

ECONOMIC APPENDIX

--submitted by Joseph Seymour

Nixon's wage control policy marks the first major qualitative change in the relationship between the U.S. state and the labor movement since World War II. In the absence of effective policing machinery, the 90 day freeze is more a test of will of the labor movement than a serious wage control policy. With this policy, the U.S. joins all major capitalist countries in attempting to impose direct state control of the labor market. Such a policy has not been ultimately successful in any state maintaining bourgeois democracy. The most successful experience of capitalist wage control occurred in the early years of De Gaulle's semi-authoritarian rule. There is no reason to believe that the U.S. government will be able to impose effective long-term wage control, although in the immediate period it will undoubtedly hold down real wages.

To the extent that money wages are, in fact, held down, this will moderate the inflation with some time lag. Despite the restraints on real wages, the changes in fiscal policy (which are contractionary, on balance) and steps taken against foreign competition, there is no reason to expect a significant expansion of production due to the over-capitalization of American industry resulting from the investment boom of the mid 60's. The next few years should witness the continued stagnation of production, accompanied by high, if not rising, unemployment.

The U.S.'s competitive devaluation and turn to protectionism will spread the American crisis internationally in the classic manner. Despite retaliation and imperialist expansion into non-U.S. markets, there is no way that Western Europe and particularly Japan can avoid powerful contractionary pressure on their economies. The long Japanese boom is over, presaging the breakdown of Japan's paternalistic labor system, which is based on guaranteed employment geared to a rapidly expanding export market.

Despite its qualitatively weakened economic position, the U.S. retains a virtual monopoly of military power in the capitalist world. Therefore, the very real economic conflicts between the imperialist powers will not immediately manifest itself in the breakdown of traditional alliances or in military-diplomatic maneuvers. This awaits the effective rearmament of Germany and Japan.

30 August 1971

Theses on the Women's Liberation Movement

1. Because the oppression of women is deeply rooted in all class cultures and rests upon an institution--the family--central to social and economic life, women have not regarded themselves as an oppressed social group whose condition could be changed.
2. Significant political movements directed at women's oppression have been exceptional. Those that existed were either fleeting movements directed against particularly apparent forms of women's inequality (e.g. the right to vote) or have been produced by transitional organizations established by mass left-wing parties.
3. The existing American women's liberation movement arose out of the effect of the break-up of the New Left on a wide stratum of liberal and radical women political activists. The women's liberation movement reflects the New Left doctrine that members of oppressed groups should devote themselves to independent and exclusive organizations designed to fight that oppression, and that only such independent and exclusive groups can effectively fight that oppression.
4. The women's liberation movement is essentially ideological being directed at publicizing the manifold oppression of women and changing the social and personal attitudes of the women involved in the movement. Direct agitation against the state and other bourgeois institutions (e.g. over abortion reform, equal pay) has been distinctly secondary.
5. In contrast to the black movement, the existing women's liberation movement does not enjoy general sympathy among the female population and has not succeeded in politicalizing the women of any significant social group. The existing women's liberation movement is organically incapable of drawing in working class women.
6. The existing women's liberation movement is transitory because it is isolated as a current within the petty-bourgeois left-liberal milieu, having a foundation neither in the sympathy of the female population nor in concrete struggles against the ruling class.
7. The program of Women and Revolution is a correct Marxist program for the woman question, ideally designed to be implemented by a transitional organization staffed by cadre of a mass socialist party. It is unlikely that this program will make serious inroads into the women's liberation movement as such.
8. Because the existing women's liberation movement is an ideological movement whose central premise is the unique capacity of an independent women's movement to overcome women's oppression, a Leninist party cannot fight for hegemony over it (any more than it can fight for hegemony over the exclusionist black movement). To the extent that women's liberation activists are won to the view that the oppression of women can only be overcome through a socialist revolution led by an integrated party, the question of an independent women's movement is transformed from a principled to a tactical one.
9. The SL's goal in the women's liberation movement is to recruit individual activists, who out of a concern for the oppression of women are brought to see the need for the reconstruction of society in conformity with the principles of scientific socialism. The main activities of the Women and Revolution group should, therefore, be propagandistic, at a high theoretical level, rather than agitation over program or organizational maneuvering within the movement.

Monday, 6 Sept. 1971 (Closed Session)

- 10:00-12:00 International Discussion [2 hours total]
[Restricted Attendance]
Reports--Carter, Robertson (45 min.)
Discussion (50 min.)
Summaries and Voting--Carter, Robertson (25 min.)
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch (1 hour)
- 1:00-3:00 Mass Strike Fusion Prospects [2 hours total]
(Discussion structure to be organized)
- 3:00-3:30 Break (1/2 hour)
- 3:30-6:00 National Organizational Perspectives [2 1/2 hour total]
Reports--Robertson, Nelson (65 min.)
Discussion (1 hour)
Summaries--Robertson, Nelson (25 min.)
- 6:00-7:00 Control Commission Report [1 hour total]
Organizational Rules Provisions--Brosius (10 min.)
Discussion, Summary and Voting (10 min.)

New CC Regulation--Foster (15 min.)
Discussion (20 min.)
Summary and Voting (5 min.)
- 7:00-7:30 CC Composition [30 min. total]
Perspective at Next National Conference--Gordon
Filling Vacancy & Cooption (10 min.) (20 min.)