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## "RISK" STUDENTS AND THE SWATHMORE MOVEMENT

The SDS Labor Committee supports the SASS demand for the admission of several "risk" students. The demand for 10-20 "risks" represents the first tentative, moderate expression of what should rightly become a major focus of any movement which seriously hopes to significantly alter the character of the university and the society which it is supposed to serve. We would recommend a university policy which would guarantee admissions to a substantial number of black and white working class youth. Moreover this is not a matter of moral preference. We would contend that the enrollment of ghetto high school victims and their white counterparts must be a leading feature of a program intent on reversing the disgusting decay of the human and material resources in our country. This is also to suggest that failing to adopt such an enrollment policy as our own guarantees our futures as rather pathetic managers of an accelerating social rot.

### Ghetto Education and Modern Productive Labor

The demand for a four year college education or its equivalent for expanded numbers of black and white working class youth otherwise expresses the country's immediate need for a greatly enlarged modern productive labor force - that is a working population equipped with the skills required to operate the most advanced technologies presently associated with the military and aerospace industries. That this sort of training is simply not taking place must be immediately apparent to anyone entering a ghetto high school. In fact the opposite is occurring. Skill levels of all kinds and subsequent employment possibilities are declining for thousands. The increasingly diluted academic pabulum served up in the average ghetto classroom is ruining the futures of a majority of ghetto students, leaving them unfit to man even the most primitive technologies connected to the most backward industries (garment for example). High school has become a one-way street to the army, unemployment, welfare rolls or at best \$1.60/hour back-breaking jobs.

This destruction of human life and potential is only appropriately reflective of a more general decay of the whole of society productive powers. Tales of growing poverty and even substantial starvation are too common to need repetition here. Of less common knowledge is the recent decline in living standards of the whole of the working population reflected in a three year trend toward lower real wages (proceeding at a 7.8% annual rate as of Oct.), caused by a 6% yearly inflation and an apparently uncontrollable tax spiral. Massive consumer needs are going largely unmet. Supplies of schools, hospitals, housing, urban transit etc. are entirely inadequate and growing more so. Finally basic industry is decades deep in obsolescence. Garment industry technology dates from the 1920's. Much of the steel plant is archaic by European standards. The technology of the metal working industry is the oldest in the industrialized world. The same applies to the shipbuilding and railroad industries and even to those sectors of the electrical industry not directly connected to the military sector. (Extensive documentation of industrial decay can be found in Seymour Melman's book, Our Depleted Society)

In short the country is in the grip of a crisis of underproduction. The productive plant is rotting. The economy is failing to even maintain, much less expand the level of living for most of the working and unemployed population. In the midst of the mess capital flows are headed out of the productive sector of the economy into absolutely non-productive areas. Speculation in industrial stocks and bonds, trading in government and public authority securities, slum real estate speculation, investment in titles to military and aerospace plant and a cancerous expansion of all kinds of parasitic corporate, advertising, financial and government bureaucracies are claiming the lions share of available capital resources. Why these essentially wasteful areas of investment are so overwhelmingly appealing at this time to major financial and corporate interests cannot be competently explained here. What should be obvious however, is that to even make a dent in the three trillion dollar poverty deficit requires the immediate redirection of massive capital flows. It is no exaggeration to say that our country is underdeveloped and underdeveloping at a rapid rate. If that is to stop; if there is to be any hope of eliminating the absolutely abysmal conditions of life confronting



eliminating the absolutely abysmal conditions of life confronting a good one third of the population, there must be a re-industrialization of the U.S. Without the investment of at least \$50 billion a year in the production of expanded means of production and consumption there can be no talk about eradicating poverty or any of its social sicknesses.

This kind of investment policy would lead to the creation of approximately 4 million new productive jobs a year in modernized industries requiring the highest levels of skill and education. Even today, apprenticeship in the newest portions of the printing industry involves the equivalent of a college education. The same is true for much military technology and the military related sections of the electrical industry. The educational requisites of a modern labor force cannot be measured merely in terms of degrees of technical aptitude. To effectively assimilate the knowledge associated with a highly complex economy and culture demands highly developed synthetic and creative intellectual abilities. A policy of productive investment then would mean a greatly augmented program of higher education for presently non-educated and mis-educated youth, so that they might be employed at skill and wage levels consonant with the most advanced parts of the space industry. Program along these lines meets the needs of the country as a whole as well as the immediate aspirations of ghetto and other working class youth for a decent future.

#### The Philadelphia High School Movement

In this connection the Labor Committee condemns Swathmore's admissions policy, because of its de facto exclusion of black and other working class students, and supports and extends the demand raised by SASS. We recognize that such an enrollment policy implies deep-going changes in educational arrangements at Swathmore. Although the problems are serious, we nevertheless believe them to be solvable and in the interest of all Swathmore students.

A high school campaign now being conducted in Phila. provides an example of a possible direction for the Swathmore movement. Several members of the Black Panther Party and the SDS Labor Committee are organizing a high school movement centered mainly, although not exclusively, in some of the major ghetto high schools. The leading demands of that movement are 1. The construction of 33 new schools (a conservative estimate of the city government on the number of new schools needed to relieve overcrowding). 2. Expanded job-training programs for jobs that do exist - many vocational schools train students for nonexistent jobs or offer courses attuned to the automotive and shop practice of two decades ago. 3. Expanded College Preparatory Programs 4. Fully paid college education for all high H.S. graduates who wish to attend but can't afford it. 5. Productive well-paying jobs for H.S. graduates - a recognition that the roots of the school crisis lie with the general conditions of ghetto life and that remedies limited to the school system are chimeras.

Finally, the movement proposes to finance its program by taxing various forms of speculative investment (slum real estate speculation and public authority pork barrel bond issues being the most immediately identifiable) as opposed to any increased wage taxation. This last proposal on financing then concretely links the aims of the high school movement with the needs and interests of the rest of the wage-earning population.

## "STUDENT INTERESTS" ?

The Labor Committee believes that the movement at Swathmore must proceed to link up with broader social layers in the kind of movement outlined above. It should be clear that programmatic struggle aimed at arresting the underproduction crisis is in the immediate interests of black oppressed. We also contend that the fight for re-industrialization, productive jobs and expanded higher education for working class students is in the interests of college students as well. Like it or not, we too are currently being trained as highly "skilled" members of a non-productive labor force. We are headed for "careers" as corporate, financial and government bureaucrats, slick marketing parasites, technicians for the military, apologists for social misery, pokicemen of social discontent in the ghetto classroom, and embarrassed dispensers of inadequate, degrading welfare doles. Our only hope for a decent, productive future depends on joining with the kind of broader movement, embryonically represented by the Phila. high school drive.

DISCUSSION - CRITICISM WELCOME - 8:00P.M. - Tues. 14th. - TABLES