

# Don't Mourn, ORGANIZE!

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## "DON'T FORGET TO ASK FOR HELP AND DON'T FORGET TO GIVE IT."

In the many years that I have been organizing, I must honestly confess that I have all too often had the experience of someone telling me months after I had first met them that I had forgotten (when we first met) to ask them for help. This is an all too common occurrence amongst progressive organizers. All too frequently we fail to let each other know what we can do by way of helping and supporting each other in the struggle. In point of fact, this is another consequence of the sectarianism I have been talking about in these editorials, because, to a large extent, it derives from people over-identifying with what *their organization* is doing and thereby under-identifying with what is being done and its historical and human significance for all oppressed peoples. How many times have sectarian progressives been delighted to hear that only a few people showed up to a meeting or demonstration of *another* organization? All too often I'm afraid. Sectarianism leads to over-protecting the activity that *your organization* is engaging in and as a result others are excluded. So, instead of taking on our real responsibility as developing progressive leadership, which is to constantly find ways to activate more and more people into the struggle in ways in which they are available, we all too often think in terms of *getting people into our organization*, or getting people to accept our perspective or line. While there is certainly nothing wrong with attempting to politically educate ourselves and others, while there is nothing wrong with principled debate, dialogue, and discussion, there is *much* wrong when the debate becomes all important—a thing-in-itself—and when a progressive's social identity becomes exclusively associated with her or his organization rather than with the broad and extended historical struggle of the masses of working and oppressed peoples.

I was pleased to see that in this current issue of *Don't Mourn, ORGANIZE!* many articles conclude with a call for help, with requests made to people for contributions of a political sort, of a material sort, of a financial sort. What I urge you to do is to not treat those endings as something to be ignored, as simply a formality which does not deserve careful reading. Just as so many of us have failed to *ask* for help, so too many of us have stopped listening to that appeal. The development of our network is not merely a place where we

can let others know what *our organization* is doing, but a place where we must openly invite others to participate in the struggle which belongs to all of us. While these battles will not be won by psychological insights in themselves, changing our states of mind, overcoming years and decades of conditioning, not only by bourgeois institutions but by bourgeoisified *progressive* institutions as well, is a vital component of victory. Just as we must organize others, so we must organize ourselves. There are times when our own personal alienation from the struggle (demoralization) can be very much helped by sitting alone for a moment and saying to ourselves, "*Don't Mourn, ORGANIZE!*"

*Don't Mourn, ORGANIZE!* is distributed to you with the expectation that you will in turn distribute it to other progressive individuals and organizations that they too might become actively involved in building this network and expanding our struggle. I urge you to do so, and as well, to continue your financial support of this

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### Nationwide Referendum Under Consideration

The New York Working People's Party (NYWPP) is considering putting out a call for the formation of a Committee for a Nationwide Referendum on the Nationalization of the Energy Industries. Jimmy Carter insists that the energy situation is one of the great crises of our times. But his response to it does not for a moment question the basic Big Business priorities which govern this society. We agree that this issue is of profound significance and, therefore, insist that there be a genuine national dialogue with *all* options placed before the people of this country. The NYWPP is right now in discussion with progressive groupings to see whether it is feasible at this time to form a national committee which would generate a massive petition campaign calling for a nationalization referendum, that referendum in turn would permit a full range of views on this crucial matter. If you are interested please contact the NYWPP at the above address or phone number *immediately*.

publication. Send \$1, \$5, \$10, as much or as little as you can afford. *Spread the Network — Build the Struggle!*

Freda Rosen,  
Coordinator

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