

Students for a Democratic Society
173 a Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115
phone: (617) 267-6152

New Left Notes

EXTRA!! EXTRA!!

The Moratorium is a Cover, Not a Solution

by Jay Sargeant, Boston State
Fred Gordon, NIC
Cheyney Ryan, Harvard-Radcliffe

'We hope that every member of the academic community, from the youngest freshman to the most august college president and trustee, will move into the breach. The planned one day national convocation of the community of scholars, Oct. 15, is the opportunity. Seize it.'
(New Republic, Sept. 27, 1967)

This quotation puts forward the liberal strategy for ending the war. But will this strategy actually work? Will it fight to get the US out of Vietnam? We think not. In fact we think that though there are many honest people involved in the Moratorium, the basic aim of the Moratorium leadership is to destroy the anti-war movement. In the past few years, a movement has begun to grow which exposes and fights the small group of men that runs this country and are responsible for the war in Vietnam. The growth of this movement has forced the rulers to adopt the strategy of negotiations, talk of phased withdrawals, etc., in the hope of obscuring the real enemy - themselves - and thereby preventing the anti-war movement from really fighting against their attempts to maintain US control of Vietnam. We think that the Moratorium is part of this strategy, an attempt by assorted liberal politicians, businessmen, and college administrators to divert the anti-war movement from the only real solution -- a movement that clarifies the nature of the war and fights to get the US Out of Vietnam NOW! NO NEGOTIATIONS! The liberals' strategy, like all liberal promises ('the war will be over in six months'), must be rejected.

What Does the Moratorium Say?

The Moratorium sees the war as an 'American tragedy' -- a tragic mistake caused by 'military advice which has created a futile and bloody conflict'. Its National Committee asks for a 'firm commitment to withdrawal or a negotiated settlement' -- never demanding immediate withdrawal.

'One of the world's richest areas is open to the winner in Indochina. That's behind the growing US concern... Tin, rubber, rice, key strategic raw materials are what the war is really all about. The US sees it as a place to hold at any cost.'

(U.S. News and World Report, April 1954)

We disagree on both counts. The long US presence in Vietnam belies the argument that the war is a tragic blunder. Its massive military aid to the French from 1945 to 1954 to fight the Vietnamese, its creation of the Diem regime and attempt to put the overthrown landlords back in power, its guiding role in the 'strategic hamlet' concentration camp program, and finally, its open invasion with 500,000 troops -- all clearly show the war has been a carefully planned policy for years,

This war is necessary and inevitable -- it is not an accident. We think that it is part and parcel of the system of US imperialism, a system based on the driving need of big business to maximize profits. A system that makes profits primary, people secondary:

'That Empire in Southeast Asia is the last major resource area outside the control of any one of the major powers on the globe... I believe that the condition of the Viet-Namese people, and the direction with which their future may be going, are at this stage secondary, not primary.'
(Sen. Gale McGhee, in the Senate, 2/17/65)

Not only is Vietnam essential as a source of cheap labor (maximum wage \$1.40/day!), but it is also strategically the key to Southeast Asia.

'He who holds or has influence in Vietnam can affect the future of the Philippines and Formosa to the east, Thailand and Burma with their huge rice surpluses to the west, and Malaysia and Indonesia with their rubber, ore, and tin to the south. Viet-Nam thus does not exist in a geographical vacuum -- from it large storehouses of wealth and population can be influenced and undermined.'
(Henry Cabot Lodge, Boston Globe, 2/28/65)

Control of Vietnam would give the US a base for the expansion and consolidation of imperialism in Asia. It would enable the US to contain China. And finally, victory in Vietnam would be a great discouragement to the rapidly escalating struggle of people throughout the Third World. This war is not a 'huge accident' -- it is a planned attack on the people of Vietnam which hurts the American people as well.

We think that the US has no right to negotiate anything in Viet-Nam. US businessmen have exploited the human and natural resources of the Viet-Nameese for twenty years. This has meant lousy wages, miserable conditions and starvation for the people of Viet-Nam and huge profits for US firms and their local allies. In fact the US makes 4 times the profits in Viet-Nam and other 'underdeveloped' countries than in this country. This not only keeps the Vietnamese in poverty, but also allows US management to keep the wages of American working people down. Clearly peace without total US withdrawal means the continuation of a system which has exploited the Vietnamese for centuries. Negotiations are simply an attempt by the us to gain at the conference table what they've been unable to gain on the battlefield -- continued domination of Vietnam. To support the right of the US to negotiate is to support the right of the US to continue exploiting and oppressing the Vietnamese. There is nothing to negotiate -- the U.S. should GET OUT NOW!!

The moratorium says halt the war because it 'has had a corrupting influence on every aspect of American life and much of the national discontent can be traced to its influence.'

We disagree. We think the US should get out of Viet-Nam immediately, but we do not bemoan the fact that the Viet-Nam war has revealed to many people, workers and students alike, that the US and its rulers are vicious aggressors, bent on continuing the exploitation of workers and peasants throughout the world. This war exposed the class nature of this society in such a way that thousands of people are being brought daily into struggle. For as the businessmen reap more and more profit from the war, workers and students are forced to pay higher taxes and inflationary prices, earn less money and are forced to die in this war. Industrial strikes, many of them wildcats, are at an all-time high; so are ghetto rebellions, in which Black people, led by militant Black workers, fight against rent-gouging landlords and petty exploiters (pawn-brokers, used goods, etc.). Lastly the universities have been greatly exposed, their role in furthering the misery and oppression of the majority of the people of the world is becoming clearer all the time.

By not attacking the negotiations, the liberal leaders pushing the Moratorium hope to accomplish two things: (1) obscure the nature and source of the war (a war of oppressed people against their oppressor) and (2) keep people stringing along, 'waiting and seeing' if peace isn't just around the corner -- a good way to keep people from actually fighting against the war!

Moratorium Leaders Lie

Whose side the Moratorium leaders are on becomes clearer when we look at how they try to get support and who is pushing them.

The Moratorium leaders are (1) intentionally vague about what the demands of the Moratorium are, and (2) national leaders have openly said that they change the politics of the Moratorium to fit the group they are talking to. Thus in Boston, a Moratorium leader, Mrs. Mahoot, has told liberal and church groups that there will be a peaceful march around the demand for a 'firm commitment to immediate withdrawal and a negotiated settlement' while she has told SDS that the demands are 'Immediate Withdrawal, No Negotiations'.

Such opportunism does not build an anti-war movement. It builds cynicism -- people feel that they are being used and that politics is futile because political leaders are trying to trick them. In the case of the Moratorium they are right!

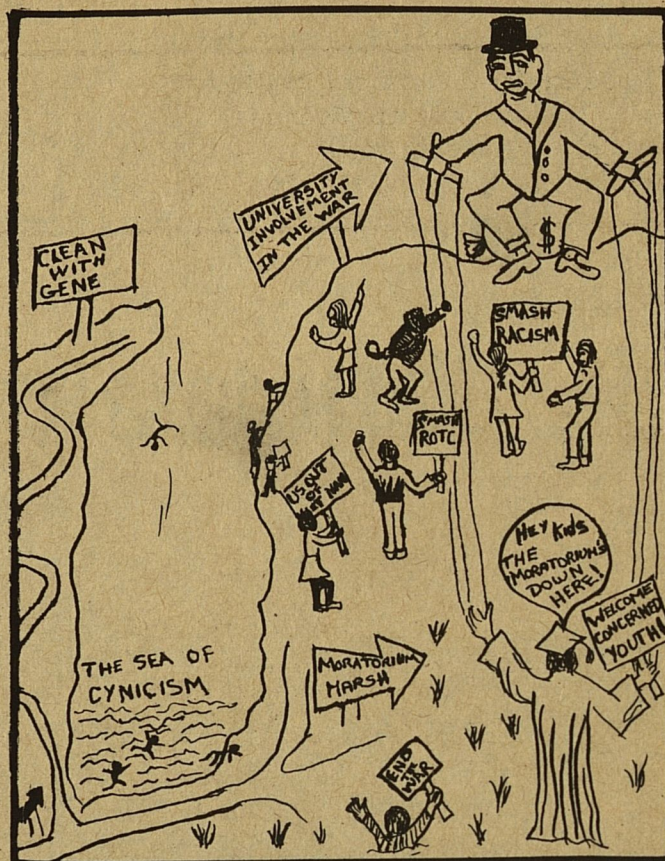
Don't Fight -- Talk

And finally, the Moratorium says that there is no enemy; no one profits from the war or has an interest in it; Nixon is bad only because he is 'dragging his feet'. Sam Brown, head of the National Moratorium Committee, told the Boston Globe (July 1, 1969):

The industrial analogy (of a strike) is not really appropriate. We don't want to cripple the universities or shut them down but simply use them as a base for working against the war.

In other words, the same universities that campus struggles across the country have shown to be absolutely tied to the big business interests which profit from Vietnam will suddenly be transformed into bases working against those interests!

Universities are not in fact neutral, ivory towers devoted to 'pure research' and the 'critical intellect'. They support very directly the interests of big business at the expense of most students and working people. For example, at Harvard, the administration called in the cops and threw eighteen students out in order to keep ROTC (which is used to suppress movements of oppressed people abroad and Black rebellions



at home) and continue Harvard's expansion -- which throws working people out of their homes in order to bring in war research, counter-insurgency, etc. Universities also have police institutes and push racist and elitist ideas. The most blatant example of the real nature of the university is its vicious exploitation of campus workers, especially Black and Latin workers. These workers suffer lousy conditions (at Columbia, two Black workers were killed in the last six months!), low pay, etc.

So the great support for the Moratorium from University administrators does not come from sincere wishes to fight against the war. Rather, they are worried that the student movement has exposed who they really serve through struggles like those at Harvard, Columbia, and San Francisco State, and is building a movement that fights against the ways the universities attack the people. By supporting the Moratorium, they hope to obscure the fact that they are the enemy, thus keeping students and workers from opposing them.

It is in this context that the role played by liberals becomes clearer. If we examine them more closely, it will be obvious that none of them offer a solution -- they merely divert our attention from the problem. They need the disguise -- they have a lot to hide!!

The Role of Liberals

Many people who sincerely want to end the war feel that the best way to get the US out of Vietnam is to support big-name politicians like Kennedy, McGovern or McCarthy, who, they believe, can further the cause of peace. This type of thinking, however, confuses cause and effect. These same liberals are in fact responsible for much of our policy in Vietnam. Kennedy was the one who started sending increasing numbers of troops, for instance; Johnson, once a liberal, was the one who bombed the North and sent 500,000 American troops. For months after the 1968 elections, 'liberal' political leaders did not say a word about the war! Now that the anti-war movement is being built once again, the Vietnam Moratorium offers the opportunity to every Democratic Party hack from McGovern to Muskie to Fred Harris to jump on the

'anti-war' bandwagon, and provide another cover for our continued presence in Vietnam.

McCarthy — Dove or Albatross?

The McCarthy campaign offers a striking example of how this sort of co-optation has worked in the past. It is no accident that the leaders of the Vietnam Moratorium are all ex-McCarthyites, for their line is the same: get the people off the streets, get them into responsible political channels where they can work for a politician who sounds like a 'dove'

McCarthy, like other imperialists, wants to maintain the ability of big business to exploit the human and natural resources of other countries. The 'national interest' which McCarthy spoke of when he stated, 'The US must have a policy in the Middle East based on America's interests', is clearly not the interest of the vast majority of American people, but the interest of a few businessmen who profit from our involvement in that area. Thus when he states that it is in our 'national interest' to begin negotiations and phased withdrawal, he sees these options as the best ones for remaining in Vietnam and continuing to exploit the people.

Who's Who Behind the Moratorium

The National Coordinators of the Moratorium are

- Sam Brown, former national student coordinator for the McCarthy campaign, officer of the National Student Association during its CIA days, most recently a fellow of the Kennedy Institute of Politics, Harvard, where he opposed the strike against expansion and ROTC. Brown is described in the New Republic as the 'spokesman for the responsible student left', who is considered by the establishment to be 'shrill but sane'. In newspaper statements he disavows any connection between the Moratorium and SDS, or other 'crazy radicals'.
- David Hawk, draft resister and former staff worker for Allard Lowenstein (who founded the 'Dump Johnson Movement'). Worked for McCarthy in New Hampshire and Wisconsin. Presently an officer of the National Student Association.
- David Mixner, presently on the McGovern Commission to recommend reforms for the Democratic Party. The New Republic says that he 'was selected because

he is a virtual unknown who possesses valid credentials with the McCarthy wing of the party.' Organizer for McCarthy in non-primary states.

The Moratorium has received support from:

- Fred Harris, National Chairman of the Democratic Party, chairman of the Humphrey Campaign of 1968.
- Edmund Muskie, Vice-Presidential Candidate in 1968 with Hubert Humphrey, early supporter of Humphrey and author of the Hawk plank at the convention which condemned the notion of unilateral withdrawal from Vietnam
- Ted Kennedy, Democratic Senator from Massachusetts
- George McGovern, candidate for the 1972 Democratic nomination for president.
- John Lindsay, Republican Mayor of New York City
- Mark Hatfield, Republican Senator from Oregon, a pre-convention supporter of Richard Nixon for the Republican nomination.

Why did McCarthy run? The answer was clear to Tom Wick-er, who wrote in the New York Times, 'McCarthy's purpose in running was to channel their (the students') energies into constructive political effort rather than let them explode in street demonstrations... If he did not totally succeed, at least he got an 'A' for effort.' McCarthy, like many others, sensed the rising disgust with American Vietnam policy, and so he painted himself as the new Messiah to direct the people's anger into 'responsible channels'. Many people were fooled into thinking that McCarthy's election would really bring peace, but McCarthy's own statements on the war prove otherwise. On his solution to the conflict he wrote, 'I think a phased withdrawal with some steps along the way would lead to a reasonable settlement. But it would be precipitous to remove US forces within six months of negotiations as promised by President Johnson. I think I would advise him against moving that fast. I would put the time limit at five years.'

McCarthy never advocated immediate withdrawal. He always supported a negotiated settlement because he believed that the United States had a legitimate interest in South Vietnam. In his opinion the war was a mistake only because it was weakening the power of the government to defend its other imperialistic strongholds. He advocated an 'acceptable settlement' which would permit 'us to give the necessary attention to our other commitments abroad -- both military and non-military.' McCarthy fancied himself a knight in shining armor, but in reality he was just another politician.

Phony Peace Moves and Phony Peace Movements

People often argue, 'Well, McCarthy didn't really want to get the US out of Vietnam, but at least it was a step in the right direction.' The fact is that movements like McCarthy's have actually hurt the anti-war struggle -- they have not attacked the issue of negotiations and have not attacked the 'right' of the US to be in Vietnam. McCarthy built a following around the notion of 'let's start negotiating, and then we'll be on the road to peace'. Two things have since become clear: (1) the 'negotiations-now' line led people to mistakenly believe that withdrawal was around the corner, thus taking the steam out of the anti-war struggle. (2) The negotiations have been shown up for what they are, a ploy to keep people quiet at home while the government wages the war more viciously than ever. After the President's last press conference, government officials admitted that the President was using the negotiations as a stalling tactic while he built up the South Vietnamese army with American guns and American know-how.

The history of the anti-war movement is rife with examples of how liberal politicians have tried desperately to channel all opposition to American involvement in Vietnam into fake demands for negotiations or more 'reasonable' solutions than total unconditional withdrawal. These movements put people on a liberal merry-go-round which wears them down and leaves them cynical. It is no wonder that so many people have adopted the 'you can't fight city hall' attitude when they have been led continuously by liberals and conservatives alike up so many dead ends.

Now the same old people are back again, and the money and prestige that is behind the Moratorium attests the renewed strength of the anti-war struggle. While many have become cynical from all the lies and illusions about the Vietnam War which liberals and conservatives have spread, many have

A glance at his record shows that Gene was not so clean: McCarthy voted for

- the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which gave the President a blank check to escalate the war
- every extension of the draft
- Hubert Humphrey's 1954 bill to outlaw communists
- a bill to legalize evidence from wiretapping
- the oil depletion allowances

learned from the past and seen these operations for what they are. The Moratorium is just old wine in new bottles. It seeks to draw people away from real anti-imperialist fights, against ROTC, against university involvement with the Defense Dept., etc., and get them engaged in meaningless symbolic actions (planting trees in honor of the war dead, cleaning the public beaches) in the hope of 'pressuring the administration through public opinion'. This time, the people will not be fooled that easily.

WHAT IS S.D.S.?

SDS is a mass student organization that fights against the war in Vietnam, against racism, and has increasingly allied with workers against the big businessmen who oppress both workers and students.

We think students have a common interest with workers. More than half of all college students fail to graduate, and most of those who do graduate become teachers, social workers, nurses, etc., who suffer low wages and bad working conditions like all working people. They therefore have an interest in uniting with workers to fight back. The war, furthermore, hurts workers more than students, and workers are in a more powerful position to stop it -- it is they who can shut down the whole show!

We think that students can really oppose the war by fighting on campuses against the ways that the universities hurt people here and abroad. SDS has waged militant struggles against ROTC, war research, and university expansion; for example, at Harvard last year, SDS fought for the abolition of ROTC and against the university's expansion that was throwing thousands of workers, especially Black workers, out of their homes to build a massive research and development center for Imperialism. SDS around the country has stopped recruiting by the military and war companies. We have also supported workers in their struggles, e.g. the California Grape Boycott, the transit workers' wildcat in Chicago, and the Curtis Brothers teamster strike in Baltimore. On campuses around the country, we have begun to ally with campus workers against the bosses who run the universities. The clearest way to expose the non-neutrality of the university on the key question of exploitation and oppression is to show how the university attacks its own workers.

And SDS is having nationwide anti-racist actions in November to build fights against racist courses, cop institutes, university expansion into Black neighborhoods, and in support of Black campus workers. Black workers, because they are super-exploited, are in the lead of the fight against US imperialism. We think that it is crucial to support the struggles of Black people, and win whites to an anti-racist viewpoint. It is especially key to fight the concrete ways Black people are attacked -- by university expansion, cops in the ghetto, low wages and lousy conditions, etc.

Over the past few years, SDS has helped to expose to masses of students who really runs this country, who is responsible for exploitation, war, and racism. It has shown that these same men, a handful of big businessmen, also run the universities, and has sought to ally with workers in militant struggles against them. It is these actions and others like them that have the rulers of this country worried and it is because they are so exposed that these men grab at the Moratorium as a fig leaf to cover themselves. They want to make the war appear to be a 'problem for which nobody is to blame'. We must not allow them to get of the hook, INSTEAD WE MUST BUILD A MOVEMENT TO FIGHT THEM!

U.S. GET OUT OF VIETNAM NOW -- NO NEGOTIATIONS!
FIGHT UNIVERSITY ATTACKS ON THE PEOPLE!!
FIGHT RACISM -- BUILD THE NOVEMBER ACTION!

Excerpts from national press release, October 2

On Wednesday, October 1, a group of provocateurs claiming to be from SDS attacked students and teachers at Boston English High School. The week before, this same gang had attacked campus workers at Harvard's Center for International Affairs. Similar incidents have occurred in other parts of the country. These actions were all the work of a group of police agents and hate-the-people lunatics who walked out of SDS at the June convention because their ideas had been rejected. No SDS chapter supports them!

The bankers and big businessmen who run the country are using this clique (led by Mark Rudd) for two purposes. First, to divert people so that they won't fight back anymore. Second, to discredit SDS and radical ideas in general.

This group's "Days of Rage" planned for Chicago, Oct. 8-11, is a police trap-- no one should go to it. Their newspaper says "We're going to Chicago to fight anyone who plays pig." What they've done previously makes it clear that they plan on fighting anyone in sight! And they're building for this action saying that it won't be a success unless some are killed.

People will see through this trick. The big businessmen who run this country and who benefit from the war in Vietnam are responsible for the rotten conditions in the schools, in the cities, and on the job. SDS supports students', parents', and teachers' fights for better conditions in the schools; and SDS supports working people's struggles against their bosses. In general, we are trying to fight on the side of working people, not against them like Rudd's gang.

SEND CURRENT ADDRESS	JOIN SDS !! (\$5 includes NLN)	BUILD SDS & NLN !! SEND \$\$
	SUBSCRIBE (\$10 for non-members)	
	NAME _____	
	last (please print) first	
	ADDRESS _____	
	no. & st.	
	City State ZIP	
	____ Member at Large ____ Non Member	
	____ Chapter \$ ____ Enclosed	