bing of elbows with political candidates. In a group of feminists, we aren't identifiable as lesbians. To stop being invisible, and therefore ignored, we need to develop our own kinds of political avenues for people to say: 'AIDS is not the only gay issue.' But in the 80's we may not have the luxury of pure autonomy. We may have to muscle our way into existing groups and environments and make our own spaces. But we'll have to compromise to do that. Also, I think that total isolation lends to navel staring, and we've had that potential as a movement. Autonomy is very important—we just have to take our inner autonomy with us. It is also important to see that other minority groups are experiencing this as well. They are faced with the same kinds of choices."

The second strategy of the Women's Caucus is an outcome of the economic crunch which has hit the lesbian community. The recent closure of the Wing Cafe and Charmed Circle Feminist Books has pushed them toward strengthening their commitment to the community and social needs of lesbians. The Blood Sisters Drive was good PR regarding AIDS, as well as the fact that lesbians are homosexuals who aren't getting AIDS, but who are unified with gay men.

"An important question," says McCallister, "is whether to continue with all lesbian activities, or to increase involvement in mixed activities." Currently, more women are involved in the women's caucus and not the general club. Lesbian space is an important question.

Conclusion: Front Burner for Women's Issues

More than ever, 1984 is an election year that is characterized by the urgency for women's involvement in the political process. For women, the most crucial issue is survival. For some organizations, this has meant that single issue struggles are being broadened to include the push for human needs that affect women and other minority groups. There is a strong tendency for coalition building much along the lines of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition.

This progress in the women's movement has also meant compromise. For Womancare, survival has meant dropping the role of political activity from the organization, and donning a more professional image. And for some feminist organizations whose involvement in the electoral process has not traditionally been viewed as a strategy to achieve goals, there is a growing recognition that women must seize the opportunity that this election year brings to maximize the gender gap. Lesbians, in particular, are compromising community and social needs by meeting them in the context of their political work. In San Diego, there are large numbers of lesbians active in mixed progressive organizations. These are significant sacrifices in the development of women's culture.

What can be seen as a step backward to a rehashing of the civil rights and human needs gains of the 60's, can also be seen as a fortification of those gains, and a fortification of our movement. The historic reality that women's issues are always put on the back burner may be becoming obsolete because current conditions have placed them at the forefront of our present social crises. Women's political role has been to push so-called "women's issues"; and progressives in general cannot ignore the potential of political muscle that women, more and more out of necessity, are willing and able to flex.

Laying the Groundwork for Struggle

by Robert Tambuzi

As Dr. Maulana Karenga argued in the sixties and still continues to argue, "the key crisis in American life is the cultural crisis, i.e, the crisis in views and values." The vision crisis is defined by a deficient and ineffective grasp of self, society and the world, while the value crisis is seen as incorrect and self-limiting categories of committment and priorities which in turn limit human possibilities.

With an ineffective grasp of one's self and a deficient world-view, it is not only impossible to make revolution in this country, it becomes hard to just get up in the morning. Lulled into unconsciousness daily, the withered and weakened elements of the left find it impossible to develop strategies and tactics to stop the erosion of the gains achieved during the sixties, as the masses forced this regime to liberalize the society. More human and civil rights were gained during the sixties than any other decade in American history. All the progressive organizations reached their height in that decade. SNCC, CORE, the Black Panthers, SDS, SCLC and the US Organization are among the groups and organizations that, *through their involvement with the masses* and the *radical leadership* they possessed, forced this society to make concessions they never would have if left to their own designs.

Additionally, the radical and progressive leaderships and organizations were under attack as a mad and sadistic J. Edgar Hoover unleashed the COINTEL PRO to gnaw away at both their characters and lives. Both the national and local police teamed up to create a context to disrupt or otherwise neutralize Black Nationalists, left groups and individuals, "keeping such groups from attracting young members and preventing them from gaining respectability." Because they feared our unity, radical and progressive tendencies were curtailed and cut off as its leadership was maimed and mutated by the ruling class' coercive apparatus.

Frederick Douglass argued some one hundred years ago that "power concedes nothing without a demand, it never has and never will." This political maxim holds today as much as it ever has. This is no argument for wanton gunplay as exhibited by some groups during the sixties nor is it an empty slogan shouted to scare the oppressor. It is truth of a proverbial nature that we must grasp.

Increasinglyl, as the reversion to raw racist, sexist, militarism and class exploitation becomes more complete, we are still burdened with the responsibility to rebuild a movement that provides purpose and direction to the masses of American people who still hunger for freedom, justice and equality.

The Hearts and Minds of the People

Today, in the 80's as in the 60's, the key battle and war to be waged is an ideological one. Essentially, the struggle involves a fight for the hearts and minds of the people, the masses. The masses are our salvation, the key element in a dilemma when they know more about what is going on with and in *DALLAS* than they do Managua or Pretoria.

What is to be done??

What is needed in the eighties is the same thing we had in the sixties; radical organizations and individuals that are conscious, capable and committed to substantive social change. They must be conscious of the need and necessity of change, capable of working to bring that change about and above all, committed to build the context that will transform the people into unashamed partisans of their own liberation.

What is needed on the level of leadership are cadre that are committed to ideological struggle. Dr. Karenga provides us with a cogent definition of ideology which is, "a coherent system of views and values which give a moral, material and meaningful interpretation to life." That is to say, that by working for and among the masses we'll be able to learn from and teach them. Each one must teach one, as we struggle around concrete projects and programs that serve to raise the standard of life of the masses. What we must attempt here is an ideological remoulding. Mao is still instructive, "Our comrades must understand that ideologically remoulding involves long-term, patient and painstaking work, and they must not attempt to change people's ideology, which has been shaped over decades of life, by giving a few lectures or by holding a few meetings."

One may ask, how is this to be accomplished? And would it be correct in doing so. We must take the position that leaders are made and not born. Tempered and tested in the process of struggle, leaders arise and alternative institutions are built as well as existing institutions are strengthened. What is called for here is disalientation through work and struggle. As we build institutions that house the people's aspirations, we must at the same time seek to eliminate and effectively intervene in the social structures that create and sustain racist, sexist and capitalist relationships.

One important note. As with all political election years, beginning with the presidential primaries, a furor arises as to what candidate to support and what issues to push. While participation in electoral politics is an important part of struggle, this does not alleviate the need to build and strengthen groups and community institutions. Electoral politics are of an *ad hoc* nature, while the consistent and dynamic struggle to raise the masses consciousness and standard of living is *permanent*.

The Cooperative Alliance Project

Over the past few years, progressive elements of the San Diego community have been meeting and sharing our perceptions and expertise. Believing that we must do as much as we can "in the way that we can" to raise the level of life in our community, a cooperative food system project has been proposed as something concrete we can organize people around. By providing information and inspiration, a principled and practical model of cooperation with and among the masses is possible. The development of a centralized food buying, producing and distributive system was chosen as a model because of its importance to people in San Diego. A recent survey on hunger in San Diego, prepared and carried out by the San Diego Hunger Coalition, revealed that over 20 percent of the people in San Diego lived below the poverty line and many of them went to bed hungry.

It is a real indictment of our community and society that permits such a tragic thing to occur. Our responsibility then is to lay the groundwork for struggle, to lay the basis for what W.E.B. Dubois termed "a cooperative commonwealth."

The first step of this project is the formation of an alternative—collectively owned and managed—humanistically oriented. a centralized food buying, producing and distribution system, that creates meaningful, gainful and non-exploitative labor. The short term goals of the San Diego Cooperative Alliance are centered on locating a space to house the centralized food-buying system. This location will actually become a depot, where food is distributed on a pre-order basis.

The depot concept is ideal for organizing purposes. By combining the purchasing power of groups, families and individuals, nutritional and affordable goods can be delivered and services facilitated. The depot concept is an issue to mobilize people around. By organizing and mobilizing people around a common need, we develop a "track record" of work and struggle around the "coop" way of life, gaining valuable experience. This can lead to developing trust, and lay the basis for all to understand and internalize the values and views needed for coop membership and ownership. And the depot must be organized in such a way as to make it neither capital intensive or nor labor insensitive.

The benefits that can come from the successful completion of this project are many. Most importantly, however, is that its success lays the basis for a much needed model of cooperation to achieve victory and a higher level of human life.

CISPES Strategy

For more information regarding any of these activities, please call CISPES at 235-0485.

It should be emphasized that CISPES considers activity on all three fronts (legislative/electoral, direc action, and people to people exchange) to be equally valid and important. Concentrating all our forces on a single front would be a serious tactical error; moreover, it would prevent us from reaching out to all sectors of the U.S. people, which we must do if we are to be effective in preventing an esclation of U.S. intervention in Central America.

We recognize that not all strategies are equally to the liking of all groups, that the most enthusiastic demonstrators are not likely to be the most active legislative lobbyists, and vice-versa. Therefore, we must appeal to the tolerance and political maturity of all sectors—the young and the old, blacks, Latinos, and whites, political activists and "ordinary people"—if we are to build a broad anti-intervention front which can take into account the interests of all the different groups, and which reflects the desire of us all not to make yet another tragic mistake, not to go into another Vietnam.

!EL PUEBLO VENCERA!