

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Are you a member of the Anti-Slavery Society? It would be interesting to know how many members of NAIES know that there is such an organization. The question of membership was asked of the editor this past summer when in London, England, working on a research project. The answer was "no"; however, in July, 1977, the rolls of the Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights did increase by one, and the number of members in the United States jumped significantly. The most recent membership report listed a total Society membership of 907. The number of members in the United States is less than 100.

The editor of *Explorations in Ethnic Studies* would like to call to the attention of the NAIES membership the existence of the Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights and urge all interested members to join. The Society is based at 60 Weymouth Street, London, W1N 4DX, England. The current membership fee is 4 £, and application forms can be obtained from the above address c/o Mr. Patrick Montgomery or from the editor of *Explorations*.

The goals of the Society are: (a) to eradicate slavery in all its forms, (b) to promote the well-being of indigenous people, and (c) to defend human rights in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. The Society is a direct descendant of the Aborigines Protection Society, founded in 1837, and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, founded in 1839. The two founding organizations were merged in 1909 to form the present Society. The present-day Society is the only source of published material on contemporary slavery. The Society has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The organization is a registered charity in the U.K. and has no political or religious bias. The Society has members in twenty-eight countries and is entirely sustained by private subscription.

Slavery, that is chattel slavery, involves the owning of persons. While this form of slavery may be

rare, pockets survive in a few countries in the world. The U.N. Supplementary Convention (1956), to which some eighty-four states are parties, ". . . binds them to eliminate in addition serfdom, debt bondage and certain institutions similar to slavery affecting women and children." The Society's concern for the status of women, given the theme for the upcoming Minority and Ethnic Studies Conference, "Minority Women and Ethnicity," should be of interest to many NAIES members.

The goals and purposes of NAIES certainly include concern for human rights, and these concerns should not be limited to the United States. As an organization, NAIES should reflect an international concern and perspective. To do less would be a serious limitation or restriction on the Association.

On the other hand, there may be members who would argue that there is enough for NAIES to do within the United States. Why go outside? The editor hopes such members will respond, and the dialogue and communications that result will form the basis of an active "Letters to the Editor" feature for *Explorations*. In forthcoming issues, the editor will raise other controversial matters and sincerely hopes the membership and other interested parties will respond.

George E. Carter, Editor
