

**WHAT  
CAN  
I DO  
ABOUT  
VIETNAM?**

# 30 actions you or your local group can take to be more effective in the Vietnam crisis.

*The following suggestions represent the distillation of the experience of Mass. PAX and its community organizations. All of these activities have been successfully carried out. All materials referred to as well as further details are available at the PAX office, 44 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138, Telephone 491-0650.*

**1** **Community Speak-out** has as its aim the development of a truly two-sided discussion. Get a strong delegation to visit local, civic, religious leaders; newspaper editors; veterans' organizations; even right-wing groups. Convince them that this is not an exercise in propaganda, but an honest confrontation in the highest democratic tradition. Advertise in the local paper, use mailings if possible, put announcements on radio and in the churches, leaflet public places, go door-to-door. It is important to use a public hall or a church hall where neither side will have the advantage. An alternate form is to have a person prominent in the community take testimony in public from anyone who wishes to express an opinion on Vietnam. The role of the Chairman in this case will simply be to ask leading questions for the purpose of clarification. Another approach would be the "Let's Discuss Vietnam" approach for middle-class groups, or already constituted civic and church groups, if the community speak-out does not seem to fit into the style of the community.

**2**

**Distribute leaflets** at shopping centers, main streets, factory gates, your own neighborhood, the houses on your street, beaches and other recreational areas with large concentrations of people.

**3**

**Buy one-minute radio spots on local stations.** Get local clergymen or other well-known individuals to make the radio tapes.

**4**

**Participate in local telephone-in radio programs.**

**5**

**Write letters to the local press.** Answer other letters which appear in local press. Attempt to get a continuous dialogue going. Contact writers of favorable letters and ask them to join your effort. Visit your local newspaper with a delegation and press for more and better coverage of your issue and for editorials on the subject. Offer to write a weekly newspaper column reflecting the opinion of your group. Suggest that the newspaper make available a similar column to your opponents.

**6**

**Show peace films** in cooperation with church and other groups.

**7**

**Contact all opinion makers systematically;** select literature, books and pamphlets for distribution to community officials, student leaders, editors, newscasters, business leaders, union officials, etc.

**8**

**At all public meetings distribute leaflets** outside relating the community issue under discussion to our nation's involvement in Vietnam.

**9**

**Help high school students:** work with high school students on problems of military service, the draft, understanding Vietnam and Southeast Asian affairs, as well as the total thrust of American foreign policy and how it affects their lives.

**10**

**Organize seminars:** prepare and conduct seminars on Vietnam for the entire community: students, church, fraternal, business and service organizations, and any groups of friends or neighbors.

**11**

**Establish a Speakers' Bureau** by drawing on the services of professors, scientists, clergymen and ordinary citizens who are willing to develop their ability to speak on the issues before local Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce, PTA, churches, etc.

**12**

**Issue press releases:** should be issued on behalf of your group on all major issues as they occur. It is important to react quickly, to have the release cleared with the leaders of your group. Make sure it is well-written, brought in person to the local newspaper to make sure it is understood and printed.

**13**

**Hold Press conferences** when you are having an important speaker or visitor, or when an important event has taken place to which you wish to react.

**14**

**Organize local community Peace Walk;** often held to coincide with a religious holiday. Advance publicity handled by a small committee; posters prepared by an artist, and distributed throughout the community in churches, synagogues and store-windows. Signs may be carried. Newspaper and television coverage usually attained.

**15**

**Help war-injured Vietnamese children;** for medical care and assistance, work in conjunction with the Committee of Responsibility, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York.

**16**

**Relate the arts to politics:** produce "Viet-Rock," "US," "MacBird," Brecht plays, or sponsor a reading. Other possibilities are art exhibitions, art sales, or benefit concerts, and benefit film premieres as fund-raising and educational efforts.

**17**

**Organize within communities:** develop a year-round organization to help people, to provide community services, to make real changes in neighborhoods and communities as well as electing people to public office. Such services would include pushing for an experimental housing project, an experimental school, a lawyers' group for legal advice, demonstrations to combat air and water pollution, service committees to help individuals in their struggles with civic bureaucracy.

**18**

**Organize public demonstrations:** make sure you have an adequate site, a disciplined and dedicated demonstration group, effective signs, effective literature, and effective public speaker and spokesmen.

**19**

**Encourage local clergy to go to Washington** to lobby with their Senators and Representatives. Many communities provide scholarships for this purpose.

**20**

**Circulate petition** urging President Johnson to stop the bombing in Vietnam or to negotiate with the National Liberation Front or other initiatives which can lead to ending the Vietnam War. Publish the petition with the names in the local newspaper.

21

**Maintain silent vigil** at specified time and place. This may continue over period of weeks or months, until desired goal is achieved.

22

**Try to get your city, town, or ward, Democratic or Republican Committee to pass a resolution on Vietnam.** For Democratic organizations the easiest way might be to request support for the public statements of Senators Robert and Edward Kennedy. For Republican organizations the resolutions might be cast in the form of expressing support for statements by Senators Hatfield, Percy, Aiken or Javits.

23

**Attend all political meetings** or candidates' meetings in the area, constantly raising questions about Vietnam, and American foreign and domestic policies regardless of the immediate content of the meeting. Vietnam relates to all issues everywhere.

24

**Visit your Congressman and Senators** whenever they return to the state. Be prepared and informed on the issue you are going to raise. Be courteous, but firm. Demand specific answers. Do not hesitate to interrupt when the Congressman filibusters. Join with other groups, e.g., Civil Rights, Anti-Poverty, Anti-HUAC, so that the Congressman can feel a demonstration of strength in numbers and the interrelation of the issues. Tell the Congressman that you are going to systematically watch his votes and actions on the issues in which you are interested.

25

**Write letters to the President** and other prominent political figures. These are often necessary for protest or support. Don't forget to give praise when earned.

26

**Encourage political candidates:** Always be on the lookout to stimulate effective and capable people who represent your point of view to run for political office at every level.

27

**Organize a telephone chain** for use in emergencies in sending messages to President, Congressmen, Senators, or others. Keep in mind that an opinion telegram can be sent for 75¢.

28

**Prepare for 1968 Elections:** begin immediately to discuss your role in the 1968 Elections, considering the following possibilities:

- a. Running an anti-Johnson slate of delegates from your district to the Democratic National Convention.
- b. Participating in the Massachusetts Presidential Preferential Primary.
- c. Encouraging Liberal Republicans to develop Vietnam positions which will attract the anti-Johnson vote.
- d. Developing a Third Party or other independent action.
- e. Boycotting the election.

29

**Establish relationships** with civil rights groups, foreign policy organizations, reform movements, organizations of the poor, etc. Try to hammer out joint approaches to problems relating their issues with your issue.

30

**Be a Draft Counsellor.** Obtain a *Handbook for Conscientious Objectors* or contact the American Friends Service Committee, 44A Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138, about their training workshops for draft counsellors. Help establish a Draft Information Center in your own community.

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# PAX

MASSACHUSETTS POLITICAL ACTION FOR PEACE (PAX), a non-partisan organization, seeks to develop and apply political power in order to bring the issues connected with ending the arms race to the center of the political arena. PAX activities make explicit the need for peace and disarmament as a prerequisite for dealing with racial injustice and unmet social needs.

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## Massachusetts POLITICAL ACTION FOR PEACE

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