

ANALYSIS

We recognize that war is but a single manifestation of the injustice pervasive throughout world society. To bring about real and lasting change, we must confront this injustice wherever it exists, suggesting by the very means we use and the alternatives we create, the beginnings of a new society.

Slum housing, racial discrimination, sexism, war...the list of evils under attack by concerned groups could fill this page. But we believe that in the long run the piecemeal approach will prove to be inadequate. We urge activists to see how, for example, militarism and economic exploitation interlock--and to work to change the basic conditions underlying them.

MNS emphasizes wide participation in analysis, in order that goals and strategies can be decided democratically. Through macro-analysis seminars we are developing the tools to make a "do-it-yourself" approach available to a range of activist groups.

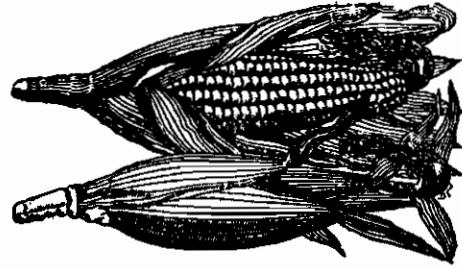
At this point MNS sees several realities which condition life even on the neighborhood level:

--Our environment is being destroyed, the earth is being left increasingly stripped and polluted.

--Corporate capitalism does not eliminate hunger even in the U.S., much less offer a solution to world poverty. It exploits the earth as well as workers and requires a huge military establishment to defend access to raw materials.

--Military programs consume large portions of the earth's resources--and lives--and prevent creative solutions to conflict.

--People are oppressed because of their sex, race or age by those more powerful than themselves. And prejudice--plus desire for private profit--leads to indignity, poverty and war.



VISION

A vision is essential for social change. In the process of developing an analysis of what is wrong, we begin to perceive the outlines of what could be: maximum decentralization and democracy in both the political and economic sectors; social ownership of productive capital; no rich and no poor; guaranteed social services; and production based on human need rather than on private profit.

STRUGGLE

We have a sense of where we are and where we want to go. Now it is necessary that we develop a plan of action.

The fundamental changes we envision demand that people move toward taking control of their own lives. The movement should be based on nonviolent ways of resolving conflict. Our strategy includes raising consciousness, building an egalitarian and viable structure, developing alternative life-styles and institutions, and engaging in various forms of action, from symbolic demonstrations to active, nonviolent resistance and confrontation. The struggle needs to be waged on all levels--personal, local, regional, national and transnational.

TRAINING FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

Training for nonviolent social change is based on a two-fold conviction: that the struggle ahead of us is a long and difficult one, and that the tools we use in building a new society become a part of that world.

Training is a learning process, the goal of which is creative and fundamental change. It can have a number of emphases: to help groups prepare for nonviolent direct action projects; to build a more sustained movement by facilitating vision, analysis, and strategy building; to explore responses to violence in our lives; to become more aware of the way we interact, and the way we relate to the historical process; to help us learn more about nonviolent theory and struggle; and to shore skills necessary for building a movement--ranging from democratic group processes to street speaking and running a mimeograph machine.

The resources for learning are found within ourselves and our understanding of the nonviolent struggles of the past. For this reason, trainers do not serve as "information-givers" but rather as facilitators to help provide an environment and a structure through which learning can occur.



CHANGED LIVES AND CHANGED VALUES

Alternative institutions provide practical experience in "living the revolution now," Working in health care, food, education, home repair and other needs, these enterprises provide a living example of what we mean by the new society. Working cooperatively, without a boss or employees, helps to put human meaning into work. The aim is to consume and pollute less while meeting people's genuine economic needs. These institutions show how, even in the present system, we can begin to take our lives into our own hands.

Bertolt Brecht once lamented the revolutionaries who sought to build a caring world but could not themselves be kind. A community is an affectionate group whose members know each other well through struggling together. Such a group can sustain us in risking jail or other repression as we confront the structure of entrenched power. Whether actually living under one roof or not, people who work together for social change can nourish in each other the roots of a loving world.

Changed life styles: With the help of a caring community, we can grow in many ways. We can lose our fear of authority and speak out. We can give up the rigid male/female roles into which we have been socialized. We can dare to treat those different from ourselves as valuable human beings. We can consume less (but enjoy it more). We can learn to trust and cooperate with the group rather than seek our own advantage. We can sing, touch, and play.