

We have a responsibility to produce a work so others in the movement or those who will come to the movement will use in their organizational development.

An Evolving Outline

- I. Participants should start off by writing a brief political history of themselves.
- II. Focus should be given to social practice at the time of contact with the O.
- III. Once contact was made tell of your political and organizational practices.
- IV. Political movements
 - a) Black Protest
 - b) Civil Rights
 - c) Black Liberation
 - d) Viet Nam war/ First Phase
 1. teach-ins
 2. protest rallies/ the Berkeley Student Movement
 - e) Women issues
 - f) Counter-cultural
 1. Hippies
 2. war related environmental issues
 - g) Anti-imperialist movement/ Viet Nam War/ Second Phase
 1. draft resistance
 2. forming national student organization /SDS
 3. Black Panther Party
 4. Chicago National Democratic Convention
 5. National movement against US imperialism world wide
 6. Poor People's Campaign
 - h) Anti-imperialist movement/Viet Nam War/ Third Phase
 1. National coordinated student protest at all major colleges
 2. radical black labor movement/ Detroit
 3. Anti war liberation zones
 4. left wing physical confrontation with the police
 5. Chicago 8
 - I) Anti-imperialist movement/Viet Nam War/ Fourth Phase
 1. left wing bombing
 2. counter-cultural trends
 - a. communal living
 - b food coops/ natural foods
 - c. women's un-conventional social practice
 - d. women's health groups
 - e. book stores
 - f. child care issues
 - g. gay rights issues
 3. mass rallies
 4. election of blacks to city, state, national political offices

5. students transformed into revolutionaries
 6. Native American treaties movement
- J) Anti-imperialist movement/Viet Nam War/ Fifth Phase
1. The making of black revolutionaries
 2. revolutionary politics/ The O
 3. Socialist politics/labor organizing
 4. FBI operations in full gear
 5. CIA's domestic operations
 6. anti-repression movement

Short Political History

- Mid-1960's Work on George McGovern political campaigns with mother, stuffing envelopes, literature drops etc.
- 1969-1970 Organize anti-war demonstrations while in high school
- 1970-1973 Some anti-war participation, participation in gathering items for Wounded Knee occupation
- 1973-1975 St. Paul Tenants Union – providing legal assistance, organizing tenant actions (part of Legal Assistance of Ramsey County)
- Summer 1974 1st O contact while organizing in St. Paul projects (African-American). I was having difficulty in taking process forward, there were many competing forces other than Housing Authority to contend with, contact with leadership who had knowledge of some of these forces. At the time, I was living in a commune in Selby-Dale with shared responsibilities (shopping, cooking, cleaning etc.), but no shared political philosophy. As part of communal living we shopped and volunteered at Selby Coop. Other aspects of my practice at that time included formation of St. Paul Freedom Brigades, a self-styled militant organization that attended demonstrations and sold leftist literature at demos, farmers' markets etc. We wore berets and had a banner. I drafted a manifesto that was agreed by the participants. I also helped John Gehan in a mayoral election. This brought me into contact with Black community power structure (Robert Hickman et. al.). I also volunteered some time at a community restaurant on West 7th that I believe was called Commonwealth. Many of the people involved in this restaurant helped start the coop bakery in St. Paul originally known as Our Daily Bread, later PNB.
- 1974-1975 Involved more at Selby Coop, part of movement to transform with M., KE, BDB and Clarence, including taking down window boards, cleaning up store, refinishing floor, expanding food selection. There were battles over direction and growing CO paranoia, but many of the participants just walked away, exception of Tom Copeland. Hiring of coordinators from community, Levy and Maggie.
- Becoming a representative to PRB from Selby, participating in meetings to organize against reactionary forces leading up to PW takeover.

Beginning of ITP process, first assessment, confusion on what it all meant along with a fair amount of moralism over assessment, struggling with concept of MOT.

1975-1976 Working in PW, struggles with finances, trying to get funds, getting duped by infiltrator, loss of PW, following court cases over PW.

Print shop: learning all aspects of printing, working in collective atmosphere with C/SC

Relationship with Carol

1977-1980 Birth of Connie, practice with child care, use of DM/ITP in child development.

Law school

Practice at PNB, working shifts

1980-1981 Graduate law school NYC; struggle with discipline when on own

1981-1995 Child care practice, development (Connie and N); largely on my own with erratic results in use of tools

PBN legal issues, conversion to coop, tax matters

CCC legal and tax matters

ECC legal and tax matters

Study and summarization groups

Brief History

b) Civil Rights

Engaged in demonstrations and educational programs connected to college, neighborhood and church.

d) Viet Nam War / First Phase

1. Teach-ins

Participated in presentations and debates; organized and managed political and information events for students at college

2. Protest rallies

Participated in rallies and demonstrations at two colleges and in their cities

i) Anti-imperialist movement / Viet Nam War / Fourth Phase

2. counter-cultural trends

b. food coops / natural foods

Worked at local food coop (before learning about coop movement)

f. child care issues

Worked in early stages of coop child care center; worked in program with children; participated in maintenance work

4. election of blacks to city, state, national political offices

Worked in campaign of first black woman to run for the city council

j) Anti-imperialist movement / Viet Nam War / Fifth Phase

The O

Social Practice at Time of Contact with O:

Worked with MDAC, a parent childcare coop, around developing the coop and working in the program with children as well as in maintenance and construction. Engaged in struggle with the original organizers whose leadership had lost track of programmatic aims and neglected the program. At the same time several of the original organizers continued to work with parents to bring the program to a higher level without losing track of the political aims. Worked to locate and purchase a building for MDAC to insure that the program would continue at about the time we and our child left MDAC. This work included finding a suitable building (a former restaurant) for sale at a reasonable price, and obtaining enough funding to purchase the building.

In retrospect I view those years as critical in being able to respond to the Coop Movement because of the material work in a program with progressive political aims (child development, organizing people around their economic needs, development of women's leadership) It was also the basis for my level of understanding of the aims of the Coop Movement especially at the stage of taking a class stand.

Political and Organizational Practices in the O

1975 - 1976: Worked in the development of cadre groups as the Twin Cities left groups moved into the O including most former NAM members.

1976: Member of an internal political education formation,

1976 - 1980: Worked with Youth Farm Program. Roles and amount of time spent varied in different periods.

Also worked on NB bakery shifts during this period.

1977 - 1979: Worked with the Theatre Program.

1978 - 1979: Worked with Eastside Childcare Program.

1979 - 1980: Worked with computer system group located at NB.

1981 - 1986: Worked with DCP with role much diminished as DCP limited its activities and I started a writing business.

Personal political history

- **Civil Rights:**
Participated in activities of college campus group that promoted civil rights through educational meetings. Initially the person who provided leadership for this group was the protestant minister of the church historically associated with the college. This civil rights group brought black activists to speak at the predominantly white campus.

Joined national demonstration called by Dr. Martin Luther King 1965.

- **Anti war movement**
Campus anti war-activities began about 1966. Participated in campus teach-ins as a learner. Joined campus demonstrations. In 1966 joined national demonstration in Washington, D.C.
- **Women's issues: child care**
After having a child, took a job in a daycare center in West 7th neighborhood. Initiated a community course called "Democratization of the family" by placing an ad in an alternative newspaper. Among the people who responded were families who had contact with New University Conference, a national organization that included in its priorities the organizing of women as a political force for change. The local representatives were made up both of men and women, and their local project was to form the Minneapolis Daycare Action Coalition (MDAC), meant to be a model program for families and a base of action.

The political aims of the program were central in shaping my view of the women's movement and the relationship of child care to women's political development.

The analysis of NUC was that women need low cost, quality child care. Since the largest cost of child care is the labor, the cost of labor needs to be addressed in order to make child care available to all women. Child care is the responsibility of fathers as well as mothers, corporations that benefit from labor of workers with children, non-parents, and government. If parents (and non-parents) are allowed a short, regular time from work to contribute their labor to child care programs, a large portion of the cost of child care can be addressed. As a benefit of cooperative participation, parents can learn from the experience of caring for children in a social setting and can influence the particular program's direction. In order to make this collective approach available to families on a mass level, mothers, fathers, and other supporters would have to struggle with corporations and the existing political system.

Some of the original leaders dropped out because they did not see their political goals in motion quickly enough or shared by the parents they recruited. Most of

the parents were drawn to being in a movement, but the priority of parents was first of all to make the child care program operational. Surprisingly, two men originally connected to NUC and without children in the center stayed and worked consistent shifts for several years. In fact, most of the fathers willingly participated, often providing their own styles of activities.

I played a leadership role in organizing the participants to bring about a licensed, operational daily program for children. Later when it became clear that parents could not cobble together shifts without a paid coordinator, I wrote an application to VISTA for support. The VISTA staff person visited the center, interviewed me, and decided to assign two VISTA volunteers to act as coordinators on the basis that MDAC would strive to become a model for low cost child care for working parents.

Parents did not anticipate that participating in MDAC would challenge the way that parents related to other parents and to their children. Children had to become accustomed to seeing their parents caring for other children. Parents had to struggle with one another to work out how children would be disciplined. In addition, the maintenance required to sustain and improve the facility, which was donated space in a vacant library, was substantial. Work parties were held every weekend to do maintenance, to work on improvements, and to do special projects required by the health inspector. In between, we held group meetings to try to work out logistics, parenting philosophy, and program direction.

There was a mix of people in the program. Although most were influenced by the counter-culture movement, all were working or in school. While we recruited two-parent families because everyone's labor was needed, we were able to carry a few single parents who worked full time and could contribute only on weekend work parties.

MDAC was not able to move beyond providing a cooperative service for its member families, even though several MDAC mothers, including myself, took on leadership roles in the community of child care activists. Two MDAC mothers founded the South Side Child Care Resource Center, a storefront center that held workshops for parents and provided information on child care programs. I became the President of the city regional committee that met in the Resource Center and represented that region on GMDCA, the organization that channeled Federal funding to communities. I also met for over a year with a committee appointed by the University of Minnesota to study the need for child care at the University. The eventual output of the group was the formation of the child care center located on the West Bank of the University.

My early summaries concluded that MDAC failed because it was a counter-culture experiment. This does not adequately characterize the experiment. Whether the families were influenced by the counter-culture movement in some

way or not, with the exception of two families, the participants were working parents who needed low cost child care.

Child care as a service is labor intensive. Parents did make a substantial dent in the cost of child care by covering staff hours and building equipment. However, MDAC still needed some outside funding to bridge the gap between a sustainable program and one that depended on a few dedicated people who put in extraordinary hours to make it work. Just as mothers' labor is unpaid, MDAC operated in a climate where money was scarce for child care programs. Second, the principal center staff person funded by VISTA was a member of NAM and did not consider MDAC to be anything other than a counter-culture job that would allow her to do her real political work in NAM. There was not a critical mass of leadership to move MDAC beyond its survival as a single child care center serving the families largely attached to the University. VISTA had no basis to fund it for another term. When the original families (including our family) "graduated" because their children started public school, MDAC did not have the capacity to maintain the program and it deteriorated. The one thing that kept it alive for a while was that it had received funding from GMDCA to purchase a building. This unusual capital investment reflected that MDAC parents had in fact been able to bring to an initial level, at least, the original long term goals of NUC.

On another level, MDAC was not able to address its longer range goals of organizing women to penetrate the work place by winning time off work (two decades later called "flex time") because the conditions were not there at that historical moment to do so. Women needed to enter in greater numbers into the workforce.

- Experimentation with living, farm
During this same period my spouse and I purchased both a home with another family and a farm with yet another family. We were influenced by the counter-culture movement, but both experiments did not fit the usual pattern that we observed with other people experimenting with counter-culture living. The splitting of the home turned out to be an economic arrangement as well as a child care arrangement. Our co-owners took half the house and we shared child care. They were also members of MDAC. The experiment lasted about a year and a half, and we decided to move out. We were starting to change our food habits, under the influence of the food coop movement while the other family was not. This led to our having two separate shifts in the kitchen, and we found that the space was small for two families.

We did not have clear plans for the farm, but responded to an offer from our neighbors to buy into some land with them. We spent most of the time there and eventually the other couple pulled out. My spouse's father had been a farmer and he hoped that we could eventually develop some kind of way to supplement our income through organic farming of a small crop. We did not have running water

and the house was more of a shack, so all of the time we owned it we were at the stage of slowly making it livable. We got directions on how to do this from our farmer neighbor, who we let use our land for extra grazing. We also helped him with bailing hay.

Initial contact

In 1975 I was invited to join a study group and asked to observe a meeting at the Women's Union. I knew people in the Women's Union but was too involved in child care and work to get involved.

In that same year MDAC was on the verge of foreclosure. One of its leaders, a father still remaining from the original families, contacted some of the former organizers. In a meeting of the whole center, the members and board agreed to formalize an arrangement that people associated with the Coop Organization would take over the organization as its officers. While a few parents antagonistic to the Coop Organization objected, the majority agreed to the change in leadership, provided the families who chose to stay in the program could continue. A number of families did.

Coop struggle: I participated in the food coop struggle but had participated in food coops only as an occasional shopper. My spouse initially made contact with the food coops and talked me into going. He introduced coop foods into our household. I found it inconvenient to shop at the coops because you couldn't put your child in a grocery cart and just walk through. There were too much measuring and packaging. Nevertheless, I admired what people were doing and considered that I was doing parallel work. I also knew two women connected to the coops who were also connected with the child care movement.

I was looking for an organization and responded to the signs of organization and the class struggle. I was asked to join in various tactics throughout the period of struggle in 1975. It had a profound impact on our household and social relationships. We were somewhat older and more settled than many around us, and when the struggle came we broke off many long term relationships with people in MDAC, with work colleagues, and with people in all kind of activities with which we were connected.

1973
1st Study group

EB
updates
2/74

BEANERY
PAPER

ANNOUNCEMENT
OF
CO PW

FEB
75

APRIL
75

MAY
75

3/23/75
Debate on
Beanery
Paper

PRB
mtg

Summer '75
Selby
Baderhorn

NAM

DEC
75

Criticism
of TC & S Union

1975
Our Bully Board
also Ranged

North
Country

Jan
76

March
76

mil City

4/1/76
Legal
Jahresbuch
BPW

11/12
~~FRI~~

26

march on
mil City

11/76
Bryant
Central

1972	March	First All Coop Meeting
1973	November	First study groups
1974	February	Elizabeth Blackwell Women's Center opened
1975	February	Beanery Paper released
	March 23	Debate on the Beanery Paper
	April	Announcement of the CO
		Policy Review Board Meeting
	May	Policy Review Board Meeting
		Takeover of PW
	Summer	Organizing and control of Selby and Powderhorn
	August	Reorganization of Our Daily Bread (later PNB)
	December	Incorporation of NAM into CO
1976	January	Criticism of TC Women's Union paper
	Jan – March	Organizing at North Country, Mill City and Seward
	April 1	Legal assault on PW
	November	March on Mill City Bryant Central Organizing
	December	North Country control
1979		PNB organized as corporation
1981		PNB organized as a legal coop
		DCP works on S/23
1982		DCP job cost development
1983		DCP HP250 conversion
1984		DCP MNI customization
		DCP JL conversion - XT