

MAY DAY BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

Historically May 1 has been the day of the oppressed. May 1 demonstrations have touched off major changes from reform to revolution and this year should be no exception. On May 1 people in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa will be expressing their solidarity with the Vietnamese people. We should join in that struggle. On May 1 people should mass in Washington and present the government with the peace treaty, demanding that Nixon respond within two days by calling an immediate end to the war. If the government refuses to heed the will of the majority for peace after years and years of patience the people should begin to implement the treaty themselves. Beginning on May 3 and continuing for the rest of the week people who presented the treaty and the thousands that will join them should close down the functioning of the federal government through massive civil disobedience. The demonstrations should be non-violent but disruptive--blocking streets, marches, strikes at schools and other places of work. To be effective--i. e. : to provide the spark that can coalesce the people who oppose the war into activity--we must be willing to do more than march. At the same time our tactics should not be seen as provocative even though those sorts of tactics may well be just. Civil disobedience is disruptive but it doesn't force the people involved to make a choice between revolution and the system. Revolution is a necessity, but many people who oppose that war don't yet believe this and they shouldn't be excluded from the movement. Civil disobedience will allow groups as diverse as church and youth groups to take part. It also means that people will be taking some risks, opening themselves to arrest. But mass arrest penalties for white people are still relatively light and the demonstration will not be Gandhi-like. People can and should defend themselves from attack.

MAYDAY-MAYDAY-MAYDAY

The presentation of the peace treaty May 1 in Washington should be linked with simultaneous demonstrations in all major cities and on all campuses. Washington is the most important focus, but May 1 should be a nation-wide movement. On May 3 and 4 when disruption begins in Washington young people will have to make a choice as to whether to come to D.C. or stay in their areas. Hopefully, most cities can contribute to both efforts with an initial focus on Washington during the first week of May and gradually moving that emphasis through strikes and demonstrations back to regions. This means that young people will be called upon for several weeks of sustained activity, something which will require a great deal of hard work and sacrifice. Thus we must begin now to inform people from everywhere of our plans, explaining our views on Nixon's new strategy. Talking with people from dormitory to unemployment office will be helpful. Women's groups, which will hopefully play a leading role in May Day, are critical. The anti-war movement must realize that its past chauvinist practices have hurt women and weakened our chances for peace.

BEYOND MAY 1

The demonstration in Washington, although critical to the success of the peace treaty, cannot be an end in itself. People should not drop ongoing projects but should relate them to the war. One of the weaknesses of the peace movement has been its inability to relate imperialism to the lives of non-student non-hip communities. Actually, great numbers of people in factories, offices as well as unemployment and welfare lines have begun to become aware that Vietnam affects their lives and that until the war is ended the job of reconstruction of this country is impossible. But if this kind of awareness is to grow, if this kind of unity can develop, it will be necessary for the movement to change. Elitist attitudes will have to change. We will have to talk to and learn from people we normally ignore. In fact, the movement should no longer be an "it"--a thing separate from the people but part of them.