

Letter from [unclear] chapter of [unclear]

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R.U. CADRE EFFECTS ON VVAW-WSO

One of the longest working members of our chapter gives these thoughts on the more personal effects of the crisis in VVAW-WSO. It speaks for all of us:

"After being a member of VVAW-WSO for four years, I have seen great changes in the organization and great changes in myself. These changes have included personal, as well as political, change, which, to me, must coincide. I started out as a veteran who was against the war in Vietnam. I was strictly an anti-war advocate. My viewpoint wasn't yet developed into seeing the Vietnam War in a larger context. I really saw it as a "mistake to be corrected". Through my contact with other people who viewed the war as I did, and especially through the contact I had with people in VVAW-WSO, I began to expand my viewpoint of the world. In the organization, I ran across people who were very concerned with questions such as racism, sexism, and imperialism. The meaning of these words wasn't very clear to me, and at times I was even threatened by the concepts; but through the respect and trust which I found in people in the organization, and their willingness to educate me in a thoughtful and respectful way, these concepts became something real that touched my own life. This trust and respect enabled me to carry on in my own life with these real concepts and enabled me to fight against the racism and sexism within myself and in conjunction with others.

"In the past year within VVAW-WSO, the concepts have remained (racism, sexism, imperialism) and the idea of fighting against them, but a new dimension has been added or, I think I should say, a dimension has been lost. The dimension is trust and respect that we held for each other and our differing opinions on these various issues and how we should go about combatting them. This loss of respect and trust is in direct correlation with R.U. members joining VVAW-WSO.

"I first heard of the R.U. at the Buffalo NSCM. People started introducing themselves as R.U. My only alarm came when someone from New England began to criticize the conduct and practice of R.U. members he had had contact with in Boston. What alarmed me was the vehemence with which this criticism was answered. There is the possibility that the criticism from the member from Boston was unprincipled. The criticism from members of the N.O. who answered it was unprincipled. All that I heard in answer to the member was that he was a slime and other things about what a nasty person he was. I criticized the N.O. for their conduct and it was not accepted. At this same meeting, the N.O. position paper on the united front strategy against Imperialism strategy emerged. A paper, I learned later, was exactly like the Revolutionary Union strategy for a United Front.

"From this paper put out by the N.O. another interesting thing emerged that would come to a head later on. The thing that emerged was something called the "two-line struggle". That is, there are two ways or two areas that political struggle can take place in, either bourgeois or proletarian. You are one or the other. Adversaries or allies; good or bad. This same adversary relationship also emerged by the time of the St. Louis NSCM as a principle by which political struggle is viewed. This adversary viewpoint is also well documented in just about every R.U. publication printed. You are either in the bourgeois camp or the proletarian. In light of this two-line struggle business, the unfortunate thing for VVAW-WSO is that viewpoints that fall outside whatever line or strategy is being pushed are not

allowed for. Other viewpoints are stifled; who wants to be labeled an "agent of the bourgeoisie" or "Trotskyist" or whatever? This simplistic viewpoint of the world (two lines) doesn't exactly contribute to an atmosphere where learning and constructive understanding can take place. This affects the democracy of the whole organization (by eroding the basis for democracy -- respect and trust for the value of different ideas and viewpoints).

"Another dimension of the erosion or downgrading of democracy in VVAW-WSO by R.U. cadre is the method by which the cadre operate within VVAW-WSO. R.U. cadre come into a meeting with a solid block or line on one position and that position is strictly adhered to, given cadre discipline. That is fine for the R.U. but it puts those without that preordained line in a reactive position; and instead of people coming together and learning from each others' experiences, we find ourselves constantly reacting to the cadre (R.U.) position."

Many have pointed out that the R.U. cadre in VVAW-WSO can always be recognized by their forthrightness in putting out their line. We can also recognize them by their language. We are disgusted with the introduction into our discussions of words like "scum", "slime", "bloated toad", "trash", and nauseam. Is it VVAW-WSO or R.U. that has constituted chapters in New Jersey, Texas, Washington State, Oregon and Detroit? What sort of cadre comes new to the organization and introduces and presses an expulsion motion against a long-standing member, as happened at the Ohio regional with the Detroit chapter? In Southern California, B.R. did not serve VVAW-WSO in his leadership position by participating in the travesty of 30 people expelling 150 members of the Northern California sub-region. These examples of R.U. cadre contributions to VVAW-WSO indicate to us that they have been destructive.

MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT. WE CRITICIZE R.U. CADRE, NOT BECAUSE THEY CLAIM TO BE COMMUNIST, BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE HYPOCRITES. IT IS THEIR PRACTICE WE REJECT.