

PRAIRIE FIRE

**THE POLITICS OF REVOLUTIONARY
ANTI-IMPERIALISM**

**POLITICAL STATEMENT
OF THE**

**WEATHER
UNDERGROUND**



\$1.50

One edge of youth culture consisted of politically active people: organizers, embattled artists, people's musicians, free schoolers, mothers and fathers and children of communal families. What has happened to this large grouping of people as the fat of affluence has dissolved over the last three years?

Some have become small business men, and have taken on the material characteristics of their parent's generation. But most have gone to work, or are on welfare, or are even maintaining a rural subsistence through small farming or crafts. Many live at the edge of getting by —women alone with small children, people eking out a living in groups. To the extent that communities survive among this group of people, they are real bases for organizers, not necessarily revolutionary, but open. This group of people constitutes a de classe sector —increasingly proletarianized— whose experience in political work or in organizing alternatives can be a valuable contribution to our movement.

There are serious weaknesses in youth culture. It is imbued with the sexist values of the dominant culture that bore it. It mainly looks to male heroes for models. It has failed to genuinely meet women's needs or to make a wholehearted commitment to fighting sexism.

Sometimes trying to build cultural alternatives has become a substitute for struggle, or has collapsed into hip capitalism. "Do your own thing" —at first an advocacy to add your own unique contribution to the community effort, has become a slogan for individualism, splitting apart, and undermining the solidarity that has been built.

In many ways, the culture has withdrawn to rest on its privileges, dissociating from active opposition to racism and from active identification with Black and Third World people. A flippant attitude toward consciousness-expanding drugs is separated from the whole picture of deathly and pacifying drugs pumped into insurgent communities. The problems of heroin, methadone, alcohol and pills have not been dealt with. Although young people experience police oppression day-to-day, police power directed against Black and Third World people is not combatted. Rarely do alternative institutions organize to meet the needs of the Black community, Third World children, the old.

The best of the culture is realized through the process of struggle itself —this is what creates unity of opposition, builds anti-racism, breathes life into the sense of community and makes our communities insurgent.

Revolutionaries must embrace the explosive content of the profound alienation young people experience in US society, and struggle with and change its accommodations to imperialism. It is our view that the youth movement is a force that has and will continue to affect the consciousness of the working-class and the society as a whole. We must approach the youth movement with a consciousness of the great contributions made by students, GIs and other young people in the anti-imperialist struggles of a decade.

THE ARMED FORCES

The army is one of the central oppressive institutions of youth. Young men are forced into the armed forces because of lack of education

and employment
crudest and mo

The r
have led you
institutions of
rulers to rule,
torture and k
fighting such
down many in
together as a s

There
US war of exp
the growing B
crisis. The j
war. We refus
demonstrated
head out a fe
alienation fro
fighters, but fe



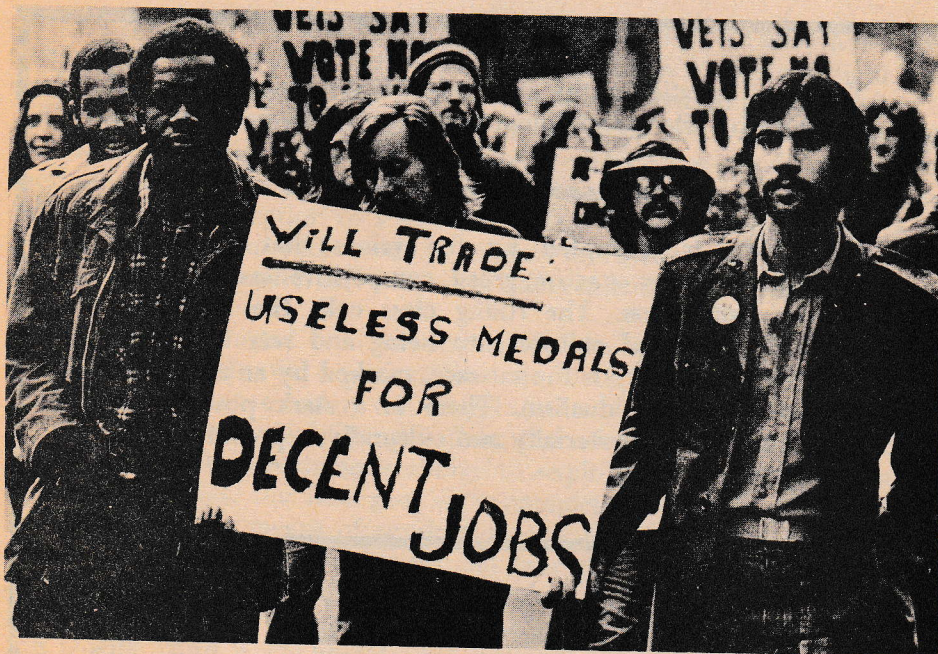
The
struggle and g
up 45% of t
Vietcong ever
have at home.

Atta
open confron
carry out orde

and employment opportunities. Once in the army, we are faced with the crudest and most direct forms of discipline and class oppression.

The rebellion in the armed forces comes from the same causes that have led young Third World people and white youth to rebel in other institutions of US society. GIs have raised deep questions about the right of rulers to rule, of the armed forces to command, of the supposed right to torture and kill women, children and men in Vietnam. The realities of fighting such a vengeful yet totally unjust war as the war in Vietnam broke down many institutional and cultural forms that have kept the armed forces together as a so-called "proud fighting unit."

There has been GI rebellion within the armed forces during every US war of expansion, but the defeat of US forces in Vietnam combined with the growing Black rebellion at home accelerated the opposition into a full crisis. The justification for war grew thin; no one wanted to die in this war. We refused to fight and burned our draft cards, left the country, and demonstrated against the war. Instead of going on patrol, many units would head out a few hundred yards and sack out for the night. A generalized alienation from military discipline developed. Imperialism needs willing fighters, but fewer and fewer could be found.



The resistance and solidarity of Black GIs set the terms of the struggle and galvanized others. In the racist army, Third World soldiers made up 45% of the combat casualties. Slogans of resistance developed: "No Vietcong ever called me nigger;" "Don't fight overseas for what you don't have at home."

Attacks on the brass, subversion of the military machinery, and open confrontations spread among GIs. On occasion, whole units refused to carry out orders—both in Vietnam and in the US at the Democratic National

Convention in 1968. Thousands of young people who became the dedicated enemies of imperialism were trained in weaponry and combat. Veterans who came back to the US organized against the war and led a national campaign against war crimes. One of the most dramatic moments in the anti-war movement was in April 1971, when the Vietnam Veterans Against the War threw away their war medals at the White House.

Veterans face chronic unemployment, inadequate medical treatment, unjust benefit payments and drug addiction at home. Vets are plagued by an oppressive discharge system which codes young men according to the recommendations of the ruling brass. This system creates a blacklist on the labor market against many returning veterans, especially those who didn't toe the line.

The revolt in the army is anti-imperialist class struggle on the highest level, led by Third World GIs but with many white working-class people involved. This revolt involves cultural insubordination, political education, direct action and mass participation in armed resistance and sabotage. As a result we have arrived at a new political situation: the ruling class can no longer confidently depend on the armed forces to do the dirty work of empire in all parts of the world.

The great injustice of this system is that it leaves its potential unrealized while maintaining scarcity for billions of people.

US society is corrupted by the values that necessarily accompany piracy — racism, greed, competitiveness, brutality, sexism, callousness. The ruling class calls the backward, criminal aspects of culture into being and sets them into motion. The society is the rat-race, marked by an anti-social premium on individualism. There is a stark poverty for masses of people materially and culturally, a poverty in the quality of life.

As imperialist crisis deepens, the entire fabric of social control is tightened and becomes more severe.

Third World peoples in the US, and also women, youth and members of the armed forces have shown the most consistent initiative and practice as measured by the decisive anti-imperialist struggle of this entire period: the war in Vietnam. These groups have been the carriers of proletarian internationalism for this time.

VI. AC ENEM

This
our analysis
goal for this
build the arm
are both nec
methods, som
taking a leap
united in rev
other. These
common enem

Ab
questions: W
practice? How

Our
goal is to att
oppressed peo
the seizure of
create the coo
system and bo
empire. The w
this is why Th

We n
common idea
crippling to in
on history as
whole, larger
something me
particular pol
bigger, where
organize their