

The Aims of the Coop Movement

1. To be a weapon in the struggle against the monopolistic profit structure of the food industry.
2. To help alleviate the high cost of living by selling food at low prices.
3. To create jobs for the unemployed and foster working class solidarity on the job and off the job.
4. To educate the unemployed and the working masses on the politics of food; that is, the interconnectedness of:
 - A. working class low wages
 - B. high cost of living
 - C. billions of hungry and starving people in the world
 - D. farmers forced into bankruptcy
 - E. huge profits for monopoly capitalists.

support
your

movement

learn
from
mistakes

ideological
unity
is the key

THE BELIEFS OF THE COOP MOVEMENT

1. Cooperation and mutual help in relations of production bring out all positive aspects of the individual's personality.
2. In contrast, the existing order of social oppression and economic exploitation brings out the negative aspects of human relationships.
3. Human labor produces capital, surplus value, and profit. Wealth is based on labor.
4. Labor, unpaid labor of thousands of people, built the coops, therefore a concerted effort must be maintained to STOP and ELIMINATE all trends to privately own coops.
5. Mutual help in relations of production and volunteer labor are the cornerstone of the coop movement. Upon this cornerstone, thousands of coops will be built and will prevail because this cornerstone is the working masses.

SUPPORT
YOUR



MOVEMENT

The national coop system has now matured economically. That is, it can now make a clear cut class decision as to what road will it consciously follow: the capitalist road of social oppression and economic exploitation, or the revolutionary road toward the elimination of social oppression and economic exploitation. Essentially the question is, does the national coop system wish to reproduce the same capitalist economic arrangement which is based on the principle of private property, or does the national coop system wish to work toward developing a new economic arrangement which will be based on the principle of socialization of surplus value.

The People's Warehouse sees this question as the fundamental principal question from which all other questions are based on in determining future methods of work and the kind of legal structure that will speak to the growing economic necessity to unify and consolidate the national coop system.

In an attempt to systematically address ourselves to the fundamental principal question now facing the national coop system, we see clearly two irreconcilable class distinctions which are preventing the consolidation of the national coop system. The essential understanding of these two class distinctions is the difference in class allegiance.

Fundamental difference number one: the People's Warehouse recognizes clearly the contradictory aspects in the national coop system. On the one hand, there are those coop activists who opportunistically are seeking personal gains and are forming themselves into class cliques to further advance their self motivating interest. DANCe represents this class faction as well as the rising class cliquish trend inside the national coop system. On the other hand, there are many political progressives who clearly recognize the

nature of the social order of capitalism and desire to actively struggle to bring about new changes that will speak to the fulfillment of the Aims of the Coop Movement and the Beliefs of the Coop Movement. This faction in the national coop movement is represented by the People's Warehouse.

Fundamental difference number two: given the two distinct factions inside the national coop system, logically we can see that there are two opposing world views, two opposing methods in problem solving, and two diametrically opposing class positions; one class position supports the social order of social oppression and economic exploitation (we judge by one's practice and not by one's words) and the other class position supports the socialization of surplus value - profits which are shared by the whole of society and for the advancement of society as opposed to privileged classes. It is only through the socialization of surplus value that social oppression and economic exploitation will cease to exist.

In summing up, it is undialectical to think that two opposing political factions with two opposing ideological positions can maintain principled unity inside the same organization or system and at the same time following the dictates of their ideological beliefs.

Fundamentally there are two class ideologies, bourgeois and proletarian. Moreover, all of our actions and desires can be interpreted as either supporting the preservation of the present social system of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or supporting the proletarian movement which has as its aim the institution of scientific socialism. There is no way to escape the influences and beliefs of a class ideology, but we do have a class conscious choice from which to select.

Given the two distinct ideological positions in the national coop system, if the legalization of Trung Brokerage comes off successfully, it will not and can not sustain a systematic and consistent business operation for a long period of time. Because in reality the Trung Brokerage will only be an economic alliance based on a specific set of economic problems owed to a specific economic historical condition which reflects two aspects (1) the subjective growth and development of the national coop system and (2) the objective economic conditions of the national economy. An economic alliance cannot sustain itself without principles of unity based on a class ideology.

LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES

The class struggle which has been going on in the Minneapolis and St. Paul coop system is re-playing itself in the national coop system -- and many of the forms which the struggle took locally are now repeating themselves on a nationwide level.

The attempt to set up the Trung Brokerage is a replay of some of the struggles that came down around the PRB (Policy Review Board) in the Twin Cities.

"The PRB was set up to serve as a legal shield in order to deal with the legal problems of the People's Warehouse, Inc., in its relationship to the whole coop system.

"The PRB had a double function: (1) on account of the economic growth of the coop system the PRB served as a legal shield. This legal shield was only as strong and can only be as strong as the degree of political unity. (2) Not being able to build ideological

unity, the utopian socialists succeeded in building political unity with its opposition. The material basis of this unity stems from the fact that all political tendencies had an invested interest in the coops, for whatever reason; and it is precisely this fact that compelled them to rally under the legal shield - the PRB.

"Why did the PRB succeed in rallying the coop system whereas the All Coop Meeting (an earlier and more informal attempt to unify and centralize the Twin Cities coop system) failed? This was because the All Coop Meeting could only operate on ideological unity, which was impossible; while the PRB could offer a material basis for political unity, which was economic benefits and legal protection.

"It must be noted that ideological unity transcends political unity, because political unity comes about out of necessity.

Proletarian ideological unity depends upon Marxist-Leninist principles as the essential ingredients in maintaining one-ness of commitment to a socialist workers revolution. On the other hand, political unity is not absolute. Political unity is always conditional depending on time, place and conditions. Political unity is based on alliances which are usually established out of expediency and necessity, whereas ideological unity is based on common class allegiance and revolutionary class commitment.

"It was only out of legal necessity that the PRB served as a unifying force.

"The failure to unify the coop system ideologically made ideological struggle in coop expansion and development inevitable."

The PRB, which was conceived out of an attempt to bring political

unity to the swiftly expanding but disunited coop system, turned into its opposite -- a bureaucratic parliamentary monster which attempted to squash ideological struggle and hold back every progressive development in the coop movement. DANCe comes directly out of the controlling interests of the PRB, and represents a continuation of its policies and practices.

In bodies like the PRB, the ideological struggle must be held back, because it threatens the fragile political unity which is based on false premises.

As the ideological struggle within the Twin Cities coops escalated, a defined legalist camp arose from the centers of power of the PRB. This legalist camp expressed their natural class allegiance by attempting to set up legal contracts to enforce the false political unity, with the unspoken assumption that the armed force of the state ultimately backed up the shaky agreements.

Therefore, although the PRB was initially conceived as a legal shield to protect the coop movement against the legal offensives of the ruling class, as it turned into its opposite it became used as a legal club whereby the capitalist roaders in the coops could call in the ruling class repressive apparatus to protect their property interests and repress their political opposition.

Similarly the Trung Brokerage plan has been conceived out of legal and economic necessity rising out of changing material conditions. Growth and expansion of the coops on a quantitative basis have given rise once again to qualitative changes in the need for new forms of organization to meet new demands on the coops as a form of struggle.

The Trung Brokerage plan is an expression of the desire and need to unify the coop movement as a nationwide force in the people's struggle against decaying imperialism.

However, how is this unification to be brought about? Will the mistakes of the Twin Cities coops be repeated in attempting to establish false unity via a legal contract (like the PRB) while attempting to repress the ideological struggle? We have seen how self defeating this road is, because the ideological class struggle can not be repressed, particularly not in revolutionary times such as we are now entering-- repression only makes the struggle grow more intense.

THE OUTCOME OF THE MISTAKES OF THE PRB WAS THE PRESENT
TWO-LINE STRUGGLE BETWEEN DANCe AND THE PEOPLE'S WAREHOUSE

An economic alliance can't sustain itself without principles of unity based on a class ideology. The creation of DANCe is a case in point. Although DANCe and the People's Warehouse haven't and don't co-exist in an economic alliance, ideological unity is still basic in maintaining organizational unity even within the same system of organization.

In this connection, in our pamphlet The Indictment of DANCe we said:

"...the economic contradiction in the Twin Cities coop system has been raised to the point that the objective conditions can't any longer give reality to the existence of two warehouses in the same city and serving the same coop stores -- the two warehouses being mutually competitive because of political differences which stem from class allegiance. In the case of DANCe, its class allegiance

is to the monopoly capitalist class and in the case of the People's Warehouse, its class allegiance is to the working class -- the producers of all wealth and the massive unemployed.

In addition, in "The Update of the Coop History Paper" we said:

"The intensification of the contradiction between the CO and the petty bourgeois reactionaries led to the coop split. This split manifested itself in the creation of DANCe. The PW was recently invited to take part in a public forum to discuss the differences between us and DANCe. The following is taken from the PW's position paper which was read at the forum:

"Now we will proceed to answer the three questions this forum has put before us:

1. Why is there two warehouses?
2. What are the differences?
3. Why don't both sides list their grievances instead of character assassination?

"1. Based on the unity and struggle of opposites, which is a fundamental law of development, the two warehouses were a natural but temporary outgrowth of a two-line struggle in the coops. This two-line struggle is between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie over the question of leadership and control of the coops.

"2. The differences are political differences. The most distinct difference is the contradiction between saying and doing. We all say we are opposed to monopoly capitalism, but the CO and the People's Warehouse have demonstrated their long-range commitment to the revolutionary struggle against monopoly capitalism.

"The coops will lose their revolutionary vitality and die if they cut themselves off from the source of revolutionary vitality, the working class. The CO has not only talked Marxism and Leninism, it has worked actively to transform the dominant class content of the coops from petty bourgeois to working class.

"The CO has organized itself out of the People's Warehouse and brought in new working class leadership and provided jobs for working people.

"3. Why don't both sides list their grievances instead of character assassination?

"Having said that the difference between us, DANCe and PW, is of an ideological nature, to respond to the stated question without preface will be to disregard our political position.

"Members and supporters of DANCe have clearly shown from their practice which class they will side with in order to protect their petty bourgeois class interest. Based on their selfish interest, the opposition to the People's Warehouse have called on the bourgeois legal system to repress the legitimate working class forces in the People's Warehouse. We all know that the bourgeois legal system was set up as a tool to suppress and repress all revolutionary forms of struggle (A month after this statement was made the petty bourgeois reactionaries gave names of CO members to the Minneapolis police intelligence division.)

"By DANCe having used and using the bourgeois repressive tool, the legal system, to suppress defined working class interest, we clearly see DANCe as a class enemy of the working class."

We have said and we will repeat that DANCe is illegitimate, there is only one legitimate warehouse in the Twin Cities -- the People's Warehouse.

The PW has taken a position that it will never be connected to any economic endeavors as long as DANCe is connected. Having learned our lesson and learned it well, the PW disrespects DANCe as being an illegitimate warehouse considering the under-handedness and its conspiracy to economically destroy the PW. What guarantee do we have to say that DANCe won't do it again? There is no guarantee because the PW and DANCe stand ideologically opposed.

If any warehouse in the national coop system takes seriously the purpose and aim of the Trung Brokerage then there is only one reason to explain why DANCe hasn't been denounced and economic sanctions brought to bear in an attempt to close DANCe down -- DANCe's action must have been correct. Nevertheless, it should be a political outrage for any warehouse that proclaims to be in opposition to monopoly capitalism to allow the existence of DANCe to continue another day without an all-out effort to close it down.

The PW has taken the position that it will not and can't take part in any collective economic endeavor until this conference passes a strong resolution denouncing DANCe as illegitimate.