authority among the WSP groups. Peck even compared the NMC situation to that of the NCC, prior to the Cleveland conference which called April 15, 1967. Lens and Peck expressed support for April 6.

As a result, the NMC is not going to organize any actions of its own in the spring. A motion passed expressing "active support" to all the spring actions that have been called by others, including April 6, SCLC proposals, proposals by the Non-violent Action Group, etc. It was decided that the Mobe would reduce its staff and activity to the minimum. There will be no administrative committee meeting to approve this decision, but the administrative committee will be polled by mail.

It was generally agreed that the Mobe should not simply dissolve, if for no other reason than that such an announcement would be branded by the ruling class as a sign of the weakness of the antiwar movement.

2. Feb. 9 Chicago meeting convened by Fred Halstead to discuss the GI-civilian demonstrations April 6. New York snow and the still unsettled state of agreement on April 6 kept attendance down. Present were representatives of the Chicago Peace Council, Vets for Peace, WILPF, SWP, SMC, and regional representatives (mostly SMCers) from Cleveland, Detroit, and Minneapolis.

The most important aspect of the Chicago meeting was that it had been called -- it indicated that preparations for April 6 were proceeding. That fact forced other elements of the national antiwar movement to take a stand -- the NMC meeting, for instance, was called in direct response to the Chicago meeting.

A committee of five was set up and empowered to broaden out the sponsorship and participation in the organizing of April 6 actions. On the committee are: Fred Halstead, SWP; Leroy Wolins, Vets; Sid Lens and Sylvia Kushner, Chicago Peace Council; and Howard Petrick, SMC.

The committee was specifically asked to contact the Non-violent Action Group to check into its willingness to participate in the national co-ordination of April 6. Lens had indicated that they would be receptive to the idea. NAG is a loose formation, mainly of pacifist groups, organized by Stuart Meacham of the AFSC. Afterwards Halstead contacted Meacham, who indicated friendliness to April 6, but no readiness for deep involvement in the actual responsibility for the actions. NAG is calling for actions April 3-6, but Meacham said these were in no way conceived as competing with April 6, that in fact NAG would urge its contacts in local areas to participate in April 6. NAG is planning its major actions in three cities still to be selected.

The national board of the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom sent a telegram to the Chicago meeting saying, "WILL ENCOURAGE LOCAL BRANCHES COOPERATION IN CITIES CHOSEN FOR NON-VIOLENT LEGAL DEMONSTRATION EASTER SUNDAY. CONCUR WITH EMPHASIS ON ENDING THE WAR IN VIETNAM, LEGAL RIGHTS FOR GI'S, ABOLITION OF DRAFT, AND GENERAL REDIRECTION OF RESOURCES FROM WAR TO PEOPLES' WELFARE."

The Chicago Peace Council representatives stood firm on their intention of organizing the Chicago action for Saturday, April 5. A final decision on the date will be made in Chicago within a few days.

3. New York Parade Committee. A Feb. 13 meeting of the New York Parade Committee voted to organize a major New York antiwar action on Easter weekend. The meeting was much larger and broader than Parade Committee meetings in the past several months. The majority sentiment was strongly in favor of the proposal for GI-civilian actions April 6 as presented by Fred Halstead.

Lengthy discussion was held on the direction of the Parade Committee and the need to organize mass antiwar actions, specifically in the spring. Only towards the end of the meeting did discussion arise questioning the GI character and the date of the action. For time considerations, the exact date (April 5 or 6) of the action was left to be decided at a meeting the following week.

So overwhelming was the sentiment for the action, that Dellinger took the floor at the end of the meeting and expressed support for an April 6<sup>th</sup> GI action.

The information in this report is by-in-large favorable for the progress of April 6 and can be used in local area antiwar meetings that may be coming up shortly.

Comradely,

Gus Horowitz, for the  
national antiwar steering committee