THE RECENT FUND APPEAL YOU RECEIVED FROM OUR OFFICE HAS BEGUN TO BRING RESULTS. BUT—JUST AS OUR NATIONAL COMMITTEE WAS NOT LULLED INTO SILENCE FOLLOWING THE PRESIDENT’S MARCH 31ST SPEECH, WE CANNOT SIT BY IN SILENCE FOLLOWING HIS OCTOBER 31ST ANNOUNCEMENT OF A BOMBING HALT IN NORTH VIETNAM.

WITH MOST AMERICANS, WE HOPE MEANINGFUL AND PRODUCTION NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN SOON, IN PARIS. UNTIL THE KILLING IN VIETNAM ENDS, HOWEVER, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO RAISE OUR VOICE IN PROTEST AND IN CREATIVE CRITICISM.

IF YOU HAVEN'T YET SENT IN YOUR CONTRIBUTION, WE URGE YOU TO DO SO IMMEDIATELY. AN ENVELOPE FOR YOUR CHECK IS ENCLOSED.

REPORT ON AMNESTY EDUCATION-ACTION PROGRAM

In late July, our National Steering Committee began to discuss strategy and project programs which would enhance the possibility of an executive amnesty being granted to all young men who had resisted the Vietnamese war. While we were aware that no amnesty would be granted prior to the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam, we were at the same time conscious that a move for amnesty, with appropriate strategy, needed to be considered—and projected—before the war ended.

As the first aspect of creating a public consciousness with regard to amnesty, Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, a member of our Steering Committee, testified before the Democratic Platform Committee prior to the convention of that party on the question of amnesty. Also, as a result of encouragement from our national office, several other peace and liberal-oriented organizations included an amnesty plea in their testimony before the Democratic Platform Committee. The testimony of Rev. Neuhaus was drawn, in large measure, from the amnesty petition which most members of our organization were sent in the late summer. As of this date, several thousand persons have signed our amnesty petition. (If you desire a copy—or copies—do not hesitate to write us for them.)

We felt it was of critical importance to underscore the "human side" of men who had resisted the war. It is for this reason that late in September, our National Committee made specific plans to send a group of Americans to Paris and Stockholm to meet there with American servicemen who had deserted the United States armed forces. In cooperation with the National Mobilization Committee to End the War, therefore, fourteen (14) persons visited Paris and Stockholm between October 24 and October 30. Among the participants were: Dr. Harvey Cox, Associate Professor at the Divinity School of Harvard U.; Reverend Richard Neuhaus, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church, in Brooklyn, N.Y.; Mr. Michael Novak, Professor of Humanities at Old Westbury College, Long Island; Mr. John Goley, a Fellow at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; Father David Gracey, on the staff of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania; Mrs. Grace Paley, author, and Professor of Literature at Sarah Lawrence College; Dr. Franz Schurman, Professor of Sociology at University of California, and Mr. Joseph Sax, Professor of Law at University of Michigan Law School.
Participants in the Paris/Stockholm trip have, on return to this country, written articles (that of Dr. Cox is enclosed), appeared on radio and television, and spoken to various groups in different parts of the country. In addition to the reporting-back process upon which many of the participants have been engaged, they concurred on two specific recommendations which our National Committee is in the process of implementing.

First, we intend to place a staff member in Stockholm to work with deserters there. With more than 150 deserters in Sweden, different kinds of problems—financial, language difficulty, job placement—impinge upon the lives of many deserters. The staff person whom we will place in Stockholm will be able to effectively assist deserters with their problems.

Secondly, we plan on making and keeping contact with families of many of the deserters and keeping them abreast, through the offices of our Stockholm-based staff person, of the situation there with respect to their sons.

In conjunction with this whole thrust of our National Committee there has evolved a group of organizations who are now working together and beginning to create—first, among persons within the peace movement—an understanding and concern for those who are prisoners, deserters, and those who have been forced to emigrate, rather than fight in Vietnam. The move for amnesty will be, of necessity, a long-range education-action project, but one which must be pressed to a successful conclusion.

Our amnesty statement of a few months ago was clear: "At home those who are vindicated morally can be amnestied legally. Amnesty would remove the scandal of imprisonments in America. Amnesty would reflect a nation strong enough and flexible enough to acknowledge its error. What we have done in Vietnam cannot be dismissed or simply forgotten. It must be repudiated."

VIETNAM SUNDAY

The weekend before the election saw many events taking place which focused on "Vietnam Sunday." The National office of CALCAV exhausted its supply of the statement "The Religious Community and American Politics" after distributing 130,000 copies. This statement was read from pulpits and distributed in churches and synagogues across the country. In addition, several thousand special literature packets were prepared and distributed, and the National office arranged for a number of film showings and speakers across the country.

An attempt was made to arrange a prayer service for peace at Fort Dix, in New Jersey. A meeting was held the week before Vietnam Sunday (between Capt. Rubin Ascue of Fort Dix and Mr. Richard Fernandez, of Clergy and Laymen Concerned) at which it was stated by Chaplain (Capt.) Ascue that such a service "was not in the best interest of the Army." Plans had been made by several clergymen from Philadelphia to hold the service had permission been given by the Chaplain.

Probably the most dramatic action of "Vietnam Sunday" was the staging in New York City of a sidewalk Mass in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral. A group of some forty-six persons, most of them Roman Catholic, had asked permission to read a statement during regular Mass inside the Cathedral. Denied this, they picketed the Cathedral during Sunday Masses, carrying signs which read "We protest our church's silence." Many persons received communion during the sidewalk service, celebrated by two priests in vestments which were white in color, white being the symbol of mourning in Vietnam.

V I S I T S T O P R I S O N S A N D M I L I T A R Y H O S P I T A L S

In addition to the listing of military resisters, conscientious objectors, and draft resisters who are in jail, and guidelines for visiting them mentioned in the October newsletter as being now available for the asking, we now have a listing of military hospitals in preparation. These hospitals receive injured military persons from Vietnam who are returned to the United States for care. Surely the pastoral obligation of
religious persons concerned about the Vietnam war includes visits to both the injured and the imprisoned. We urge that you use whatever time you have during the holiday season to begin to make such visits.

ALLENWOOD PRISON CAMP will be the scene of a holiday-season gathering (Dec. 20, 21) of persons from the religious community and peace movements with more than a hundred Americans of Conscience who have resisted the Vietnam war, and who are presently being detained in that institution. Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam—as one of the sponsors of this action—hopes that many people from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware will attend. (There are presently 128 draft resisters at Allenwood, and an additional 26 will be bussed from Lewisburg Penitentiary for the occasion—visits to the men have been arranged for Saturday, Dec. 21, through the cooperation of Merrill Alexander, Director of Federal Prisons, and the wardens of these two Federal prisons.) On Friday evening, Dec. 20, at Lewisburg, there will be a preliminary gathering, with eminent speakers including Dr. Harvey Cox. Folksinger Judy Collins will be on hand. Following the prison visits will be a Saturday evening dinner at Lewisburg. FOR EXACT MEETING TIME, PLACE, AND OTHER DETAILS, CONTACT one of the following: Michael Sherwin---215/561-4164/735-6722X454; Rev. Kenneth Sherman---716/896-8035; Rev. Ray Oswald---717/682-1852. (Or call the National CALCAV office---212/870-2174/2032.)

STAFF CONFERENCE

During the weekend of November 15 - 18, forty persons converged from 21 cities to meet (for the first time) in Clinton, Michigan. Most areas were represented at this conference by a field staff person and a member of the local CALCAV Steering Committee. The group was pleased to have a number of good resource persons, including Dr. Peter Berger, consultant to the National Committee, and on the staff of the New School for Social Research, N.Y. City; Dr. Joseph Sax, of the University of Michigan Law School and a member of the recent delegation to Paris and Stockholm; and Robert Graf, a member of the Milwaukee 14—the group that recently burned the draft files in that city.

Topics must fully discussed were amnesty, the draft and military resistance, the present problems and outlook of the peace movement, and the upcoming Mobilization in Washington being organized by CALCAV. Those attending found great value in exchanging ideas on these subjects and also in simply meeting their counterparts from other areas, comparing problems and their various methods of approach or solution. During evening sessions, a number of recent films were shown that will be available to local groups. (It rained all the time.)

MUTINY CHARGES PENDING AGAINST 27 MILITARY PRISONERS IN SAN FRANCISCO

On October 11, 1968, Pvt. Richard Bunch, a psychologically disturbed 19-yr.-old inmate of the Presidio Stockade was shot in the back and killed while heading away from a work detail by a 12-gauge shotgun fired by an unidentified guard. Mere hours after this fatal event, the army declared the killing to be a "justified homicide" although they announced the intention to investigate the affair. That evening, as word of Bunch's death and manner of his death spread, there was a small riot at the stockade by inmates. The next day, several prisoners filled out army "510" forms requesting press interviews to counter the army version of "justified homicide," and asking to talk with superiors about bad conditions in the stockade. Requests were all denied. On Oct. 14 the prisoner assembled at 7:30 a.m. for role call and work detail assignments; when the first man of the group who had filled out "510" forms was called, the whole group answered "here" in unison, and began to sing "We Shall Overcome" and "America the Beautiful." One man read an improvised "510" listing grievances to an officer. (One grievance was shotgun-carrying by guards.) Then the prisoners began singing and did not respond to the inaudible loudspeaker order of the Captain to join the work detail, but lingered on the grass, still singing. For such insubordination, the legal officer of the base, on October 23, prepared a mutiny charge against the 27 prisoners involved in this protest, and on November 5 preliminary, investigatory hearings began and are at this date continuing. The information gained in these hearings will be used by Lt. General Stanley
Larson to determine if these men should be court martialed on mutiny charges. (Maximum penalty for mutiny is death; minimum could be as much as 20 years.) It should be noted that there have been more than 30 attempted suicides by twenty men at the stockade in less than a year, waved off as "suicide gestures" by the Post Advocate.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF CLERGY AND LAYMEN CONCERNED ABOUT VIETNAM

Listed below are the members of the National Committee of CALCAV. At least 35 of these have recently become members of this committee. Because of space limitation, we will not list the members in each issue of the Newsletter. Therefore it is suggested this issue be saved, for future reference to this list.

Dr. Amitai Etzioni, distinguished scholar on world affairs, writes: "During the last four years I have been a guest of the U.S. Embassies in 12 Latin American and African countries. I found—and the embassies made no secret of it—that the United States is involved militarily in at least eight of these countries, to the same extent and in the same form that it was involved in Vietnam between 1950 and 1954. Thus, if the situation in Vietnam is viewed as a process of escalation, in which lower-level commitments generate pressures to move to commitments on the next level—so far in an endless sequence—then it must be noted that in at least two of the countries, Bolivia and Guatemala, we have already passed through three or four phases of the process." (Last month, a team of U.S. Special Forces advisers arrived in Argentina to train soldiers in anti-guerilla warfare against Peronists and radical opposition.) -- from Tristram Coffin's Washington Watch No.39