

Ex-Hostages: Heroes or Spies?

By Jerry Schechter

The mass media is having a patriotic field day over the return of the hostages. Let us take a closer look at what is going on though.

According to numerous sources (including Jimmy Carter), in Oct. 1979, David Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger paid Carter a visit, telling him to let the fascist Shah of Iran come to New York for medical treatment. Carter called Bruce Laingen, head of the U.S. embassy in Teheran, asking him what might happen if the Shah came to New York. Laingen reportedly said he thought the embassy would be attacked. Two weeks later it was—with the full knowledge of the U.S. ruling class. Why would the U.S. rulers do this?

The main reason is their declining influence internationally. The U.S., which used to be the richest country in the world, now ranks eighth in Gross National Product. Its influence in Africa and Asia is disintegrating. Given the economic and political pounding the U.S. rulers are taking, only one option is open to them: war, to regain lost markets and spheres of influence. However, after Vietnam, not many people in the U.S. will fight in an imperialist war. Thus, Rockefeller and Co. need to push their pathetic patriotism. And what better way than to engineer a "crisis"—just like the one they created at the Gulf of Tonkin to escalate the Vietnam War.

Patriotic demonstrations ensued, along with anti-Iranian racism. At Stony Brook, only one demonstration of 15 people was organized and was met with a larger counter-demonstration organized by the Inter-

national Committee Against Racism (INCAR). That was the last organized gasp by any pro-U.S., pro-Shah wimps. In isolated instances Iranian students were attacked in the dorms. Thus, the drive to initiate a new imperialist war was given a boost by the hostage "crisis."

For 30 years, the U.S. government had kept the Shah in power. It was the CIA, through the U.S. embassy in Teheran, that led a coup that overthrew the nationalist Mohammed Mossadegh and put the hated Shah back in power in 1953. It was the U.S. that supplied the Shah with the most heinous methods of torturing political prisoners. Thus it should come as no surprise that the U.S. government is thoroughly hated by the Iranian people.

It should also come as no surprise that the U.S., through its embassy, was planning to engineer a military coup in 1979 to overthrow Khomeini and restore a government friendlier to the U.S. William Sullivan, former U.S. ambassador to Iran, admitted this in a Fall, 1980 article in "Foreign Policy." Also, documents taken from the embassy after the takeover have proven this. The hostages are not "heroes," but rather, spies, who were attempting to instigate a new pro-U.S. regime.

The ordeal of the spies has also brought to light the relative decline of U.S. imperialism. The military "rescue" mission organized by Carter was a joke out of a Three Stooges movie, as eight "elite" U.S. soldiers died in the Iranian desert.

Khomeini, Beheshti, and the clerical fascists in the

Iranian ruling class also used the hostage-spies to build their own power base against the liberal fascists in the Bani-Sadr clique. But given the high rate of inflation, the racist attacks on the Kurds, and the Iran-Iraq war, the Khomeini regime needed to deal again with the U.S., mainly for weapons and money. The hostage-spies were no longer useful to them.

For U.S. workers and students, the return of the spies will not alleviate the ravages of inflation, unemployment, racist terror, or the threat of war. The "humanitarian" concern over the spies, even by well-meaning people, is misplaced and distorted. How can people be upset over the relatively mild treatment the spies received (among the "worst" complaints: hair in their food) when the U.S.-backed El Salvador government tortures hundreds daily? How concerned were the humanitarians when the U.S.-backed Shah tortured millions with such devices as strapping the victim to an electrified bed frame (developed by a U.S. "scientist")? How concerned are they when black children are murdered, probably by the KKK, in Atlanta, or six black men murdered, some with their hearts cut out, in Buffalo?

No, we must do away with the system that causes all these evils—capitalism. Without revolution, we are on a treadmill, simply waiting for the next attack to take place. The patriotic hoopla over the hostage-spies is a smokescreen designed to induce us to support and fight for a system that is rotting away. Don't be a sucker for the big bosses.

(The writer is a graduate student and a member of the Progressive Labor Party.)

Equality Interests Both Sexes

By Ray Nicholson

As I have received many malicious responses from the people of the Womyn's Center, I feel it is my responsibility to reply to those who have publicly questioned my opinion which was expressed in a viewpoint on Nov. 17.

Firstly, it is not my goal nor the goal of the People Center to destroy or defame the Womyn's Center. My ideas are not totally discordant with those of the Womyn's Center. I do believe vehemently in equality between the sexes and an end to all types of discriminatory practices not just sexual discrimination.

The point where I seek to differ with the views expressed in Elizabeth Watts' viewpoint (Nov. 19) and the several letters received afterward is that if an organization such as the Womyn's Center (or any campus organization for that matter) receives Polity sponsoring it must have a non-discrimination clause in its constitution.

The Womyn's Center conveniently "could not find" their constitution when I asked for it, so I went to Polity and got it from them. This copy of the Womyn's Center constitution was so antiquated as to have the organization's name as the Women's Center. It was obvious to me that those women who had formed the organization were certainly not the women in charge of the organization now. It did however contain a non-discrimination clause including the words "on the basis of sex."

I ask the Womyn's Center "Why don't you abide by your own constitution? Why don't you abide by Title IX like other clubs such as LASO, the Newman Club, etc." What the Womyn's Center would say is that these groups selectively discriminate against other groups on the campus. What I say to this is that these clubs and organizations do not discriminate they just sponsor activities that not everyone is interested in. They would then say that only women are interested in the Womyn's Center. To this I say "nonsense" because I am interested in feminism and equality between

the sexes but not in an organization that openly states that I have no place in one of their meetings simply because I was born with male genitals instead of female.

There are, believe it or not, substantial members of men and women on this campus who would be interested in working together for equality, progressive social change and an end to discrimination on the basis of sex. What the Womyn's Center would have us believe is just the opposite—that they are the only people on this campus to be actively interested in feminism or anything related to it.

It is my understanding that it is the philosophy of the Womyn's Center to not allow men to work with them in any way since they believe it would be detrimental to the feminist cause. Not only is this

policy illegal, in violation of the organization's constitution itself, but also, it is detrimental to the cause of equality between the sexes. It also helps serve the desires of the new "moral right" (the people who helped elect Ronald Reagan) since this policy seeks to separate those interested in progressive social change from each other on the basis of sex. Feminism, equality between the sexes, whatever the name, is a form of progressive social change that this new "moral right" is trying to destroy by blocking the ERA and by attempting to make abortion and birth control illegal.

It is my opinion that they have a fair chance of succeeding if the people who are interested in progressive social change (the Womyn's Center, NYPIRG, myself) do not cooperate among themselves to align against this

attempt at instilling a new McCarthyism into the minds of the American people.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am still interested in keeping the idea of the People Center alive. The idea is an organization of women and men aligned together to achieve equality for both sexes in a cooperative and socially aware manner. Last semester when I attempted to start the organization I believe it was too late in the semester to get people interested as finals were approaching rapidly at that time. Hopefully this semester more of you will come to the meetings. As usual they will be advertised in the Notices section of the Statesman classified section.

(The writer is an undergraduate psychology major and a resident of Irving College.)

