

## The Bretton Woods Stakes

The National Planning Association's committee on international policy, headed by Stacy May, has just issued a report analyzing the Bretton Woods agreement and warning that its rejection by either Great Britain or the United States "would promote conscious economic warfare and lead to the development of rival economic blocs."

The major point which leads to this conclusion is the compromised section of the monetary fund proposal, in which the British agreed to abandon exchange controls and other discriminations while the United States consented to allow a certain flexibility in exchange rates, limited by the provisions and management of the fund.

Britain, of course, has been the leader of a sterling area and many Britons today insist that England's prosperity depends upon retention of these controls, rather than by nondiscriminatory, multilateral trade. To the greedy, it is a rosy picture. They want England to broaden the sterling area to include western Europe as well as Latin America and thus crowd the United States, as well as other world powers, out of trade with these nations.

Fortunately, enough British see the problem in better perspective and are anxious, in order to attain world peace, to curb the operations of the sterling area. And, fortunately also, there seems to be a majority of Americans who also can see the long-range advantages to this nation in a freer trading world.

America does not wish to compete in the world market on a state-managed trading system. The very acceptance of such a thesis would be tantamount to accepting the undermining of our own domestic economic system's foundations. The planning group's committee has done a real service in so bluntly and honestly evaluating the Bretton Woods proposals. For perhaps as much depends on the Bretton Woods decisions as on what will come out of San Francisco.