



# Getting it together for bengla desh



Thurs. August 5th  
Lafayette Park 11am

A people's navy of two rowboats and a canoe was launched into Manhattan's East River near Pier 36 on Friday morning July 23, as part of a demonstration against the Nixon administration's support for military dictatorship of West Pakistan. The demonstration began with a memorial service for the 600,000 Bengali people who have been killed or have starved to death since the regime of General Yaya Kahn began its aggression against East Pakistan on March 25. The action's immediate aim was to protest the loading of equipment, including military supplies aboard the Pakistani freighter Surtlej. Sister Elizabeth and Priests Neil McLaughlin and Joseph Wenderoth spoke during the service about the need "for people to overcome" their helplessness about the awesome horror in East Pakistan and try to do something about it.

After the memorial service the group of about 100 marched to a site about a mile down the river, where the three boats were launched. The plan was for the nine activists in the People's Navy to place their boats in front of the Surtlej as a blockade. However the situation did not develop that way, as the people in the boats learned from some friendly dockworkers that the Surtlej wouldn't set sail until Tuesday July 27. The People's Navy returned to shore after a few hours and at a meeting later that afternoon decided to resume the blockade on Tuesday.

A similar action occurred on July 14, in Baltimore where a small number of rowboats and canoes spent three days in the harbor in an effort to keep the Pakistani freighter Padma from docking. Seven activists were arrested and charged with misdemeanors, and were released shortly after. That action helped precipitate a decision on the part of the International Longshoremen's Association to refuse to load the Padma. Although Local 829 reversed its position two days later and loaded the ship (the Captain had been able to persuade the unionists that no arms were aboard) the initial receptivity of the Longshoremen can be considered a major victory. The good relationship which developed between the demonstrators and the trade unionists had as one result an invitation for a four person delegation including two East Bengalis to go to the International Longshoremen's convention in Miami to discuss the issues of shipment to Pakistan. The delegation's work at the convention proved partially successful as the Longshoremen voted positively on a resolution recommending that locals not load any military supplies bound for West Pakistan.

One fact which must be understood by the people in the movement and communicated to the public in general, is that "non military" economic and material assistance also has a major role in maintaining the West Pakistan forces in East Bengal. According to Dr. Ebal Ahmad a Pakistani scholar and a defendant in Harrisburg Conspiracy, without U.S. economic aid the dictatorship's troops would have to be withdrawn within a few months. It is impossible to over-emphasize the urgency of the situation and the need to mount actions against U.S. complicity immediately. As the World Health Organization has pointed out, if the army is not withdrawn this summer's crops will not be planted, and a famine will ensue, with an estimated ten to fifteen million Bengali people dying from starvation by the winter.

East Bengal - During the last two weeks, bombs or grenades have exploded every night in Dacca. Thursday night (July 22) three powerful blasts were heard.

The heaviest incident of the week was a co-ordinated bombing attack Monday night (July 18) when five power stations were damaged, two of them destroyed. The explosions left most of the city of Dacca without electricity for nearly a day and power was restored by routing current around the damaged stations. The clandestine transmitter, Radio Bengla Dosh, announced the power station bombings in advance.

Attacks against bridges and other communications by the guerrillas have increased markedly in the past weeks. Rail communications between the port of Chittagong and Dacca remain out.

Apparently, Bengalis who fled to India after March 25, when West Pakistan's army moved against East Pakistan, and who enrolled in Indian guerrilla schools now had graduated and returned to Pakistan. (The March attack followed elections last winter in which candidates favoring an autonomous East Pakistan won a majority.)

Meanwhile, a self-proclaimed President Yahya said that if India helped the rebels further - by helping them establish a base in East Pakistan for instance - he would regard the move as an outright attack. To quote the man: "I shall declare a general war and let the world take note of it."

The President also revealed that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the East Bengali leader, would go on trial before a military court "very soon." The trial, he said, would be held in secret. He did not reveal the exact charge to be brought against Sheikh Mujib but said it would carry the death penalty.

At a spontaneously organized community meeting of twenty five people at St. Stephen's Church last Tuesday July 27th, the framework for a demonstration was set. The theme of the action was projected as "Nixon the Merchant of Death" People are going to wear black robes and sheets and paint their faces to symbolize the hundreds of thousands of deaths that are a result of U.S. economic and military aid. Dye sheets, bring one for a friend.

A permit is being sought for the Lafayette Park beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday August 5th. Sisters and brothers at the meeting felt that by rallying first at the park, the action could remain flexible and the group could move from the area in front of the White House to where it liked in the lunch hour.

There will be a second meeting at St. Stephen's Church (16th and New

ton) Monday Aug. 2nd to prepare for August 5th and perhaps for advance leafleting of government buildings.

The government of the United States may be the only country in the world that has not cut off all economic support of Pakistan and its dictator Yahya Kahn. Even Great Britain has cut off all shipments to Pakistan and there are many members of Parliament who are said to support Bangla Dosh, amazing when you remember that Pakistan was once a part of the Commonwealth. Meanwhile once more tricky Dick keeps the blood flowing and watches the first major famine in centuries develop.

The people of East Bengal have been exploited by the West for too long. The U.S. sponsored mass slaughter and suffering are intolerable. The East Bengalis must be independent and Yahya Kahn's reign of terror ended. **LONG LIVE BENGAL DESH !!!**



## Free clinic to make house calls

The Washington Free Clinic, whose no bull shit approach to people and their problems needs no introduction, is seeking to expand their services to include communal houses.

In a new program designed to gather and share information about commune lifestyle, medical and mental health team members are prepared to offer many of these services already being conducted daily at the Free Clinic. If invited, members would be happy to live in the commune long enough to share their knowledge and skills and get to know the people at a meaningful level.

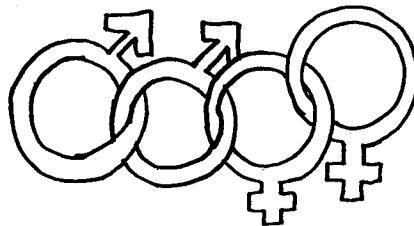
Depending on the need, medical teams will be available to provide treatment and counseling in pediatrics, V.D., abortions, and birth control.

Mental health team members will make visits to teach methods in group conflict resolution when a crisis arises, and will provide training and information sharing on group problem solving technique and information for people interested in starting their own communes.

Of highest priority to both free clinic teams is the safeguarding of the privacy and sanctity of communes and their inhabitants.

Anyone interested in seeing a program of this sort get under way, or with ideas or suggestions that you would like to share, call John at 420-1894.

## Gay rap groups at free clinic every tuesday night



About three months ago, I went to the Friday night Open Rap Group at the Free Clinic. Considering the obstacles that had to be overcome, the noise in the waiting room and hassles from staff members about noise we were making, it was on the whole a good experience. Still, I had come away from it feeling somewhat incomplete. As a gay person, I felt that some of my issues were not being dealt with and also, I felt, a sense of discomfort from the other people in the group in regards to my gayness. I had stated in the group, in answer to a question, that I was gay, and because of this one of the women came to me later and expressed the fact that as a gay woman, she had felt some of the same oppression in the group that I had.

As a result, the two of us plus another gay male decided to try and

get together a GAY rap group on Tuesday night. The first night, largely because of a lack of advertising, we had four people. But by the third week, we had grown to about 9 or 10. From there the growth was pretty constant, until one week it zoomed up to about 25. Instead of breaking down into smaller groups we all stayed together. The following week we talked about the advantages and disadvantages in staying together in a large group. Mostly, people felt positively about the sense of community we felt.

Every Tuesday night at 8 PM at the Washington Free Clinic, an open gay rap group is held. The gay men and women who have attended the rap sessions have found the interaction between other gay people & themselves to be a positive alternative to traditional groups.