February 25th
Saturday 8:00 pm Playreading will be at the Birong's (599 Glen Drive), on Saturday the 25th of February at 8pm. Call Ms. Mona Birong at 233-5995 for more information.

February 26th
Sunday 10:00 am Prairie Dances - From Bourree to the Boston Bump, a FAMILY SERVICE, all are welcomed!

February 26th
Sunday 1:00 pm You are invited to come, bring your friends, and join Boyce Totz in celebration of a cottage studio, a winter lake and a showing of recent gouache and water-color paintings - just a stones throw from the Yahara River, at 1435 Morrison Street, Madison. The showing is from 1-5 pm. Please give Boyce a call at 255-8647 for further information.

March 5th
Sunday 10:00 am "My Turned On Teacher", George Cramer, teacher and artist, front and center and all around the room. This will be the opening Sunday of Theron Caldwell's lay-ministry, a morning dedicated to the proposition that if learning leaves you cold now days there's somthing terribly wrong between sender and receiver.

March 6th
Monday 7:30 pm There will be a Board meeting on March 6th, at 7:30 pm, at Diane Miracle's (3980 Plymouth Circle). All are welcome to come to the meeting. See you there!

March 12th
Sunday 10:00 am "The Way We Are, Now That We Mention It", A direct look at what is Unitarian Universalism and how we react to that at Prairie. Leaders, Arnie Clay and Theron Caldwell.

March 17th
Friday 9:00 pm First Unitarian Society would like to announce (drum roll please): the Saint Pat's Follies, with The Original Hyperion Oriental Fox Trot Orchestra! Presented at First Society on Friday, March 17th, Between 9 and 12 pm. A maximum of 200 tickets ($3.75 each) are available at the Adult Programs Table (following Sunday service) and from the church office at 900 University Bay Drive, 233-9774.
Jack and Mona Birong are proud grandparents. Lindy and Husband Bill Hinrichs have a daughter Michell(e), born on Saturday, February 11th. All are faring well.

The Larger Prairie circle of those who are no longer in Madison need to hear that Roland Parrish, one of the founding members of Prairie, died of cancer in late January. He was seriously sick for only the last 10 days, having surmounted the disease for 16 years. We are very grateful to Avis for coming, as always, to the Sunday meetings. As we struggle to fill the gap in Prairie, discovering repeatedly how many behind-the-scenes responsibilities he carried out, we remember Roland - direct, open, self-effacing and joyful - and we are proud to have been included in his circle. - A friend.

PRAIRIE CELEBRATES ITS 10TH BIRTHDAY!

PRAIRIE will celebrate its 10th anniversary this April 30th at our regular Sunday morning service. We want it to be a memorable celebration.

A correction! The poem above is missing its title! It should read as follows:

I BELIEVE (A TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS)

Sorry folks!

THE CHURCH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY
An Address by David Lisman

Some here have contended we should seldom or never take any form of social action? Why? I believe there are several reasons.

In the first place debating social policy and becoming involved in social action may conflict with your basic purpose for coming to Prairie. Many of us come for fellowship or personal growth. It is a pleasant interlude in the rat-
race, a moment when we can enjoy each other’s company and ponder the meaning of life. Social action, we may feel, only brings more aggravation. We come here to get away from that, not invite more of it.

We must admit that while for some social action can have a genuine therapeutic effect and actually deepen personal relations, for others it may have an alienating effect. Moreover there is the danger of the social activist using group action to escape from dealing with his or her inner concerns, and in so doing treating others as objects rather than persons. As the Commission V says, in social action groups there is often a tension between obtaining an objective and respecting the feelings and the ideas of the people involved. Any error would best be on the side of over-stressing concern for the feelings of the persons involved to the exclusion of effective action, rather than the contrary. But I believe we performed admirably in this respect during the recent issue. In any case, social policy procedures should take into account the very personal side of our fellowship.

In the second place, you may believe that the church should not engage in social action because despite our historical precedent, this is simply not the function of a church. The church should be a place for fellowship and personal growth alone.

It's interesting to note that in the Protestant movement at large there has been a split between those who believe the function of the church is to minister to one's soul and those who believe it should be to change the world. This conflict was most bitter during the period of history called the Social Gospel led by Walter Rauschenbush, a Baptist, and more recently during the civil rights movement and the Vietnam war. It is an issue that is far from settled in the traditional Protestant denominations, although at present it appears that for many of the denominations, including ours, concern for social justice has been replaced by preoccupation with the human potential movement stressing interiority over social action. It has been a time of retrenchment.

I can understand theologically why a Christian may wish to give priority to his soul over the concerns of the world. After all, he has an otherworldly philosophy. But few Unitarians have such justifications. We have in the last century primarily been Humanists. With the death of God and the disappearance of the three-storied universe we are left with this world on our hands and left with the realization that if we don’t do anything about our world who will?

Whether we are humanists, naturalists, or deists or subscribe to some form of Transcendence, I believe we would all agree we are beings in the world who are influenced by the physical and social conditions of our existence. As even Sartre, the most radical defender of existential freedom, has said, it makes a difference whether we’re born Chinese or French or American.

This, as you may recall, is where I have criticized the self-help movement. Concealed in the human potential movement at large is a secular pietism, namely, the assumption that if we become our true selves, society will be transformed as if by magic. This ignores the very real social obstacles to even becoming our “true selves”, if there is such a thing. It may not even be possible to become such a self in a corporate capitalist society. So if anything has to be changed, it is the system as much as the self. Nurturing our inwardness privately or as a church, while important for inner strength, in itself will not solve those problems which are the source of much of our personal frustration. In the words of Commission V, “What shall it avail a church to strengthen itself internally, yet remain irrelevant to the irrelegious structure of the society in which it is based?” (11)

Actually, rather than threatening interiority, group social action may be the best means of connecting our inner and external concerns. In the wake of the events of the late sixties and early seventies, many of us feel rather powerless as individuals in a society of confusing and complex institutions. In our highly organized and impersonal society, group action may prove to be one of the essential ways, not only to survive as individuals, but to relieve individual suffering and to increase opportunities for individual growth and fulfillment.
Jallings objects to HR6869

The ACLU predicts that enactment of this bill into law would triple the prison population, by shifting emphasis from rehabilitation and parole of prisoners to longer sentencing and by jailing citizens for labor union activity and political demonstrations.

It is not true, as advertised, that the new bill is cleansed of clauses violating civil liberties: A few blatant ones have been amended out, but hundreds remain.

"placing a person in fear of economic loss" would invite felony charges against striking members of the unions at Madison Newspapers Inc. Actionless crimes could be used to destroy legitimate labor organizations. Even individuals who have committed no act, not even walked a picket line, only attended a planning meeting or discussion of goals and methods, would be liable under these provisions.

For details on S1437/HR6869 and the more reasonable alternative HR2371 contact the Madison Coalition to Stop S1, P.O. Box 1027, Madison 53701 (phones 255-8171/257-0912/256-7438), or go to its meeting any Thursday in the Memorial Union at 7:30 pm.

Other organizations opposing the bill are as follows: the ACLU, the U-U Service Comm., the National Montiorium on Prison Comm., and the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. (RESPONSES WELCOME-ED.)