independent socialist

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THE ROAD FORWARD
for the California Peace and Freedom Party

At this moment, Summer 1968, Peace and Freedom finds itself in the trough between two waves. Temporarily no longer buoyed up by a groundswell, the movement is asking itself: What kind of party/movement are we? what kind of party/movement do we want to be?

The answer that crystallizes can do much to determine whether it has a chance of becoming *a broad third-party movement of the left* with a future, or another kind of leftish sect (just before disappearing).

Though the latter course means its demise, there are understandable reasons why there is a drift in that direction as well as organized pressure. The Independent Socialist Club proposes a conscious orientation of the Peace and Freedom party movement in the other direction, the first direction. We will define this orientation, as well as the proposed alternatives.

Essentially we propose maintaining and deepening the present character of Peace and Freedom, and rejecting certain proposals that have been made for a basic change in the character of the movement.

The first wave, which swelled to a crest at the end of 1967, made it possible for Peace and Freedom to get launched, against all expectation. Its dynamic was an unexpected degree of mass disillusionment and disgruntlement with the Democratic Party, its leaders and its machine, as then represented by Lyndon Johnson. The impelling factors were opposition to the Vietnam War, and sympathy with the Black Liberation movement in one form or another.

The reason why Peace and Freedom came into existence as a result of disgruntlement with the Democratic Party is simply that there is no other way for a mass third party of the left to come into existence at all. That is where the future mass support for such a party is now--around the Democratic Party in one way or another. The problem is to break them away.

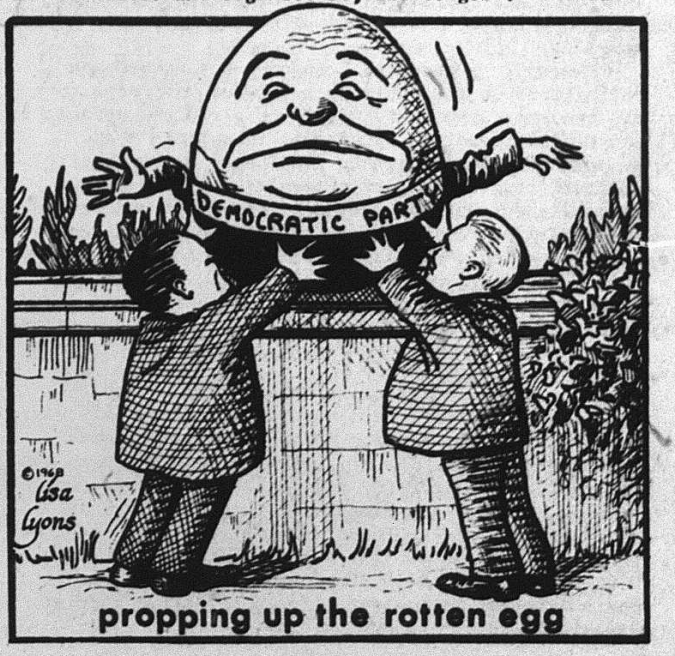
The second wave, which seems highly probable, will come in the fall, with the open collapse of the apparent inner-Democratic alternative, McCarthyism. The generally expected nomination of Humphrey will mean that the Democratic Party is (once more) shown to be not an instrument that can be used for the benefit of the people; that the party machine is not susceptible to change from below; and that Johnson's abdication has merely led to the nomination of a Johnson stand-in. No matter what demagogic attempts Humphrey may use to give the impression he is separating himself from the policies of the administration for which he was salesman and apologist, large numbers (not necessarily most) of the people, young and old, who looked on the McCarthy campaign as a political crusade for change, will be ripe for a third-party alternative.

If in addition McCarthy himself goes over to Humphrey openly, as is quite likely, then this same swing is bound to be intensified, with the added educational conclusion that the McCarthy "crusade" was a fake or an illusion in the first place. Under these circumstances, a Humphrey-Nixon contest can re-create the situation which in the course of 1967 led to the first wave of flight from the Democratic Party toward an independent alternative.

The issue is not whether this is a prediction which will or will not come about; the issue is not prediction at all, but preparation. If the second wave does not materialize, for any reason including the unpredicted nomination of McCarthy at Chicago, then Peace and Freedom will go down in the history of an already bizarre campaign year as just another incident.

It will have played a very useful and honorable part; it will have helped to radicalize many people; it will have provided many people with valuable political experiences; and it will be dead. It will surely have a successor some other year, but by that time the problem of classifying it will be simple: *corpse*.

The meaningful question is therefore not prediction but preparation to make sure that the second wave will lift Peace and Freedom to new heights, and not roll over it. The question is how Peace and Freedom can prepare now to remain open to a new influx, to channelize and organize it, and to grow. The dan-



propping up the rotten egg

ger is that if Peace and Freedom adopts certain new courses being urged upon it, disgruntlement with the Democratic Party will bypass it as irrelevant, and peter out in the usual apathy and cynicism.

As of now, this looks like the main danger. Of course, Peace and Freedom faces dangers and tests from 57 other sides too, including the diametrically opposite side: the danger of being pressured to water down or de-emphasize its already achieved political policies and style. This danger has already manifested itself in particular local cases--for example, in the form of putting the Peace and Freedom name in the background in favor of an "independent" or non-partisan campaign. This electoral-opportunist tendency has to be fought wherever it appears, even if it is minor and sporadic.

1. WHAT IS THE PFP?

What is Peace and Freedom now? What kind of party/movement is it?

It is difficult to pigeonhole it with a label because it simply does not comfortably conform to pre-existing labels for anticipated third-party movements. (That is also why it exists.) The question of what it is and what it should be has to be thought through afresh.

Peace and Freedom was initiated in California by left-wing radicals and revolutionary socialists demanding a principled break with the Democratic Party *before* there was any visible mass groundswell in this direction. All liberals were against this out of hand. For most of 1967 even the majority of the New Politics movement in California opposed it or dragged their feet on proposals to start a serious registration campaign. At the Chicago New Politics conference in September of that year, only a small minority (under 10%) proposed and voted for a third-party perspective. The rest, leaving aside the anti-electoralists, could not see breaking with the Democratic Party definitively; many of them wanted, and still want, to keep at least one foot inside the Democratic Party and the old politics, while using New Politics rhetoric.

The break came only when the third-party advocates stopped merely arguing the question inside the so-called New Politics movement as it then was, in the hope of swinging the whole movement in this direction, and set out with what forces they could muster to begin serious work on establishing the new party. It was this initiative that later snowballed. The first fact, then, is that Peace and Freedom was initiated not even by the New Politics movement as such, but rather by the left wing of the New Politics movement.

Secondly, Peace and Freedom was launched and established on the basis primarily of what were then the two most important indicia of a radical approach: unilateral immediate withdrawal from Vietnam and support of Black militancy, including a sympathetic attitude toward the ghetto revolts. It has lately been alleged that the choice before Peace and Freedom is either "no politics" or "left-liberal politics" on the one hand, or else some kind of complete and "clear radical program" on the other. But the fact is that there must be something different from either of these two prefabricated concepts, because Peace and Freedom was not established on the basis of either one.

The actual political approach that has characterized Peace and Freedom may be summarized this way: *a minimum radical program, plus a militant issue-oriented movement.* The "minimum radical" approach was concretized sufficiently at the Richmond state convention of Peace and Freedom on these and several other issues, and we cannot summarize all of the convention's work here. (as a matter of fact, we note with regret that the State Convention policy documents have not been given life in effective popular pamphlets and other popularizing literature, to bring the Peace and Freedom radical program to wide circles of people.)

We want to see Peace and Freedom continue along these programmatic lines. We do not want to change this concept of what Peace and Freedom is and should be. We will not examine more closely what this concept is by contrasting it with proposals that have been put forward to change Peace and Freedom to something else.

2. THE "THIRD TICKET" CONCEPT

This was the approach which was supported by the types dominating the disastrous Chicago New Politics conference. In two words, what it usually meant was willingness to run (or talk about running) an independent ticket against Johnson *this* year, while firmly opposing any perspective of trying to establish a permanent political alternative to the Democratic Party and to give institutional form to a break from the Democratic Party. The political meaning of this combination was and is: staying essentially within the Democratic Party coalition, while either blackmailing them with the threat of an independent ticket or (if necessary) putting a scare into them this year with an actual independent ticket in order to obtain more leverage on the machine next time.

This approach of a varied assemblage of types, by no means limited to the Communist Party, although CP forces constituted its biggest element in Chicago. After Chicago, this tendency proved completely impotent; the main role played by the continuations outfit NCNP was to try to knife the Peace and Freedom drive in California right up to the point where Peace and Freedom succeeded in spite of all.

But this was not the end of the "Third Ticket" concept. This same political approach is also the explanation of the ambiguous operations of Robert Scheer at the Richmond Peace and Freedom convention; and of his maintenance of his "Community for New Politics" organization as an instrumentality of this politics, if only on the shelf.

In a different part of the forest, this is still also the key to the Communist Party's attitude to Peace and Freedom--or at least of that part of, or faction of, the CP which wants to have a "positive" relationship to Peace and Freedom, such as the Healy faction in Southern California.

The question of a definitive and principled political break with the Democratic Party, and with any faction of the Democratic Party, is a fundamental question for the Peace and Freedom movement, on which there can be no fudging without jeopardizing the whole life of the movement. It has been argued that the question of "organizational" independence from the Democratic Party is "merely" an "organizational question" and therefore of minor importance as compared with political questions of program and such. This is a bad misapprehension. The break with the Democratic Party is not only a political question but, logically and psychologically, the prime political question for the movement, in the sense that this above all is the *political* decision to be made by every individual before he can have a fruitful relation to Peace and Freedom.

It is not a mere "organizational question," for one thing, because it is quite possible to be organizationally independent of the Democratic Party without being politically independent, let alone hostile. CDC is formally independent organizationally; the New York Liberal Party is actually independent organizationally, but not politically independent. The whole "Third Ticket" concept is for an organizationally independent operation that would avoid a political break with the Democratic Party as such.

Real political independence from the Democratic Party involves political *hostility* to the Democratic Party as a party; it means setting up in business not only independent of, but against both old parties.

A political break with, and political hostility to, the Democratic Party as such, in favor of Peace and Freedom, is a *radicalizing act*. That is because it takes place in today's political context. It has to be understood dynamically: it is a first step, of course, but a first step in a radical direction. One who has been on the Democratic Party merry-go-round and then lets go is likely to keep on going when he flies off--in this case to the left. For the individual, making this break with the Democratic Party and going over to Peace and Freedom is a *political act*, not just an organizational shift. It enforces radical conclusions. It is an act with an arrow sign over it.

The political break with the Democratic Party, which establishes Peace and Freedom as an independent third party, is therefore Point No. 1 in its minimum radical program. It is a big mistake to derogate it as "merely an organizational question." What it represents both practically and symbolically is a political decision on a fundamental aspect of whatever "radicalism" means: the choice between *going into opposition* to the Establishment or trying to *permeate* its institutions. If radicalism can be defined at all, short of specific political positions, this is its definition. Now, the choice on the political field between oppositionism or permeation--between radicalism and standard-type liberalism--is precisely the question of the political break with the Democratic Party in favor of an independent third party on the left.

3. THE LABOR PARTY CONCEPT

Independent Socialists have long been in favor or building an independent labor party; that is, we would like to see the labor movement of this country take the step which was long ago taken by labor in every other advanced country in the world: forming its own political party on a class basis. Naturally, revolutionary socialists do not view this development from the same standpoint as the reformists: we view it, as did Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, as the first step in a political evolution, not an end in itself. Like these revolutionary leaders, we see its progressive significance as providing a new terrain on which the political radicalization of the class could go forward, even if at first it is under entirely reformist leadership. In fact, the assumption must be, given the political level of the American working class, that (as elsewhere) such a labor party would be launched under thoroughly reformist leadership and program, with revolutionary socialists acting as a critical left wing at best. The criterion established by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky for support to such a party was therefore not the extent of political agreement with its line and policies, but rather its class character, the fact that it represents the working class in autonomous movement--an explosive potentiality whatever the state of affairs at a given time.

It was particularly in connection with the labor party perspective that revolutionary socialists clarified their views on critical support of a class party than of individual men. If American labor formed its own party, as British labor did early in the century, then there can be little doubt that the candidates it would run, or many of them, would be as individuals not much politically different from liberal Democrats today. The difference would not be in the man but in the movement.

We mention all this only as a "control case," a type to set beside Peace and Freedom for comparison. For obviously, in Peace and Freedom we have a quite different political species.

It is not a labor party, not any kind of labor party; and not only because of its unfortunately weak working-class composition. No one has been so ridiculous as even to propose that it "declare itself" to be a labor party.

However, it has been suggested that Peace and Freedom should declare itself to be an "organizing committee" or "organizing center" for a labor party. We do not think that even this formulation makes sense at this stage. This would seem to say that Peace and Freedom is putting itself forward as the *nucleus around which* a labor party should be formed; and there is no realistic basis for this kind of talk. It would be very good if the time came when Peace and Freedom was in position to do this without appearing ridiculous, but that time is not in sight now.

What Peace and Freedom can and should do now along these lines is much more modest, and a precondition for a more grandiose perspective. (i) It can state its view as favoring a labor party--that is, urging the labor movement also to make the political break from the Democratic Party; and (ii) it is very important, in terms of the "movement" side of Peace and Freedom, for trade-unionists in its ranks to act together inside the labor movement for militant policies and rank-and-file democracy, as was spelled out in various reports and resolutions at the Richmond convention, and to pay special attention to recruiting trade-unionists and other workers to Peace and Freedom. In other words, there is the question of pressing a militant *pro-labor orientation* inside Peace and Freedom; but this is another matter, which is not our subject now.

Here and now, at any rate, whatever else can be said about the Labor Party concept, it does not provide Peace and Freedom with a distinctive basis for existence at this stage; and there is no sign yet visible that this is going to change very soon. At most we might say this: if Peace and Freedom can survive for the next four years, and if there is a radicalizing groundswell toward (say) 1972, one which also undercuts the labor bureaucracy, *then* the possibility may arise realistically of Peace and Freedom making a meaningful contribution in this field and perhaps merging into a new political development. All of which is too *iffy* at this point to warrant further discussion.

4. THE "SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC" PARTY CONCEPT

This does not refer to a concept held *by* social-democrats (whose only relation to Peace and Freedom has been to revile it with the most slanderous lies of any press in the country, Hearst included), but rather to a view held by some radicals of what Peace and Freedom should become.

The term "social-democratic" is not usually used in this connection. This is, however, the accurate political content of the view put forward (for example) by the late unlamented "Labor Party Caucus" of Peace and Freedom, when it issued an ultimatum to suffer the penalty of being branded a "third capitalist party." (When the Richmond convention failed to satisfy, this group of sectarians punished us condignly by withdrawing their revolutionary presence from our midst in order not to be tainted.)

The entertaining thing about this very "revolutionary" proposal was its thoroughly social-democratic character. If this is the acid test, there is scarcely a rotten social-democratic party in the world that has not traditionally declared that it is for the elimination of capitalism some day (though it must be admitted that nowadays some social-democratic currents in Europe are not too certain even of this). At any rate, it is traditional with the Social-democracy.

Naturally there is some difference of opinion on just how this end can or should be accomplished, and even on what the abolition of capitalism means. But then the ultimatum didn't specify that any particular position on these questions had to be adopted too. In fact, to pursue these questions would mean adopting statements on what used to be called The Road to Power, along with positions on the nature of soviet power, the dictatorship of the proletariat,

the class nature of the state, and other interesting matters, including some intensive education in Marxism. Naturally they were not so mad as to suggest this regimen. All they wanted was just a teeny-weeny little "abolition of capitalism." As acid tests go, this one was out-and-out reformist.

Of course, we Independent Socialists are for the abolition of capitalism and for socialism. It does not follow we have to insist that Peace and Freedom also come out in favor of socialism--neither in favor of our own thoroughgoing revolutionary-democratic socialism, nor certainly in favor of some social-democratic version of it. Just because the Independent Socialist Club educates and organizes for socialism (that is, revolutionary socialism), it does not follow that we have to insist that Peace and Freedom adopt the very same political function.

On the contrary: Peace and Freedom's best reason for existence, as we see it, is that it has a different political function--namely, the function of a broad, outgoing radical third party such as we are describing in this paper. Thus we see that Peace and Freedom should be an organization capable of involving various radical and revolutionary currents with differing views on long-range programs, as well as people who are just beginning to reject Establishment politics.

This example--of a wooden-sectarian group which found itself making a classically reformist proposal while thinking itself very very revolutionary--is only one case of what happens when one tries to fit Peace and Freedom into some mold other than what it naturally started with: a minimum radical program plus a militant issue-oriented movement.

5. THE RADICAL PARTY CONCEPT

There can be little doubt then that Peace and Freedom is a "radical party"--indeed this is a label it has applied to itself. But that only raises next questions. What is a radical party, and what kind of radical party is it?

There are all kinds of radical parties, including some that are not parties, not radical, or not either. Obviously, Peace and Freedom is a radical party *sui generis*. Here are two peculiarities to begin with:

(i) Radical parties usually are ideological parties with fairly extensive ideologies to match; whereas Peace and Freedom has operated on a limited, minimum kind of radical platform as mentioned.

(ii) In concept, Peace and Freedom is an *all-inclusive* radical party, aspiring to be inclusive of a wide-ranging assortment of radicals with the most disparate and clashing ideologies, including the anti-ideological ideology. This inclusiveness is a good trick if you can get away with it. But how can the trick be pulled off?

Every party, every political formation has to have some "cement" that basically holds it together (as long as it stays in one piece). Speaking of left parties, that cement can only be one of two things, no other cases being known to history. The party will be held together either by force of its *numbers* or its *ideas*--its numbers, or mass membership, representing its role in the elementary class struggle, and its ideas representing its distinctive program.

The classic examples of the first type were the mass socialist parties of Europe, especially taken in their heyday. They were usually full of a variety of political currents and clashing ideas; therefore beset by centrifugal forces; but these disparate tendencies coexisted because they were held together by a common role in the general social struggle, where the party functioned as a common fortress facing the outside enemy. Typically, insofar as they were all-inclusive of diverse political currents, the cement was, at bottom, the outside pressure of the class struggle--whatever the nature of the leadership. But this was the *only* reason they could be all-inclusive or broadly inclusive. On the other hand, programmatic ideas (ideologies) tend to represent a centrifugal force--not a cementing force. Radical groups (often called "parties") which are held together by a unifying ideology have never been all-inclusive, nor even inclusive of a wide political spectrum, even where they have "believed in" being so.

This underlies the problem of survival of Peace and Freedom. What "cement" is there that can keep *this* all-inclusive kind of radical party together in one piece over any long period of time, if not indefinitely?

Exactly the most disastrous kind of answer is being offered Peace and Freedom at this time by a group called the "Radical Caucus." The official platform of this group, and programmatic presentations by its leaders at Peace and Freedom meetings, propose that Peace and Freedom strike out on a new course, the gist of which is stressed as being the adoption of a "clear radical program" as against what it has now. A section of the platform repeats the word "revolutionary" a dozen times, evidently advocating that Peace and Freedom must develop a "revolutionary" program. Its leaders counterpose their vision of Peace and Freedom as a revolutionary "vanguard" to the idea--which they denounce--of appealing to mere "disgruntled liberals." They denounce concepts of Peace and Freedom that advocate too broad an appeal, as inconsistent with the "revolutionary" character of the party they propose.

We believe that this is a prescription for disintegration; for rendering Peace and Freedom completely incapable of benefiting from the "second wave." It is the politics of impotence given a revolutionary paint-job. It can only serve to provide a radical sect for people who are unable to form their own radical sect.

In the first place, what exactly is the "clear program" of radicalism and revolution which they would have Peace and Freedom adopt? The answer to this question is as yet unknown. The only "clear" and thoroughgoing radical and revolutionary program we know of is revolutionary Marxism; and it is only a fairly homogeneous propaganda group that can acquire a united idea of what *that* is. In all probability, if the signers of the "Radical Caucus" platform were to try to work out a "clear radical program" just for themselves, they would promptly divide into a dozen factions. In all certainty, if the membership of Peace and Freedom tried to work out a "clear radical program" that had any meaning, they would divide not into factions but into atoms.

It is not a question of some "revolutionary" program which Peace and Freedom can accept or reject; none is proposed in fact nor will be proposed. It is a question only of bluster. This kind of bluster is centrifugal in its effect.

The only possible "cement" for the Peace and Freedom coalition lies in the two characteristics which it actually did develop, as we have already stressed: the minimum nature of its radical program, and the orientation toward militant issue-oriented action which can unite people in movement. The role played in the formation of Peace and Freedom by the two primary minimum issues--Vietnam and racism--was not an artificial invention, which somebody had to "propose." They emerged out of the objective political situation to which Peace and Freedom was the response. They were not devised by Peace and Freedom; they created Peace and Freedom.

While there can be nuances of opinion on how "minimum" a minimum program should be (the outcome of the Richmond convention, in its main outline, is good enough for us), what we have to stress here is the general concept of a *minimum radical program* as the alternative to the bluster about "clear radical program" or "revolutionary vanguard." Sensible radicals should not act in Peace and Freedom as if Peace and Freedom were merely your favorite

radical sect.

If the programmatic approach in Peace and Freedom remains minimal (the status quo), and if this is competently combined with militant "movement" action on either large-scale or local problems (a matter of tactical decision), then the door remains open to retaining and acquiring sufficient mass support to "cement" the movement, to counterbalance the centrifugal forces set up by the ideological disparities.

Peace and Freedom faces special difficulties in trying to do this. On the one hand, there is the already stated First Law of Political Dynamics: The more detailed and wide-ranging the programmatic commitments, the stronger the centrifugal forces pulling apart a would-be mass movement. On the other hand, this is not a movement of people experienced in mediating clashing views--in fact, mostly not a movement of experienced people, period.

Also, there are many people in it who, very naturally, look to Peace and Freedom as the vehicle to put across whatever they believe to be the saving solution for humanity, simply because this is the only vehicle they have. This can be a sticky problem. We Independent Socialists also have our "saving solution," of course; but the point is that we don't dream of imposing it lock-stock-and-barrel on Peace and Freedom. But for many new people in Peace and Freedom, including new-fledged radicals who have recently discovered that society is worse than they thought, there may be a tendency to look on Peace and Freedom as the natural instrument of a particular nostrum. So to speak, Peace and Freedom has to be their "revolutionary" vehicle because they have no other.

For most of the people in Peace and Freedom, this can be solved by educational discussion, experience and common sense. For the "Radical Caucus," however, the imposition of the "saving solution"--the maximum program, or whatever that "clear radical program" is--is presented as a principle.

Equally mischievous to the health and growth of Peace and Freedom is the attitude toward the "disgruntled liberals" which is associated with the "Radical Caucus" concept of the movement. Particularly revealing is their drumfire of denunciation of appealing to "disgruntled liberals."

On the face of it, this makes little sense. To argue that "Peace and Freedom ought to organize radicals, not left liberals" is to assume a hard-and-fast distinction which does not exist in life. "Left liberals" who become disgruntled with the Democratic Party over the radical issues we have mentioned, and who move to break with the Democratic Party in the direction of Peace and Freedom--*these are people who are in the process of becoming radicalized.* The Peace and Freedom Party was able to pull off the miracle of getting on the ballot because of the work of shoals of former disgruntled liberals, who pitched in and in the process learned to be gruntled radicals (some of whom may not be saying we should not appeal to disgruntled liberals..).

Moreover, from the standpoint of revolutionary socialism, a great many of the people now in Peace and Freedom who think of themselves as "radicals" (and we are happy that they do) have not necessarily really fundamentally abandoned liberal political patterns of thought, even while engaged in militant radical action; in other words they may remain "left liberals" programmatically (above all, from the viewpoint of a "clear radical program"!). We do not find this disconcerting; on the contrary--especially at a time like this. A "left liberal" in a mood of desperation--i.e., in a state of exacerbated disgust at the evils of this society--can be a man on his way to becoming a radical, and eventually even a revolutionary. The difference between such a "desperate liberal" and a "radical" can be as amorphous as the definition of "radical" itself.

For we are dealing with politics and people in flux--that is why this year is such an opportunity. We are dealing with people who are in the process of *becoming.* After all, every revolution has been made by the troops of relatively recently "disgruntled liberals" or their equivalents--that is, by people who, before the revolutionary crisis, were not ready to overthrow the system, and who became ready to accept a new leadership only at a certain point. The "revolution" that is on the agenda for Peace and Freedom today is not yet overthrowing the whole System, but something a little more modest for the day: viz. overthrowing the two-party system (the Demorepublican one-party system) and establishing a new force on the left in American politics.

If and when we face the "second wave," of (for example) misguided idealists who invested their consciences in McCarthy and feel betrayed, it would be a sterile talmudic game to discuss whether they are worthless "left liberals" or honorific "radicals." They will be people in the process of change. What they will change into will depend (at least in part) on Peace and Freedom.

In the first place there will be self-selection, not selection by Peace and Freedom screeners. The *really* worthless "left liberals" or "right liberals" will be no problem in this respect because by definition they will want to remain with the Establishment. But the others--the ones who come to Peace and Freedom because it has an alternative to offer, or who merely tentatively look in its direction and wonder if there is something real there: they are the ones Peace and Freedom wants to get hold of and *transform,* as a good part of the present Peace and Freedom membership were transformed after their first step in signing a registration form.

Peace and Freedom will want to make radicals of them, or more conscious radicals; we of the ISC will also want to make revolutionaries of them. But for the mass, as distinct from individual cases, Peace and Freedom is the first step, not the last step.

That is its main function: to provide a first step. To accomplish this function, it needs a *broad* radical appeal, not a narrow one.

It needs the *minimum radical program,* of the type it has been operating on up to now--not bluster about secret or imaginary revolutionary programs.

It needs to get those ex-disgruntled liberals or radicals involved in the *action* as it carries on *movement-type militant activities directed against the ruling powers of the society.*

This is our concept of a Peace and Freedom movement which can absorb the "second wave" and grow into a mass third party movement offering a political alternative on the left such as has not existed up to now.

FOR A BROAD CLEAVER CAMPAIGN

The choice of presidential slate for Peace and Freedom is one important way of concretizing a perspective for the movement; just as important, if not more so, is the way in which a presidential campaign should be carried on. The Peace and Freedom Party has to make its decision on this as soon as possible.

The Independent Socialist Club believes the decision must be based on the following *sine qua non:* the slate named must be people who are themselves committed NOW to a third-party campaign, and of whom one can be reasonably sure that they will fight out the campaign to the end, without capitulating to the pressure of lesser-evilism or of "let's keep one foot in the Democratic Party." While there are various other considerations which make a possible candidate better or worse, there is no other consideration as completely decisive as this one, at this time. Unlike the fall of 1967, it is no longer possible to discuss this question in terms of "urging" or "pressuring" someone to run--particularly someone who still refuses to break politically with the Democratic Party, like Spock or SCLC leaders.

This decisive consideration points to Eldridge Cleaver as the presidential candidate.

Naturally, there are other reasons for supporting him, and advantages as well as disadvantages for Peace and Freedom in his candidacy, but this consideration is decisive in itself, in our opinion. Individuals will naturally have, and express, various other arguments for the Cleaver candidacy.

A Cleaver candidacy presents both opportunities and difficulties for a Peace and Freedom presidential campaign. The fact that Cleaver is a militant Black revolutionary recommends him mightily to us, as Independent Socialists, but it may well be a difficulty from the point of view of building a broad radical Peace and Freedom movement among whites who, however radical they may consider themselves, are not revolutionaries. The objective of the Peace and Freedom campaign should be to maximize the opportunities offered by the Cleaver candidacy and counteract the difficulties. While the first (maximizing the opportunities) entials no special issue at this point, the second does need special attention. To this end, we think Peace and Freedom should have the following approach:

(1) The ticket should be balanced: first by the vice-presidential choice, and secondly, by the "shadow cabinet" proposal. As we understand the concensus in the Peace and Freedom movement, this indicates the following considerations for the vice-presidential choice: (a) white; (b) representative of the *anti-war* side of the Peace and Freedom movement, in the same sense that Cleaver obviously stresses the Black-liberation side of Peace and Freedom politics; (c) within the framework of the "radical spectrum" of Peace and Freedom, a more moderate radical than the Black-revolutionary politics of the Panthers or of the white-revolutionary wing of Peace and Freedom.

(2) The presidential campaign must be a Peace and Freedom campaign, not a "Cleaver campaign." The standard-bearers of the Peace and Freedom campaign will, of course, be its candidates, headed by Cleaver, but we consider it would be a betrayal of the Peace and Freedom movement if (a) the campaign degenerated into a "cult of personality" appeal as against a party-building effort; or (b) the campaign was turned in effect into a "third ticket" campaign which de-emphasizes Peace and Freedom as a third-party challenge to the two-party system, as a campaign to build a permanent institutional political alternative to the Demorepublican establishment.

(3) We assume that Cleaver will run unequivocally as a candidate *of the Peace and Freedom Party*, and not as a candidate of some other political formation *who is merely endorsed or "also supported" by Peace and Freedom.* Specifically: (a) while independent (non-Peace and Freedom) supporters of Cleaver are welcome to organize support for his candidacy in their own way and in fact such developments are to be encouraged, we assume that Cleaver himself will run as the Peace and Freedom candidate, not as the candidate put up by some other independent political formation; (b) while there is no question about the propriety of the Black Panther Party, if it wishes, also naming Cleaver as *its* candidate, we assume that in this case Cleaver will be running as the joint candidate of both Peace and Freedom and the Panthers, and not as a Black Panther candidate who is merely endorsed by Peace and Freedom.

(4) We assume that Cleaver--although, like ourselves, he is on the left side of the "radical spectrum" of Peace and Freedom--is oriented toward helping to build a broad radical Peace and Freedom movement, rather than a narrow-gauge radical sect using "revolutionary" language as a substitute for carrying out its essential function: which function is to break away supporters of the Demorepublican establishment toward a mass third-party movement of the left on a minimum radical program and issue-oriented movement activities. That minimum radical program--the heart of which are the fight for immediate withdrawal of American imperialism from Vietnam and opposition to Washington's counter-revolutionary foreign policy all over the world, and support to the militant Black liberation movement in this country and attack on white racism--was adequately reflected in the general outline of the ideas adopted by the Richmond convention of Peace and Freedom.

This question of perspective for Peace and Freedom should condition the way in which the presidential campaign is carried on by Peace and Freedom and its standard-bearers, the style and emphases of the campaign, and the planning of its appeals. All Peace and Freedom people should be vitally interested in seeing that this is the kind of campaign carried on, in order to realize the maximum opportunities from the presidential campaign in general and from Cleaver's candidacy in particular.

Behind all this is a fundamental view: the Peace and Freedom movement does not--should not--exist as primarily an electoral instrument but rather as a political *movement* which, organized as both a party and a movement, orients toward using election as one valuable terrain for the building of a new kind of political organization, a genuinely "new politics." This is a consideration which not only excludes a "third ticket" or "independent Cleaver Campaign" approach for Peace and Freedom in this election, but which also should permeate every aspect of Peace and Freedom activity in 1968. The presidential campaign of 1968 should be regarded as simply the best way, in these particular months, in which a Peace and Freedom movement can be built--not as the be-all and end-all. The campaign and the slate, both, must be *subordinated* to the interests of building the kind of movement Peace and Freedom aspires to be; this means that mere vote-getting, as valuable as it may be, must be subordinated to this too. Peace and Freedom does not exist to serve the presidential campaign, but the presidential campaign must serve Peace and Freedom.

Excerpts from the Richmond Program of the California Peace and Freedom Movement

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The basis of human dignity is the ability of people to make the decisions that affect their lives--to order their private lives as they choose, and to decide collectively with their peers on matters of collective concern.

The fundamental decisions which affect people's lives are economic decisions. The people have power over their economy only when they can make it work to fulfill their needs. But today in America the public institutions of government, by which the people might exercise such power, are the willing servants of an industrial state which, operating through millions of functionaries who are "only doing their jobs," manages the economy and thereby the lives of the ordinary people in the interests of expanding profit and continued national and world-wide domination.

Individual wage-earners are defined as inferior to the employers who manage them. Collectively, through unions, they are still subordinate to the people who buy their labor.

Black people as individuals are at the mercy of brutally racist police and subtly racist employers. Black communities are invariably governed by white power structures "downtown." The same holds true of other oppressed minorities.

Individual soldiers must follow even the most arbitrary orders of superior officers under penalty of court-martial. They are not allowed at all to organize themselves for redress of grievances, let alone to demand justifications for a war in which they risk their lives.

Students, youths, welfare clients, and many other kinds of people find themselves in the same position. And *all* Americans are subject to government interference in their private lives.

The Democratic and Republican parties are the public expression of those who hold a disproportionate share of power in private life. The Peace and Freedom Party supports the efforts of the powerless to gain dignity by exercising some real control over their own lives: black people trying to organize their own communities, wage-earners who strike for their rights against their employers or in wildcat action against undemocratic unions, soldiers who refuse to commit acts that violate the dictates of conscience--all the people who stand up and resist.

The main task of the Peace and Freedom Movement is to organize people to begin to gain real and concrete power over the institutions which control their everyday lives. One important way to accomplish this is to project into the electoral arena the voices of people fighting for human dignity, to make it clear that the demand for human dignity is at root a demand for power--and that the people will have this power only when we all can democratically assure that our economy works to fulfill human needs rather than to increase the power and profit of a small minority. The function of Peace and Freedom candidates is to act as the tribunes of Americans who have begun to fight back.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Peace and Freedom Party stands for the right of all peoples to determine their own destiny. It opposes the U.S. foreign policy of economic, political and military domination over the affairs of other nations. We are dedicated to the reversal of America's systematic economic, military and political exploitation of the peoples of the world. This domination establishes the U.S. as the major obstacle to the attempts of other peoples to overcome their misery and oppression and to establish for themselves an existence rooted in self-determination and dignity. The war in Vietnam is not an accident; it is the logical consequence of an American economic imperialism which requires the subordination of foreign resources, markets, and political structures to the needs of corporate property and profit. Under the pretence of protecting the world from Communism, America supports reactionary regimes throughout the world, thereby thwarting the aspirations of its peoples and maintaining them in a condition of bondage.

We oppose the same conduct on the part of any other nation, without exception. Although our major concern as Americans is with the imperialistic foreign policies and wars of our own country, we also oppose the imperialistic interventions of any other nation, capitalist or Communist.

The Peace and Freedom Party supports the struggle for human liberation and freedom wherever that struggle takes place. We defend the right of all exploited people to the control of their own economic resources and political systems in a world of just, stable pride and the continuing diminution of military threat and power. We understand that no such radical change in American policy is possible under the present American military-industrial complex, the source of that American imperialism which so brutalizes the nations of the third world. The power of monopoly capitalism must be broken and replaced by a mass movement whose concern is the democratization of all aspects of American life.

This fundamental restructuring is neither easy nor imminent, but it can be accomplished through our persistent and dedicated effort. The façade of American life masks a system of domestic and foreign exploitation which the repressed people of the U.S. and of the world are coming militantly to oppose. To articulate this struggle and to join its ranks is the effort worthy of our labor and sacrifice, the hope of men throughout the world, and the unique human challenge of our times.

Ban all aggressive wars; immediate withdrawal from Vietnam!

Other actions taken by the Convention in the area of foreign policy included a statement expressing "solidarity with the efforts of the Polish students to establish guarantees of Freedom of Speech and association"; also participation in the April 1968 "Stop the Draft Week"; a statement "defending the rights of enlisted men in the armed forces," including their right to form their own organizations.

MINORITY LIBERATION

We of the Peace and Freedom Movement, recognizing the white racism which pervades this society, and recognizing further the oppression existing in this country, stand for an immediate end to racism, and for self-determination for all minorities. We support the right for all oppressed minority communities to police themselves and maintain economic and political control over their own lives. We also recognize that law and order cannot be separated from justice and

that these must arise from the community itself.

It is the responsibility of the majority community to make available to minority communities sufficient resources to make possible fully adequate education, housing and income for all of the people.

We are pledged to building a political movement which will ultimately permit the masses of whites, blacks and other oppressed minorities to ally in a common struggle for their common interests.

We endorse the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense Ten Point Program.

PANTHER PROGRAM

(The Panthers' program was endorsed by the Convention as a program for the black community, and not as the platform of the Peace and Freedom Movement.)

(1) We want Freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community. (2) We want full employment for our people. (3) We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black community. (4) We want decent housing, fit for shelter for human beings. (5) We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. (6) We want all black men to be exempt from military service. (7) We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people. (8) We want freedom for all Black men held in Federal, State, County and City prisons and jails. (9) We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black communities as defined by the Constitution of the U.S. (10) We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

The Convention passed other motions dealing with Black liberation, particularly the demand that Huey P. Newton be set free now, for a Black plebiscite on self-determination, and for UN observers to halt police brutality; also a statement of "Guidelines in Addressing the Problem of Racism in White Communities."

LABOR

The P&F Movement seeks to represent the interests of working people--organized or unorganized--before the community... [It] recognizes that no serious challenge to the existing power structure can be made unless working people form the basis of that challenge. ...

The P&F Movement believes that people must confront their grievances directly, wherever they occur. To this end, we encourage the organization of workers into democratic unions to achieve job democracy and an end to racist job policies. ... We support the efforts of rank and file unionists to end racism, undemocratic procedures in and bureaucratic control of their unions. ... In short, the Peace and Freedom Movement believes in *job democracy*.

ECOLOGY

The Peace and Freedom Movement opposes the traditional brand of practical and expedient politics that has encouraged the exploiters of the human and natural resources of our earth. This movement bases its program on a framework of ecology, that is, the relationship of each man, and every living thing, to each other and to their environment. We recognize that the quality of human life on earth, and even the bare survival of that life, is critically dependent upon an immediate and substantial improvement in man's level of ecological awareness and responsibility. Unless man can learn to live harmoniously as an integral part of the biologic community, keeping his population and his resource consumption at levels that can be sustained permanently, all other human values, along with the human species itself, will shortly cease to exist. The crisis is imminent and methods must be drastic, taking precedence over estasblished property rights and nationalistic interests.

MISCELLANEOUS

Here are some brief excerpts from other statements adopted by the Convention or by subsequent vote of the chapters, selected only to give an idea of the variety of issues taken up:

ECONOMICS: ...An economic system as productive as the American economy that does not meet this basic requirement [just distribution] should be fundamentally reformed. ... The Peace and Freedom Party proposes to remedy the failures of our present economic policies by establishing human rights as superior to property rights and making radical changes in... (1) Taxation... (2) Employment and a living wage... (3) War spending...

EDUCATION: ...We ask that education become freer, more experimental, more relevant... We believe that the public school from kindergarten through the university does not serve the needs of more than a small minority of students...

STUDENT POWER: ... P&F advocates that students and faculty should have control over their own campuses...

HEALTH: ... Health care is a right and not a privilege. A high standard of health care must be made equally available to everyone.

PERSONAL FREEDOMS: ... It is not the function of government to establish morality, but merely to impose restrictions upon individuals in those areas where other individual rights are infringed.

URBAN AFFAIRS: ... we resolve to return this power to the inhabitants of the various communities within the cities...

WOMEN: ...this party guarantees equal opportunity for women and will actively encourage their participation...