

*special double issue on the movement*

# LIBERATION

August-September 1969  
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THE MOVEMENT:  
10 YEARS FROM NOW

carl oglesby:

*notes on a decade*

julius lester

*to recapture the dream*

noam chomsky

*some tasks for the left*

so: aronson • waskow • cook  
newfield • lynd • naison

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August-September, 1969

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*Liberation* is soliciting artwork for future issues. If you are interested in appearing in *Liberation* please contact Jeanne Friedman, 674-0050.

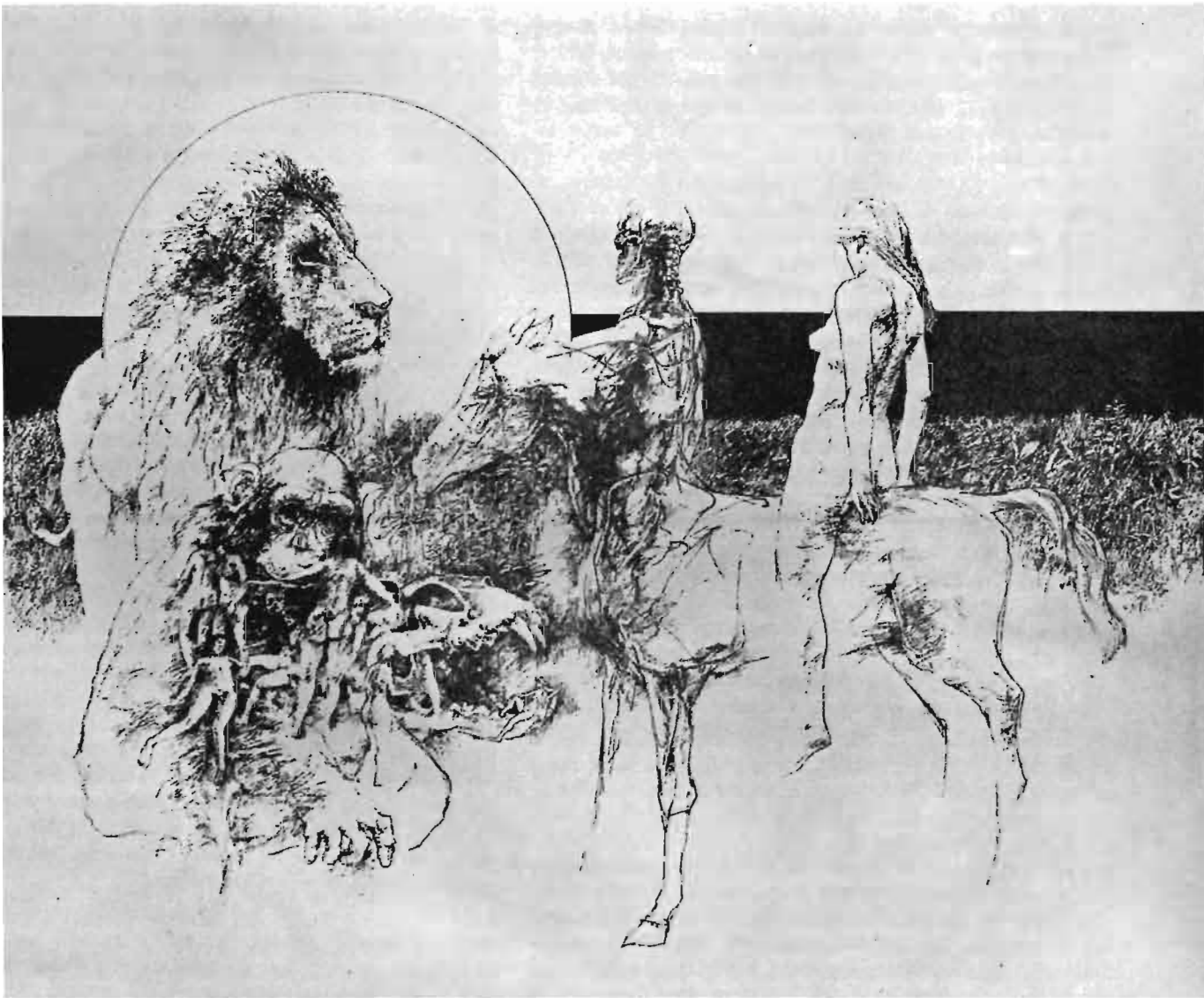




#### A SYMPOSIUM

This double issue of *Liberation* features a symposium based on the question: "Where can—and should—the movement be five to ten years from now?" The editors conceived of this symposium in the hope that a number of leading activists could help the rest of us define some specific, perhaps intermediate, goals for a revolutionary humanist transformation in America. We offered the authors the freedom from a rigid format, the opportunity to formulate the problem as they chose. We are pleased with the results. Many of the articles, Carl Oglesby's brilliant essay in particular, base their hopes for the future on events of the recent past. Accordingly, most of the projections start with an analysis of the present condition of the movement as a point of departure. While the articles vary in emphasis and point of view, all share the assumption that the American system of corporate capitalism is fundamentally incompatible with human needs and libertarian values. Ultimately, Oglesby, Newfield, Chomsky, Lester, Naison, Aronson, Lynd, and Waskow are all interested in the creation of a political force which can reach out to the broad base of Americans who are alternately frustrated and brutalized by a system over which they have minimal control.

*Liberation* certainly does not intend its symposium to be the last word. The editors are planning to set aside ample space in the October issue for the reactions and alternative proposals of our readers. Let us hear from you.



# Notes on a Decade Ready for the Dustbin

Carl Oglesby

The idea of trying to visualize ourselves five or ten years from now seems to me hopeless but necessary, so I'm writing a letter instead of a paper just because it seems easier in the former to float, stammer, and skip.

Hopeless—to put it most abstractly—because I don't think we have anything like a predictive science of political economy. We *approach* having an explanatory art of history, I think, and sometimes we can build up a head of steam-bound analogies and go crashing an inch or so through the future barrier, but it always turns out we land sideways or even upside down. And more practically, hopeless because in a situation as sensitive as what the world's in now, mankind as a whole lives under the permanent Terror of the Accidental.

But necessary, too, this idea, because even if we're never going to surpass improvisatory politics, we could still improvise better if we were clearer about ourselves and the

country, and the effort to think about the future always turns out to be an effort to think about the present. Which is all to the good. So I'll start with the past—to get a sense of trajectory, if any, or the rhythm of our experience, to see if there's a line of flight:

## 1960-64

As well the Freedom Rides as Greensboro? But then, as well the desegregation decision as the Freedom Rides... etc. Whenever it began, this was the Heroic Period, the movement's Bronze Age. In transition ever since, the movement has yet to prove it will have a Classical Period, but maybe we're on the verge. Essentially, a single-issue reform politics; integration the leading public demand, although underneath that demand, there's a sharply rising sense that a structural maldistribution of wealth won't be corrected by the abolition of Jim Crow. An implicitly radical democratic communitarianism, projected correctly as both a means *and an end* of the movement, can still co-exist with a formless and rather annoyed liberalism because (a) the Peace People are obfuscating the Cold War without yet having become suspicious characters, and (b) the reform tide seems to be running, picking up velocity and mass, and has still to hit the breakwater. But there's a richness in the decentralist idioms of this period that has only been neglected, certainly not exhausted, or even barely tapped, in the intervening half decade of transition.

## 1965

Very quick, sharp changes, engineered in part by Johnson, in part by self-conscious growth within the movement.

\*The war abruptly becomes the leading issue for most white radicals. But not for community organizers, some of whom in fact are bitter about the new preoccupation. This is neither the first nor the last time that this sort of friction develops. What is its general form? A nationalist vs. an internationalist consciousness? It appears that some activists will always tend to visualize the American people mainly as victims, and others will tend to see them as criminal accomplices (passive or not) of the ruling class. This maybe points to an abiding problem for an advanced-nation socialist movement—a problem which will be neither understood nor solved simply by the Trotskyist slogan, "Bring the troops home."

\*The teach-ins and the SDS April March on Washington repeat in a compressed time scale the civil-rights movement's growth from Greensboro to Selma. It's in this very brief, very intense period that SDS projects an unabashedly reformist critique of the war, our naive attack on the domino theory being the best illustration of this: "But the other dominos *won't* fall," we insisted, happy to give such reassurance to the Empire.

\*SNCC formalizes its transformation from reform to revolution, first, by explicating the connection between racism and the war; and second, by focusing the metaphor

of Black Power, which clearly (at least to hindsight) implied the forthcoming ghetto-equals-colony analysis and the shift from an integrationist to a separatist-nationalist politics, which of course was to bring two problems for every one it solved. This shift seems to have been necessitated by the impasse which integrationism confronted at Atlantic City the previous year.

\*What was the Atlantic City of the white student movement that was to go from pro-peace to anti-war, anti-war to pro-NLF, pro-NLF to anti-imperialist to pro-Third World revolution to anti-capitalism to pro-socialism—and thence, with much more confusion and uncertainty than this schedule implies, to anti-peace (i.e., no co-existence) and anti-democracy ("bourgeois jive"), and which finds itself at the present moment broken into two, three, many factions, each of which claims to have the *real* Lenin (or Mao or Che) in its pocket? Riddled with vanguarditis and galloping sectarianism, and possessed of a twisty hallucination called the "mass line" like an ancient virgin her incubus (or is it just a hot water bottle?) the Rudd-Jones-Ayers SDS is at least an SDS with a past. I'll say later what I think is wrong with the mass-line stance, but the point here is to understand that it didn't just come upon SDS out of nowhere, not even the nowhere of the PLP, and that in the end, whatever you think of it, it has to happen: (a) because there was no way to resist the truth of the war, no way, that is, to avoid imperialism; (b) because once the policy critique of the war had been supplanted by the structural critique of the empire, all political therapies short of socialist revolution appeared to become senseless; and (c) because the necessity of a revolutionary strategy was, in effect, the same thing as the necessity of Marxism-Leninism. *There was—and is—no other coherent, integrative, and explicit philosophy of revolution.*

I do not want to be misunderstood about this. The practical identity of Marxism-Leninism with revolutionary theory, in my estimate, does not mean that Marxism-Leninism is *also* identical with a genuinely revolutionary practice in the advanced countries. That identity, rather, constitutes nothing more than a tradition, a legacy, and a problem which I think the Left will have to overcome. But at the same time, I don't think the American Left's first stab at producing for itself a *fulfilled* revolutionary consciousness could have produced anything better, could have gone beyond this ancestor-worship politics. It was necessary to discover—or maybe the word is confess—that we had ancestors in the first place; and if for no brighter motive than gratitude at not being so alone and rootless, the discovery of the ancestors would naturally beget a religious mood. That of the revival tent, no doubt, but religious all the same.

Again: Why did the white student Left so quickly abandon its liberal or reformist criticism of the war as policy and substitute its radical criticism of the war as the result of an imperialist structure? The former seems to have had much to recommend it: simple, straightforward, full of pathos and even sentimentality, it has by this time been linked (by liberals) to a still more pathos-laden cry to bring



the boys back, and these two thrusts—save *our* boys and (incidentally) *their* babies—now make up the substance of the popular complaints against the war. (Harriman is now saying what we said about the war four years ago. What happened was that the student movement traded this *easy* argument against the war for a much harder one. Not that we rose as one man to denounce imperialism, of course. It was in October of that year that Paul Booth told the nation that SDS only wanted to “build, not burn.” But he got into a lot of trouble for his pains; and when about a month later, at the SANE-organized March on Washington, I used (without knowing it) all the paraphernalia of an anti-imperialist critique without once using the word “imperialism,” nobody objected, nobody said, “This line commits us to an attempt at revolution and therefore, true or not, should be rejected as being politically impracticable.”

Why did our movement *want* to be “revolutionary?” Very generally: An extrinsic failure of production (i.e., production turned *against* social reproduction) had already been intuited by that sector of the workers whose function is to *pacify the relations of production*. The most general means of this pacification is the neutralizing of the moral environment. This is what poets, political scientists, lit. teachers, sociologists, preachers, etc. are supposed to do. Deflect, divert, apologize, change the subject, prove either that our gods are virtuous and our direction right or that *no* gods are virtuous and *no* direction right and that rebellion ought therefore to forego history and take on the Cos-

mos. I think it can be shown that the practice of this essential work had already been jeopardized by the over-all character of production in the late '50s. Those whose role in production is to *explain* production, to provide it with its cover of rationality, had found it impossible to play their role *convincingly* simply because production had become extrinsically anti-social. Workers who cannot do their work rebel. They do so, furthermore, in the name of their work, in behalf of its possibility, and therefore in the name of that reordered system in which their work would again become possible.

The main point here is that 1965 was the year in which both the black and white sectors of the movement explicitly abandoned reformism and took up that long march whose destination, not even in sight yet, is a theory and practice of revolution for the United States. For the West.

## 1966-67

The rise of the resistance (in all its variety) and experiments with a “new-working-class” analysis, both motions strongly influenced by Greg Calvert and Carl Davidson. Superficially, these developments seemed to be congruent and intersupportive. But it looks to me now as if they were in fact opposite responses to the general problem of conceiving and realizing a revolutionary strategy, each one being a kind of political bet which the other one hedged. There was, I know, a lot of heavy theorizing about the politics of resistance, and I don't want to turn a complex experience into a simple memory. Still, I think it's fair to take the slogans as being indicative of its political atmosphere—“Not with my life, you don't!” for example, or “A call to resist illegitimate authority.” Even if only in embryo, I think “resistance” was at bottom a youth-based anti-fascist front whose most central demand must have appeared to any outsider's eye to be for a return to the *status quo ante*. That's not to say that its organizers were not radicals or that its inner content was anti-socialist or non-socialist. But in basing itself on the individual's rights of self-determination (mythical, of course: we were all hip to the con), and in trying to depict Johnson's as an imposter (“illegitimate”) regime, the Resistance was easily as unassuming in its politics as it was extravagant in its imagination.

At the same time, Carl (“I Blush to Remember”) Davidson, among others, was trying to work out a new-working-class concept of the student rebellion, the main purpose being to discover in this rebellion that revolutionary power which one feared it might not have. Wanting revolution (with all that implies about the power to make one) but only having spasms of campus rebellion, the student syndicalists needed to show that at least the seed of the first found fertile ground in the latter.

Meanwhile: The method of political action which had been reintroduced in Harlem-'64 or Watts-'65 was on some terms perfected in Detroit-'67. All whites are convinced that something will have to be done, but nobody knows quite what to do. Except, of course, for the Right, which

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What happened at Columbia/Harlem in the April of '68 is just as important as what happened in Hay Market Square—but at the same time no more important.

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understood at once that what was needed was a metropolitan police force equipped both militarily *and politically* for urban counter-insurgency.

## 1968

Confidence reappeared with Columbia and France, and then took an important turn with Chicago.

*Columbia:* (1) Conclusively, students have severely limited but formidable power to intervene in certain processes of oppression and to compel certain institutional reforms. (2) A practical alliance between blacks and whites became a concrete fact for the first time since Selma. The campus continues to be the main current locus of this alliance. (I say this, obviously, in view of Columbia's subsequent: Columbia's innovations proved repeatable elsewhere.) (3) Production relations constitute the life of class economy; distribution relations constitute the life of class society; consumption relations constitute the life of class politics. The stormed or barricaded factory gate of classical revolutionary vision is not the definitive image of any "final" or "pure" proletarian consciousness. The struggle at the point of production, when it occurs, is merely one expression of a more general struggle which, much more often than not, is ignited and fed by consciousness of inequities of consumption.\*

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\*"In eighteenth-century England the manufacturing workers, miners, and others, were far more conscious of being exploited by the agrarian capitalists and middle-men, as consumers, than by their petty employers through wage-labour; and in this country [England] today consumer and cultural exploitation are quite as evident as is exploitation 'at the point of production' and perhaps are more likely to explode into political consciousness." E.P. Thompson, *"The Peculiarities of the English,"* The Socialist Register, 1965 (London), Ralph Miliband and John Saville, eds., p. 355.

The worker comprehends the factory, in fact, as his means of consumption. It's in distribution patterns that the life styles of the class hierarchy are imposed; in the consumption patterns thus produced that the hierarchy of classes is most immediately *lived*. Production relations, as they are actually lived, are usually politically neutral: *the difference between an 8-hour day under U.S. capitalism and a 16-hour day under Cuban socialism is hardly to the former's advantage*. In fact, it's much more often a failure in the distributive or consumptive functions that creates political trouble for capitalism. How to finance further expansion? How to empty these bursting warehouses? And it could even be argued that as between the ghetto rising and the militant strike in heavy industry, the former is closer to that famous "seizure of State power" than the latter is. But why try to choose at all? We are dealing here only with aspects of a unitary complex, not with elements of a compound, and the tendencies of a method of analysis to reproduce reality as a set of correlative abstractions should never be permitted to reduce aspects of a continuous social process to the elements of its model. What happened at Columbia/Harlem in the spring of '68 is just as important, just as pregnant and portentous, as what happened in Haymarket Square—but at the same time, *no more important either*. We have littered contemporary American history with a hundred aspiring preludes whose aggregate *current* meaning is precisely the fight for the last word about their meaning, but whose future denouement is not yet revealed to us. To make the point still more explicit: There is no such thing as a model revolution (or even if you think you have found such a thing in *la Revolution francaise*, note that it materialized considerably in advance of the theory that hailed it as such), and there is no revolutionary theory





by means of which right and wrong sites of organization and agitation can be discriminated. The function of analysis is to clarify reality, not to pass judgment on it.

A few other points about Columbia: (4) "Co-optation" is obviously a useful concept. It warns you against being hoodwinked by those who've learned to smile and smile and still be villains. Unfortunately, just beyond that point at which it remains useful, it flops over completely and becomes disastrous: it can become a no-win concept masquerading either as tactical cunning or strategic wisdom. It instructs people to reject what their fight has made possible on the grounds that it falls short of what they wanted. If the Left allows its provisional victories to be reaped by the Center-Left, trust that those victories will very promptly be turned into most unprovisional setbacks. Am I saying that we should sometimes have people "working within the system's institutions?" Precisely, emphatically, and without the slightest hesitation! You are co-opted when the adversary puts his goals on your power; you are *not* co-opted when your power allows you to exploit his means (or contradictions) in behalf of your goals.

(5) The SF State strike retrospectively clarified one difficulty, maybe a shortcoming, of the Columbia strike. Other BSU-SDS-type eruptions suffered from the same lapse. Namely: *We very badly need a clear, sharp formulation of the white interest in overcoming racism.* All of us feel that this "white-skin-privilege"—if it is even a privilege at all—costs us something, and that the cost exceeds the gain. Yet we've had difficulty making it clear why we feel this way, and for the most part in the hurry of the moment have simply had to abandon the attempt, opting either for a purely moralistic explanation (which has meant

that the white base of the strike is not represented in the strike leadership committee) or for the adding on of "white demands" (which tended to obscure the specifically anti-racist character of the action). Neither approach is any good. It is wrong for the base of the movement, any action, not to have a voice in tactical and strategic policy—witness, for one thing, the general bewilderment of the white SF State students who, when the strike was over, had little to do but return to business-as-usual classrooms. It is also wrong, or at least not quite right, for whites to demand "open admissions for all working-class youth" at the same time that the same whites are (a) trying to help make a point about the *racist* nature of colleges, and (b) attacking the *content* of the basic college education on the grounds that it's a brainwash. The German SDS idea of the critical university, somehow adapted to our particular political objectives, might break through the current dilemma at the level of program. But especially since the dilemma may shortly materialize in noncampus settings, it's first necessary to break it at a theoretical or general level. Why does racism hurt whites? Or *which* whites does it hurt, and why and how?

*France, the May Days:* "The revolt of the students is the revolt of the forces of modern production as a whole," writes Andre Glucksmann, a leading theoretician of the March 22 Movement. This intriguing formulation, like all new-working-class theorizing, is at bottom nothing but an attempt to find a new face for the old Leninist mask: Only "workers" can make 20th Century revolutions, so those who are creating a big revolution-sized fuss, even if they come outfitted with a few electrifying Sartrean neologisms, must therefore be some new kind of workers. I think this

souped-up "New Left" scholasticism is worse than the Old Orthodoxy. Any common-sensical reading of the Glucksmann map would lead the revolution-watcher straight to the faculties of administration, technology and applied sciences, since it's within the meanings of the New Technology that these "forces of modern production as a whole" are being visualized. Maybe at Nanterre, where the fuse was lit. But certainly not at the Sorbonne or anywhere else in Paris, where the student base of the revolt, just as in the United States, came out of the faculties of liberal arts and the social sciences. Quite contrary to Glucksmann, the revolt of the students is the revolt *against* the forces of modern production as a whole—a fact which would doubtless be apparent to everyone if it weren't for the intellectual tyranny of Marxism-Leninism.

The more tradition-minded Leftists scarcely did any better with this out-of-nowhere avalanche. Not for one moment having imagined it was about to happen, insisting on the contrary that nothing like it ever *could* happen, and having finally satisfied themselves that all their curses and spells couldn't make it go away, the Old Crowd FCP determined to see in this Almost-Revolution a conclusive vindication of their theories, practices and political rheumatism all combined. "Behold, Lenin lives!" cried the Stalinists of France, even as they bent their every effort to killing him again.

The main fact about the Almost-Revolution is that it was *almost* a revolution, not that it was almost a *revolution*. As parched for victories as the Western Left has been in the post-war period, it may be forgiven its ecstasy at scoring a few runs. But what are we left with? No questions, Pompidou is not the only or the main or even a very important result of the May Days; as a minimum, the feudalism of the French academy has been jolted, and maybe it's still a big deal in the 7th decade of the 20th century to give academic feudalism a jolt. But it seems to me that all the lessons people are claiming to have learned are not lessons at all, only so many brute-force misreadings of the event. To claim that the student *foco* was a worker "detonator" is to dodge the awful question of the vanguard, not to face it and overcome it, and besides that, it tortures a meaning into "student" that has nothing to do with the students' evident meanings. On the other hand, the claim that the old problem of the "worker-student alliance" has found here the possibility of its solution seems to me the very opposite of what the facts indicate: Under propitious, even ideal circumstances, with the State isolated and virtually dumb before the crisis, with DeGaulle offering nothing more spiritual than an old man's resentment or more concrete than a diluted form of the students' program, with the army out-flanked politically and the police widely disgraced, with production mired in fiscal doldrums, the industrial workforce caught with a deep unease and its bureaucratized leadership dozing, it still proved hard for students and young workers to make contact, and (so it now seems) all but impossible for them to forge a lasting and organic revolutionary union.

It seems to me that the following are more defensible

"lessons."

1. No key West European nation (Britain, France, Germany, Italy) can slide hard to the Left unless a Warsaw Pact nation can also slide equally hard to the right. France and Czechoslovakia constitute the gigue and the saraband of an unfinished political suite.

2. We're in a period in which, for the first time in modern history, the social base of a truly post-industrial socialism is being produced, delta-like, outside capitalism's institutional reach. (That is, a socialism which rejects capitalism because of its successes instead of its failures, and which comes into existence in order to supercede and surpass industrial society, not to create it.) But for long time within the capitalist state, and for much longer within the capitalist empires, this new base will co-exist with the old: that which wants to go beyond will co-exist with that which needs to come abreast. This constitutes the protractedly *transitional* nature of the current period, a source both of confusion and opportunity within the world Left community, and above all a problem which the advanced-nation Left will have to solve by means of a post-Leninist theory and a post-Leninist practice.

*Chicago:* (1) Liberalism has no power in this country. It is not politically organized. The few secondary institutions in which it lives its hand-to-mouth existence are, at best, nothing more than insecure and defenseless sanctuaries. In none of the estates—not the church, not the media, not the schools—does it exhibit the least aggressiveness, the least staying power, the least confidence. *This country, in the current situation, is absolutely impotent before the threat of what Fulbright has lately called "elective fascism."*

I'll admit that this discovery surprised me. I had thought that the liberals had a little crunch left. McCarthy had always obviously been an icecube in an oven; but even deprived of Kennedy, I had supposed that the liberals would have been able to drive a few more bargains. They were helpless at Chicago, and their helplessness has only deepened since then. (Observe the sorry spectacle of Yankeeedom's main gunslingers, Harriman, Vance, and Clifford, vainly trying to ambush Nixon, who knows and imperturbably defeats their every confused move.)

For the very simple truth about Chicago is that Daley got away with it, and there was nothing anybody could do. What "Big Contributor" dropped a word to the wise against him? What "Key Party High-up" moved even to censure him behind the scenes or slow him down? The *institutional mass* of the society is either neutralized or passively or actively supportive of reaction, and reaction can go, quite simply, as far as it determines it needs to go. Screaming their heads off at both the infant Left and the entrenched Right, liberals have neither base nor privilege, neither an organized following nor access to the levers of power. This is important.

(2) If only because it sharpens the melodrama, we may as well pinpoint Chicago, August, as the place and time of the "mass line's" formal debut: an unforgettable lit-up



Courtesy of Associated American Artists

**Chicago occasioned these two terminal movements; the humiliation of liberalism and the "official" reversion of SDS to a Marxist-Leninist worldview.**

nighttime scene, Mike Klonsky taking the bullhorn at Grant Park to harangue the assembly about its "reformist" politics.

I've already indicated that I see nothing promising in *any* version of Marxism-Leninism—not PL's, not that of the now-defunct "national collective" of the Klonsky-Coleman period or of its apparent successor, the Revolutionary Union, and not that of the more diffuse and momentarily hazier grouping, the Revolutionary Youth Movement. But of course I don't claim that a mere statement of this view constitutes either an explanation of it or an argument for it. The argument will have to be made, very carefully, in another place, and I have to confine myself here to the observation that any revolutionary movement will all but inevitably adapt itself to Marxism-Leninism—or the other way around—because there is just no other totalizing philosophy of revolution. This philosophy then enables a representation of reality in something like the following general terms: "A desire in pursuit of its means, a means in flight from its destiny—these conditions constitute The Problem. Solution: tomorrow, when history's preplanted timebomb at last goes off, blasting false consciousness away, the words of the prophets will be fulfilled."

Chicago, in any case, occasioned these two terminal moments: the humiliation of liberalism, and the "official" reversion of SDS to a Marxist-Leninist worldview.

1969

The leading events so far: The SF State strike and the structurally similar conflicts that erupted across the coun-

try, the People's Park showdown in June, the SDS convention, and the Black Panther call for the Oakland conference.

*San Francisco State:* I want to make just two observations on this much-studied event.

First, the movement's characteristic attitude toward partial victories—more particularly, toward what is disparaged as "student power"—is mechanistic. It appears that every change which is not yet The Revolution is either to be airily written off as no change at all, or further than that, to be denounced as co-optation into the counter-revolution. People should only try to remember that the SF State strike did not materialize out of thin air, that it had a background, that it was that particular moment's culmination of a long conflictual process, and that just as with Columbia, where political work had been sustained at a generally intense level at least since May 1965, the explosive strike at State was made possible, maybe even necessary, by a long series of small moves forward, any one of which could have been attacked as "bourgeois liberal reform." More precisely, it was in large part those incremental "reforms" of curriculum and student-teacher and teacher-administration relationships carried out under the unseeing eyes of President Summerskill that created the general conditions in which the strike could take place. As with Columbia, the atmosphere had long been thoroughly politicized—that is to say, charged with consciousness of national issues. And a long reign of liberalism had, in effect, already *legitimated* the demands around which the strike was fought through, just as a long reign of reformism had created the institutional means of the strike. In the

same way, the fact that the Third World Liberation Front leadership did after all negotiate the "nonnegotiable" demands, the further fact that this leadership then moved to *consolidate these bargaining-table victories within the changing structure of the institution itself*—this meant not that the fight was over, not at all that "capitalism" had suffered a tactical defeat only to secure a strategic victory, but rather that the stage was—and is—being set for another round of conflict at a still higher level of consciousness within a still wider circle of social involvement. For the net result of the strike's victories is still further to break down the psychological, social, and political walls that had formerly sealed off the academy from the community. This is a big part of what we are about—the levelling of all these towers, the redistribution of all this ivory, the extroversion of these sublimely introverted corporate monstrosities: and not just because we have willed it, whether out of malice or chagrin or a blazing sense of justice, but rather because capital itself, in all its imperial majesty, has invested these schools with its own trembling contradictions. Necessarily demanding a mass consciousness of and for its technological and political ambitions, it necessarily produces a mass consciousness of the servility of the first and the brutality of the second. Necessarily demanding an army of social managers, pacifiers of the labor force, it necessarily produces an army of social problem solvers, agitators of that same labor force. Necessarily demanding an increasingly sophisticated corps of servicemen to the empire, it necessarily produces a cosmopolitanism to which this empire's shame is its most conspicuous feature. Necessarily demanding a priesthood to bless its work in the stolen name of humanity, it necessarily produces the moral and social weaponry of its own political condemnation.

We play upon these stops. Not able to arrest this process, as Reagan wants, nor to let it go forward, as the liberals want, doomed to be blind in either this eye or the other, not able to prosper without teaching us to serve it, not able to teach us to serve without somehow teaching us also its inner secrets, not able to teach us those secrets without teaching us to despise it, capitalism in our time is forced upon—*forces upon itself*—a choice of mortalities. Either to continue that process whose most general form is simply total urbanization, with its attendant destruction of all the disciplinary taboos, of the family, of political religion, of nationalism, of property and the ethics of property, of individualism and the entrepreneurial style; or to try to reverse that process, in which case it destroys its fragile equilibrium, destroys the social base and dynamic of production and growth, puts on the airbrakes and turns off its engines in midflight. If it makes the first choice, it bursts like an egg: *social control over the means of education is necessarily only the prologue to social control of the means of production, distribution, and consumption*. If it makes the second choice, if it tries to freeze everything, then the living thing, the life inside the egg, dies out; a moment more, the shell collapses: *Already a fascism in its colonies*, the empire is obliged nevertheless to hold its

fascism at a distance; and when protracted "wars of liberation," wherever they happen (ghettoes, campuses) and whatever unpredicted form they take (e.g., Peru!), succeed in driving this frontier fascism back upon its metropolitan front, then the whole political and social basis of the empire begins to fragment and dissolve. For a stable empire can be military only in its means, not in its ends—its ends necessarily being a mode of production, distribution, and consumption; and the servicing of these ends ultimately requires exactly that metropolitan class *hegemony* (all classes passively accepting or even affirming the rule of the dominant class, the class hierarchy having therefore the firm structure of vertical consent) which fascism supplants with class *coercion*.\*

One brief aside on a related matter: When I first met white New Leftists about five years ago, their most common fear was that they were not a serious threat. Along with this went the equally common belief that their seriousness would be proved only if they were vigorously attacked. (The current expression of this is the general view that the "vanguard" is whoever is being most vigorously attacked: it is not the people who pick their leaders, but the State.) No one suggested that the Other Side might be holding less than a fistful of aces, that the adversary was not super smart, that he might be stymied by his own contradictions. Maybe it was my background that made me skeptical—grandson of the south's Last Peasant Patriarch, some of a first-generation migrant from a defeated rural economy to the industrial revolution (Akron: smoke, tires, factories, timeclocks, the permanently present memory of the "home" which you had abandoned in spite of all wishes and had thereby, despite yourself, helped destroy, and which you could never go back to again no matter how many rides you took those seven hundred miles on hot jam-packed Greyhound buses that, once below Marietta, stopped every other mile to pick up or let off still another coming or going hillbilly, suitcase in one hand, baby in the other, eyes shot from whiskey and incomprehension. . . . Another time I must deal with this). I had thought that there was precious little need to go out of your way to provoke those distant people who worked on Mahogany Row, lived in the mansions of Fairlawn, and owned all the cops and politicians. If the vague people of the vague middle were ignorant of how power worked and who had it and who did not, we who lived just at the edge of the black ghetto and whose lives were ordered by the vicissitudes of production—cutbacks, layoffs, speedups, doubles, strikes—were under no illusions. We knew their viciousness because man, woman and child we had it for constant companion. My mind was blown, its gears stripped, to hear someone say that the gift of authenticity was the Man's to give, that it came in the form of clubbings and

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\*If the biography of German Nazism seems to contradict this thesis, recall that Junker coercion was finally translated into the hegemony of the State itself not mainly because of risings in the colonies, but because of pressure from rival imperialisms dating back at least to the First World War.



jailings, and that, left unprovoked, he might withhold it. Not so: pursue your aims with stark simplicity and in all peaceableness, put money in thy purse with the politest and gentlest of smiles—trust him, he'll get around to making you pay, and anybody who does not know this just hasn't been paying attention.

So. That's the first "observation"—the winning of a "reform" isn't always a bad business, and Leftists should stop being scared of being reformed out of things to do. The only real strategic necessity is to make sure the reform in question reforms the power configuration so that it becomes the basis for further and still more fundamental challenges to class rule.

The second observation is connected. It has to do with the question of what's called (disparagingly) "student power." The formula attack on the making of demands for such things as curriculum reform and greater student participation in campus government goes like this: "The young bourgeois, privileged already, exhibits here only his desire to extend his privileges still further. This desire must be fought by radicals. If not exactly in the *name* of the working class, we must see ourselves as fighting at least in its *behalf*, and since its interests are hardly served by the abolition of grades or the reduction of required credits, we must oppose such demands."

First, the outlines of a speculation. What if the multiversity is in some substantial part the creation of the advanced-world proletariat—not merely the plaything and mistress of the imperialists? What if it is partly in the multiversity that the proletariat has banked and stored up its enormous achievements in technology? What if the multiversity—the highest realization yet of the idea of mass education and the rationalization of productive labor—is in one of its leading aspects the institutional form through which the proletariat continues its struggle for emancipation? Behind how many of these so-called "bourgeois" children, one or two generations back, stands a father in a blue collar, a mother in an apron? The proletariat, says Marx, will have to prepare itself for self-government through protracted struggle. What if this struggle is so protracted that it actually must be seen as taking place, in one of its aspects at least, across *generations*? The revolutionary aspiration of whites in the 1930's manifested itself most sharply in factory struggles. In the 1960's, that aspiration has materialized most sharply on the campuses. What have we made of this fact? The function of a method of social analysis is not to reprimand reality for diverging from its model, but on the contrary to discover in reality the links and conjunctures that make history intelligible and life accessible to effective action. An abstraction is not something to stand behind like a pulpit but a lens to see through more discerningly. Obvious? Then it is high time to confess: At the same time that it has been trying so desperately to live forwards, the New Left everywhere, in West Europe as well as here, has been just as desperately trying to think backwards. If Marxism is any good, and if we can prove it worthy of the moment, then we ought to be able to say what it is about contemporary relations of

production that makes the campuses a primary site of contemporary revolutionary motion. Only when that question is answered will we have any right to pontificate about "correct" and "incorrect" lines, and it has not yet been answered. Meanwhile, even if it is good and sufficient, as I am almost sure it is not, to characterize "student power" as a fight for "bourgeois privilege," we would still have to ask: What *kind* of privilege? Assuming that there is nothing here at all but an intra-class struggle against the contemptuous indifference of institutions, against the mindless blather of the dons, the deans, the sycophants and the liars, against authority in particular and authoritarianism on principle, we would still have to say that the political balance of this struggle is *progressive and portentous*. To those who tell me that this fight neither equals, approximates, initiates, nor reveals the form of The Revolution Itself, I answer first, Neither did Nanterre, neither did Watts, neither did anything else in man's social history but a bare handful of uniquely definitive and epochal convulsions, each one of which moreover appeared only at the end of a painfully long train of indeterminate events which escaped their ambiguity only thanks to the denouement; and I answer second, If you are trying to tell me you know already what The Revolution Itself will look like, you are either a charlatan or a fool. *We have no scenario.*

Second, for what it's worth to a movement suddenly infatuated with the words of the prophets, Lenin faced a somewhat similar question in 1908 when certain radicals refused to support an all-Russia student strike on the grounds that "the platform of the strike is an academic one" which "cannot unite the students for an active struggle on a broad front." Lenin objected: "Such an argument is radically wrong. The revolutionary slogan—to work towards coordinated political action of the students and the proletariat—here ceases to be a live guidance for many-sided militant agitation on a broadening base and becomes a lifeless dogma, mechanically applied to different stages of different forms of the movement." Further: "For this youth, a strike on a large scale . . . is the beginning of a political conflict, whether those engaged in the fight realize it or not. Our job is to explain to the mass of 'academic' protesters the objective meaning of the conflict, to try and make it *consciously* political."

*The People's Park:* Those few SDSers, unfortunately conspicuous this past year, who think Stalinism is more or less right on, ought at least to have admitted that "socialism in one country" is not exactly the logical antithesis of "socialism in one park." But it was the Stalinists, both pure and off-breed, who among all the Bay Area radicals found it hardest to relate to the park before the attacks, were most puzzled by the attack itself, and produced the most opportunistic "support" in the aftermath. Mainly because these curious rumbles of the hip are so hard to focus politically in terms of a mass-and-vanguard model, it's hard for people with old minds to figure out how to relate to them. That fact may be the basis of a touching epitaph; but a living politics for our period will have to understand that "decadence" is as "decadence" does, that the "cultural

revolution" is not merely a craven and self-serving substitute for the "political" one, and that if the West has, indeed, a leftwards destiny, then neither its particular ends nor its modes of organization and action will be discovered through archeology. My guess: People's Park was one among many episodes of a religious revival movement—exactly the kind of movement that has heralded every major social convulsion in the United States—and as with all such movements, its ulterior target, its enemy, is the forces of the industrialization of culture. The difference now is that the virtual consummation of the Industrial Revolution, *within the West*, lends a credibility and relevance to such a program that it formerly has not had. That is: The anti-industrialism of early radicals like Blake and Cobbett, though it was fully anti-capitalist, could confront rampant capitalist industrial progress with nothing more powerful than a retiring, improbably, defenseless nostalgia; could argue against the system of "masters and slaves" only in behalf of the older and no doubt mythical system, allegedly medieval, of "masters and men." Every time it became a *practical* movement—whether revolutionary or reformist—socialism had to put forward simply a more rational version of the program of industrialization itself. This is not an irony or tragedy of history, it's just the dialectics of historical process. That it has so far been unsurpassable is in fact the essence of revolutionary socialism's general isolation to the backwards countries, or put differently, this limit merely expresses the wedding of revolutionary socialism to anti-colonialism, and on the other hand, its impotence in countries in which the industrialization process has been carried forward effectively (however ruthlessly) by the bourgeoisie. The thesis of People's Park, rough as it may be to deal with both in terms of our tradition and our current practical needs, is that the essentially *post-industrial* revolution, embodied most fully but

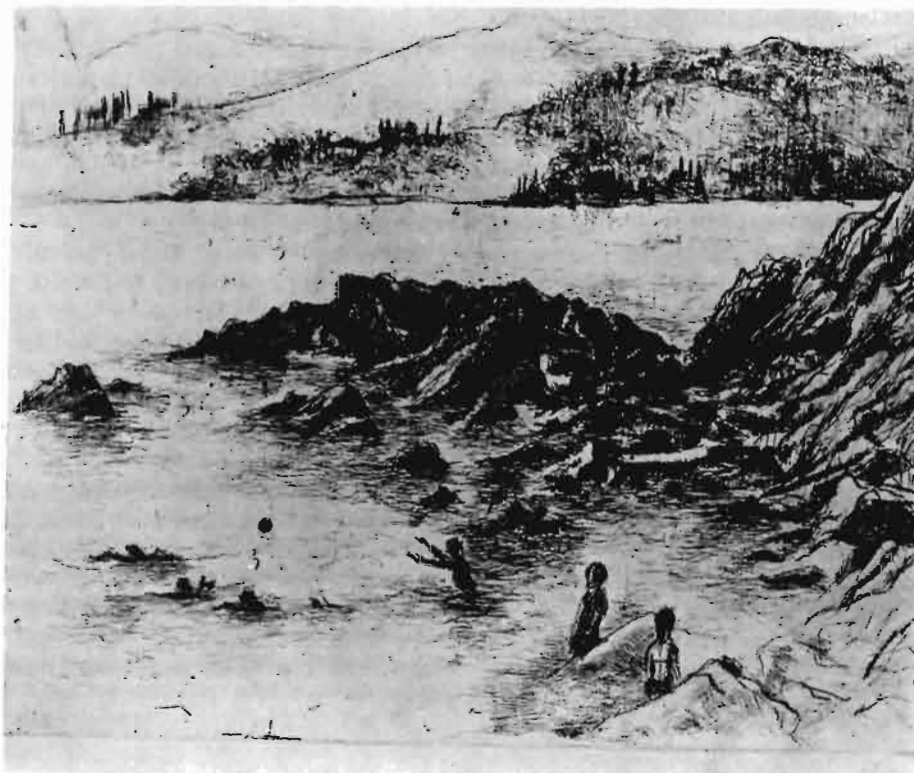
still (we must suppose) very incompletely in the hip communities, portends the historically most advanced development for socialist consciousness.

"Most fully" because it goes beyond industrialization, and in doing so, implies (much more than it has so far realized) a genuinely New Man—just as new compared to Industrial Man as Industrial Man was new in comparison to the artisans and small farmers who foreran him.

But it would be useless just to approve of this cultural revolution without being very clear about its terrible limits. I see two limits. First: The "new values" (they are, of course, very old) can claim to be subversive only of the standing values of work, but not really of consumption, there being nothing in the structure and precious little in the texture of "hip leisure" that keeps it from being commercially copied (deflated) and packaged. Thus, in effect, the target of the attack detaches itself, refuses to defend itself, and in offering itself as the apparent *medium* of the attack is able (persuasively to all but the sharpest consciousness) to pose as the "revolution's" friend. There are a thousand examples of this process, whose minimum result is vastly to complicate the cultural critique, and which at the other limit succeeds wholly in disarming it. The quietism of which the hip community is often accused may thus be much less the result of a principled retreat to cosmology than of its flat inability to confront commercialism with a deeply nonnegotiable demand.

Second, even though the new anarchism is morally cosmopolitan—affirming in a rudimentary political way the essential oneness of the human community—its values are *practical* only within the Western (imperialist) cities, and are far from being universally practical even there. So the second and bigger problem the cultural revolution needs to overcome is its lack of a concrete means of realizing its

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ideal sympathy with those globally rural revolutionary movements whose social program necessarily centers around the need for industrialization, not the surpassing of it. A solution of this problem would no doubt also solve the first. This is why it's so important to subject the cultural revolution to a much more profound and critical analysis than what has been produced so far. For the point at the moment is not to be for or against the current reappearance of anarchism. It will be necessary rather to explicate its tradition (too many hippies think they are saying brand new things) and then to try to see if the balance of forces has changed sufficiently that this old movement for a cultural revolution against industrial society has begun to acquire a power which it formerly has not had.

*The SDS Convention:* I wasn't there, never mind why. At the last SDS thing I was at, the Austin NC, the handwriting was already on the wall. Having determined that SDS must become explicitly and organizationally committed to its version of Marxism-Leninism, PL would continue in its Trotskyist way of identifying organizations with movements and would try to win more power in SDS—that much was already clear in the spring. I didn't think, though, that PL people would force a split. As fiercely indifferent to this country's general culture as they seem to be, I still thought they would understand a split as contrary to their purposes and would therefore seek to avoid it, even if that meant a momentary tactical retreat. Either I was wrong, or PL misunderstood—and misplayed—the situation.

I want to make just one point about the current situation. What is wrong about PL is not its rigidity, its "style," its arrogance or anything like that. Its *ideology* is wrong. And not just in the particulars of emphasis or interpretation or application, but in its most fundamental assumptions about the historical process. Someone else may argue that PL's Marxism-Leninism is a bad Marxism-Leninism, and that is a view which can doubtless be defended. But I see no prosperity in the approach that merely wants to save Leninism from Milt Rosen here and Jared Israel there. The problem is deeper and the task much more demanding. It can be posed this way: Backwards as it is, our practice is more advanced than our theory, and our theory therefore becomes an obstacle to our practice—which is childish and schematic, not free and real enough. The general adoption of some kind of Marxism-Leninism by all vocal factions in SDS means, certainly, that a long moment of intellectual suspense has been resolved—but much less in response to experience than to the pressure of the *tradition*. We have not produced even a general geosocial map of the United States as a society—only as an empire. We have not sought in the concrete historical experience of classes a rigorous explanation of their acceptance of "cross-class" (Cold War) unity but rather have employed a grossly simplified base-and-superstructure model to explain away the fact that labor

does not appear to think what we think it ought to think. We have taken a class to be a thing, not a process (or as E.P. Thompson called it five years ago, "a happening"), and have imagined it to be bound, more or less, to behave according to the "scientific laws" which govern the category. Most generally, we have imported a very loose and sometimes garbled theory of pre-industrial revolution, have tightened it without really clarifying it, and are now in the process of trying to superimpose that theory, thus reduced, on our own very different situation. The RYM group does not differ in this respect from PL, the Revolutionary Union, or even YSA or ISC. All these groups, opportunistic in widely varying degrees, claim to have the same ace in the hole, and Lenin's phrases (or what's worse, the Chairman's truistic maxims) are gnawed upon by every tooth.

For a long time I was baffled. Last fall the word began to reach me: It was being said that I had "bad politics." How could *that* be, I wondered, since I thought I had no politics at all. But by winter I conceded the point: no politics is the same as bad politics. So there followed a time in which I experimented with only the "mass line." Could Klonsky and Coleman be right? It didn't come to much. My mind and my instincts only became adversaries. By spring I had to deactivate, couldn't function, had to float. What I know now is that this did not happen to me alone. On every quarter of the white Left, high and low, the attempt to reduce the New Left's inchoate vision to the Old Left's perfected remembrance has produced a layer of bewilderment and demoralization which no cop with his club or senator with his committee could ever have induced. And my view of the split at the convention is that it merely caps a series of changes which began at the East Lansing convention in 1968, with the decision to counter PL's move on SDS by means of a political form—the "SDS caucus," i.e., a countervailing faction—which accepted implicitly PL's equation of the social movement with the organizations that arise within it. What walked out of the Coliseum was simply a larger version of 1968's SDS caucus. Certainly it had grown in awareness and self-definition over the year; and knowing that bare opposition to PL is no very impressive gift to The Revolution, it had spurred itself to produce an independent Marxist-Leninist analysis and at least the semblance of a program. My unhappy wager is that even in its RYM incarnation it remains a faction, that it will continue last year's practice of "struggling sharply" against internal heresies, that it will remain in the vice of the old illusions, that it will pay as little attention to what is happening in the country and the world as its predecessor regime did, and that whatever growth the movement achieves will be in spite of its rally cries and with indifference to its strictures. Nor is there a lot that can be done about this. The Western Left is perhaps in the midphase of a long, deep transition, and there is no way for SDS to protect itself from the consequences. They will have to be lived out. Which does not mean there is nothing to do. It means, rather, that any new initiatives will confront a situation very heavily laden with obstacles and limits. It isn't 1963 anymore.

*The Panther Convention:* It hasn't happened yet as I write, and I have no idea what its outcome will be. But certain doubts still need to be aired.

What's good about the Panthers has been amply hailed in the white Left: The Panthers have, in effect, done for the black lumpen of the northern urban ghetto what SNCC, years ago, did for the black serfs of the rural south—individual despair, given a historical interpretation, is turned into collective political anger. To the alternatives of tomism, crime, and psychosis, SNCC in the country and the Panthers in the town have added the idea of revolution—ant-racist, internationalist, and socialist.

But taken all in all—and for forcing historical reasons this is truer of the Panthers than of SNCC of 1960-64—this consciousness is a Word without Flesh, and that's what's got the Panthers trapped in a blind alley from which the only exits are either martyrdom or the "anti-fascist" popular front which it is the apparent purpose of the July convention to organize. To put it another way: The Panthers did not *organize* the ghetto, they only apostrophized it. So far as I know, the breakfast-for-children program represents the only serious attempt to relate concretely, practically, broadly, and *institutionally* to the black urban community as a whole. And it is very much to the point that the Panthers have recently promoted the breakfast program as their most characteristic political act—at approximately the same moment that the super-militants are purged, the public making of fierce faces greatly cooled, and the gun no longer presented as the leading symbol of Panther intentions.

This is all to the good, but it should have happened long ago. There ought to be dozens of programs like the breakfasts. Nothing else, in fact, gives stature, credibility, and social meaning to the gun; for the ghetto, as such, neither can be nor should be defended. Only when that ghetto is being transformed, de-ghettoized, by the self-organized activity of the people does its militant self-defense become a real *political* possibility. I'm not saying that social organization must always precede combat organization. If ghetto blacks were like the sugar proletariat of pre-revolutionary rural Cuba, and if the police were like Cuba's rural guard, then the opposite would likely be true. Even so, even if there is a proper analogy to the July 26 Movement, what would follow if not the obligation not merely to challenge the police, not merely to engage militarily and escape alive, but in fact to *defeat* the police, to prove to the people that the tyranny cannot impose its will on the countryside by force? The essence of J-26 politics lies in its valid presupposition of a popular will for social revolution and in its insight that it was mainly their common-sensical skepticism about overcoming the state military machine that held the people back.

With all respect for Cuba and the ardor of black American militants, I fail to see in the caste ghetto of an industrial city anything like a political replica of the countryside of a one-crop colony. The presence in the ghetto of the political gun meant a great many worthwhile, even invaluable things. But crucial as it is, "Free Huey!" is

not by itself a social program or a revolutionary slogan. The irony is that nothing but a real social program, and the expanding base of involved, active, and conscious people such a program alone could produce, would ever make Huey Newton's liberation even thinkable, never mind the means.

"But of course this has all been seen by now." Has it? The current Panther move to establish a white base of support does not persuade me that it has been *understood*. *The Panthers are in trouble not because they have no white support, but because they have too little black support; not because they have no white allies, but because, in the virtual absence of a wide array of real activities, real social programs in the black communities, there is nearly nothing that white allies can do besides pass resolutions, send lawyers, and raise bail.*

SDS will have to take its share of the blame for this. Much more interested in shining with the borrowed light of Panther charisma than in asking all the hard practical questions, much more interested in laying out the metaphysical maxims that identify the "vanguard" than in assuming real political responsibility, this SDS, which so often chews its own tongue for being "petty bourgeois," most shamefully confesses its origins precisely when it tries so vainly to transcend them in worship of "solidarity" which really amounts to so much hero-worship. Bourgeois is as bourgeois does. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao, Chou, Ho, Giap, Fidel, Che, Fanon: which one plowed a furrow, ran a punchpress, grew up hungry? That, in the first place, ought to be that. Further, in the second place, it is not lost causes, however heroic, or martyrs, however fine, that our movement needs. It needs shrewd politicians and concrete social programs. Not theoretical (really theological) proofs that The People Will Win in the End, but tangible social achievements now. Not the defiance of a small, isolated band of supercharged cadre who, knowing they stand shoulder to shoulder with mankind itself, will face repression with the inner peace of early Christians, but a mounting fugue of attacks on political crime of all sorts, on all fronts, at all levels of aspiration, from all sectors and classes of the population, so that repression can never rest, never find a fixed or predictable target. Humble example: Yesterday's *New York Times* carries a full-page political ad—the American Institute of Architects, it seems, has come out against the war. What will the Panther or the SDS national office do? Send a wire? Make a phone call? Investigate the possibility of a combined action? Try to make two or three new friends in order to make a hundred or a thousand later. I guess not. For the AIA is as *bourgeois* as they come, awfully *liberal*, too. When even the Oakland 7 and the Chicago 8 are suspect, what chance does a lot of architects have? So the architects will never hear what we have to say about the empire, about the houses that are being built in Cuba, about what we take to be the extent and causes of the present world crisis.

But this loss is presumably compensated by our clarity about the "vanguard." Clarity! Any close reading of the RYM's Weatherman statement will drive you blind. Some-



times the vanguard is the black ghetto community, sometimes only the Panthers, sometimes the Third World as a whole, sometimes only the Vietnamese, and sometimes apparently only the Lao Dong Party. Sometimes it is a curiously Hegelian concept, referring vaguely to all earthly manifestations of the spirit of revolution. At still other times, it seems to be the fateful organ of that radicalized industrial proletariat (USA) which has yet to make its Cold War-era debut. Mostly, though, it's the poor Panthers, whose want of politics was never challenged by the few SDSers who had access to their leaders; this appointment—Vanguard to the People's Revolution—being, presumably, SDS's to make—and one which is defended, moreover, in terms of a so-called revolutionary strategy (see the Weatherman statement) in which the United States is to experience not a social revolution at the hands of its own people, but a military defeat at the hands of twenty, thirty, many Vietnams—plus a few Detroit.

But perhaps the ghetto=colony analysis means that the Detroit is already included in the category of Vietnam? In that case, for all real political purposes, (North) American=white; and the historic role of these whites, their "mission" in the many-sided fight for socialism, is most basically just to be overcome. The authors of the Weatherman statement are of course perfectly right in trying to integrate what may appear to be *decisive* international factors into a model scenario of domestic change. From no viewpoint can an empire be treated as if it were a nation state. But although they face this problem, they do not overcome it. They might have said that the leading aspect of the US industrial proletariat remains, classically, its exploitation at the hands of US capital, and that it therefore still embodies a momentarily stifled revolutionary potential. Contrarily, they might have said that what we

have here is a giganticized "labor aristocracy who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their outlook... [and who are] real channels of reformism and chauvinism" (Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*). On its face, neither view is silly, but neither is one more satisfactory than the other. Weatherman's refusal to settle for one or the other seems to me to express a realistic *intuition*; but the problem is not solved simply by asserting one theory here and the other theory there. They cannot both be equally valid. I think the difficulty is embedded in the method of analysis: Weatherman takes class to be a thing rather than a process, and consequently tries to treat class as if it were, in and of itself, a *definite political category*. (That is, labor is fated to be Left.) But Weatherman also has a certain level of historical realism, and this realism always intervenes (happily) to obstruct the mostly theoretical impulse—a kind of social Freudianism—to idealize labor, to strip it of its historical "neurosis" by the simple and fraudulent expedient of viewing its neurosis as *merely* superstructural. In other words, Weatherman's confusions and ambiguities stem from a conflict between its model and its data, and it comes close to escaping this dilemma only when it forgets its static model of class for a moment, and gives freer rein to its sense of history and process. At such moments, it comes close to saying something really important, which I would paraphrase, over-optimistically no doubt, thus: "The labor force we are looking at today is not the one we'll see tomorrow, and the changes it will undergo have everything to do with the totality of its current and forthcoming experiences, which range all the way from the increasingly sensed contradiction between the rhetoric of affluence and the fact of hardship to the blood and money sacrifices it will be asked to offer in the empire's behalf." But this ought to be said up front, and it then ought to lead to the



most exhaustive analysis of the real, living forces that impinge upon not just labor but the population as a whole. Everytime something like this starts to happen, Weatherman breaks off and reverts to its concealed paradox: the vanguard of the US (Western would be better) revolution will be those forces which most aggressively array themselves *against* the US, those forces, in other words, which are most *distant* from white culture. Thus, *cause becomes agency*: the living proof of a *need* for change—the Panthers, the NLF, etc.—is defined as the political *means* of change; an almost absent-minded abstraction converts white America's sickness into the remedy itself.

The most succinct case of this kind of bad reasoning I've heard came at the end of a speech Bob Avakian made at the Austin NC. The racism of white workers would have to be broken, he said, because, when the revolution comes, it will be led by blacks, whose leadership whites must therefore be prepared to accept. If this were only an unconsidered trifle, it would be pointless to snap it up, but it appears to represent a serious, persistent, and growing school of thought in the New Left. The problem with it is just that it implies that there could be a revolution in the absence of a profound radicalization of the white working class, in the absence of profound changes in the political character of that class. What would make it possible for white workers to revolt would also make it possible—and necessary—for white workers to help *lead* that revolt. The very idea of a white working class revolution against capitalism that is, necessarily *presupposes* either than racism will have been overcome or at least that the conditions for that triumph will have been firmly established. The problem with this dreamed-of revolution will not be anti-blackism within its ranks, but the anti-communism of its adversary. "In revolution, there are no whites or blacks, only reds."

But beyond this, Avakian (as with the Weathermen) wants it both ways: blacks are a colony, on the one hand, outside the colonizing political economy and set over against it; and on the other hand, they are in and of the empire's proletariat. In the first mode, they press against the empire from a position which is outside it in every sense but the geographical. In the second mode, they press upwards against the bourgeoisie from within capital's system of social classes. It is of course not impossible that these modes really do coexist and interpenetrate one another. In fact, it is likely that they do. But both modes cannot be represented as simultaneously co-leading aspects of the black situation *vis-a-vis* white society. A white revolutionary strategy requires a decision as to which aspect is dominant and which secondary, *as well as an understanding that what is dominant now may become secondary later, may even disappear*.

So—an attempt at a clarification (which, as with certain other points I've tried to make in this letter, I'll have to elaborate and defend in some other, more ample space):

1. The persistence of integrationism, in a dozen disguises, and nationalism's struggle against it, make a strong circumstantial case for the view that blacks are above all

blacks. They are not just another part of the workforce, not even just the main body of the lumpenproletariat. Nor do they make up a *caste*. Industrial societies do not have, cannot afford, castes; castes belong to pre-capitalist formations (or, at latest, to agrarian capitalism) and are in fact destroyed by the imperatives of industrial organization.

Obviously, blacks are assigned an important role in the US production-consumption process. So were pre-revolutionary Cubans. So are contemporary Venezuelans. The low-skill aspect of black production and the importance of the credit and welfare systems in black consumption constitute, in themselves, the leading features of a *colonial* relation to a colonizing political economy. It is therefore appropriate to see the black ghetto as a colony. Thus, and *true* black nationalism (much "nationalist" rhetoric is merely a Hallowe'en mask for integrationist or even *comprador* demands) is necessarily anti-imperialist, and could consummate whatever military or political victories it might achieve in the independence struggle only through a socialist development of the means of production.

2. No more than the struggle of the Vietnamese can be the struggle of the blacks to play a "vanguard" role in the problematic revolution of white America. *Vietnam and Detroit, the NLF and the Panthers, do not constitute the means of white America's liberation from imperialist capital. They constitute, rather, the necessity of that liberation.* They exist for white America as the living embodiment of problems which white America must solve. There are, obviously, many other such problems: the draft, high taxes, inflation, the whole array of ecological and environmental maladies, Big Brotherism at all levels of government, the general and advanced hypertrophy of the State, the fractionalizing of the civil society. Most of these problems are relatively diffuse; they are not experienced so acutely as the war or the ghetto risings. But they are still real to people, and they all have the same general source in the hegemony of capitalism: What sets Vietnam aflame is the same force that brutalizes the black population and poisons everybody's air.

3. The function of the white Western socialist is therefore, at this moment, to confront white America (white France, etc.) with the truth about the problems that harass it, to explain that these problems cannot be solved merely by repressing those people in whose lives the problems are embodied, cannot be solved by prayer or petition, and above all that they cannot be solved so long as the means of production, the wealth of that production, and the monopoly of political power that goes with those means and that wealth are locked up in the hands of the big bourgeoisie. You would as wisely ask the bullet to sew up the wound it made as ask the monopoly capitalist to solve these problems. The capitalist cannot do it. But the socialist can. That is the point we have to make.

4. The rebellion of white students is provoked most fundamentally by the general *extrinsic* failure of capitalist production—by the fact, that is, that production has become so conspicuously anti-social. This is what gives the student rebellion both its power and its very real limits. But this

extrinsic collapse has not yet been followed by an *intrinsic* collapse: the system of capitalist production is at the moment *both insane and rational*. If a failure of its administration should produce also an *intrinsic* collapse—if suddenly no one could buy and no one could sell—then the people of the West would come again to the crossroads of the 1930s, and would have to decide again whether they would solve their problems by means of war or revolution. It is at that point that the fight for the loyalty of the proletariat will become truly historical instead of merely theoretical, necessary instead of merely right, possible instead of merely desirable. *But no will, no courage, no ingenuity can force this eventuality*. If it develops, and if the crisis is prolonged enough for white American workers to grasp the need for revolution, then with the same motion in which they change their rifles from one shoulder to the other, they will simultaneously *de-colonize* the blacks, the Vietnamese, the Cubans, the *French*—for at such a moment, all the old paralyzing definitions will die and new definitions, revolutionary ones, will take their place. The world proletariat will have achieved, at last, its dreamed-of world unity. This possibility, this towering historical power, is merely the other side of what it means to be a white American. But again: no matter how well it is organized or how combative and brilliant its performance is, no Western socialism has it in its power to force or even to hasten the intrinsic collapse of capitalist production. If you are an unreconstructed Marxist, you believe that it will come about sooner or later; if, like myself, you are not, then you don't know. It could happen: the market seems pale, inventories are large, the need to fight inflation in behalf of the international position of the dollar may lead to harder money, more unemployment, and still further slippage in demand; and if Nixon does not get the ABM, the whole system of the US Cold War economy will have received an ominous if mainly symbolic jolt. My view is that if this process starts unfolding, labor will have scant need of student organizers, and in the second place, that it will actively seek the support of student radicals. The "worker-student alliance" will happen when workers want it to happen, they will want it when they need it, and they will need it when and if the system starts coming apart. At such a conjuncture, students will have a critical contribution to make no matter what happens between now and then; but their contribution will be all the greater if they will have employed this uncertain threshold period to secure some kind of power base in the universities and such other institutions as they can reach, and if they will have used the opportunities of their situation to take the case for socialism to the country as a whole, aware certainly that class *implies* a political signature, but just as aware that it does not *necessitate* one. It is mainly to the extent that the white movement has done just this, in fact, that it has been of some occasional concrete service to the black movement, and the same will be true of any forthcoming relationship with a self-radicalized labor force.

Let me put this more bluntly. We are not now free to fight The Revolution except in fantasy. This is not a limit

we can presently transcend; it is set by the over-all situation, and it will only be lifted by a real breakdown within the system of production. Nor will the lifting of the limit be the end of our fight; it will be just the possibility of its beginning. Meanwhile, there is no point in posing ourselves problems which we cannot solve, especially when the agony of doing so means, in effect, the abandoning or humbler projects—"humbler"!... as for example, the capture of real power in the university system—which might otherwise have been brought to a successful head. Just look: Very little, even insignificant effort was invested in the idea of "student power," and the SDS leadership even debunked the concept as, of all things, "counter-revolutionary." Yet we have just witnessed a moment in which a few key universities very nearly chose to collide head-on with the State over the question of repression of the Left. That would have been a momentous fight, especially coming on the heels of the black campus insurgencies. It's our fault that it didn't happen. The fault may be immense.

This was supposed to be about the future. Thousands of words later, I have still said very little about the future. I'm not really surprised at myself, and I won't apologize, but simply sum it up by saying that if SDS continues the past year's vanguarditis, then it, at least, will have precious little future at all. For what this movement needs is a swelling base, not a vanguard.

Or if a vanguard, then one which would rather *ride* a horse than look it in the mouth. One which wants students to get power and open up the campuses, blacks to win the franchise and elect some mayors, architects to be against the war and advertise that fact in the *Times*, clergy to be concerned and preach heretical sermons, inductees to dodge the draft and soldiers to organize a serviceman's union, workers to have more pay and shorter hours, hippies to make parks on private property, liberals to defeat the ABM, West Europe to escape NATO, East Europe the Warsaw Pact, and the global south the Western empires—and the American people as a whole (by any means necessary!) to be free enough to face their genocidal past for what it was, their bloody present for what it portends, and their future for that time of general human prosperity and gladness which they have the unique power to turn it into. And for being still more "revolutionary" than this implies, let us confess that time alone will tell us what they might mean.

Carl Oglesby is a former president of SDS and co-author of *Containment and Change*.

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Coming:

John McDermott  
establishment critics  
on vietnam

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# A New Sensibility Rooted in Rebellion

Jack Newfield

Courtesy of Associated American Artists



There are three separate but related movements whose gains or setbacks over the next five years are important to me. One is the radical (not necessarily revolutionary) political opposition movement developing in this country, (by this I mean much more than just SDS or the New Left), including a variety of extra-parliamentary insurgencies, many of which are single issue and reformist; the strike of black hospital workers in Charleston; draft resistance; the grape strike; the movements among Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; the community control movements in the ghettos; the GI organizing movement; and the growing revolt of intellectuals against the institutions of the military-industrial complex; as well as the Panthers, the ad hoc campus revolts, and the full range of anti-war activities.

The second movement whose growth concerns me is the cultural

revolution in this country—the movement to create new life styles, new institutions, new communities. By this I mean rock music, Rat, Newsreel, hippie communes, the drug subcultures, street theatre, film experimenters, McLuhan, Ginsberg, Phil Ochs, Dylan, the Stones and Joe Heller; a whole new sensibility rooted in community, sensuality, rebellion, and a sense of the absurd.

The third movement is the internationalist drive against white, Western colonialism from Vietnam to Latin America to Angola.

a.  
I now see several historical trends emerging that make me *pessimistic*, in the short run about the first two of these movements. The most depressing trend is the atrophy of the old liberalism. It is now a cliché in the mass media that the country is rapidly be-

coming more conservative. I think that this is not so. What is happening is that *liberalism is becoming more conservative*. It is liberals who have been responsible for the Vietnam war—JFK, Humphrey, Bundy, Fortas, McNamara; liberals in the unions and party structure (Carl Stokes, Bayard Rustin, Adlai Stevenson, Gus Tyler, Fred Harris) who sponsored Humphrey's nomination in Chicago; liberals who opposed the open admissions policy for CCNY (Lindsay, Wagner, Badillo, Scheuer); and liberals who have so far refused to stand up against Nixon's New McCarthyism—the Chicago indictments, the roundups of the Panthers, the police violence at Berkeley, the Congressional paranoia about SDS. The liberals seem willing to pay the ransom of a little repression in order to get the Movement off their backs. It is Edith Green, RFK's manager in Oregon, who is sponsoring the anti-student bill in the House.

Two other developments make me temporarily pessimistic. One is the Movement's own penchant for elitist bullshit. The Crazies breaking up meetings of I.F. Stone and Norman Mailer only turns sensible people off. Ditto the Living Theatre disrupting Paul Goodman. Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin calling Sirhan Sirhan a "freedom fighter" will not radicalize the Kennedy and McCarthy activists, and calling all cops "pigs" will not humanize them, either. The Movement has to reach out more. PL's attempts to use and take over SDS do not further a humanistic and democratic movement. These trends need to be combated without red-baiting and I was impressed by Staughton's piece in the June *Liberation*, as well as by Bob Scheer's essay in the July *Ramparts*.

There is no revolutionary situation



in America today. To act like there is is to invite a police state. PL suffers from a malnutrition of reality. Their strategy can get some very good people killed. It is counter-revolutionary, counter-productive. It is hostile to the cultural revolution beginning in the United States. It is, in both theory and practice, anti-democratic.

The rising *racism of the white working class* I would identify as the third negative trend. Despite the events in Paris last spring, and mounds of SDS literature I have read, I see little evidence that white workers in America are immediate allies of a radical movement (I cannot see the Teamsters liberating a building in sympathy with a Black Student Union). The elections this spring in Los Angeles, Minneapolis and New York underscore this problem. The factory workers, cops, secretaries, steelworkers—the Wallace constituency—have legitimate fears and frustrations. I think we can talk usefully to them about specific issues—powerlessness, tax reform, hypocrisy of liberal politicians, aid to parochial schools, bigness and bureaucracy. But I think it is a debilitating delusion to expect they can be quickly, or easily recruited into a revolution led by blacks who want their jobs, and by pot-smoking, long-haired students.

**b.**  
Yet I think there are hopeful currents on the margins of the society that make me *optimistic, in the long run*, about the eventual fate of the political, cultural and international movements I cited at the start of this piece.

Things will begin to get better if we survive the next four to eight years of Nixon. We will win important battles, the consciousness of masses of people will begin to change; the Movement—in some form—will become a serious alternative in this country. But barring a total economic collapse, or a war, I can't see a revolution. The government just has too great a monopoly on violence, and the people are just too satisfied. The Movement will have to dig in for the long haul; decades of boring, gruelling work in communities. Being a radical here will be neither easy nor satisfying, since we are living

in the eye of the octopus. But patience is imperative.

**P**art of my long range hopefulness derives from my agreement with the fundamental assumptions and myths of the Movement. The country *is* in crisis. Youth *is* a new class in post-industrial society. Wealth, property and income *are* unequally distributed. America *is* rotted and doomed. Traditional liberal institutions (UFT, Harvard, Reform Democrats, Peace Corps, *New York Post*, OEO) *cannot* solve basic social problems. And each year, the high schools turn out a greater percentage of rebels and activists, heads and seekers. The young will be a permanent and increasing constituency for radicalism. And if we can build new radical institutions and communities (publications, movements, projects, new universities, organizations) they will not be so vulnerable to economic reprisal and political repression as the Left was in the 1950s. Biology and time are on the side of the Movement. As Hayden often says, "We will not bury you; we will just out-live you." We will get even with Sidney Hook through his children.

The anti-colonial movements will probably grow as time passes, although I am hardly an expert in this area. But I am confident that the NLF will win in Vietnam, Nelson Rockefeller's tour of Latin America underscores the deep discontent there. These movements in the Third World will give increased legitimacy to those inside America who wrote and worked for the liquidation of the American Empire.

The cultural revolution is slowly gathering momentum, reaching more and younger heads all the time. Rock and pop musicians like Dylan, Jagger, Lennon, Ochs and Zappa will become recognized as the most representative voices of this generation, just as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Salinger and Kerouac are now recognized as the literary *Zeitgeists* of their time. Records and juke boxes and FM radio stations will continue to radicalize kids. And the kids can't be fooled by exploitative commercial *schlock*. The film *Che* has bombed. *Up Tight* was also a flop. Just as *schlock* rock, like

Jay and the Americans and the Vanilla Fudge, can't compete with the Band and the Doors. Politics, for the young, may come out of the barrel of an amplified speaker. And all the sociological pre-conditions exist—affluence, social mobility, the population explosion—for the cultural movement to continue to spread. This movement may not be *explicitly political*, but it is creating and strengthening new values and new life styles all over the country, in any city that has a record store, in any high school that has an underground newspaper.

When Gracie Slick sings, "feed your head," or the Stones sing, "I can't get no satisfaction," or Dylan sings, "I ain't gonna work on Maggie's farm no more," this gets inside more heads in middle America than any theorist of revolution. Sexual freedom, long hair, pot, satire, tribalism, the breakdown of censorship—these are the vessels of the cultural revolution that Richard Nixon cannot stop.

**C.**  
Let me summarize. The next few years under Nixon, Mitchell and Laird will be very difficult. There will be harassment and repression; the liberals won't have enough balls to help much, and the Movement's own violent nuts (or undercover police agents) will probably give the liberals plenty of excuses for their caution. But if we survive this period, I think we have a good chance to achieve significant structural changes in the society. Time will prove the Movement's analysis of corporate liberalism, the universities, and Vietnam right. The older liberal's lurch to the Right will fail, and they will lose the allegiance of the best young; who joins the YPSL or reads *Commentary* any more? I believe the social conditions that create radicals—war, racism, hypocrisy, state violence, bureaucracy, Puritanism, repression—will continue. And each day, more and more young people in colleges, in high schools, even in junior high schools, will reach the point where they feel they can no longer conform to illegitimate authorities who brutalize the best parts of their nature.

Jack Newfield writes for the *Village Voice*.

# Beyond Old and New Left: The Emergence of a Third Force

James Aronson

I speak of the needless destruction and waste of lives, efforts and ideals, of intramural frustration and anger, and even of bitterness and hatred whose end product can only be division and impotence.

On the night of Lincoln's birthday, nine years ago, Louis E. Burnham, an associate editor of the *National Guardian*, stood at the lectern on a platform in a small meeting room in New York. He was in the midst of a Negro History Week lecture to a predominantly black audience on "Emerging Africa, and the Negro People's Fight for Freedom." Burnham was black, and while this fact is not integral to this story, it does have a bearing. His usually vibrant voice was tired and his words were slow. He said: "I know you get tired of the continuing struggle sometimes. We all do, but we must not despair, we must not rest—too long. Tomorrow's new world beckons. Tomorrow belongs to us."

His voice faltered and he sat down to rest. An hour later he was dead of a heart attack in the emergency room of the Polyclinic Hospital, in large part a victim of years of struggle and years of neglect of person. Burnham was 44, an articulate and dynamic writer and speaker with a magnetic personality. He was on the threshold of making his greatest contribution to the black freedom movement in the fullness of his maturity.

At a memorial meeting for Burnham two months later, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, then in his 93rd year, said: "I knew Louis Burnham for 25 years. There are many matters of which I might speak concerning him—of the work he did; of the work he was doing at the time of his death; and of what he might have done had he lived. Above all, none can forget his honesty and utter sacrifice. I speak, however, only of one matter

which seems to me of the greatest moment. What I want to say has to do with the saving of lives like that of Louis Burnham; the stopping of the vast and reckless waste which goes on each year in this country and others, and deprives the world of irreplaceable help for the tasks which we have to do."

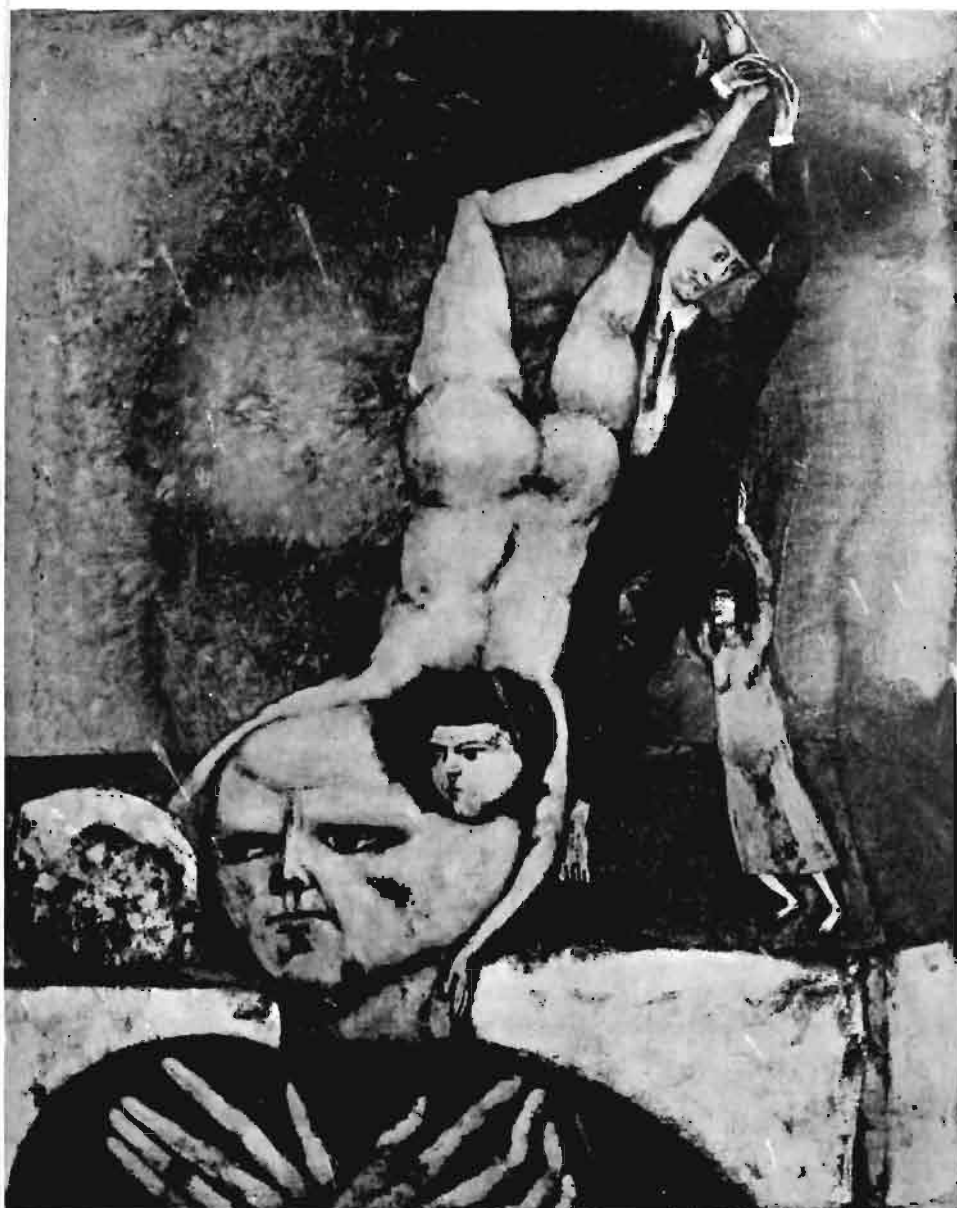
DuBois spoke of the delinquency of the state, but even more of the delinquency of individuals in the radical movement, of their lack of concern for one another, of the failure of responsibility of man to man. I chose this episode in the life of a burned-out young black radical, and the words of a disciplined and sage historian and sociologist whose life spanned almost a century of the history of the world, because I believe the warning DuBois sought to sound still has not been heeded.

In a sense, I have gone into the past to make a projection into the future. Projections in themselves are difficult enough. For the radical movement today a projection such as is set forth in the title of this symposium is all but impossible, given the lack of cohesion within the movement and the absence of clear analysis of the prevailing forces in the country today. I refer to it as "the movement," although I do not believe that a movement in an organized sense exists. In this framework, a more appropriate question might be: "Where will the movement be five or ten years from now, unless . . . ?" My comments here will be less a projection and more an expression of some deep-

ly held convictions and impressions based on thirty years of involvement in efforts to help present a radical alternative for the United States.

The word "unless" encompasses a feeling not of despair but of dismay over the present state of the movement and particularly the human exchange among members of the movement. I speak of the needless destruction and waste of lives, efforts and ideals, of intramural frustration and anger, and even of bitterness and hatred whose end product can only be division and impotence. In this time of continuing political, social and economic crisis, I would venture this projection: Unless the state of mind of the radical movement can be oriented wholeheartedly toward the philosophy and achievement of humanist socialism, within the American experience and requirement, and ever mindful of the movement's relationship to the struggle for liberation everywhere in the world, five or ten years hence the movement will be precisely where it is today—sporadically and courageously successful in focusing national attention on the key problems of our time, but essentially unable to extend its influence beyond the righteous walls of its own making.

This dismay has been deepened in the days before this was written by the mindless self-cleaving of the Students for a Democratic Society at its convention in June in Chicago—an outcome accurately (and I am sure reluctantly) forecast by Staughton Lynd in the June issue of *Liberation*. Even the most sympathetic reports (the *Guard-*



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ian and Liberation News Service particularly) presented a canvas of hysteria and bedlam that could only have brought an exhilarating warmth to the hearts of the counterinsurgency planners in Washington and their branch divisions throughout the country.

The ancient and foul-smelling Coliseum was filled with screams and shouts and the chanting of slogans and the raising of ikons to exorcise heretical devils; speakers degraded women as sexual vessels in the image of the debunkers of the Bolshevik Revolution 50 years ago; half a convention hall was expelled by the other half in flag-

rant violation of a democratic constitution; there was apparently neither time nor inclination nor, in the last analysis, opportunity to discuss—much less formulate—a course or a program to enlist the support of fellow Americans toward the urgent task of altering the American system. And finally there was an “election” to leadership of a man of undoubted courage but much less proven acumen and ability, who acknowledged that he was a “press-created” leader whom the media had made a “symbol of the new left.” Then, accepting his media-created role, he said: “The movement needs leader-

ship, the movement needs symbols, my name exists as a symbol. I think that’s a good thing.”

I think that’s a poor thing. The pressing need for the movement today—much less five or ten years hence—is neither righteousness nor symbols but the introduction, teaching and training of political, economic and psychological humanist socialism in preparation for what may be a life-and-death struggle with the forces of inhumanity that surround us. To permit inhumanity to persist unchallenged in our own ranks is the surest way to self-destruction.

One can welcome and applaud the revolutionary formulations of the new left as replacements for the reformist formulations of the old left, while at the same time deploring the romantic rhetoric of revolution that permeates much of the new left. It has, to my mind, misled many young radicals, and persons finding their way to radicalism, into mistaking confrontation with reaction as the final battle between American imperialism and the American revolution. We are a far way from this condition. The American power establishment is worried, but it is enormously strong; the potential revolutionary forces are not organized, and those segments which are organized have no viable socialist program for America.

The main priority in building a revolutionary force is the creation of a *movement* which does not as yet exist—a movement comprised of diverse but cooperative elements, black and white, Spanish-American, Puerto Rican and Indian, poor farmers, organized workers, community councils, working separately or together, young and old, willing to accept a common unity of purpose strong enough to create a radical movement which can be a force for radical change in the life of the nation. Just as the gathering power of an emerging American imperialism did its utmost to destroy a resurgent New Deal spirit after World War II, an entrenched American imperialism will do its utmost to prevent a movement from coming into being today to project a revolutionary rather than a reformist program. It will be as-

sisted in its effort if any one group seeks to impose its policy as the prevailing one for a radical movement, in the conviction that it is the only "correct" policy.

The history of the radical movement in the United States, and in many other countries, has been to a great degree a history of foundering on the rock of correctness. Developments within the New Left in the last year demonstrate that it is clinging to the same old left rock which it had condemned and promised to shatter.

It is, for example, most unfortunate that the Southern Students Organizing Committee, a modest and hard-working group, should have been dissolved into the SDS on the eve of the SDS's own probable disintegration as a useful organization. The apparent reason was that SSOC's policies were not "relevant" to the stated national goals of SDS. The policies of SSOC, however, were relevant to the requirements of the South. With a cadence appropriate to the South, SSOC was proceeding on the basis of its understanding of its region and its people to seek solutions for the region. It was tragic that it was forced to yield to the demands of the absentee landlord.

This episode points two ways for a radical movement: (1) to a patient and painstaking road to organization, or (2) to wreckage on the familiar shoals of ineffectual correctness. I do not believe that there can be an overall "correct" policy for a national radical movement today except in the acknowledgement of the overriding questions of race and

imperialist war. The first objective, it seems to me, must be a working relationship among all groups and organizations which are potential participants in such a movement, with tolerance, understanding and a knowledge of one another's problems and aspirations. And, above all, a knowledge of history.

I am reminded of a remarkably clear and prophetic commentary by the late Paul Baran in a symposium on "Cooperation on the Left" in the July 1950 issue of *Monthly Review*. Discussing the "manipulative ability" of the American ruling class to sustain the decline of radicalism in the United States, he wrote:

There is hardly any room for political cooperation on the Left at the present moment because there are no politics of the Left. The time will perhaps come, possibly sooner than we think. But just now the issues are ideological, and ideological problems cannot be solved by organizational makeshifts... What is needed—let us say it again and again—is clarity, courage, patience, faith in the spontaneity of rational and socialist tendencies in society. At the present historical moment in our country—"better smaller but better."

Today, almost two decades later, there is plenty of politics on the left, and the slogan might well be "bigger and better." But Baran's cautions about clarity, courage, patience and faith remain as valid as ever. Some of these qualities can be achieved partly through the study of history. It is a pertinent and not at all condescending question to ask how many radicals have a sound knowledge of the history of the radical movement in the United States, of the Populists, Socialists and Communists, the isolated pockets of struggle through the McCarthy era? What about the New Deal and the beginnings of the Cold War? I was somewhat startled in conversation recently with an activist in the black freedom movement of the early 1960s, to hear him say that the young black militants today, for the most part in the 18-year-old range, have almost no knowledge of the beginning of the student black freedom movement in 1960 because that history is not being imparted to them.

What knowledge and understanding is there of the cataclysmic events involved in the Bolshevik Revolution and the Chinese Revolution (there is more appreciation of course of the Cuban Revolution, since it was closer to hand and had an immediate spiritual impact on young people)? Would it not be more profitable and useful for radicals to seek to comprehend the struggles, dissensions, betrayals and glorious achievements of these revolutions, rather than to wave little red books and invoke chapter and verse of the

theoretical literature of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Stalin, tracked down in talmudic fashion to make a stunningly irrelevant point? The lessons of revolutions achieved have far more value for a radical movement than the romantic rhetoric of slogans that have no bearing on the conditions of our life.

There is validity to the theory of the continuity of history. The past—its positive achievements, mistakes, failures, victories—affect the present and, together with the experiences of the present, help chart the course of the future. With such knowledge will come more careful critiques of the nature and direction of the radical upsurge of the last decade; with such knowledge, projections become meaningful weapons in the struggle that lies ahead. It can also be of great help—on both sides—in bridging the gap between the generations.

Attitudes toward the New Left among the older generations in the radical movement—and this inevitably takes a middle-class turn because the radical movement of the 40s and 50s was largely middle-class in nature—seem to assume either of two forms: (1) despair at the unwillingness of most New Leftists to adopt a single set of political and scientific ideas (as was the fashion in their time), and a defensive attitude toward New Leftists who, with single-minded hostility, charge them with responsibility for the "mess" that was the legacy of the New Left. This is coupled with disapproval of the new "life-styles" involving sexual freedom, marijuana and drugs and bizarre dress; (2) an uncritical approval of the New Left and young people in general because "young people are the hope of the future, and God knows we surely have failed them." This attitude is a comforting one: It permits the older generations to acknowledge that the younger generation has made them aware of the extent to which they have given up the struggle; then, having made this noble acknowledgment, to continue to remain nobly aloof, except perhaps for occasional financial support.

But there is a "third force" both in the older and younger generations with which I would associate myself. In this group, the elders—some of them wisely





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saddened veterans of the New Deal, others scarred victims of the McCarthy era—refuse to regard themselves as useless or expendable, and have never departed from the actual struggle. They accept the new life-styles without endorsing the use of drugs or the prevalence of pornography as heralds of national liberation. They do not regard themselves basically as culpable for the state of the nation and the world today, any more than they would charge the present generation with culpability if its efforts failed to bring about change. Rather, they subscribe to the theory of the continuity of history, recognize their place in the continuing struggle, concede past error as well as take pride in accomplishment, and seek to work with the younger generation, heartened by the youthful surge toward radicalism. They hope they may be able to impart some useful knowledge on the basis of experience, even as they learn from the experience of the younger generation.

Among the younger generation, it seems to me, the “third force” manifests itself as a serious, earnest group which finds pleasure and love in the camaraderie of the common struggle, rejects the bitterness and hatefulness of many of their colleagues, and seeks to understand the forces at work in our society by partaking in honest intellectual endeavor and the life experience of the community. On the basis of this understanding, they attempt to formu-

late programs and policies which may attract their peers who do not as yet have sufficient political and social understanding to join them. They do not reject America: they reject the system and the symbols of the American establishment. They do not wish to isolate themselves as a sect, yet know they may for some time to come be forced to suffer the slings and arrows directed at a vulnerable minority.

They understand the problems of the generation gap, but do not reject dialogue between the generations to ease the problems. They understand the psychological problems of their own generation—the seeking after idols, the ego-drives, the frustrations and the search for identity that often lead to a dead-end—and they try to deal with them in a spirit of fraternity.

They do not seek the destruction of the university, but attempt to use the incomparable facilities of the university, and the guidance of faculty members who share their hopes and aspirations, to make of themselves better radicals and ultimately better revolutionaries. They do not have faith in the electoral system on a national scale, but understand that there is utmost relevance in the election of black people to a board in a backwater Alabama county which allocates and distributes food to hungry people.

They accept the division between black and white as a necessary concomitant of the system which has

created the division in the first place, realize that their role in the struggle for black freedom is not to seek the protective comfort of the umbrella of the black community, but to work with white persons in the difficult task of helping them to understand their stake in the struggle for black freedom. They are willing to work with black people on the basis of understanding and, when the time is appropriate, to join them in the common struggle.

Radicalism is our alternative for America, young and old alike, and we insist on the right—and the duty—to argue, plan and build for what Lynd terms a “humane, democratic, libertarian” society, without interference from those in power. If there is interference—and there will be—we will resist, but the resistance—if the movement can be fashioned—will have the support of numbers and the essential solidarity of participants in a common effort.

A national liberation movement—which is what our movement must be—will not develop easily and without cost. Fifty years after the death of John Brown, DuBois wrote in his biography of the Old Man: “John Brown taught us that the cheapest price to pay for liberty is its cost today.”

Fifty years after DuBois wrote those words, the cost remains unaltered.

*James Aronson was editor of the National Guardian for many years.*

# TO RECAPTURE THE DREAM

Julius Lester



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What we know as "the Movement" had its beginnings in the late 1950s. In Afroamerica the beginning was the 1956 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama in which a twenty-six-year-old minister, Martin Luther King, Jr. introduced non-violent direct action as a means of attacking the problem of racial discrimination. The bus boycott was a sharp departure in political tactics for blacks. Until that time the NAACP's approach of using the apparatus of the system in the attempt to make the system work had prevailed and the NAACP had achieved a great victory in the 1954 Supreme Court school decision. The South's reaction to the Supreme Court ruling was summed up in the new rallying cry of the Confederacy—"The South Says Never!" And Afroamerica watched black children being beaten as they entered schools in Clinton, Tennessee, Brownsville, Texas and Little Rock, Arkansas. In response, the Eisenhower regime did so little that it amounted to nothing.

In America during this same period, similar tactics were being used, as pacifists in New York, San Francisco and other cities demonstrated against the testing of nuclear weapons, the appropriation of monies for bomb shelters and air raid drills in the schools. In other parts of America a phenomenon known as the "beat generation" established psychic liberation zones in New York, Denver, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, saying that they would not follow the "man in the gray flannel suit," that life did not consist of the balance in your bank account, but in the values by which you lived.

None of us who were a part of those beginnings in the Fifties could have then predicted the Sixties. The Sixties represent one of the most fantastic compressions of political ideas and action of any decade in American history. (As Jim Morrison of The Doors has pointed out: "A generation lasts only two or three years now.") To go from

sit-in demonstrations at lunch counters in the South to the Black Panther Party, from pacifist demonstrations against nuclear testing to a mass anti-war movement, from the "beat generation" to a cultural revolution is a ten-year journey almost beyond comprehension. Yet, this is the journey which has been made.

It is a tragedy of the Sixties that too few of us know the journey on which we have been. We refer to "the movement" as if it were a political monolith. But what we now call "the movement" bears little resemblance to what we called "the movement" in 1963. In the early Sixties, "the movement" consisted of SNCC, CORE and SCLC in Afroamerica. SDS, various socialist groups and peace groups in America. At that time if one wanted to be a part of "the movement" one affiliated himself with one of those organizations.

Today, "the movement" is no longer an identifiable political entity, but we still refer to it as if it were. It is more a socio-political phenomenon encompassing practically all of Afroamerica and a good segment of the youth of America. It is exemplified by the high school dropout who knows why he's not in school, the long-haired youth whose life is lived in the streets, college students, SDS organizers, winos, blacks in daishikis and blacks in suits and blacks in black leather jackets and on and on and on. Indeed, most of the people who now consider themselves to be a part of "the movement" do not belong to any organization. Instead, there are loose groupings of people around the country who share a common outlook, common life-styles, and common aspirations.

What we refer to as "the movement" has become increasingly broad and more varied, not only in terms of the people who were involved, but in its aims. During the early Sixties it was easy to know what was happening. "SNCC has organizers in Mississippi. They are organizing people to vote." There was a political goal and a means of reaching that goal. Yet, as "the movement" progressed, it found that the problems it was confronting were more

complex than had first been recognized. And on another level, "the movement" had the power to unleash more than it consciously intended. Indeed, one action set off a chain of other actions around the country. For example, the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project was designed to organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, to challenge the Democratic Party delegation at the convention in Atlantic City, and to focus the attention of the nation on the state of Mississippi. All of these objectives were achieved, yet the Summer Project served as the catalyst for other actions that were not directly related to the desired objectives. Thus, the results of the Summer Project can also include the take-over of Sproul Hall on the Berkeley campus in 1965, the beginning of a black-white split in what was then the "civil-rights movement," the beginnings of an all-black movement, which announced itself in 1966 with the cry of Black Power. These side results of the Summer Project in turn set off other actions.

Things happened in the Sixties. We didn't make them happen as much as one action produced ten other actions (but the progression was geometric) and we were swept along with it. By the mid-Sixties, it was practically impossible for an organization to adequately control and guide actions which it initiated. And to tell the truth, we were so excited seeing so much happen, that few tried to control or direct what was happening. We were not concerned with being conscious of the implications of what we were doing. We were merely conscious of doing.

The nature of "the movement" underwent a subtle change in the mid-sixties. Until 1964, "the movement" had depended upon its own people to carry information from place to place. Meetings were small; "movement" publications were few and people depended upon direct contact with each other to keep informed and since there were always a fair number of people in motion, this was not difficult. However, with the Summer Project in 1964 and the murders of Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner, the



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media became more and more prominent as the carriers of "movement" information. (One of the reasons the Summer Project came into being was an attempt to break the media black-out on Mississippi.) It had always played an unconscious role in "spreading the word." A 14-year-old black youth who watched sit-in demonstrators getting beaten in 1960 via NBC was 19 at the time of the Watts Rebellion, and he had been politicized by NBC, not by meetings, rallies or "movement" propaganda. And a ten-year-old in Detroit who witnessed Watts via NBC was more than ready two years later. "The movement" took advantage of the media's new interest in it and began to consciously use and eventually depend upon the media to be the agent for information rather than upon its own people and organs. And as "the movement" grew, it became so loose and ill-defined in structure and constituency that a press conference was the most effective way of communicating with "the movement."

The media was also the principle agent of information for the cultural revolution, feeding itself and making news about be-ins, love-ins, hippies, rock groups, drugs, etc., and it took the Yippies to merge the cultural revolution with the political movement via NBC. Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin consciously used the media to transmit concepts of the cultural revolution and to direct those concepts toward political ends. They made their attitude as much a part of the information to be transmitted as their words and their dress (which is also attitude). (Vito Battista, a Republican legislator from New York, is a good Yippie. Chairman Mao swimming the Yangtze shows knowledge of Yippieism. Khrushchev banging his shoe on the table at the UN is a Yippie elder statesman.) Abbie and Jerry used NBC to communicate with twelve-year-olds in suburbia, consciously trying to give them concepts and models that would be an alternative to those presented by their parents and teachers.

By the fall of 1966, "the movement", which had once been composed of a few political organizations, was becoming a separate society, with its own newspapers, its own life-style, its own morality. It became like a huge river with people jumping in at every point along its banks. Those who had been swimming in the river for several years suddenly found themselves surrounded by hundreds of new swimmers and while everyone admitted that there was a communication gap between the young and their parents, few recognized that there was a growing communication gap within what we still called "the movement." We used the same words and thought we were talking about the same things, but, in actuality, increasingly, we were not. The political perspective of someone who has been in "the movement" since 1960 (and how many are left?) was, of necessity going to be different from that of one who entered in 1968. The viewpoint of the former was not necessarily superior to that of the latter, but the differences between the two had to be recognized and understood. The "movement" veteran had a sense of "movement" history, having lived it. The "movement" neophyte did not. As far as he was concerned, "the movement" began when he became aware of it.



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Because of the constantly changing nature of "the movement", because the constituency of "the movement" was constantly changing, we needed, by 1966, a history of the previous six years, so that each of us would have some knowledge of where we had been, whether we had been there or not (and no one had been everywhere). We still need that history, only now it must cover almost a decade. It is in our history that we learn who we are. It is in our actions that we learn who we are. If either element is missing, we become one-legged creatures on crutches, thinking that we are running simply because we're in motion. I speak to a college audience and casually mention the Freedom Rides and suddenly realize that most of those listening were between the ages of ten and fourteen when John Lewis stumbled from a burning bus outside Anniston, Alabama in 1961. They do not know what I know. (And because I am older, I lack some of the insights they have because they are younger.) The results of this become painfully apparent when one sits in a meeting in 1969 and finds himself participating in a 1966 discussion. The reasoning and the arguments are the same. Only the faces are different. The question then becomes: does each generation have to cover the same ground for itself or can the knowledge of one generation be transferred to another? Because a generation is now so brief, there *must* be a way. "The movement" today extends from the ninth grader just entering high school to thirty-year-olds like myself to "old



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men" like Staughton Lynd and Dave Dellinger and beyond. We must not become alienated from each other.

One of the tasks which must be undertaken in the Seventies is for those with the capability and experience to recognize that it is their responsibility to write and analyze our own very recent history. If this history is not written, we will then leave the job to be done by liberal historians (who have, in fact, begun) and the information which they will transmit to the future will not be the story of radicalism in the Sixties. Merely the liberal's story of radicalism in the Sixties. We of the sixties have suffered because we do not know the history of radicalism prior to ourselves. And because we don't, we see the increasing factionalism among political organizations and it's like the re-playing of a Grade Z movie. Because we don't even know our own history, we see SDS and the Black Panther Party repeating some of the mistakes SNCC made earlier in the decade. All of this is unnecessary, but it is happening. It will continue to happen as long as we do not know what happened in the Sixties, and before.

"The movement" is no longer what it was when SDS issued the Port Huron statement or when the Jefferson Airplane used to perform in Golden Gate Park. Today "the movement" has several divisions, the most apparent being the black-white one. Within both of these, there are sub-divisions. Within the white movement, a division can be loosely made between cultural and political orientations, recognizing that there is, of course, an over-lapping between the two. This is a division between the "street people" and those of a more traditional political orientation, e.g. SDS, PLP, SWP, etc. (Within the latter, there are many divisions and factions, and seemingly more, God forbid, on the horizon.)

Within the black movement, there is no clear-cut division between the cultural and political, despite the insistence of the Black Panther Party to the contrary. While the Black Panther Party has national projection as the leading organization within the black community, what is happen-

ing in the communities is contrary to this. Leadership within the black movement is becoming more and more localized. Just a few years ago, that leadership was national in character, best exemplified by Stokely, Rap, and for a period, the Black Panther Party. With the development of strong local leadership, the nature of the black movement is changing. People are being organized around practically every conceivable issue and sometimes, from every conceivable approach. Intense black-oriented education is going on within communities and once more, news of what is happening is being transmitted by word-of-mouth, not via NBC. This period of internalization is the natural one to follow the mass awakening which took place with the pronouncement of Black Power from 1966-68. The black movement is more alive now than it has ever been. It simply isn't visible on the six o'clock news, except when 14-year-old girls are murdered by cops in Omaha.

The one very clear division which does exist in the black movement is between those who use a Marxist-Leninist analysis (generally the Black Panther Party) and those who use a "race" analysis. The Black Panther Party would say that this is a political-cultural split, but many blacks from a political background, i.e. involvement in "the movement" pre-dating the BPP, reject both the Marxist approach and a complete "race" analysis. One of the most influential spokesmen for a new analysis based on black nationalism is Harold Cruse. His book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* and his recent article on Cleaver's second book in the *New York Review of Books* are excellent examples of a new approach to black nationalism and the question of revolution.

The Seventies will undoubtedly see an intensification of struggle between black Marxist and black nationalist viewpoints. Because Marxism does not concern itself with the question of race, its relevance to the black struggle is highly limited. Those who define the struggle as a class struggle are using 19th century concepts of 19th century conditions. Those who define it solely as a race struggle are over-simplifying the realities of the last years of the Twentieth Century. Sadly, the attempts by some blacks to come to a new analysis of the black condition in America and of America itself are being hindered by white radicals who are only too happy to proclaim any black the all-Wise Leader if he says that it is not a matter of race, but a class struggle. This enables white radicals to avoid grappling with the problem of racism, a white problem. Both white and black Marxists make the remarkable assumption that if one is a Marxist one is automatically not a racist. No. One merely becomes a Marxist racist and racism under any name smells as bad. A radical "cracker" is still a "cracker." If the white movement is to grow, there must be a recognition of the fact that while racism proceeded from capitalism, racism now has an independent existence. Racism can exist within any economic system. The destruction of capitalism does not mean the automatic destruction of racism and many blacks do not think that the destruction of racism can be delayed until after the revolution. The question arises, but can racism be destroyed under



capitalism? No, but that has to be the priority. The white radical movement is infected with racism and any revolution proceeding from its ranks is going to have racism within it. And if there is a socialist revolution which has racism within it, there has been no revolution. Just a change in economic systems. The failure of the Black Panther Party and many white radicals to recognize this takes the political movement back to the days of 1964. We are not witnessing a radical coalition, but simply a new form of integration. And it has been given its validity by SDS and other white radicals, not by the black community.

There is a need for a new analysis. The quality of any political movement can be no better than the quality of its ideas and the way in which those ideas are expressed. A political movement functions on the basis of revolutionary concepts and revolutionary morality. In the past year, there has been an alarming decline in the quality of concepts and morality within the political movement. When a hyena has been wounded, it will turn and eat its entrails. The political movement which began in the late Fifties and came to fruition in the Sixties had a clear concept of where it was going and some idea of how to go there. Yet, the further it went, the more aware it became of the complexities of the problems and the less apparent were the solutions. The more complex the problems appeared, the more the political movement turned to solutions others had used with success, namely, Marxism-Leninism. While these solutions worked for other people, there was little questioning as to what degree, if and how these solutions might work in America. The ways in which Ho, Mao and Fidel each used Marxism-Leninism in different ways to suit their particular problems was over-looked and the fact that they used Marxism-Leninism became all important. The result has been an ever-increasing factionalism within the political movement, with each side saying it represents the one, true approach and throwing epithets of "counter-revolutionary" back and forth like the Chicago police throwing tear gas canisters. He who disagrees with me is counter-revolutionary seems to be the current level of political analysis and acumen. This not only creates dissension but is demoralizing in the extreme.

The political movement has become so concerned with itself that it has ceased to grow. In and of themselves, organizations are very dangerous things. They are begun as the vehicle for social change, for the revolution. After a while, though, they unknowingly become mistaken for the revolution itself. Organizations have to have offices, printing equipment, mailing lists, etc., and generally, it seems that the more the power structure moves against an organization, the more it becomes concerned with saving its offices, equipment, mailing lists, i.e. in preserving itself. Its principle tasks become paying the office rent and phone bills and getting people out of jail. And the more it is attacked, the more it has only one issue to bring before people—defend the organization. When an organization's overwhelming concern becomes its own preservation, it is no longer waging a struggle. It has merely become an employer with so many on the payroll and bills to be paid.

The organization begins to rule its members instead of the members using the organization as a means to the end. a means to the end.

One of the important tasks of the Seventies will be to examine and evaluate organizations and if necessary, disband many and create others. Our loyalties have to be to the struggle, not to any particular organization. Too many people have left an organization and thereby, left "the movement," thinking that an organization was synonymous with "the movement."

Intense involvement with organizational internal affairs can blind us to what we are supposed to be about—the creation of a society based upon values of humanity. Yet, we cannot be the vehicle for the creation of this society unless we ourselves are in the process of being transformed. If we become narrow in outlook, if we refuse to be open to criticism, to new concepts, we become the fascists we say we are fighting. If we become so self-righteous and self-important that we talk to no one and listen to no one who does not agree with the way we view the world, we are even less than those we are allegedly fighting because we are supposed to know better. If we continue to substitute the waving of the little red book for thought, if we continue to substitute the screaming of slogans for ideology, if we continue to divide and fight among ourselves, then "the movement" of the Seventies will be comprised of bitter, disillusioned idealists who lost the dream.

We must not mistake an organization, a gun, or even an ideology for the revolution. They are only means toward it. Revolution is first and foremost a question of morality, a question of values, a question of the inner life of people. If we lose sight of this, we can create a society in which everyone is well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed, and find a new generation of the young rising up and saying, "We want the world and we want it NOW!"

We had the dream and we are losing it. If we can regain the fervor and intensity of that dream in the next five years, that will be more than enough. To create a society in which each man has the opportunity to love himself and thereby, the opportunity to love his fellows. That is the dream. Before we can create the revolution which will make real the dream, we must begin to create it among ourselves. In the beginning it was easy to maintain the dream. Now, because the problems facing us are more complex than we ever imagined, maintaining the dream is that much more difficult. Letting that dream suffuse our every thought, word and deed is that much more difficult. Yet, that is what we must do, no matter how difficult it becomes. Without the dream, there is no revolution.

*Julius Lester is a long-time activist and author of Look Out Whitey, Black Power's Gonna Get Your Mamma and Revolutionary Notes.*

## in defense of SDS

Mark Naison

Before we try to project where the left should be going, we've got to recognize that many brothers and sisters involved in the most serious political work no longer think in terms of an all-inclusive movement. To the regional organizers and national collective of SDS, the Progressive Labor party and all who share its opposition to black liberation struggles are traitors and enemies. To the Black Panther Party, Ron Karenga's US organization which murdered two Panther leaders in Los Angeles is a stain which must be purged from the black community at all costs. Whether these factional wars are a sign of the New Left's maturity or degeneration is open to debate. But it is an undeniable fact that as the American left has begun to emerge as a serious revolutionary force, those organizations in the forefront of the struggle are beginning to draw sharp ideological boundaries around their political work.

The speed with which the atmosphere of the struggle has changed has shocked many long time activists. Highly respected movement intellec-

tuals such as Julius Lester, Staughton Lynd, and Greg Calvert have publicly bemoaned the movement's new harshness in rhetoric and insularity in practice. To these writers, the ghost of "Stalinism" with its purges, its ponderous language, its racism posing as anti-racism, its vanguard pretensions and megalomaniac style—have come back to haunt us. After all the careful efforts made to establish the left on a fraternal, democratic basis, the leading radical organizations in the black and white community seem hell-bent on imitating the worst abuses of the old left.

Those of us who are the "Stalinists" in this situation therefore have a lot of explaining to do to people on the sidelines. Why are we kicking people out of SDS, waving red books, carrying (or talking about carrying) guns, and reviving tired concepts like the "vanguard" and the "revolutionary party."

The explanation goes deeper than "paranoia," "guilt," or "youthful adventurism." Fundamental changes in the movement's political analysis underlie these shifts in strategy and style. Many of the New Left's initial assumptions have been exposed as illusions during the crises of the past year. Through study, through struggle, through the force of repression, we've learned some basic political lessons.

*First.* That there is no significant possibility that American capitalism will progressively reform itself into a non-exploitative, socialist society. The election returns, the continuation of the war, the assassination of Kennedy and King, the police riots in Chicago, Berkeley and Madison, the brutal suppression of the Panthers and black student groups, and our growing (cumulative) knowledge about the meaning of imperialism have left us with the feeling that there can be no



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such thing as a peaceful, democratic transformation of American society. Every gain for oppressed or exploited people in the United States is paid for by greater exploitation of people in other segments of the American Empire. The old conception of agitators within the system is a bad dream. There are no more Radicals, only Revolutionaries.

*Second.* The idea that a new working class of technicians, professionals, and intellectuals will play the leading role in the transformation of advanced industrial society has been exposed as a myth. This was the year we saw New York City teachers strike harder against the black community than they ever did against the city, college professors denounce student radicals more passionately than they ever did the warmakers, and clerks, technicians and lower corporate personnel vote in larger numbers for Wallace than any social stratum except farmers. At the same time, discontent within the army, the expansion of the movement in the high schools and community colleges, the growth of wildcat strikes, and the unprecedented cooperation of students and workers in the French general strikes showed enormous untapped potential for radicalism among less privileged sectors of the working class, particularly the young. We began to see that much of the movements program and style, including its lack of discipline, its endless debates, its abhorrence of violence, reflected the class attitudes of students at the elite universities, and had to be changed as the movement spread to less privileged sectors.

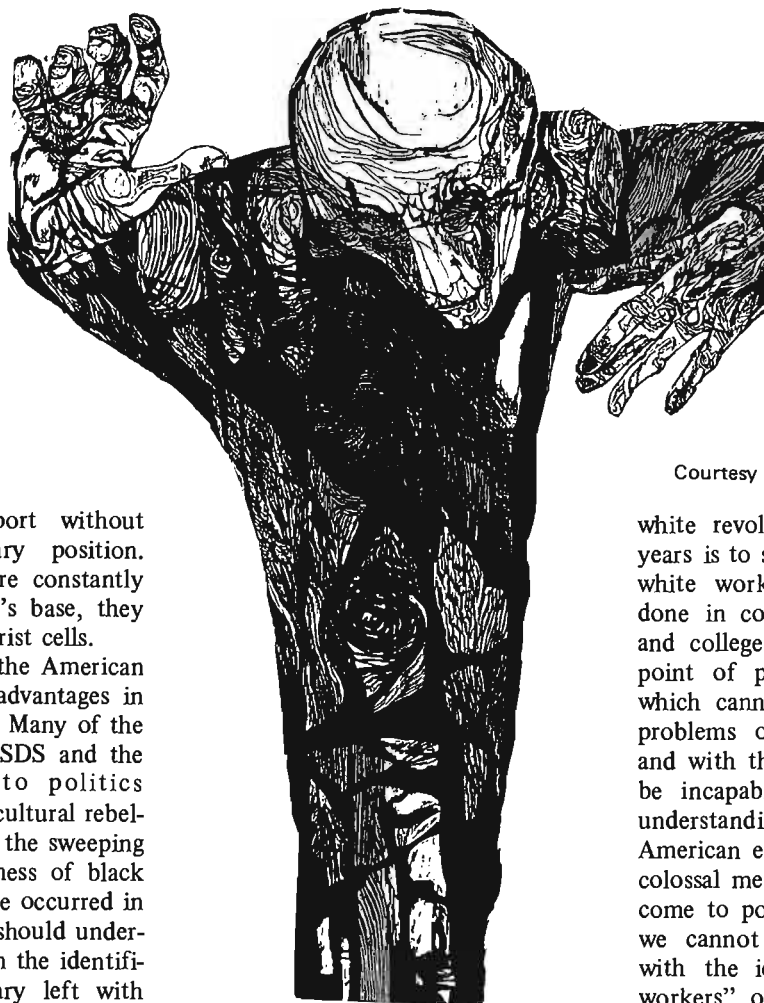
*Third.* We began to understand the pivotal role that national liberation struggles by Third-World peoples and black and brown minorities in America would play in bringing down imperialism. While Vietnam fought on, while student strikes paralyzed Mexico and Argentina, while guerilla activity increased in Guatemala and Venezuela, the black struggle in America also attained new heights of militancy and political sophistication. The nationwide growth of the Black Panther Party, the emergence of revolutionary black caucuses among auto and transit workers,

the initiation of armed struggle by black college students at North Carolina A&T and Cornell, the three-month shutdowns of CCNY and San Francisco State by "co-optable" black students, and the thousands of local struggles waged by black high school students and working people showed all but the racist and the blind where the major internal challenge to American imperialism was coming from. All of these activities were inspired by a nationalist impulse, but it was a nationalism that was moving far beyond "Hate Whitey." Under the leadership of SNCC, the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement and the Panthers, radical black spokesmen were showing how black power could be combined with a class analysis, and alliances formed with politically conscious whites who respected the black community's right to self determination.

These theoretical insights forced a complete reevaluation of the left's strategic thinking. For the first time in recent American history, black and white activists began to pay serious attention to the problem of the transfer of power, and have concluded that it is unlikely that socialism will come in America without destroying or neutralizing the armed power of the capitalist state. Given this conclusion it is not at all surprising that the theoreticians we are turning to for guidance are those who were engaged in the *practice* of revolutionary struggle: Lenin, Mao, Che, Lin Piao. Those who complain about the irrelevance of these thinkers to conditions in advanced industrial society ignore the methodological contributions they have made in integrating theory, political analysis, and military strategy into the Marxian framework. We are aware of the limitations of Leninism and Maoism as humane philosophy, but they are the only varieties of Marxism (there are at least 57) which have succeeded in establishing socialism in an important political area. For socialists who have lost all hope in the revolutionary possibilities of the electoral process or the "mass strike," it is a perspective we are forced to study seriously out of our very responsibility to *win the revolution*.

Our new theoretical stance has been criticized so hysterically that it has been hard to arrive at an objective understanding of our mistakes in practice in the last year. Vilified as "Stalinists," "totalitarians," and "suburban putchists," it has been tempting for us to regard any criticism as a betrayal of the struggle, or the product of a starry-eyed humanism which expects that a battle for socialism can be waged without corrupting many of those involved in it. But much of the criticism has been worthy of our concern. One point in particular is basic; even if the shift in our political perspective is correct, it has occurred so quickly that it has left our constituencies far behind. The political perspective of this essay is shared by perhaps 5000 people (although pivotal ones) around the country and their efforts at implementation have been clumsy at best. Both the Panthers and the Revolutionary Youth Movement Caucus in SDS have acquired the habit of attacking anyone who disagrees with them as counterrevolutionary. Such practices are *particularly* dangerous for a revolutionary group. Even as we become more disciplined, we must be careful to leave open channels within the movement where people can make the transition from liberalism or apathy to radicalism.

Any projection of where the revolutionary left should be going in the next ten years must come to terms with this tension between openness and internal discipline. If revolutionary struggle is to succeed, there must be cadre organization within factories, the military, the police and pivotal schools, communities and government bureaucracies. These collective have to be capable of initiating action to shut down the economy and the state apparatus, and to defend that action militarily or neutralize the state's military response. But at the same time, these collectives have to grow out of organization which brings revolutionary politics to the people, which makes the transfer of power acceptable and understandable, and provides for free discussion of the movements ultimate objectives. Considerable attention must be given in the future to ways of



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consolidating mass support without sacrificing a revolutionary position. Unless vanguard cadres are constantly expanding the movement's base, they will wither into sour terrorist cells.

Despite its weakness, the American left has certain natural advantages in transcending this problem. Many of the new Marxist-Leninists in SDS and the Panthers have come to politics through involvement in "cultural rebellions" and are sensitive to the sweeping changes in the consciousness of black and white youth that have occurred in the past ten years. They should understand the need to maintain the identification of the revolutionary left with the liberating cultural currents of the time, even as the parasitic and elitist aspect of the culture are criticized. We must make a disciplined effort to avoid a formulistic approach to culture and consider people's inner needs as seriously as their material interests.

This places a great responsibility on the radical media. No other activity can play a greater role in counteracting elitist tendencies within the left and we should look forward to its dramatic expansion. The year 1979 should see nationwide revolutionary newspapers such as the Guardian and the Black Panther with circulations of over a million, the emergence of mass circulation left magazines, and the commensurate growth of community newspapers, film groups, street theatre, rock and blues bands, and radio stations (licensed or underground) that grow out of local organizing. But at the same time, the revolutionary artists, journalists, and scholars have to take special effort to avoid the mentality and practice of an *intellectual*

*caste*. This involves two responsibilities: a) To do all their intellectual and artistic work in autonomous radical media (and contribute to their organizational development) and b) To participate in collectives and mass organizations in the local areas. Both of these principles cut through the dangerous division between critics and organizers which plagues the left today (such as the incredible hostility between academic "socialists" and movement activists.) They should organizationally link art and theory to the construction of new institutions. In the development of radical media, the revolutionary left should be working to "create the new society within the womb of the old."

Local organizing should seek to follow the same principles, but the task (to put it mildly) will be more difficult. The primary responsibility of

white revolutionaries in the next ten years is to spread the movement to the white working class. This has to be done in communities, in high schools and colleges, in the army, and at the point of production. Any movement which cannot relate to the day-to-day problems of struggling with scarcity, and with the productive apparatus will be incapable of developing a serious understanding of the operations of the American economy, and would make a colossal mess if by accident it ever did come to power. But at the same time, we cannot just jump into organizing with the idea of "learning from the workers" or with the expectation that once some mystical unit called the "working class" is aroused, the socialist revolution is a foregone conclusion. The type of motion, the type of actions we organize, even around very immediate issues, have to be of a kind that generate revolutionary consciousness and an orientation toward power, not just narrow class interest. In particular, white workers just like everyone else we want in the movement have to relate to the international character of the American political economy and the special oppression of black people within America. Struggles have to be sought, and education programs run which challenge white nationalism, which enable white workers, like the rest of us, to see their interest linked to a revolution which will use the productive apparatus of America in the interests of *all working people who have been oppressed by American imperialism*.

What does this mean in practice? First, that the primary focus be on

organizing working class youth, particularly in areas where the black liberation movement has begun to generate tensions. Blue collar youth and young workers don't have as strong a commitment to racism as their parents: they don't have a mortgage to protect, a skill category to defend, or (on the cultural side) a depression psychology of militant anti-communism. They see both a society collapsing around (and on top of) them and the beginnings of resistance. Our role will be to pull them into that resistance through actions which challenge the growing militarization of the society and the deterioration of working class life. This means fights against curfews, pigs in the schools, plant speedups, sellout union bureaucracies, roundups for the draft, repression in the army. It means efforts to draw working class kids into anti-war and anti-imperialist struggles—street demonstrations, campus take-overs, defense actions against groups hit by repression. And it means extended efforts to ally working class youth with black people already in motion—the Panthers, black labor caucuses, and black student groups—and to explain how the black liberation movement creates revolutionary possibilities for the entire working class. Unlike traditional “community organizers” we'll be rapping about imperialism and the need for revolution from the beginning. We'll be laying down a strategy for a youth movement that fights, and bringing kids in on their perception of a totality of oppression.

Secondly, we should orient our organizing toward the goal of citywide and regional movements as quickly as possible. For the next few years, much of the revolutionary left's organizing will take place in neighborhoods. Organizers will be moving into working class areas and making their contacts, doing educational work, and mobilizing kids into militant action around local and national issues. But as soon as this organizing begins to take effect, connections should be made between various organizing projects, people brought into each others struggles, and efforts made to plan strategy on a city-wide level. Once this point is

reached, the politics of the revolution become clear in a way that can take us beyond the stage of the youth movement. As struggles against the pigs and army are tied in with labor strikes and protests against cutbacks in public service (schools, hospitals, libraries, welfare, public transportation) an important political point emerges: that the economic squeeze on the working class and blacks is part of a general crisis of imperialism, a crisis which requires more and more pigs to keep order. From there it's a question of power, ours or theirs. We begin to work toward a point where every local picket line, street demonstration, occupation, or defense action, will be joined by people from all over a region and where every step taken to repress us will be met by the involvement of more and more people.

Third, we need to draw a network of cadres and collectives from the regional movements which begin to map out revolutionary strategy to define and develop the structure of the new society. These groups will probably only have begun to develop on a serious scale in the next ten years, and there is great danger in their being created prematurely out of frustration with the speed of local organizing work. But in a society with a repressive apparatus as effective as this one, and with such a complex social structure, it is in such collectives that the basic framework of the revolutionary movement must be hammered out. Specifically, the military aspect of revolutionary activity and the coordination between white and black movements will have to be planned at this level. Neither of these pivotal and delicate tasks can be approached in a completely open fashion.

Still, these critical responsibilities only underline the need to have collectives grow out of practice and in a climate of widespread support. The principles of armed struggle and alliance with the black liberation movement have to be emphasized and practiced in all aspects of our organizing in strikes, mass demonstrations, and local liberation movements like the battle for People's Park. Only as large segments of the working population,

black and white, become accustomed to the idea of struggling against the armed power of the state will there be any hope of a socialist revolution. Elitism by cadres must be fought at every point without sacrificing the movement's politics. We must not allow the revolution to be isolated from the mass of the American people.

None of this is going to be easy. We have an awesome task: We must make a revolution in the heartland of the most powerful empire that man has ever created, with an international political economy attuned to the tactics of divide and conquer, a working class divided by deep racial hate, and an apparatus of repression that staggers the imagination. In ten years, if we are still alive, we will have just begun to develop the mass support to be a serious revolutionary threat, and we will be harassed and murdered and incarcerated in an effort to stop us. We have only to look at the Panthers to know that the Man doesn't fuck around. Twenty Panthers dead, hundreds in jail on trumped-up charges, virtually all their local offices shot up, bombed and burned. We'll get the same and more when we begin to build support among the people. It makes a lot of us hesitate, draw back from politics. Is the revolution worth all this bloodshed, all this risk? Is it worth the faction fights, the sense of corruption we feel as leaders or fighters, the ego trips?

But then we begin to think. About a South African native quarter. A Vietnamese peasant scarred by napalm. A Bolivian miner. A university plaza in Mexico City filled with dead bodies. Sic kids on a roof in Harlem shooting junk blood. An Arkansas prison farm. A toilet in a Mississippi gas station saying “white only,” Gary Indiana, Cairo, Illinois. Thirty-eight thousand dead boys. One million dead people. American imperialism. It's a real thing. Not just words, not just pictures on a television screen. Not just a bad dream, but blood and suffering and exploitation.

When you face that fact, there ain't nothing to do but fight.

Power to the People.

Mark Naison is active in New York Regional SDS.



# mighty mice



## The Great Chicago Conspiracy

Trial Date: September 24

Mass Demonstration in Chicago: October 11

# Getting to Know America

Bob Cook

*Bob Cook taught sociology at Yale and is one of the founders of AIM in New Haven.*



To be honest about the movement and its future today is to be critical. I consider the last ten years in America to be the most exciting politically since the days of Haywood and Debs. The black movement, led by the older civil rights groups and white students, and the anti-war movement, led by older peace groups and white students, are legitimate bearers of that heroic radical tradition which too few of us know is part of our heritage. But these movements had limited, while admirable, goals. Now their remnants are regrouping and purport to be revolutionary; this is a broader, more serious aim—as Carl Oglesby says. The difference between radicals and revolutionaries is that the latter are dead serious—and for that reason the movement deserves our most self-searching analysis.

A revolution, as I understand it, is a mass of people participating in their own liberation and the transformation of their society, yet the basic criticism of our movement today is that it is cut off from the mass of Americans who must make the American revolution. This too, is part of our heritage, as a result of the misdirection of the American left since the Russian Revolution. Our task today is to locate the root causes of our isolation and to eliminate them. As I see it, the key problems within the movement are:

1. *The gap between rhetoric and reality.* To look at what we are saying, in comparison with what we are doing, and even more important, with the world around us, is to see a discrepancy so great as to warrant calling us almost insane, dwellers in a land of fantasy. We hear calls for armed revolution from students who have just been at-

tacking militarism and who never shot a gun in their lives. We hear college freshmen at elite universities, just out of fancy high schools, talking about what the workers are "really like." We see revolutionary posturing not much different from the posturing of the hippies, beats, or other bohemian actors. In effect, we have an intellectualization of politics in which words take on a reality of their own, the result being endless debates over "positions", factionalism, and ultimately, isolation of the movement which engages principally in esoteric verbal "struggles".

2. *Lack of consciousness of, relation to and respect for the culture of most Americans.* It all began innocently enough with white students going South, and coming back with the stereotypes of the fat southern sheriff and the beer-drinking redneck. (Remember all the folksongs, like "High Sheriff of Hazard" or "Mississippi Find Yourself Another Country to Belong To"? Dylan alone saw through it, with "Pawn in Their Game.") But we have come to the point where someone going to the SDS convention in Chicago does not want to drive through small American towns because they are full of pigs! In a condescending manner that has become, unfortunately, typical; the movement champions nationalism in others (Blacks, Vietnamese), while denying it to ourselves. We are internationalists, it is argued, far above petty nationalism. Other revolutionaries know better. In a brilliant series of lectures, the artist David Siqueiros spoke of the way the Mexican muralists' work had developed as a result of their growing awareness of the struggle of the people. While rejecting false nationalism, they found "that by learning to know well our

man, the man of our land, we were going to gain a greater knowledge of the universal man. All the great masterpieces of the past had been done in that way; beginning by knowing the national man." Closing with advice to other artists, he says that "you yourselves must bring forth your art from your own land and your own people; you must extract it from your national history. You must create monuments. But create monuments that are understandable to your people, even though this be only by means of emotion."

In Vietnamese Studies No. 15, there is an account of underground revolutionary work by Le Quang Ba, who later led the 316th Division of the DRV army at Dien Bien Phu. He tells of this work among the peasants in the mountain regions, and how early the organizers made the mistake of attacking people's superstitions by throwing incense burners into the river, which led only to big ceremonies to beg the gods for pardon. Later, they were taught by Ho to respect local customs; for example, not to cook beef with families that avoided it; to spend the night in the fields guarding the crops on Tet, when local families did not want strangers in their houses.

And Julius Lester has pointed out how ridiculous it would have been for SNCC organizers in the South to ignore the local black churches, or, worse, to attack religion as the opiate of the masses.

Yet our movement goes on ignoring the history, customs, traditions, and real strengths of our people.

3. *The social composition of the movement.* Underlying the above faults, and the probable cause for them, is the fact that the movement



## Provincetown

draws its recruits overwhelmingly from students and university people and among these from two special types: the sons and daughters of professionals, and upwardly mobile persons from the working class. Knowing, as we do, that social existence determines consciousness, it should be clear that the main perversions of the movement today are a direct result of its social character. University students have lived their lives in a sheltered academic atmosphere. The main reality for them has been the classroom, and they have been trained to perform well in that environment. Words for them are tools, and their skill with words determines their position within the academic world. The dominant quality of their experience is its very narrowness.

Add to that their social backgrounds: the families of professionals lead special and privileged lives, and are taught to view ordinary people with contempt. Upwardly mobile persons, moreover, are just those who have been most adept at shedding the trappings of their class, at leaving behind their families, old friends, accent and dress.

The result is an intellectualized politics of guilt on the one hand and condescension on the other.

We know that men can determine their own history within the limits set by social conditions. The future of the movement for the next five to ten years will be determined to a large extent by the actions of the ruling class in America and by revolutionaries outside of America. But within those limits, the future of the movement will be shaped by the decisions of its participants. Unless some of us take radical steps to deal with the problems outlined here, the most likely scenario for

the future is a repeat of the fifties—maybe with more violent repression. The alternative will require the courage to flaunt established movement dogma and to face the fact that the American people are today a long ways from revolutionary consciousness.

In effect, it will be necessary for some elements of the movement to cut themselves off from the organized left and the student culture. They will have to live, work, and struggle with the mass of Americans, at first to learn, only later to teach. They will have to organize around what the people perceive to be their problems—probably not war and racism. Only by living with and learning from the people will revolutionaries be able to speak to them in a language that is understandable.

The organizational form of the American Revolutionary Movement cannot be predicted, because it will have to grow from the activity of the people as revolutionary culture again merges with American culture. As new leadership develops among the people, new organizational forms will be created (this has already happened in the black movement, first in SNCC, then in the Panthers).

It does seem unlikely to me that the new movement will be centralized, bureaucratic, or Leninist in form, partly because of the great diversity in America, partly because the American revolutionary tradition is primarily anarchist. In any event, for the next five to ten years, the movement will, I believe, be decentralist. The most viable organizational form for that period will likely be thousands of rather small collectives, or affinity-groups, carrying out individual projects. Some may work

around movement institutions like schools or presses; others may be organizing committees in shops, neighborhoods, or vocations.

One advantage of such groups is that they minimize the amount of time spent on internal organizational problems since they are small and most coordination takes place in a natural, almost instinctive fashion. A second advantage is security, both from external agents and provocateurs, and from left disruptors. Finally, they provide an atmosphere of mutual support and trust which is essential to the psychological well being of individual organizers. There should, and will be some national coordinating agency for these groups. I doubt that it will take the form of a party. It may be the resurgent IWW, which has the advantage of having been the greatest revolutionary organization in our history. Or it may be an entirely new federation.

The regular left will not, and should not, disappear. Student organizing, anti-war activity, non-violent confrontations, and so one will all continue to play an important role in shaking the conscience of America. But unless some of us are out there talking and working with the people while they're being shaken, they will never understand.

The new movement must, as Walt Whitman said of the new poetry, "bend its vision toward the future, more than the past. Like America, it must extricate itself from even the greatest models of the past, and, while courteous to them, must have entire faith in itself, and the products of its own democratic spirit only. . . . Erect, inflated, and fully self esteeming be the chant; and then America will listen with pleased ears."

# Some Tasks for the Left

Noam Chomsky

Dire warnings with regard to the state of American society are hardly confined to the left these days. Senator Fulbright has recently warned that the United States is "already a long way toward becoming an elective dictatorship." If we continue on our present course, "the future can hold nothing for us except endless foreign exertions, chronic warfare, burgeoning expense and the proliferation of an already formidable military-industrial-labor-academic complex—in short, the militarization of American life. . . . If, in short, America is to become an empire, there is very little chance that it can avoid becoming a virtual dictatorship as well."<sup>1</sup>

Senator Fulbright was commenting on an attempt to combat the erosion of the constitutional system, typical of all Western parliamentary democracies as centralization of power in the executive continually increases. The attempt is embodied in a "sense of the Senate" resolution that was proposed by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Its report (April 16, 1969) notes that the chief executive "now exercises something approaching absolute power over the life or death of every living American—to say nothing of millions of other people all over the world." It warns that in consequence the American people are threatened "with tyranny or disaster."

The Committee's report recalls the fears expressed by Abraham Lincoln when President Polk "precipitated the clash which began the Mexican War": "Kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This our Convention undertook to be the most oppressive of all kingly oppressions; and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that *no one man* should hold the power of bringing oppression upon us." The report notes further that there are 50,000 American troops in Thailand, many "engaged in military support operations against insurgency." It cites a classified memorandum asserting "that the presence of American Armed Forces in Spain constitutes a more significant security guarantee to Spain than would a written agreement." Since the only attack that threatens Spain is what is nowadays called "internal aggression," it is clear what form of "security" is guaranteed by these secret agreements.

The Senate Committee is surely accurate in remarking that domestic tyranny is a likely concomitant to the effort by the "Kingly oppressor" to protect such delightful regimes as those of Spain and Thailand (and Saigon, and Greece, and Brazil. . .) from "internal aggression." We can expect, with fair confidence, that any serious domestic challenge to American global management or its ideological underpinnings will call forth the repressive force and ultimately the violence of the state. What we may expect, then, is voluntary submission to the coercive ideology of *Pax Americana* and its repressive practices, or the overt use of force to compel obedience; in either case, a form of domestic tyranny.

The attempt to construct an integrated global economy dominated by American capital is one major theme of post-war history. Though there have been setbacks, the project proceeds apace along many paths, and no one can predict the degree to which it will succeed. Evidently, only certain forms of national development are compatible with this aim, and American foreign policy has endeavored to block all others. In practice this has often meant, in Joan Robinson's words, that "the United States crusade against Communism is a campaign against development. By means of it the American people have been led to acquiesce in the maintenance of a huge war machine and its use by threat or actual force to try to suppress every popular movement that aims to overthrow ancient or modern tyranny and begin to find a way to overcome poverty and establish national self-respect."<sup>2</sup>

The maintenance of the huge war machine has deeper social roots than the need to protect the regimes of Greece, Spain, and Brazil from internal aggression. Even if American military support were not needed to preserve these bastions of freedom, the militarization of American society would be unlikely to abate. The particular form of state-subsidized capitalism evolving in the United States demands substantial government support for technologically advanced segments of American industry. Under existing social conditions, with public policy largely determined by private empires, it is naturally preparation for war to which the public subsidy is diverted. With the best of will, it is

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not easy to devise alternative forms of government intervention in the economy that will not conflict with the interests of these private empires, but will rather enhance them. Furthermore, a public subsidy must be tolerable to the population at large. Even a totalitarian state must win some measure of popular support for its policies and expenditures, and "defense of the home" is invariably the last resort. A challenge to the system of preparation for war is not likely to be tolerated.

Such a challenge has arisen in the United States in the last few years, largely from the student movement and the black liberation movements. The rising wave of repression should therefore come as no surprise. The editors of *Monthly Review* have quite correctly noted the analogy to the post-war repression that helped to impose the narrow conservatism that has dominated American life for the past two decades. It is typical of repressive regimes, throughout the world, that they place their harshest and most reactionary figures in control of the Ministries of War and Interior. The Nixon administration has adopted this familiar practice (Laird and Mitchell). A bill now before Congress proposes the establishment of a crime of peacetime treason, with severe punishments for those who give "aid and comfort" to "any foreign nation or armed group which is engaged in open hostilities" with American armed forces. The implications are clear. But even without such "legal" authorization, there are many early signs of what might ultimately become a police state, perhaps, with extensive

popular support: coordinated counter-insurgency operations, as in Berkeley; criminal police violence against Black Panthers; harassment by quasi-judicial means; punitive sentencing for minor violations; Congressional investigation of universities, and so on.

Twenty years ago, the contribution of American liberalism to the repression was not small. One of the first acts of the Americans for Democratic Action was "to use guilt-by-association tactics by printing in major urban newspapers the names of the Progressive Party's principal contributors and then listing the organizations on the Attorney-General's list of subversive groups to which these contributors belonged—or had belonged,"<sup>3</sup> this well before McCarthy got into the act. The hysterical reaction, in some quarters, to the revival of politics in the Sixties suggests that history may repeat. In these circumstances, even the defense of civil liberties has a radical content.

The best way to defend civil liberties is to build a movement for social change with a positive program that has a broad-based appeal, that encourages free and open discussion and offers a wide range of possibilities for work and action. The potential for such a movement surely exists. Whether it will be realized remains an open question. External repression is one serious threat. Factional bickering, dogmatism, fantasies and manipulative tactics are probably a considerably greater danger.

A movement of the left should distinguish with clarity between its long-range revolutionary aims, and certain more immediate effects it can hope to achieve. Specifically, for us today there is no priority higher than bringing the Vietnam war to a quick end with the withdrawal of all American military force. This may be a feasible goal. It would entail the abandonment of a policy that has been pursued for 20 years as part of a more general strategy for constructing an integrated world empire compatible with the perceived needs of American capital and organized in accordance with the dominant principles of American ideology. Nevertheless this particular venture could no doubt be "liquidated" without too severe a blow to the system—fortunately for the people of Vietnam and Laos, for if this were not true, their future would be dim indeed. I continue to believe that nonviolent resistance provides the best means for achieving this goal.

But in the long run, a movement of the left has no chance of success, and deserves none, unless it develops an understanding of contemporary society and a vision of a future social order that is persuasive to a large majority of the population. Its goals and organizational forms must take shape through their active participation in political struggle and social reconstruction. A genuine radical culture can be created only through the spiritual transformation of great masses of people, the essential feature of any social revolution that is to extend the possibilities for human creativity and freedom. There is no doubt that we can learn from the achievements and the failures of revolutionary struggles in the less-developed countries, and it would be as foolish to fail to do so as it would be criminal



not to help where we can. It is evident, however, that their experiences cannot be mechanically transferred to a society such as ours. In an advanced industrial society it is, obviously, far from true that the mass of the population have nothing to lose but their chains, and there is no point in pretending otherwise. On the contrary, they have a considerable stake in preserving the existing social order. Correspondingly, the cultural and intellectual level of any serious radical movement will have to be far higher than in the past, as André Gorz, for one, has correctly emphasized. It will not be able to satisfy itself with a litany of forms of oppression and injustice. It will have to provide compelling answers to the question of how these evils can be overcome by revolution or large-scale reform. To accomplish this aim, the left will have to achieve and maintain a position of honesty and commitment to libertarian values. It must not succumb to the illusion that a "vanguard party," self-designated as the repository of all truth and virtue, can take state power and miraculously bring about a revolution that will establish decent values and truly democratic structures as the framework for social life. If its only clearly expressed goals are to smash and destroy, it will succeed only in smashing and destroying itself. Furthermore, if a radical movement hopes to be able to combat imperialism, or the kinds of repression, social management and coercion that will be developed by the evolving international economic institutions, it too will have to be international in its organizational forms as well as in the cultural level it seeks to attain. To construct a movement of this sort will be no mean feat. It may well be true, however, that success in this endeavor is the only alternative to tyranny and disaster.

The threat of tyranny and disaster, or even their early manifestations, do not themselves provide a sufficient basis for the creation of a significant radical mass movement. In fact, this threat may induce a conservative defensive reaction. For a person to commit himself to a movement for radical social change, with all of the uncertainty and hazard that this entails, he must have a strong reason to believe that there is some likelihood of success in bringing about a new social order. This is not merely a matter of satisfaction of personal, material needs, of narrow self-interest in the sense cultivated by capitalist ideology. There is, to be sure, a justification for radical politics even in terms of self-interest in this narrow sense. The enormous waste of resources that are far from boundless and the race towards mutual annihilation on the part of the great powers provide a sufficient reason for a rational man to seek actively for some far-reaching alternative. Beyond this, it is by now widely realized that the economist's "externalities" can no longer be consigned to footnotes. No one who gives a moment's thought to the problems of contemporary society can fail to be aware of the social costs of consumption and production, the progressive destruction of the environment, the utter irrationality of the utilization of contemporary technology, the inability of a system based on profit- or growth-maximization to deal with needs that can only be expressed collectively, and the enormous bias

this system imposes towards maximization of commodities for personal use in place of the general improvement of the quality of life. All of these are factors in modern life that should lead to the growth of a vigorous left that seeks to replace contemporary barbarism by some form of libertarian socialism. But there is something insufferably arrogant about the belief that "we" are radical because we are humane, and that "they" will join us when they see that it is in their self-interest to do so. Compassion, solidarity, friendship are also human needs. They are driving needs, no less than the desire to increase one's share of commodities or to improve working conditions. Beyond this, I do not doubt that it is a fundamental human need to take an active part in the democratic control of social institutions. If this is so, then the demand for industrial democracy should become a central goal of any revitalized left with a working-class base.

In fact, in France and England there has been a renewed interest in industrial democracy and workers' control after a lapse of quite a few years.<sup>4</sup> This is a most welcome development. It is often argued that the formation of enormous planning units—the centralized state bureaucracy, immense corporations, or both acting in concert—is a technological imperative, a requirement for economic health and proper utilization of resources in a complex advanced industrial society. I have yet to see an argument that advanced technology requires centralized autocratic management. The same technology that can strengthen the authority of a narrow elite of owners, managers, or technocrats, might also be used to extend industrial democracy. In its early stages, the industrial system required the kind of specialized labor which, as Adam Smith pointed out, turned men into imbeciles, mere tools of production. Now this is no longer true. With modern technology, tools can be tools and men can be men. The need for managers is a corollary to the specialization of the labor force. It diminishes as the opportunities increase for each participant in the work-force to obtain relevant information when it is needed for decision-making and to achieve the cultural level that enables him to take part in global decisions. Simulation makes it possible to carry out certain experiments without suffering the cost of failure. Automation may provide the possibility to eliminate mind-destroying drudgery. To develop these possibilities in a concrete and detailed form is the proper task for the left. It is a task that can be carried out only by direct participation of manual and intellectual workers; it should lead to blurring, perhaps to the disappearance, of the distinction between these social categories.

What can be plausibly argued is that planning is a necessity in an advanced industrial society. One must, however, bear in mind an observation that is put very well by Ken Coates, in introducing a recent symposium on workers' control: "If planning has become a crucial need, then it has also become transparently clear that none of the most basic and elementary liberal values can survive such planning upon such a scale, unless it is arranged along lines which are inherently and profoundly democratic."<sup>5</sup> The problem

of how to combine planning with democracy, and so to preserve and significantly extend and enrich liberal values, will not be solved on paper, but only through a combination of practical experience and intellectual analysis. Almost by definition, this is a task for a revitalized movement of the left, a movement that will combine the highest level of science and technology with serious inquiry into the sources and social conditions for creativity and freedom.

Questions of this sort barely exist in the academic social sciences. For example, the leading textbook on modern economics describes the range of possible economic systems as falling on a spectrum with complete *laissez faire* and "totalitarian dictatorship of production" as the polar cases: "the relevant choice for policy today is not a decision between these extremes, but rather the degree to which public policy should do less or more in modifying the operation of particular private economic activities."<sup>6</sup> Evidently, basic questions are begged by describing the spectrum of possible systems in these terms. There is quite another spectrum that can be imagined, with democratic and autocratic control of the system of production as the polar cases. Along this dimension, both of Samuelson's polar opposites fall at the same extreme point; both "ideal" private capitalism and "totalitarian dictatorship of production" are forms of autocratic control, to be contrasted with popular democratic control of the economy through workers' councils, commune assemblies, and other forms of popular organization that can be imagined. Similarly, in a recent symposium of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences devoted to "Perspectives on Business,"<sup>7</sup> there is much discussion of the matter of management-vs.-ownership control (and the effect of technology on this distribution of power), but no mention of the possibility that the economic system might be brought under popular democratic control.

The assumptions that guide the mass of scholarship hardly differ from those expressed in manifestoes of the American ruling elite, for example, the report of the study group on *Political Economy of American Foreign Policy*, which identifies Western civilization with capitalist forms (as contrasted to the collectivist denial of freedom, initiative, and progress) and defines "the aim of economic activity in the West [as] the maximization of money income—in one or another of its forms—by individuals through the investment of capital or of labor on one's own account or for, and under the direction of, others."<sup>8</sup> The document goes on, characteristically, to describe this particular perversion in terms of universal ideals. We cannot be merely an "impartial arbiter . . . maintaining world order," but must be an active leader in the struggle to save Western civilization and the "universal ideals of human freedom, individual growth, and economic justice" which are expressed ("however imperfectly") in the capitalist institutions of the West.

Surely this concept of economic man is a psychological absurdity which leads to untold suffering for those who try to mold themselves to this pattern, as well as for their

victims. "Look out for number one" is a prescription for demoralization, corruption, and ultimately general catastrophe, whatever value it may have had in the early stages of industrialization. Cooperation for the common good and concern for the rights and needs of others must replace the dismal search for maximization of personal power and consumption if the barbarism of capitalist society is to be overcome.

The left has the inestimable advantage that it can hope to speak for humane values in opposition to the barbarous irrationality of a competitive society and to the autocratic rule of private economic empires, state bureaucracies, vanguard parties, technocratic-meritocratic elites, or whatever other monstrosities the future may hold. It will have to exploit this advantage if there is to be any hope for a serious, anti-imperialist, anti-militarist movement with a broad base in the advanced societies. Consider again the manifesto cited above. It defines the primary threat of Communism, perceptively, in the following terms: "It has meant: (1) A serious reduction of the potential resource base and market opportunities of the West owing to the subtraction of the communist areas from the international economy and their economic transformation in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West."<sup>9</sup> Evidently, this interpretation of the communist threat (which goes a long way towards explaining Joan Robinson's judgment, quoted above, that the American crusade against Communism is a campaign against development) will be quite compelling to the rich, who will easily understand why our goal must be to assist "the millhands of Calcutta, the peasants of Egypt and the Indians of Guatemala [to] become politically more reliable and economically more cooperative members of the free world community", able to exercise "the capacity for self-control, for rational and morally valid choices and for responsible actions." American dominance of the world requires such political reliability, cooperativeness, and moral responsibility. For the wealthy and privileged, it is easy to identify American dominance of the world's resources with "the continued existence of human freedom and humane society everywhere." This dominance is threatened by forms of national independence or international cooperation that appropriate resources for the benefit of those who now "complement the industrial economies of the West." This kind of "threat" should be welcomed and encouraged by the left, as should its domestic analogue. An international movement of the left should aim, of course, to reduce inequity. But this is to say that participants in such a movement, in the advanced countries, must be motivated by compassion and brotherhood rather than mere personal greed. In the long run, there is no reason why an equitable distribution of the earth's resources should lead to a decline of standard of living in the advanced countries, if it is combined with an end to the irrational waste and destruction of resources characteristic of the advanced industrial societies. Once again, however, it is clear that a large-scale "cultural revolution" is a prerequisite—or better, a necessary concomitant—for a movement of the left with solid roots in

technologically advanced societies.

The same considerations hold when we consider the urgent matter of bringing the arms race to an end. In the near future it will no doubt be exceedingly difficult to organize a campaign against militarism with support among workers, technicians, engineers and scientists, who are heavily dependent on the military budget for their employment. When radical students at MIT succeeded in raising a serious challenge to military research, the first reaction of the labor union in the university laboratories was to enter a suit in the federal courts to prevent MIT from dropping military work. The response was not irrational; the New England economy provides no alternative sources of employment. Similar factors will make it quite difficult for engineers, and many scientists, to dissociate themselves from the commitment to war and waste. If a radical movement hopes to make any progress among skilled workers, engineers and scientists, it will have to persuade them that their short-run interest is outweighed by other factors, among them, the personal interest of every rational man in the conversion of intellectual and material resources to reasonable ends, more specifically, in halting the preparation for war that may well lead to a final catastrophe. The task for radicals, in this case, is to develop concrete alternatives and to show how they could be realized under different conditions of social organization. Furthermore, they must combat the psychotic world-view that has been constructed to rationalize the race to destruction. They must try to bring about a fundamental change of values, a commitment to general goals that will, once achieved, spell an end to imperial domination, militarism, and oppression.

A decade ago, only a visionary would have been able even to contemplate these questions. Now they are lively and exciting ones. The revisionist historians have succeeded in shattering the illusions that dominated post-war scholarship. Groups such as the North American Conference on Latin America, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, the Union for Radical Political Economics, and many others, have the potential to revitalize the professions and to create a radical intellectual culture with a broad base in the universities and colleges, with effects that will extend through the media—perhaps newly created for this purpose—the schools, communities and activist organizations of many sorts. Of course these professional groups have been riding the crest of a wave of political activism. Inquiry that is free from the narrow ideological constraints imposed by dominant social institutions will be severely inhibited, and easy to disregard, unless the general political climate is conducive to challenge and innovation. In the absence of a live and healthy radical political movement, the “softer” disciplines will easily be subverted by social pressures, as has so often been the case. At the same time, a movement of the left condemns itself to failure and irrelevance if it does not create an intellectual culture that becomes dominant by virtue of its excellence and that is meaningful to the masses of people who, in an advanced industrial society, can participate in creating and deepening it.

The prospects seem to me good that the small groups that now exist can grow and interact with one another and with a political movement of the left that is rooted in many strata of American society. I think that for the present, the universities are a natural, and relatively favorable place for such growth and interaction. There is sure to be opposition to the development of scholarship and teaching that is not constrained by the dominant conservative ideology. There will undoubtedly be an effort to repress the activism that is a natural outgrowth of serious inquiry. The universities have been highly politicized by the influence of the dominant social institutions, the national state and the great corporations to which it is closely linked. The natural conservatism of the faculty will combine with the political conservatism imposed by external pressures to set up barriers to free inquiry. Examples of repression can easily be cited. Nevertheless, they should not be exaggerated. It should be recognized that in any field, there is resistance to innovation on the part of those who have achieved a certain status and prestige. This natural resistance, easy to document, provides a kind of base line in terms of which one must assess the actual political repression that exists in the universities. My personal feeling is that by this measure, which is the correct one, repression on political grounds is not extensive, at the moment. It may grow, but that is not to say that it will necessarily succeed. For the present, there is no strong reason for pessimism, in this regard.

Of particular significance, I think, are certain efforts undertaken in the past year among scientists and engineers. For example, at MIT a handful of graduate students succeeded, within a few months, in organizing a one-day research strike that spread to some 50 colleges, and that led to the formation of active and continuing organizations of students and faculty. This initiative grew out of a sanctuary for an AWOL soldier, Mike O'Conner, which was held at MIT last fall and dramatically changed the political climate on the the political climate on the campus.

In some ways, the creation of a radical movement of scientists and engineers is analogous to the organization of GI resistance. American imperial dominance is based as much on technique as on mass military force. As Franz Schurmann has rightly pointed out, “it is not likely that, barring a major emergency, the United States could again foot a massive army,” and “aside from a few puppet states such as South Korea, no country has been willing to provide the U.S. militarists with the manpower necessary to fight ‘limited wars’ distant from America’s shores. . . . Thus [the U.S.] must depend on technology to fight its wars.”<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, scientists and engineers are well aware of the corruption of intelligence imposed by a system so irrational that the majority of engineers are forced to accept employment with NASA, the AEC (in essence, a weapons producing agency), and the Defense Department. There is, therefore, symbolic significance in the fact that a successful movement of scientists and engineers has developed, in part, from an expression of solidarity with a GI resister. By means of such organization of scientists and

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engineers, the system of subsidy to technologically advanced segments of industry and achievement of global dominance through a subverted technology can be threatened at its most vulnerable point, its personnel. Scientists and engineers can make the same key contribution to a radical culture—ultimately, a successful movement for significant social change—that they now make to militarism and repression.

As already noted, it is inconceivable that the left can achieve real success in an advanced industrial society unless it develops the intellectual resources to provide plausible, concrete solutions to the problems of our society. Those who believe that these problems can be met only when social institutions are reconstructed along democratic lines have the task of showing that this is so. Potential solutions to these problems are of limited interest when they merely appear in technical monographs (though even this would be a far from negligible accomplishment). They must become engrained in the consciousness of those who will implement them and live under the conditions that they bring into existence. There are many kinds of interaction among scientists, engineers, technicians and skilled workers, the blue collar work force, professionals and other white collar workers, writers and artists, among all of those who must contribute to a vital movement of the left. Some of these connections I have already mentioned; specifically the application of modern technology to creating the conditions for industrial democracy and the rational and humane use of resources is one major task that lies on the immediate horizon. A serious mass movement of the left should involve all of these segments of American society. Its politics and understanding must grow out of their combined efforts to build a new world.



#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Boston Globe*, June 20, 1969.

<sup>2</sup> "Contrasts in economic development: China and India", in Neal Houghton, ed., *Struggle Against History*, New York, 1968.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Lafeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War*, p. 73. See Christopher Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left*, for a perceptive discussion of the "cultural cold war" of the 1950's.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the new French journal *Autogestion* and the publications of the Institute for Workers' Control, 91 Goldsmith St., Nottingham, England.

<sup>5</sup> *Can the Workers Run Industry*, Ken Coates, ed., Sphere Books and the Institute for Workers' Control, 1968.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Samuelson, *Economics*, sixth edition, 1964.

<sup>7</sup> *Daedalus*, Winter, 1969.

<sup>8</sup> Woodrow Wilson Foundation and National Planning Association, Holt, 1955. Our humane values are illustrated further, in this important document, in many ways. Thus "constructive wage and social welfare policies are obviously needed"—why?: "to mitigate industrial unrest." At the same time it is necessary to combat the excessive egalitarianism and social welfare legislation undertaken under left-

ist and socialist governments. The capitalist elite might agree with Stalin that egalitarianism is "a reactionary petty-bourgeois absurdity worthy of some sect of ascetics" (17th Party Congress). The document goes on to insist that we must preserve the right to intervene in support of "older ruling groups" who see "that their future independence lies in alliance with the West," unless the responsible middle class elements have achieved dominance. We must continue to ensure that Western Europe and Japan refrain from "neutralism and pacifism"—in the case of Japan, by making "possible greater Japanese participation in the development of Southern Asia"—a non-negligible factor in the Vietnam war, incidentally. We must combat irrational communist inspired land redistribution, as in Guatemala where (as in Iran) "nationalistic totalitarian or crypto-communist regimes have nearly succeeded in consolidating their rule" (the reference is to Arbenz and Mossadegh). And so on.

<sup>9</sup> There are three other aspects to this threat: "A planned disruption of the free world economies"; the higher growth rate of Soviet heavy industry (N.B., the date is 1955); "the fact that Soviet communism threatens not merely the political and economic institutions of the West but the continued existence of human freedom and humane society everywhere."

<sup>10</sup> "The Nixon administration and the Vietnam War," paper submitted to the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam, May, 1969.

Next February, on the anniversary of the first sit-in, the movement will be ten years old. One way to give some shape in our imaginations to the decade of the 1970s is to try to assess the work of the decade almost over. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the political work of the American New Left in the 1960s?

The most common criticism of the movement is that it has had no theory. Liberals and radicals join in making this criticism. Liberals speak of the movement's mindless activism, its nihilism, its alleged propensity to the substitution of tactics for strategy. Many persons within the movement itself now echo this criticism, except that they use words like opportunism, economism, revisionism, reformism.

My own criticism (and self-criticism) is almost precisely the reverse. I think our greatest weakness has been that we failed to become more than a movement of students, allied professionals, and blacks; and that this limitation has expressed itself in the fact that we have been more interested in ideas than in power. The drift from organizing to rhetoric during the past year accentuated a tendency which had existed from the beginning.

Our triumph in the 1960s was that we radicalized the consciousness of hundreds of thousands of Americans, mostly young and almost all on campus. Our failure was that we could not offer continuing organizations and programs by means of which ordinary people could win concrete victories which changed their daily lives. The only political program of this sort the New Left has ever had was SNCC's program of voter-registration in 1961-1964. The consciousness which we radicalized has had, politically, nowhere to go.

Illustrative of this one-sidedness in the movement's work is the concept of "corporate liberalism." Corporate liberalism was not a system of power. It was and is a system of ideas with which hypocritical liberals clothe the realities of power. The typical new recruit to the movement in the 1960s found it necessary to begin by unmasking those politically closest to him: his liberal parents, and the liberal Demo-

## A Program for Post-Campus Radicals

Staughton Lynd

cratic politicians in power in Washington. In a curious way, therefore, our "line" resembled that of the German Communist Party before Hitler's accession to power, in that we, too, concentrated our political fire on liberals rather than reactionaries (we heckled Humphrey and left Nixon alone). The phony ideas of liberal intellectuals, rather than the real power of corporate America, was our main target.

The white movement's most determined attempt to organize off-campus was ERAP (itself stimulated by SNCC's voter registration program). As Richie Rothstein has pointed out, the dozen or so ERAP projects won very few victories. They tended to excuse their defeats with the argument that at least people's ideas had been radicalized. There was a constant tendency for ERAP organizers to pull back from the teaching-through-action of the organizer to the explicit instruction of the school, the study circle, the collective. (Surely this is one of the reasons the work of the ERAP organizers produced such meager results.)

Consistent with my argument, too, is the fact that when movement people leave the campus they tend to become workers with ideas: they start newspapers, make films, open guerrilla theaters. The movement is like an early model of James Watt's steam engine. It produces a tremendous head of steam on campus, but as the piston moves through the chamber—in this case, as the tens of thousands of radicalized students move off the campus—the steam escapes, the energy is dispersed. Surely this is in part the result of the fact that there is hardly a single off-campus movement organization, involving adults as well as single young people, and producing changes in the everyday lives of its constituents, which one

can point to anywhere in the country. the country.

I and others writing recently in *Liberation* have dwelt enough on the consequences for the movement of this fact that we agitate but do not organize, we recruit but have no work for new recruits to do. As one young SDS activist put it recently, after a certain amount of frustration you decide that at least you can make yourself into a brick and hurl yourself.

The question for the 1970s, then, is whether we can find ways to work through what Andre Gorz calls revolutionary reforms: whether there is a middle path between reformism and adventurism. I want to argue that we try. I suggest that this effort in the 1970s can be understood as a synthesis of what was best in the political work of the 1960s with what was best in the political work of the 1930s.

What we have failed to do is to make radicalism attractive, because rewarding, to ordinary Americans with jobs, children, cars, homes, taxes, and installment payments. In seeking ways to do this I think we can learn from the older radicals whom we so readily write off but who, nevertheless, organized five million workers into industrial unions and led 500,000 workers in sit-down strikes in 1936-1937. The organizers of the 1930s may have something to teach us in just those areas where our own work has been weakest: the building of mass organizations, the bidding for real power.

Of course, the work of the 1930s was also one-sided. The New Left created movement without organization; the Old Left, organization without movement. In its concern to defend the Soviet Union and to cultivate Franklin Roosevelt as a potential Soviet ally, the Communist Party of

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the 1930s failed to project a socialist vision and so built organizations which, lacking this element, became partners in capitalism. This was notably true of the CIO. The war alone cannot explain how rapidly the new industrial unions surrendered their independence, gave up the right to strike in wartime, purged their radical members. Much blame must also fall on the courageous organizers whose work laid too much stress on material, achievable, short-run objectives, and too little on long-range goals.

The organizers of the 1930s tended to be opportunistic, "economist." We of the 1960s have tended to be utopian and adventurist. A mass, revolutionary socialist movement must synthesize what was best in both experiences.

The new kind of organizer I am envisioning will build a new kind of organization.

By the end of the 1970s, hopefully, there would exist in cities and regions across the country organizations with these three characteristics. In contrast to a cadre organization of professional revolutionaries, they would be based on mass participation. Yet, unlike an industrial union or a Social Democratic political party, they would rely tactically on direct action from below rather than on the delegation of power to representatives. Finally, and particularly by the end of the decade, they would explicitly affirm the socialism

which would from the beginning have been implicit in their choice of corporate targets.

In the movement today, people talk of a dichotomy between the loose, non-ideological "movement" of past years and the disciplined Leninist "party" which they hope to create. What I envision is a confederation of local mass organizations which will still be a decentralized "movement" but which will not longer be made up largely of students and other academics. It will preserve the best characteristics of the New Left of the 1960s but overcome the New Left's major weakness: its on-campus, isolated, non-representative composition.

All over the country there are organizers quietly resuming the long-term building of grass-roots organizations which SNCC abandoned in 1966 and ERAP in 1967. Some worked in SNCC and ERAP and doggedly continued after those projects folded; some are Southerners left without a regional network by the collapse of SSOC (Southern Student Organizing Committee); many are women, concerned both to reach non-middle-class working women and to develop multi-issue programs; they may be NUC (New Universities Conference) members teaching in junior or community colleges; and some are members of the Resistance, now beginning to work with young people off campus. There are common themes. For instance, in Springfield, Massachusetts (see the

June *Liberation*), Gary, Indiana and Oneonta, Alabama, as well as in the dramatic workingman's campaign in Laurel, Mississippi, organizers are trying to build around the idea of taxing the corporations and using the proceeds to finance local welfare projects. Interestingly, this was precisely the program pushed by Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panther movement in Lowndes County, Alabama in 1965-1966.

This is a very different style of work than that of summer projects for students followed by fall national demonstrations. The historical precedent for that style is the Freedom Summer and SCLC. Reversion to it underlines the fact that those whose rhetoric is most revolutionary are still campus-bound.

For people drawn to a politics of work rather than rhetoric, what are the next steps? It might be fruitful to create a series of low-keyed occasions at which individuals and groups who are committed to long-term organizing in white communities come together to share experiences. These gatherings, I would hope, would pass no resolutions, make no decisions, start no new organizations. In somewhat the same fashion as the old ERAP, this informal network would exist side-by-side with other movement structures, helping working organizers to find each other and then to find their way forward together.



Courtesy of Associated American Artists



## business, religion, and the left

Arthur Waskow

During the past decade, the movement has managed to "organize" about 200,000 and to "turn on" at most and for a moment about 20 million Americans in the new class and the under class. During the next decade two million or so people must become the movement in the sense that they organize themselves and begin reaching out to turn on new constituencies—in their own classes and in others. (With 2 million organized, almost 200 million could be "turned on", at least for a moment.)

First, as to constituency: during the '70s the strongest bases for the movement will almost certainly continue to be the new class—the information owners, the students, professors, teachers, social workers, civil servants—and the under-class—the jobless and the Black, Mexican, and Indian occupied countries inside America. They are in motion for partly different reasons, but it ought to be possible for them to stay in loose alliance. That is because the necessity of drudgery and the drudge ethic are weakest in these

two classes, and the movement is semi-consciously a twenty-first century post-"work" (that is, post-drudgery) civilization in embryo. The classes most hostile to the movement (except of course for the ruling class) have been the hard-working people, the nineteenth-century classes—the industrial workers and the industrial "middle" ownership class of farmers and grocers.

Hopefully, the existence of a large group of people who have explicitly rejected the system of drudgery, as-

serted their *and others'* right to play politics and make love, and demanded that the great social surplus be turned from corporate and military profits to making joyful life possible for the drudgers—hopefully, the existence of such a movement can turn on the hard-working people, too.

But for that to happen, the movement of twenty-first century people must drop its snobbery toward workers and small owners, must address such concerns of theirs as taxes and inflation and work rules and transportation, must imagine how the small-owners can drop their habit of domination while keeping pleasure in entrepreneurship by joining in cooperative and communal enterprises, must imagine how the workers can abandon their habit of obedience while keeping their sense of solidarity by instituting workers' control.

Much will depend on the organizational forms the movement takes during the next decade. For the twenty-first century embryo will be judged—and rightly—in large part on whether it can live in that century now, and do it well. The real politics of the movement, in short, will increasingly have to be "Show us!" rather than "tell us". It was enough to write diatribes, sit-in against segregation, and resist the draft when there were few of us. When we are many, our own lives will be examined for the workability of our proclamations.

I would argue there should be three major overlapping organizational forms for the movement, by 1980: a political (not merely electoral) party; a network of nonprofit businesses; and a network of religious institutions.

The party is both most familiar in our debates, and most strange to our practice. I will return to it. The other two—business and religion!—may seem odd to propose to a radical movement, but to me seem absolutely crucial—and to be what we are already doing, without knowing it.

**Businesses:** notice the underground press, the Black cooperatives, the rock groups, the movement bookstores and head shops. The point: we have got to support ourselves, and the only way to do it is to peddle our goods and ideas

to each other and to the straight society—unstraightening them in the process—and to tax the proceeds for new organizing. Conventional America will have to pay us to radicalize and organize it. *Have to:* because we have the workable ideas and the honest goods and the human, really human, services.

The businesses, of course, should be cooperative and communal, not capitalist. The "profits" ought to be plowed back into more organizing, where the customers are the new class or other affluent people, and into lower prices, where the customers are poor. Direction of the businesses should be in the hands of the workers, or workers and customers, with as little hierarchy as possible. Every effort should be made to rotate roles

making records, teaching children, running a summer camp), and much less sexually and psychologically repressive.

Arrangements should be made for a movement "investment bank"—that is, a way of channeling new investment money into important new business areas. "Important," of course, not by profit standards but by political ones—and the "bank" board should be chosen by the major movement groupings and by the businesses extending their credit. (The proposed Peace Tax Commission, intended to decide where war tax refusers who want to contribute their money to useful purposes can best do so, might be a prototype of such a movement "bank".)

**Religion:** Already movement theaters, underground churches, Buddhist communities, sensitivity groups, have



Courtesy of Associated American Artists

as well as to elect managers. Whenever possible, the business should be based on a commune—a group of people living together as well as working together—in something like the fashion of the Israeli Kibbutz. Some may indeed be rural, agricultural, Kibbutzim—channeling their food to movement coop stores in the cities. But in our urban post-industrial society, most such communes will themselves be urban, much more specialized than the kibbutz (producing a newspaper, selling books,

sprung up around the country—trying to bring body and spirit into touch with cerebral intellect. If the movement is to continue doing this—which is one of its most basic thrusts—then it ought to think in terms of small, free-floating religious organizations in some sort of loose network: what might be called Free Churches (and Synagogues, and Mosques, and Temples) in which social-action programs are central rather than peripheral, the clergy are community organizers and mystics as well as philo-

sophical teachers, large buildings are avoided, and fusions of traditional and new religious ceremonies are sought that can address the traditional adherents of each faith and embody its particular urgencies and history, while simultaneously binding together the radical adherents of them all.

Luckily, American society has some of its strongest rings of protection around freedom of religion. (Not that it is inviolable—but it is strong, certainly stronger than freedom of speech, press, and assembly.) For a guerrilla movement operating from institutional rather than territorial enclaves, that fact suggests some special tactical attractiveness in treating our own religious impulses seriously.

Finally: a Party. How do we make it, what should it be, how do we transcend the bitter conflicts between Black and various versions of white, pacifist resister and revolutionary communist? I do not see how, during the next decade, a Party can be anything but a federation of caucuses, agreeing on a program where possible but cheerfully agreeing to disagree whenever the constituency of each dictates it. Certainly ethnic caucuses—Black, Brown, and/or Third World, perhaps during the next decade a Jewish one, perhaps one of explicitly Christian radicals; probably sexual caucuses; probably class or occupational caucuses (students; welfare recipients; industrial workers); perhaps ideological ones (anarchist, pro-drug, Worker-student alliance). It should be fairly easy to agree that any member of the Party could be a member of two caucuses; that any caucus with, say, one-fifth of the whole Party membership could veto a proposed party resolution while leaving other caucuses wholly free to support and organize around it as their own.

What goal for such a party? Both electoral and non-electoral. Not just electoral for President and Congress and Mayor, but also for union shop steward and school principal—for the many elected (or should-be-elected) jobs in the “private” organizations that also govern us. For a radical party would be through its own acts abolish-

ing the false distinctions between the “public” and “private” governments, restoring both to popular control. Where elections were normal they would be contested; where (as for principal, police precinct captain, plant manager) they are not normal they would be invented and strong popular pressure brought to bear for the electoral victors to be seated.

But a movement party could hardly be electoral alone, and still reflect our experience with direct-action politics. If a Radical Party precinct committee or workplace committee can decide to run a candidate, it might also decide to lead a strike, a march, or a sit-in—and so could whole caucuses, or the Party itself. For years we have needed to reorganize ourselves from the ground up for every new effort—to run a candidate we have made a Peace and Freedom Party, for the same people to hold a march they must create a Mobilization Committee. At the least a broader electoral/non-electoral party would keep alive the clusters of people that could decide on the basis of a political analysis, not simply on organizational inertia, whether the movement was ripe for a march, a sit-in, or an election campaign.

Moreover, our national Party could provide something the movement has badly needed—a sense of national “connectedness” in between such momentary events as a Pentagon siege, a Democratic Convention, a wave of teach-ins, a Berkeley massacre, or (even) a McCarthy campaign. It has proved far easier to do “local organizing” in one neighborhood when people there know that all across the country other neighborhoods are also “locally organizing” for a national end. The existence of a Radical Party would provide that connective tissue.

Finally, the caucuses and local committees of a Radical Party should by 1980 be in direct, constant and serious touch with analogous movements in the rest of the world. The contact ought not to come through the national Party headquarters. If the Super-powers are ever to be broken, transnational movements of students, clergymen, “Third Worlders,” secre-

taries must be able to keep the loyalties of their members strongly committed to each other, not to the governments they live under. By 1980 political asylum for example, should be a matter of course—extended not by governments but by the radical movements of many countries whatever particular movement is at the moment under most pressure from its own government. Even in calmer movements, the actual physical exchange of people across national boundaries should be much more highly developed than it is today (and transportation will be cheaper and faster), so that the radical movements can be knit together not merely in theoretical analysis but through personal connection.

If all this came to pass by 1980, I should add, American (and probably Soviet, Japanese, and European,) society would clearly be in constant crisis—unless the Establishments had taken the one major self-protective option open to them and moved swiftly to abolish their respective war machines. (That would free resources and energy to deal with insurgency by racing with a carrot at its nose instead of a stick across its back.) In the absence of such an “intelligent” choice, the Movement will be facing a very difficult non-pattern of repression and victories. We need to examine much more carefully how to nurture a movement in jail—how even to force the jails to be a more human environment in which it continues to be possible to think and organize—and how to protect our victories, our liberations of institutional or geographic space.

*A fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Arthur Waskow's publications include From Race Riot to Sit-In.*

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## Coming: an essay on ernest mandel

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Staughton Lynd

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# the education of



## women

Florence Howe

Recently, on a train, a Goucher College student met the editor of a relatively new magazine. "Why don't we get your magazine?" she queried.

"Isn't Goucher a girls' school?"

"Sure, but what's that got to do with it?"

"Well, we didn't think you'd be interested—it's about careers."

This is a perfectly commonplace attitude. Even in 1969, it is assumed that women who go to college are generally sitting out four years of their lives before becoming wives and mothers. During my nine years at Goucher, I have found little encouragement for any other view. Unfortunately, statistics bear me out only too well. Though more women than ever before go to college, and even receive degrees, fewer proportionately go on to graduate school. The faculties of colleges and universities naturally reflect this condition: there are fewer women on the faculties of women's colleges than there were in the 30's; the percentage of women on the faculty of the University of Chicago has dropped from 8% at the end of the nineteenth century to a recent low of 2%; and a number of university departments are searching currently for their token female. And as studies continue to show, when men and women of comparable education and experience are employed,

women's salaries and rates of promotion are significantly inferior to men's. In spite of a century of sporadic hue and cry about women's rights, and in spite of our rhetoric about the equality of women, even in spite of the pill and the recent outburst of women's liberation groups, women remain a passive majority of second class citizens.

Our education is chiefly to blame, but of course after one has said that, one must add at once that education reflects the values of our society and is to a major extent controlled by those values. That is to say that we do not think of our girl students as we do our boys—and this is true from the beginning of their school years as well as on to graduate school where women are openly discriminated against for reasons which I do not here need to list. What would happen to men if women were, indeed, allowed to compete in a system equally open to them? This is, of course, a rhetorical question, since it is not likely to happen. We do know that white men, in our culture, are by and large loath to compete with black men, and our friends tell us that women will have to wait until those male racial and economic problems are solved.

Economic and political problems cannot, obviously, be solved by educational institutions. But colleges can educate their students quite deliberately to those problems, and



even, if they will, to work towards their solution. Generally speaking, the purpose of those responsible for the education of women has been to perpetuate their subordinate status. There is a hoary story still being told about the difference between educating men and women. It goes like this: "When you educate a man, you educate an individual, but when you educate a woman, you educate a family." Obviously, the story is meant to compliment women as traditional carriers of culture. But more to the point is the role that woman is channelled into by her culture. The question of purpose in education is dependent upon a prior notion of hierarchy. Put another way, education is prophecy fulfilled: imagine women educated for a push-button household and a consumer's life and you create institutions to effect that. To illustrate, I want to look at the views of five men—I choose men because for the most part they have been responsible for our history and our education.

First, Plato and Aristotle, who illustrate two poles: the revolutionary believer in equality between the sexes and the conservative believer in the inferiority of women. Plato, as revolutionary, writes in the *Republic* that, "There is no occupation concerned with the management of social affairs which belongs either to woman or to man, as such. Natural gifts are to be found here and there in both creatures alike; and every occupation is open to both, so far as their natures are concerned." He concludes, therefore, that "we shall not have one education for men and another for women, precisely because the nature to be taken in hand is the same." When he describes roles for women, he allows them "their full share with men" in all areas of life, "whether they stay at home or go out to war." He continues, "Such conduct will not be unwomanly, but all for the best and in accordance with the natural partnership of the sexes." Obviously, Plato's notions have not only not prevailed; they are hardly known today.

To read Aristotle on the same subject is to learn how little a student may learn from a teacher. For to the question "why educate women?" Aristotle would have answered, "Certainly not." This is his key statement, from the *Politics*: "We may thus conclude that it is a general law that there should be naturally ruling elements and elements naturally ruled. . . . The rule of the freeman over the slave is one kind of rule; that of the male over the female another. . . . The slave is entirely without the faculty of deliberation; the female indeed possesses it, but in a form which remains inconclusive. . . . It is thus clear that while moral goodness is a quality of all the persons mentioned, the fact still remains that temperance—and similarly fortitude and justice—are not, as Socrates held, the same in a woman as they are in a man." Aristotle thus offers no education to women. Or if we think of her in a category close to the slave's, only such education as will make her more useful to man, her master. The defining of capability—or "role definition"—controls education. And Aristotle's voice has prevailed. He and the early Church fathers settled the non-education of women for nearly two thousand years.

Milton's is a useful voice to illustrate the perpetuation of woman's subordinate status in a form somewhat more subtle than Aristotle's. In fact, Milton is my favorite example of such a view, one that I find still dominant today. To Goucher students, I usually say, study him closely: he is the enemy. You must understand your enemy if you are to defeat him. Women are teachable, Milton says, though just barely and only under careful conditions. Certainly, they need to be observed and looked after constantly or trouble may follow, as it did for Eve in the garden. But the order is plain enough: God teaches man and man teaches woman, just a bit of this or that, enough to keep her in her place. Milton's main idea is hierarchy: woman is subordinate in status, inferior in intellect, and even less reliable than man in matters of the heart.

In matters of the heart, Jonathan Swift has argued, either sex might claim distinction—for foolishness and corruption. "I am ignorant of any one quality," he writes in "A Letter to a Young Lady on her Marriage," "that is amiable in a Man, which is not equally so in a Woman; I do not except Modesty and Gentleness of Nature. Nor do I know one Vice or Folly which is not equally detestable in both." If women are more full of "nonsense and frippery" than men, their parents are to blame for failing "to cultivate" their minds. "It is a little hard," Swift continues, "that not one Gentleman's daughter in a thousand should be brought to read or understand her own natural Tongue, or be judge of the easiest Books that are written in it. . . ." Swift's remedy is to offer himself as tutor for the young lady in question; in *Gulliver's Travels*, he recommends education for both sexes.

When I asked my students what they thought of Swift—expecting at least some delight or surprise at his modernity—one sophomore said, "Why, he's insulting. I didn't like him at all." She added that his attitude was patronizing and demeaning: "He doesn't care anything about the girl. All he cares about is that she please her husband. That's why he wants her to be able to read. So that she can carry on a conversation with him."

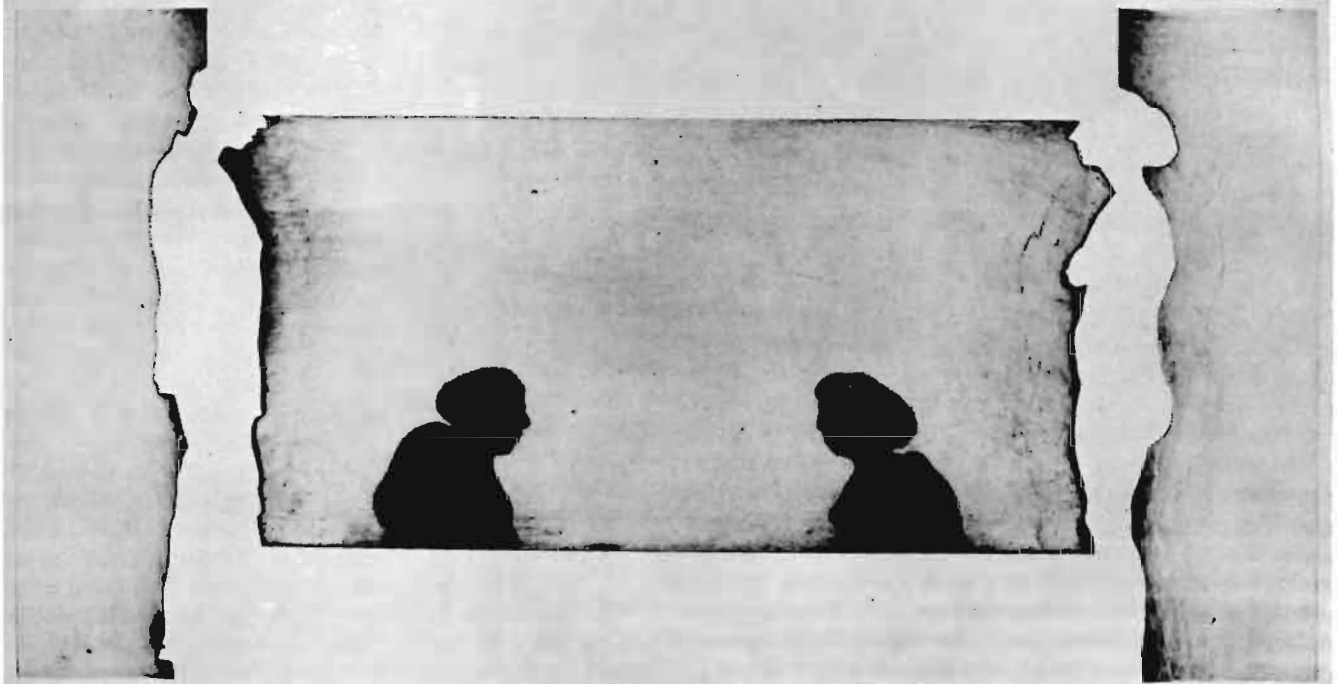
Marianne's sharp disgust surprised me and some of the other students present, one of whom commented gently and slightly in wonderment: "But that's just why I'm going to college and taking English courses. My boy friend is at college and I think that I should be able to keep up to his interests and his friends. You know, I want to know what he's talking and thinking about."

Both students had in mind a passage in which Swift offers his young lady a rationale for the education of her intellect: "to acquire or preserve the Friendship and Esteem of a Wise Man, who soon grows weary of acting the Lover and treating his Wife like a Mistress, but wants a reasonable Companion, and a true Friend through every Stage of his Life. It must be therefore your Business to qualify yourself for those Offices." That is, to function interestingly for one's husband—or children. The question of self or vocation is entirely absent, as it is from the concerns of the majority of women in college today.

About a hundred years after Swift wrote his essay, Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill began a long and complex intellectual relationship, one of the results of which was a book that Mill published in 1869 called *The Subjection of Women*. Like Swift, Mill believed that sexual differences do not entirely, if at all, control the intellect. Women are not a separate and lesser species but, as Mill put it, they are a separate class or caste, created and controlled by men through a process of socialization that includes depriving women of education.

I want to quote from Mill's book at some length because I think it is still the best single piece of analysis and because it is his only significant work not available in paperback. First, his argument about the alleged inferiority

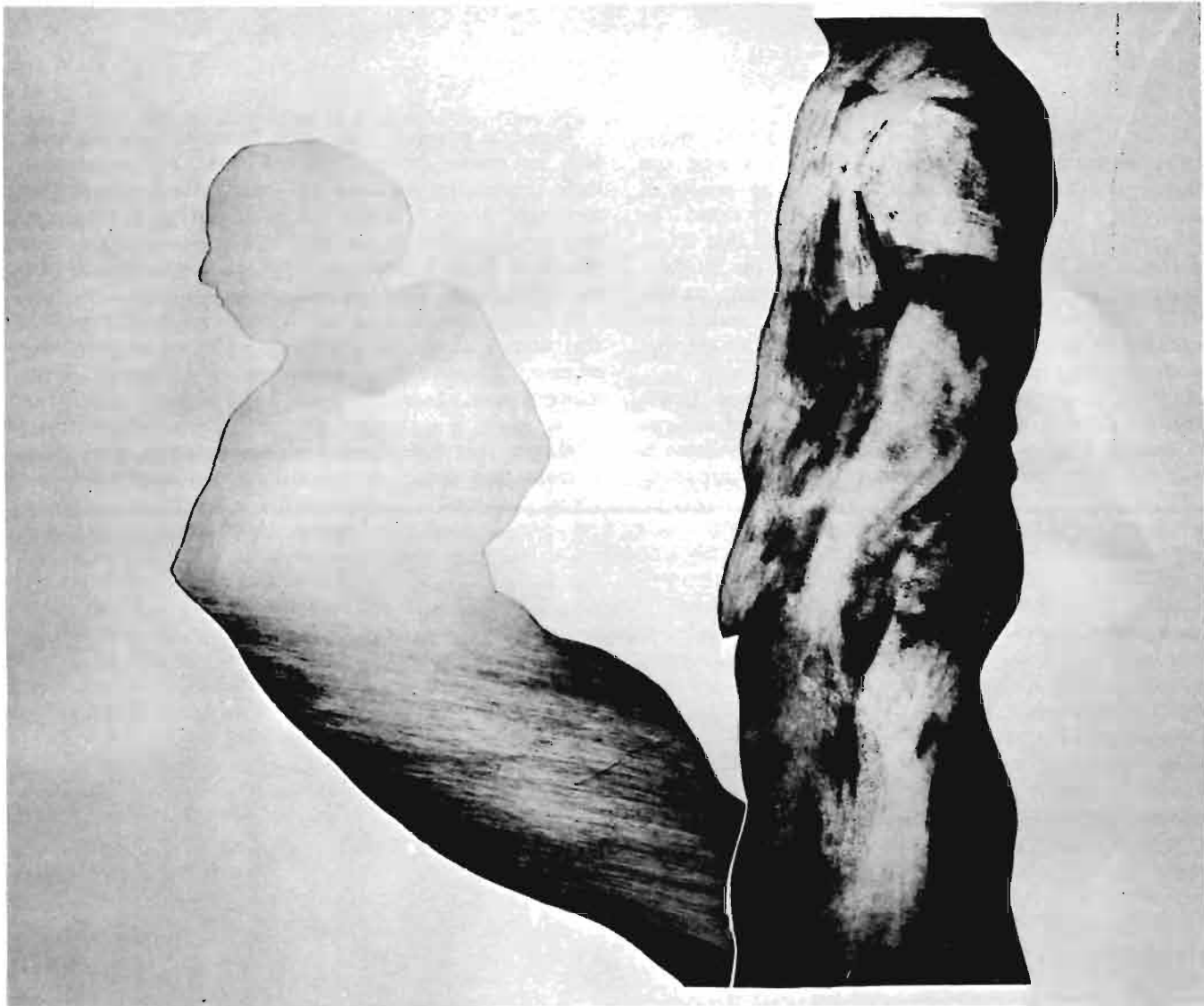
Women's relations with their "masters," according to Mill, are unique for an "enslaved class," for two reasons; their universality in time and space, their perpetuation seemingly without "force." "The subjection of women to men being a universal custom," Mill begins urbanely, "any departure from it quite naturally appears unnatural." On the other hand, most women accept their state. In fact, "All causes, social and natural, combine to make it unlikely that women should be collectively rebellious to the power of men." Thence follows an analysis by a "master" of the master's point of view: "Women," Mill begins, are so far in a position different from all other subject classes, that their masters require something more from them than actual service. Men do not want solely the



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of woman's "nature:" "Standing on the ground of common sense and the constitution of the human mind, I deny that anyone knows, or can know, the nature of the two sexes, as long as they have only been seen in their present relation to one another. If man had ever been found in society without women, or women without men, or if there had been a society of men and women in which the women were not under the control of the men, something might have been positively known about the mental and moral differences which may be inherent in the nature of each. What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. It may be asserted without scruple, that no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted from its natural proportions by their relation with their masters. . . ."

obedience of women, they want their sentiments. All men, except the most brutish, desire to have, in the women most nearly connected with them, not a forced slave but a willing one, not a slave merely, but a favority. They have therefore put everything in practice to enslave their minds. The masters of all other slaves rely, for maintaining obedience, on fear—either fear of themselves, or religious fears. The masters of women wanted more than simple obedience, and they turned the whole force of education to effect their purpose. All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will and government by self-control, but submission and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others, to make



complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections. And by their affections are meant the only ones that they are allowed to have—those to the men with whom they are connected, or to the children who constitute an additional and inde-feasible tie between them and a man. When we put together three things—first, the natural attraction between opposite sexes; secondly, the wife's entire dependence on the husband, every privilege or pleasure she has being either his gift, or depending entirely on his will; and lastly, that the principal object of human pursuit, consideration, and all objects of social ambition, can in general be sought or obtained by her only through him, it would be a miracle if the object of being attractive to men had not become the polar star of feminine education and formation of character. And this great means of influence over the minds of women having been acquired, an instinct of selfishness made men avail themselves of it to the utmost as a means of holding women in subjection, by representing to them meekness, submissiveness, and resignation of all individual will into the hands of a man, as an essential part of sexual attractiveness.

Mill concludes this section of his book by summarizing: "In no instance except this, which comprehends half the human race, are the higher social functions closed against anyone by a fatality of birth which no exertions, and no change of circumstances can overcome; for even religious disabilities . . . do not close any career to the disqualified person in case of conversion." The remedies Mill proposes are changes in law and the opening of educational and vocational opportunities to women. His ideal is "freedom of individual choice" regardless of sex: "If the principle is true, we ought to act as if we believed it, and not to ordain that to be born a girl instead of a boy, any more than to be born black instead of white, or a commoner instead of a nobleman, shall decide the person's position through all life—shall interdict people from all the more elevated social positions, and from all, except a few, respectable occupations."

It is a pity to spoil Mill's peroration with a sour note, but he makes, in the end, a nineteenth-century distinction between married and unmarried women. Whatever her talents and inclinations, the married woman ought to stay at home—for practical reasons at least. No housekeeper can replace her with economy and efficiency both. When he

pleads for woman's presence in the university and at the bar, Mill is pleading for the unmarried woman alone.

Obviously, in 1969 we do not officially hold to Mill's distinction between married and unmarried women. And yet our suburban style of life institutionalizes Mill's notion of economy: by the time a woman pays for a baby-sitter and a commuter's ticket, she might just as well stay at home. In fact, though our forms may look different, essentials have not been altered for the majority of women since Mill's day. And some beliefs about us harken back to Aristotle and Milton, though now they are part of the unconscious of college-educated females. For example, the basic assumption about women's biological inferiority, dealt what one might have expected to be a death-blow in the 1940's by Simone de Beauvoir, comes to college annually in the heads and hearts of freshmen women.

Four years ago, I began to use as a theme in a freshman writing course "the identity of woman." Some of the corollary reading assigned has included D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, Elizabeth Bowen's *The Death of the Heart*, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, Mary McCarthy's *The Group*, Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, a collection of essays entitled *Women in America*, and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. In every class I have taught, someone has asked, "Why are our books only by women?" or "Why do we have to read mostly women writers—they're always inferior to men." Even in something as simple as athletics, girls have been eager to point out that female swimmers are inevitably inferior to male swimmers. Only once in all the classes I have taught did a student point out that males of some cultures, say Vietnam, may be physically "weaker" than females of another culture, say the Soviet Union or the U.S. And I have typically received lengthy essays "proving" that women must be inferior since in the whole length of recorded history so few have been truly great. At the same time, I should point out that a questionnaire I used did not verify the impressions I gained from class discussion and student themes. It was as though the students answered the questionnaire in terms of what was "supposed to be."

The same split occurred with regard to the question of women's social equality. On paper, the students indicated a belief in its existence. In class and on themes, they gave evidence that they lived their lives in the chains Mill described and analyzed. Their dependence on male approval came out particularly in discussions of coeducation, though with varying degrees of openness and consciousness. Close to the surface and freely aired was the question of dressing for boys. It was a relief, students said, to be able to live whole days at Goucher in jeans and no make-up. And they joked about looking very different—sometimes unrecognizably so—when they left the campus for a date or a weekend. Very few students said that they dressed in a particular way to please themselves. Much more difficult to get at was the deeper question of sexual role in the classroom's intellectual life. I have had only a few students able to say, as one did this year, at the beginning of an

essay, "Men distract me." In fact, that was why she had come to Goucher. In high school classes, Virginia became aware of her unwillingness to be herself: either she was silly or silent. Here at Goucher, she said, she was able to say what she thought without worry about what boys would think of her. Moreover, she was going to be a lawyer because that was the most "male" occupation she could think of. She wanted to show that she could do what any man could. If she could manage that, then she could be "independent," and that, she said, was a meaningful goal.

Virginia is an exception. Obviously women go to college today in numbers that would boggle Mill's brain. But most come without genuine purpose, or, when they discover purpose, it is in Mill's or Swift's terms. About halfway through one term, my freshmen were talking about the motivation of a character in a story by Doris Lessing. Joan tried to make a point about the complexities of motivation by saying that she had come to Goucher only because her parents had wanted her to go to college and this was as good a place as any and that for nearly a whole term she had been wondering what she was doing here, but now she understood what her purpose might be, not only here but for the rest of her life. The class hung on her words, but she grew suddenly shy of naming her discovery. Finally she said, "Enjoyment. I think that I am here to enjoy not myself but life—and also later on, after I get out of college." Joan was immediately chastized for "selfishness." "The purpose of life," another student said, "is to help other people." Most of the twenty students sitting in the circle proceeded to take sides; a few tried to reconcile the two positions: "helping other people" might itself be enjoyable." "If you enjoyed tutoring in Baltimore slums," one girl retorted, "then you weren't doing your job properly." The discussion raged as few classroom discussions do. I said nothing, except at the end when we had to stop for supper. Then I commented that no one had mentioned, in more than an hour, earning money or having an ambition or vocation; no one had talked about the fulfillment of her identity in terms of satisfying and useful work. The girls were not particularly astonished; my terms meant very little to them, at least at that time. The girls who were most numerous and most vocal were those who thought that "service" or "helping people" should be performed for its own sake, because that was morally right, not as an enjoyable act for the individual to perform or for any other reason. This is the woman-slave mentality that Mill was describing a hundred years ago.

It is clear that a social order sends girls to college who are generally unconscious of their position in that society. And on the whole, colleges do very little to sort out the conflicts girls feel. How can they please themselves and please their (future) husbands and/or satisfy the demands of class and society? Their conflicts have grown sharper, more fierce and destructive, since Mill's day. For women a hundred years ago, the problem was to fight for the right to an education or to be allowed to vote. Women have these rights. But in fact a woman is—unless she closes her



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eyes completely—pulled terrifically in two opposing directions. They are not parallel lines: marriage and career.

On the one hand, she is still playing with dolls, dressing to suit boys, and pretending to be dumb in a co-ed high school class. She is still a continual disappointment to her mama if she returns from college each term without an engagement ring. She wants—and naturally so—to get married and have children. To assume that a career would not conflict with marriage and child-rearing, at least as our

present society is arranged, is an error.

On the other hand, her college education assumes that even if she is not going on to a career or graduate school, she should specialize for two years in some particular area of knowledge. The curriculum, moreover, doesn't help her to work out the dual roles she may have to assume, that is, if she is not simply a housewife. It assumes, largely, that the problem doesn't exist. The curriculum is geared to vocation, however narrowly conceived. An English major will



send you to graduate schools, for example. But nothing I can think of at Goucher prepared women for marriage or motherhood.

Why do we educate women? Cynically, I might answer, to keep them off the streets. Certainly, we are not thinking of them even as we do think of men—as the future engineers and administrators of a complex bureaucracy. Then why design curricula for women that are remarkably similar to those for men? Why, especially when they and their teachers assume a lesser degree of serious intellectual commitment from female than from male students, even from those avoiding the draft. I have heard a few male professors at women's colleges candidly admit either the "ease" with which it is possible to teach women or the "bore" it is. And women like me fret about the "passivity" of our students. But mostly we do little to promote a reawakening or an altering of students' or faculty's consciousness. "There, there," one professor was overheard saying to a weeping freshman, "don't cry about that paper. In a few years, you'll be washing dishes and you won't even remember this course."

I have spent a lot of time on the purpose of education because I think that we must be conscious of our motives. Are we, as one student put it recently, educating girls to become "critical housewives?" I for one am not, not at least any more than Hopkins' professors are educating "critical husbands." We can do better than that for our students and I think we should. Women and men both need work lives and private relationships. Women need to be educated for consciousness about themselves as members of a society they can learn to change. Even if women are to spend some years of their lives at home with small children part or all of the day, these are few years when compared to a lifetime. Without what I call a "work-identity," moreover, women, their families, and society generally lose a great deal.

But now I want to turn to the means: what can colleges do for the education of women? I am not speaking simply of women's colleges, for even if we were to inaugurate instant coeducation, the problems would remain the same. If we consider the candor with which some administrators of hitherto male colleges have discussed the function of incoming female students, in fact, the problems may multiply. As one dean put it to me, "The girls will keep our men on campus weekends." The three programmatic suggestions that follow are aimed at coeducational institutions as well as women's colleges. The first two are curricular in nature.

1. The most traditional approach is to recruit women to programs hitherto open chiefly to men (e.g., architecture, engineering, international relations) or to create new institutions to train women professionally in those careers. For example, a woman's college might add to its campus a school of architecture that gives graduate degrees. By and large, this is the way that the education of women has proceeded in the past, though women have been channeled into nursing, teaching, social work, rather than allegedly

"male" careers. I do not wish to disparage this procedure—obviously it is useful that it continue—but by itself it can do little more than to open doors for handfuls of individual women, leaving the bulk of their sisters behind. Philosophically, moreover, it does nothing more than to say, see, women can be architects, if you, the male world, will allow them to be. We know that already.

2. The second approach is one that has come historically out of the civil rights movement, and recently out of an analogy to black and third world studies programs: the development of *consciousness* about the psychology and sociology of sexual differentiation in western and other societies. A freshman study program that combines literature, sociology, psychology, and history, would usefully introduce the subject to students; inter-departmental women's studies programs may be devised or particular courses (e.g. in the history or sociology of women) be added to existing departmental offerings. I value this curricular direction because it calls not for competition with men but for the growth of understanding by both men and women about how society is arranged. Such understanding is essential to intelligent action for social change as opposed to individual advancement.

3. The third suggestion would commit the institution to educate the rest of its members. That is, the administration of a college, the procedures and literature of its admissions or vocational placement offices, for example, ought to reflect a conscious militancy about the education of women. The education of faculty members and administrators, male and female together, would support and promote the curricular program suggested for students. Such a program would not be easy to arrange. It is difficult, in reality, for men to see women as their replacements. And women who have come up through the usual channels of individual competition with men may not readily understand the need to reexamine their perceptions about sexual differentiation.

Needless to say, instituting a series of programs at one or even several colleges can hardly correct a condition that is fundamental to our society. But colleges can raise consciousness and offer students some tools with which to solve problems as well as the optimism necessary for any political solution.

*Florence Howe attended an all-girls highschool in N.Y.C. and Smith College. She has taught at Goucher College for nine years and is active in RESIST and the New University Conference.*

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## Coming

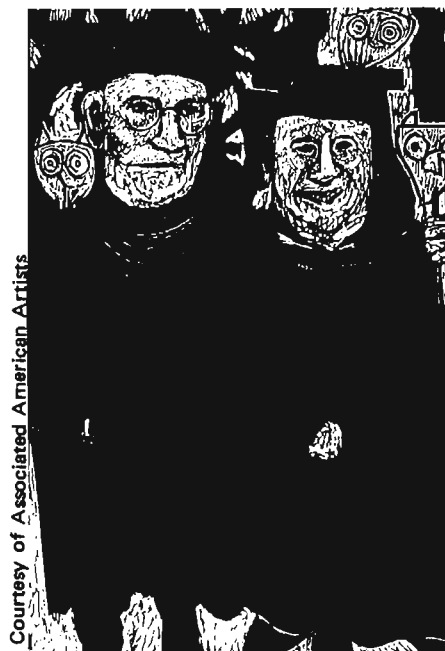
## letter from new orleans

## bob zellner

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# Guide to the Grand Jury

Brian Glick and Kathy Boudin



*I*t wasn't the Justice Department or the FBI or Daley, Johnson or Nixon who decided that leaders of last summer's Chicago actions should be tried for a federal crime. Not technically, that is.

Officially a grand jury did it. Other grand juries have indicted black militants and student activists. Many of us who do not face criminal charges have already been called as grand jury witnesses or will be soon. We're learning first hand how, in a society divided along lines of race and class, legal institutions are used by the powerful to perpetuate the status quo.

The purpose of legal repression is to intimidate and isolate us from our base. Unless we are careful, repression can divert needed energy into defense groups for raising money and publicizing repression.

*T*he Grand Jury. Part of the Bill of Rights. A bulwark of American justice, supposedly serving three vital functions.

As the "conscience of the community," the Grand Jury is supposed to protect people against unfair prosecution. Until it finds that the government has substantial evidence, no person can be tried for a serious crime in federal court or in the courts of nearly half the states. (In the other states and for non-serious crimes, a judge makes this decision in a preliminary hearing.)

As "the people's big stick," the Grand Jury is supposed to investigate official misconduct. In many states it can issue a muckraking report even when it decides no crime has been committed.

Finally, the Grand Jury supposedly provides opportunities for citizen participation in government. To the president of New York's Grand Jury Association it represents democracy in action:

Effective government can function—and our communities can maintain their vitality—only so long as the ordinary citizen can and will participate in determining the circumstances under which he lives his life. Even before our country achieved its independence, grand juries were a means by which ordinary citizens have had a direct and powerful voice in the conduct of community affairs.

A close look at what the grand jury really is and does illustrates this general principle. Those who now actively oppose the status quo—youth, blacks, poor people—are excluded from jury duty. Moreover, the Grand Jury does not itself exercise significant power; it is controlled by the prosecutor (D.A., U.S. Attorney), who uses it as a weapon against movements for change.

*T*he Grand Jury originated in the 13th century in England as a corps of knights assigned to help the Crown identify and prosecute criminals. In the United States today many Grand Juries still consist mainly of "blue ribbon" aristocrats.

From 1938-43 the federal court for the southern district of New York (Manhattan, Bronx, and Westchester) drew jurors primarily from Who's Who in New York, Who's Who in Engineering, the Social Register, the alumni directories of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Dartmouth, and Poor's Register of Executives and Directory of Directors. Many of these people stayed on the jury panel for years and helped indict the Rosenbergs and many Smith Act defendants. The federal court agreed that this procedure systematically excluded black people and workers. But it still upheld the procedure as an efficient way to find jurors who were properly "qualified."

*T*oday many states use only slightly more subtle methods to select similarly elite juries. The grand juries which indicted Huey Newton and the Oakland Seven, for instance, were picked only from names provided by the Alameda County Superior Court judges. Twenty-six company presidents, 31 bankers, 5 utility executives, and a number of realtors and other business officials were among the 261 jurors selected by the same method in San Francisco from 1950 to 1968. Non-whites, over one-third the San Francisco population, provided only five percent of the jurors.

The New York County grand juries which have indicted Columbia strike leaders and Black Panthers are not much different. According to an analysis prepared for a court challenge, the New York grand jurors who sat in 1964 were 1.65 percent black, .003 percent Puerto Rican, and slightly over 1 percent blue collar. None were under 35. Most lived in census districts with a median income of over \$10,000 per year.

These jurors were chosen from names supplied by judges and other grand jurors, plus anyone who applied in person at the jury clerk office. Over

nine-tenths of the panel from which New York juries are now picked qualified at a time when a grand juror was required by law to own at least \$250 worth of property. The chief jury clerk admits that his office still rejects any applicant under 35 unless he is recommended by a judge. The clerks also exclude anyone on welfare, anyone who was ever declared bankrupt, and anyone who has a lien or judgement outstanding against him. As the New York Times recently put it, "credit checks screen out fly-by-nights and un-reliables."

Recent civil rights legislation gives federal defendants the right to a jury "selected at random from a fair cross-section of the community." The new law also prohibits exclusion from federal grand juries "on account of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or economic status."

The real effect of this reform is only to open the federal Grand Jury to the salaried middle classes. Jurors' names are drawn only from lists of voters or persons registered to vote, despite the well-known fact that disproportionately large numbers of blacks, Puerto Ricans and poor people take no part in the electoral process. Jury clerks continue to exercise vast discretion—remaining free, for example, to treat misspelling on the required written application as proof of disqualifying illiteracy. Finally, the clerks excuse from jury duty any wage earner who claims financial hardship because he might lose his job as a result of a month's absence or because he can't support his family on the juror's fee. (Most states pay only a few dollars a day. The new law raised the federal fee from \$10 to \$20 per day, still only half what the U.S. Labor Department estimates that a city family of four needs to live decently.)

Grand juries are made up mainly of white, middle-aged and elderly representatives of the propertied and managerial classes. It's hardly surprising that in their watchdog function such grand juries protect their own economic and political power and their social privilege. The reports issued by San Fran-

cisco grand juries during 1968 condemned "welfare chiselers" and drug use, while supporting freeways and downtown redevelopment and giving "special recognition" to the police department's tactical squad.

The unrepresentative make-up of the Grand Jury combines with the structure of the legal process to ensure that the Grand Jury will rubber stamp the prosecutor, not protect the people against unjust prosecution. Most grand juries are mystified by the technicalities of the law. They serve only one month every two or three years. They have no staff except for the prosecutor's office, and they are not allowed to hire outside experts. The prosecutor manages the proceedings, bringing documents and witnesses, leading the question and drafting the indictment which the jury approves.

If one grand jury refuses to issue an indictment the prosecutor is free to call another jury and yet another until he persuades one to go along. If a grand jury decides to indict someone he doesn't want convicted, the prosecutor can always find a way to let the case die. In some states he has the legal right to dismiss any indictment. In the others he can neglect to proceed on the case, accept a guilty plea to a trivial charge, or try the case in a way which allows the defendant to win easily.

A defendant can gain nothing from grand jury proceedings. He and his attorney are excluded from the jury room. They cannot cross-examine the states' witnesses or object to questions put to friendly witnesses. In federal courts and in many states the defendant cannot appear before the grand jury even if he does discover that it is discussing him, and in other states he can testify (and then leave) only if he agrees to allow the prosecutor to use anything he says against him at trial. Although the prosecutor automatically receives the transcript of the jury proceedings, the defendant can see a copy only under special circumstances and with a court order.

Though the grand jury is useless to defendants, it can help the prosecutor in several important ways. When press-

ed to bring to trial someone he wants to protect, the prosecutor can have the case killed by a grand jury of "ordinary citizens." The Brooklyn D.A. used this tactic with great success when a police officer shot a black youth in 1965. The grand jury issued a report exonerating the cop. D.A. Koota said there was nothing more he could do, and the courts rejected CORE's petition demanding further inquiry. Precisely the same technique is now being used to protect the off-duty cops who attacked Black Panthers near a Brooklyn courtroom.

Through a grand jury report—one which names names—a D.A. may be able to prosecute in the mass media opponents against whom he could prove no case in court. Black militants in Cleveland were harassed in just this way after that city's most recent "riots." In the early Fifties a New York grand jury report accused officials of the United Electrical Workers union of membership in the Communist Party, which was not a crime even then, and recommended that the National Labor Relations Board decertify the union.

The prosecutor's third possible use of the grand jury is to deprive a defendant of the tactical advantages of a judicial preliminary hearing. At a preliminary hearing a defendant need not take the stand or present any part of his case. The defendant's attorney can discover the state's case and cross-examine its witnesses; if the witnesses change their testimony at trial, he can quote from the transcript of the hearing to cast doubt on their honesty. Since court dockets are almost always crowded, defendants can use preliminary hearings to gain time before they have to stand trial. Attorneys for the Columbia strikers used preliminary hearings to delay almost all trials until the fall, when a new University administration withdrew most of the charges against the students.

Since the grand jury serves the same procedural functions as the preliminary hearing—both are supposed to protect against unjust prosecution and both in fact rubber stamp the D.A.—the defendant is not entitled to both a preliminary hearing and a grand jury. In federal

court and in states which use grand juries, a person cannot be required to stand trial for a serious crime (felony) until he is indicted by a grand jury. But in trials for the minor crimes (misdemeanors) that most people are charged with, the prosecutor can choose between preliminary hearing and grand jury. If the defendant requests a preliminary hearing, the prosecutor can simply stall the case until he obtains a grand jury indictment.

The New York D.A. used this tactic to avoid repeating his Columbia fiasco when CCNY students were arrested this fall for giving sanctuary to an AWOL soldier. The students were booked, charged and bailed out in the ordinary manner. They then planned collectively for the expected next stage, the preliminary hearing, at which many of them were going to represent themselves so they could more effectively present their political views. To the students' surprise, and the surprise of their lawyers, the D.A. presented grand jury findings on the basis of which the judges denied requests for preliminary hearing and immediately set dates for trial.

Finally, the prosecutor can use the grand jury to force potential defendants' friends and comrades to talk with him and turn books and papers over to him before trial, unless they assert their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. He can use the transcript of the grand jury proceedings at trial to contradict a defense witness who changes his story. He may be able to trap a witness into lying to the grand jury and then convict the witness of perjury, even if he doesn't have enough evidence to try the witness or anyone else for a substantial crime.

The prosecutor has these powers only through the grand jury. Ordinarily we are no more required to talk with a D.A. or U.S. Attorney than with the FBI or the police. We can refuse to talk with any of them without fear of being jailed for contempt of court. (A person who lies to such officials can, however, be prosecuted for willful misrepresentation. In the Fifties political activists frequently were trapped into petty lies and then were forced to

inform or spend several years in jail.)

The power to compel testimony through the grand jury gives the D.A. even more than significant technical advantages. It provides him, and the government generally, with a powerful weapon for terrorizing people active in movements for social change.

The grand jury meets in secret and is surrounded by an aura of mystery. Not only are the prospective defendants, the media and the public excluded, but a witness cannot even bring his own lawyer into the grand jury room. His attorney can be in the hall, and the witness can be excused to consult him, but this is a far cry from having counsel at his side throughout the proceeding. The D.A. may well be able to pressure him into answering questions he shouldn't answer and to embarrass him so he will leave to talk with his lawyer only rarely.

The grand jury proceeding is the only situation in which a person can legally be forced to talk to the authorities entirely alone, with no lawyer or friends to advise and support him. The prospect of such an experience can terrify even the strongest and most experienced of activists. The government tries to intensify these fears by calling witnesses separately, or only a couple at a time, and encouraging them to respond as isolated individuals.

Most of the people called before the Chicago federal grand jury quietly appeared and talked. By acting individualistically they reinforced the sense of loneliness and terror which the grand jury evokes. They failed to draw on our one source of psychic and political strength in confronting the enemy on his turf, the power of collective action.

Some of those who talked in Chicago thought they could persuade the jurors to refuse to issue indictments, an unlikely prospect given who sits on grand juries and the fact that the decision to indict had already been made politically and was only being implemented through the grand jury. Others believed they could outsmart the U.S. Attorney, which seems equally unlikely since we never know just what the prosecutor's looking for and when

seemingly harmless information will help him. Since the grand jury meets in secret and no one can be certain precisely what any witness said, testifying cannot help but spread suspicion and distrust within the movement. Cooperation with the grand jury also reinforces its legitimacy and leads even more people to believe it is in fact the protector of justice that it pretends to be.

Activist recent success in talking before HUAC in no way indicates that the same approach would be appropriate in responding to the grand jury. HUAC could be made to look ridiculous and its hearings could be used as a political platform because, unlike the grand jury, HUAC meets in public, with the media present. Moreover, HUAC can use the information it gathers only to recommend legislation and publish propaganda; it has no power to issue indictments and use testimony before it as the basis of criminal prosecution (except for perjury or contempt).

Strategy before a grand jury must also be distinguished from strategy before a trial jury. Trial juries are relatively more representative than grand juries (though not made up of the "peers" of most defendants); the defendant generally has power to exclude obviously biased jurors, plus some others. While the grand jury hears only witnesses' answers to the prosecutor's questions and then confers privately with the prosecutor, the trial jury hears the defendant's full case—as he wants it presented—and hears the prosecutor only in open court.

The people who testified in Chicago  
(continued on page 67)

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*A mangled version of this article appeared in the June, 1969 Liberation.*

*Because of the article's importance, Liberation is presenting it here in its proper form.*

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## PAX AMERICANA

Dragged backward from sleep  
By an embryonic fear  
Into the smothered  
Darkness of the room  
I hear the chronic  
Muttering of drains  
And dimly hear  
The tolling bells  
In all the scattered  
Valleys of the world  
Mourning the young war dead.

A volume of Tacitus  
Haunts my mind,  
Parched blood on the earth  
The stones with sticky lips  
Crying out,  
Prodigies creeping from wombs  
And the Roman People  
Hiding their eyes  
With their hands.

In all the scattered

The stones with sticky lips

## poetry *Chris Pollock*

### SUNSET

East Side drippy flats  
Iron wounded in their sides,  
From mossy complicated taps  
Women lather beneath open skies.  
The lank wind mutters  
Among pot-bellied laundry lines,  
Carries in its evening coils  
The smell of suppers on the boil.

### OBITUARY

His death to be announced:

He was lowered to the grave  
One dun Sunday in November,  
The earth drummed its fingers  
Softly on his coffin  
Filling up his memories with earth,  
And then the hush of ground and stars.





# Reflections on the Moon

Paul Goodman

The Moon landing was mankind being great at several of our best things, exploring, making ingenious contraptions, cooperating with a will to do it, drawing on the accumulation of history whether we think of the equations of Galileo, Kepler, and Newton or the roving Polynesians, Vikings, Columbus, and Magellan. And not least, lusting to see at a distance—the pictures a second later were as sensational as the trip. People do beat all! When the first Sputnik flew on October 4, 1957, I wrote a sonnet that was published in *Liberation*, and it is still so:

A new thing with heavenly motion made by us/  
flies in the sky, it is passing every hour/  
signalling in our language. What a power/  
of thought and skill has launched this marvelous/  
man-made moon. and suddenly the gorgeous/  
abyss lies open, as you spring a door/  
to enter and visit where no man before/  
ever came.

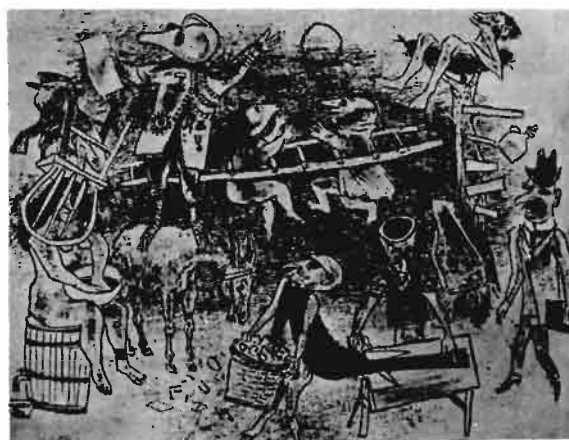
It is a mysterious/  
moment when one crosses a threshold/  
and "Have I been invited?" is my doubt./  
Yes, for our wish and wonder from of old/  
and how we patiently have puzzled out/  
the laws of entry, warrant we have come/  
into the great hall as a man comes home.

This combination of itching exploration and complicated machinery is, of course, a peculiarly Western mask of man, Faustian man—the Boodhisatvas tended to embark on inner space-voyages, with psychological technology. But ours is one of the ways of being that mankind has invented/discovered; and in our times it is a worldwide way, including the Orient and Africa, that we are going to continue, however arduous, or we revert to barbarism or annihilation.

To belittle these things is to miss the worldwide public feeling. Eldridge Cleaver and Noam Chomsky have called the event a circus, but this is polemic spite and snobbery. (Apparently, only MIT professors have a right to noble and exciting games.) For a hundred fifty years the Americans have had a propensity to do everything, good, bad, or indifferent, in a glare of publicity and coverage; and indeed the Moon stories were rather sweet. Some scientists have said that to send up a package of instruments was all that was necessary; but they don't understand that we are excited by a new horizon for ourselves, not a file of data; and I don't believe—or don't want to believe—that cold calculations are as good as our experience, however naive. Again, I don't think that the economic priority has been so bad as the radicals say. The cost amounted to less than ¼% of the G.N.P., and these are our cathedrals—in advanced countries, science and scientific technology have been the dominant religion for a hundred years (sometimes diabolic). We ought to see to it that everybody lives well, but a part of living well is blowing money you can't "afford" on big excitement,

curiosity, a better level of chatter. Why do some radicals lose their common sense when they talk politics? To tell a child or a man that he mustn't have ice cream or liquor because there are starving Armenians is to be so "serious" as to deserve to be taken seriously. And when it is a matter like space-exploration that embodies so many ideals and even human imperatives, to be cold to it is to be taken as not for real or even immoral.

There is nothing ironical in the fact that we can land on the moon but can't make traffic move or feed the hungry.



Courtesy of Associated American Artists

NASA can't make an epigram or a metaphor either. All the resources of society can't educate a child or give a poor man freedom or me happiness. All these take different kinds of soul, all good. It is politically a disaster to try to play one good against another, for people stick to what they do value. Consider the exquisite care for safety in our space program—it is astounding that there was only one accident that cost lives; if there had been the slightest hint of sacrificing a life, there would have been universal outrage, as there was an outcry about the little monkey; yet we ruthlessly destroy people on battlefields, in jails, and in slums. But it is pointless to say that this is hypocrisy, for it is not hypocrisy; it is that people have not been made to think through and feel their ruthless acts. Discuss those in their own terms.

It is claimed that we have to judge the Moon adventure as part of a whole social picture, in terms of comparative importance and a rational balance of costs. I don't think so, not in cases on the edge, like this. What good Samaritan, artist, amorous kid, or guerrilla ever judges with that kind of balance? Indeed, commanding the Moon landing was the only action of John Kennedy that rightly fitted his adolescent mentality and therefore had grace—contrast, e.g., the inappropriateness of such a personality during the Cuban missile crisis. It's too bad he didn't live to bask in the glory.

If we take the Moon enterprise in its own terms, however, as something unquestionably to be done and worth doing, there are some sad and unpleasant things to be said about the context and style. From the beginning, the context of a race

with the Russians has been bad. Going to the Moon and the planets is too big, too scientific, too historic, too dependent on all mankind and too future-laden for all mankind, to have gotten entangled in the Cold War and in propaganda. The race has been shameful. The secrecy and national competition have gone counter to the spirit of Western science and have added to the current degradation of science. I have been surprised that the scientists did not protest it more concertedly; but it seems appallingly obvious, for instance from the stupidity about the UN flag, that except for the Cold War, Congress would never have voted the money. I did not notice a Harris poll about international cooperation; I wonder what it would have shown. At least in the government's official image, e.g. the statements of the astronauts, we have been much less chauvinistic than the Russians. And bad as the present situation has been, we must remember that when Columbus put in at Lisbon after his first voyage, the King of Portugal plotted to banish him and his ship from the face of the earth, before the news got abroad.

The race has been especially unfortunate since space-exploration is a natural for international cooperation, like the Geophysical Year, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF. There has been enough sentiment for internationalism to generate the UN treaty against annexation. I still have the wan hope that putting effort, capital, and communication systems into transnational activities can drain energy from the insane aggrandizement of the sovereign Great Powers. Perhaps now that the first hectic flush of the race is over, we can go back to this idea. There is a good proposal before the UN to launch an orbiting platform for the use of all nations; and the Powers may take it up simply because it makes economic sense, and they are broke.

The horror of the military auspices and aura speaks for itself. The Pentagon and our military-industrial corporations and the military powers in the Kremlin have been boosting the space ventures every step of the way; every part of the technology is potentially a weapon; the satellites are used for spying; and we even toyed with an armed platform, in violation of the UN treaty. The brute fact is this: if the Russians can hit Venus at 30,000,000 miles and we can photograph Mars at a similar distance, we had all better rely on disarmament rather than "defense."

We thus have the ambiguity that many people are excited about exploring space, and the mass of mankind kind of think it's right; and I have no doubt that there are very many fine but craft-idiot scientists who want to do the work so much that they blink at the auspices; but on the other hand, the funding, organization, and technology are inextricably tangled with the war machine. Inevitably, with the colossal hypocrisy for which we are famous, the official space statements of the President all have had to do with peace. And indeed, the public coverage has stuck with remarkable purity to the adventure, the wonder, and the ingenuity, with almost no martial or imperialist overtones. This is how people want it.

Partly because of the military auspices—but, of course, it is a deeper disease in our country—our astronauts, the images of the enterprise, have been strangely homogeneous in biography, men in their late thirties with 2.2 children and

combat records, from small towns, etc. One has to be cautious when there is so much risk to persons and capital, but I guess that a draft resister, a Puerto Rican dropout, a farm mother of five, or even a queer might have been trained for the job equally well. The Russians seem to have collected more various and colorful types.

As I consider these events in terms of human history, however, one aspect has been more disturbing than any of the above; it was so from the beginning a dozen years ago and it was salient in July 1969: the overwhelming collectivity of the enterprise—the thousands upon thousands of industrial workmen and clerical staff and grease-monkeys and professors and technicians, busy as ants and accurately interlocking, going through hundreds of simulations in order to get everything by rote, and determined by the computer. And the other armies of TV teams and scientists with their lasers, seismographs, and chemical retorts, worked into the scenario. It is possible to think away the militarism—one way or another we will have to get rid of it in this generation or we are done for—but if mankind has a future, how to cope with this inevitable collectivity?

I do not mean that the people seem robotized. On the contrary, they look willing, earnest, attentive, I say "like ants" advisedly; and there is a beauty in this collective action. If they were robotized, there would have been blunders and catastrophe, not achievement. Yet there is a terrible loss of flashing spirit and personality. For instance, I do not know the names of the architectonic scientists and inventors, and in this set-up it would not be right for them to take a bow. Rejected Goddard can exist only as the name of a space center. With the best will in the world (and oh, do they have will!), the TV teams cannot make the astronauts look like anything but tame adolescents—though Neil Armstrong roused my fellow-feeling by his decent uneasiness at putting his foot down, in that airless world and blinding sunlight, on the ground that might sink beneath him. In this enterprise, we certainly seem to see Teilhard de Chardin's transcendent Noosphere, the super-mind, in operation. Nevertheless, as an anarchist and a psychologist I am quite convinced that this kind of environment is not viable; if it becomes universal, no child will learn anything, the culture will become Byzantine, and civilization itself become brittle and break.

Think of it in the future and in the present. We will pursue these explorations and hopefully colonize—so Buckminster Fuller thinks and urges, and he is a wise predictor. As always in the past, the culture and style of the colonies must depend on the character of the colonizers and the organization of the colonization. To give an example, the Polynesian sailors who crossed two and three thousand miles of open sea to settle Hawaii brought a brutal theology, a savage feudalism, and a most rudimentary culture compared with the grace they left behind—but what would you expect from bully rovers with ants in their pants? And inevitably, all present talk about space colonies consists of mining and cryogenic operations carried on by computerized personnel. Bear in mind that in history the colonies have sometimes become far more important than the mother countries.



And at present, what must be the effect on the man in the street? These great achievements not only, justifiably, determined fashion in behavior and language—ow! “Roger” “Over” “All systems go” “Houston, I’m on the porch”—but they must also, not quite so justifiably, make people believe that there can be no great achievement except in this collective style, no science but Big Science, no growing up and culture except plugged into the Noosphere. As the editorial in the *Boston Globe* put it, much as they sympathize with the hippies, to go to the Moon you’ve got to be pretty square. I don’t think there is any simple solution to this problem. As Coleridge said in a similar context, referring to the Industrial Revolution and the Manchester economists, “In order to have citizens, you must first be sure that you have men.” We must willingly affirm this grand collectivity; it is not evil if people do identify with it and are not coerced;

and if it is necessary for the on-going human adventure, we must go with it or commit historical suicide. At the same time, in order to have live people at all, we must multiply all the anarchist things, education that delays socialization, decentralization wherever it is possible, do it yourself, weakening the State. It will not be easy to show the ordinary man that these directions are compatible. Maybe they are institutionally not compatible. If so, we are at a dead end.

For, in candor, I must add one other, very gloomy thought. I have had it from time to time, but it struck me most forcibly during the Christmas voyage when they looked back at the Earth spinning below. Given how people have been polluting and destroying that earth, the astronauts sometimes seem to be like callow adolescents, abandoning the place where they have tossed their beer cans. But it’s my yard.



## An Exchange

Brothers & Sisters,

In "The Movement: a New Beginning" Staughton Lynd cites three examples (Chomsky, Cohn-Bendit, the Wobblies) of anti-elitist thinking about people's socialist self-activity "at the point of production"—at the points of productive contradiction throughout their daily lives. He's critical of historians who neglect evidence of this. But his own treatment of SDS-Resistance relations deserves just this criticism. Even when showing a compatibility of thought between the two groups, he bases it on *leaders'* relations and is necessarily led to discuss "what caused this happy state of things to deteriorate"—since it certainly has

deteriorated if one looks only at leaders' pronouncements.

Again, Lynd's second "history" of the Resistance since April 1968 shows how he sees SDS and the Resistance as separate organizations vying for the leadership role ("a position to play a key role in building the broad liberation movement") in "revolutionary general strikes." To say this, one must ignore or discount people's self-activity.

But Lynd's history of the Resistance before April 1967 shows, to my mind, something closer to his notions of good history—if only because the organization didn't really exist. I think something else is working when he deals with the Resistance and SDS as organizations. His view of their vying for leadership of late helps explain why, besides talking history, so much of Lynd's—and Calvert's "A Left Wing Alternative"—talk sounds like apologetics for the Resistance and subtle condemnation of SDS, to the point of not paying any attention to analysis, only to leaders' (*other leaders'*) talk.

And implicit in the apologetics is a criteria for leadership: it shall accrue to the most humanist. So the apologetics continually violate another principle of Lynd's. He warns us against dealing in stereotypes—a sure indication (when used to achieve leadership roles) of opportunism. But he and Calvert both move in the world of which-group-to-pin-which-stereotype-on.

The stereotypes are all too easy. On the one hand: Leninist-Stalinist middle class guilt masochist martyrdom (bad). On the other: Humanist-combining-sophisticated-analysis-with-a-humane-spirit-reminiscent-of-the-movement-in-the-early-1960s-with-consensus-decision-making-emotional-openness-and-decentralized-structure. "The characteristic Resistance manner" is "seeking out an individual at a time" and "a personal, deep communication type of politics" (so good).

Such egotripping. In his preface to the second edition of *Capital*, Marx notes that once the bourgeoisie established itself in the early 1800s, in place of genuine scientific research there came "the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic." Please

note how Lynd ignores substance and analysis ("genuine scientific research").

The key difference between Lynd's two "histories" since 1968 is precisely the fulfillment of the criteria—"a comprehensive political program"—which SDS folk like Steve Weissman, Mike Goldfield, others used to criticize the original Resistance strategy.

Moreover, among the criticisms of the Resistance was the same conclusion that Lynd comes to: The forms of protest of the Resistance were/are forms for elite college students, consequences of the class character of the channeling system. It is in *this* context (not as "a further argument" separate from it) that Carl Davidson and Hamilton's criticism, as I remember it, was conducted: The forms of protest of the Resistance were/are "characteristically middle class"—whatever the sentiment they express.

But in Lynd and Calvert we see a specific objection taken to being accused of "the politics of guilt." What has been at issue has *not* primarily been such identification of motivation and sentiments, but instead the question of adequate analysis and program: the class nature of the oppression AND OF THE MOVEMENT AGAINST IT. This is the issue when we try to fight the recapitulation of capitalist styles within the movement (e.g., male chauvinism and class supremacy). The issue is *not* whether guilt over such style is motivating shoddy organizing, but whether the style itself is to be an object of our analysis.

I for one never thought the criticism of the Resistance rested on the notion of a politics of guilt. But Lynd and Calvert may think it did and thus counterattack. But to redo the argument now and to ignore its questions of political analysis strikes me as part of an opportunistic attack on SDS. Especially when the counterargument says that "affirmation rather than self-denial was the emotional kernel" of the Resistance. Affirmation, strength, self-reliance—aspects of a fighting humanism—parts of an argument to make the Resistance the most humanist.

Somehow, says Lynd, the personal, open humanist affirmation has been

wiped out of SDS (Calvert is no longer attending meetings) while continually confirmed in the Resistance. This leads to a characterization of SDS as dogmatic and manipulative, which actually characterizes male leadership forms throughout the movement. It is yet to be shown that this characterizes the bulk of SDS members' movements. What it does do, of course, is build the Resistance imagemaking.

Lynd says "perhaps one should turn the SDS critique of the Resistance inside out, and argue that during the past year SDS has been reverting to the very politics of middle-class self-flagellation which it charges to the Resistance; that is, that since the spring 1968 National Council meeting SDS has asked white people again to play the role of auxiliaries to other peoples' radicalism." While this *may* characterize the Rudd-Klonsky posturing, it does not characterize the debate and analysis that has dealt with the question of racism (and explicitly the question of "white demands"). It doesn't characterize Noel Ignatin's

work, which has been vital to the analysis being developed, it doesn't characterize the Southern Conference Education Fund, and it does not characterize the debate at the Ann Arbor (winter 68-69) NC.

Lynd and Calvert exaggerate or perhaps really ignore the politics of the position on racism. Lynd makes anti-racist work SDS's "primary political activity" (I have shifted the emphasis in the phrase; Lynd italicized "primary"). Carl Davidson did a good critique of Calvert (June *Liberation*) doing the same thing, so I won't dwell on it. But just note how the terms neatly separate the humanists from the dogmatists (Totalitarians).

Note also: *Liberation* reprints Lynd and Calvert together, instead of Calvert and Davidson (and not Calvert-Davidson-Calvert!). Imagemaking.

What seems to be working in all this is an attempt by humanists to be the most humanist. Somehow, the image is, Resistance practice has simply fulfilled its original notions, rather than shaped and been shaped by struggle

and humanism. Working with the Movement for a Democratic Society in Springfield, Mass., I know we cannot make a morality out of talking to each person one by one.

The other side of this Humanistism is that SDS has deteriorated into a dogmatic centralist white-guilt machine. A view fostered by looking only at the factionalism when (as Lynd has seen) two (actually at least three) elitist groups see SDS as a group to recruit from.

The begged question is the real one: What are the people doing? In their development as a movement it's not an easy answer of pat stages and deterioration at the hands of Leninists and Stalinists. I sense, because the Resistance sees its style as more humanist than the SDS NO collective, a willingness to acquiesce in the destruction of SDS as a movement group and in the elitist notion that there is one movement style.

With a good deal of concern,

Jon Weissman

## lynd replies:

We have all been through six months of factional activity more intense than we ever expected to encounter in the New Left. I am sure this has left scars on all participants, myself included. An aspect of factional activity is that people simply encounter each other less (closed caucusing reinforces this), and in an atmosphere of isolation stereotypes flourish and lead to further isolation.

Before responding to any of Jon Weissman's particular points, I want to make it clear that I share what I believe to be his central concern, namely, that all involved rapidly extricate themselves from habits of name-calling and get on with work. Work, apart from its other virtues, is also the best approach to breaking down the factionalism which has prevented work.

If Jon Weissman believes my talk at the Resistance conference praised the Resistance because it "simply fulfilled its original notions," I think he should

reread it. Surely its thrust was to criticize the Resistance for permitting itself to define Resistance work by the act of draft card return. In so doing the Resistance has become not only single-issue and single-constituency, but single-tactic. I believe I share with Jon Weissman the concern that the movement reach beyond a middle-class and on-campus constituency, and moreover that I made this plain in the Bloomington talk which *Liberation* printed.

Aside from the extended quotation of Greg Calvert's speech at Princeton in spring 1967, I don't believe my talk dwelt on or even identified leaders. Even in referring to the Princeton speech I thought I made it clear that it illustrated a rank-and-file mood expressed in the button, "Not With My Life You Don't."

As Jon Weissman may have noticed after writing his letter, I tried to deal with the work of Noel Ignatin and of

the Southern Conference Educational Fund in an essay in the July *Liberation*. There I suggested, consistent with the analysis of the Bloomington talk, that the approach to racism which emphasizes surrender of "white skin privileges" does indeed encourage the emotion of guilt and does not necessarily produce substantive assistance to the black liberation struggle. I hope Jon Weissman will join in discussion of these problems in future issues.

Thus I find most of Weissman's specific points unconvincing. Yet I believe he puts his finger on an element of organizational chauvinism which was present in that Bloomington talk. He is probably right, too, in suggesting that a certain glorification of humanism-abstracted-from-political-work went along with this. I am grateful to have the opportunity to reemphasize that what I hope for is the building of mass organizations, controlled from below, which practice militant direct action without becoming inhumane. Whatever leadership the Left requires belongs to whichever groups or individuals prove most creative in that work.



# Letter to the Movement :

## The English Teacher as Civilizer

Barbara Kessel

"...at Dexter and elsewhere the faculty assume that it is their duty to replace the students' actual culture with an alien culture. Missionaries from these graduate schools, like clergy from colonial empires everywhere and in every time, feel confident that what they bring is good for the natives and will improve them in the long run. In culture, as elsewhere, this is manifestly not so."

So wrote John McDermott in an article quite famous on the Left, "The Laying on of Culture." This article caused me to realize what I have learned in six years' teaching from my students—white working-class high-school students, professors' kids at Iowa, both urban and rural, women on welfare who were paid to go through "Manpower Training," and the militant Black students at Malcolm El Shabazz Community College. What I have learned, gradually and painfully, was that every last assumption and attitude that my graduate school training had instilled was destructive.

The first and most common insight which occurs to people teaching English on a lower level than the universities is that most of the courses we had are irrelevant to the task, seeing as how the "non-elite" will not relate to Dryden and Pope, Chaucer and Beowulf (the elite aren't exactly eager for them either), and it has been many a year since our freshman composition courses. Still there are text books of literature and paperbacks which can be appropriately used and we do have our tool bags of critical principles and techniques. Most of us have managed from there, and when we ran into the total student rejection phenomenon ("The Red Badge of Courage stinks!" "Yea, right."), we fell back on the comforts of "I'm Only Trying To Help You" or "You'll See When You Go to

College" (a fantasy of a prestigious professor saying, "The Red Badge of Courage, that masterpiece of irony..." and the student, properly shamed, remembers his Philistine rantings of olden times.)

What many teachers never suspect is that most of the students have their own critical principles. (I can hear the snorts and harumphs at the very idea.) The most important principle held very dear and in common is the non-objectivity of any critical statement about art. Two-thirds of a "college prep" high school class fought me and the remaining compliant third of the class to a bloody standstill over their right to "a poem means whatever anyone sees in it." One guy even went into the community taking sample reactions to some poems, to prove his point. Why did a group of 16-year-olds get so excited over an abstraction seemingly far removed from their lives? So that they can protect their "NO" when some teacher says "Buttons" by Carl Sandburg is a good poem, but Phillip Freneau's "To the Memory of Brave Americans" is sentimental. Another class got very insulted over that "sentimental," and the class apologists argued that the word "sentimental" was merely a put-down word that some people used to describe other people's emotions, which they didn't happen to feel.

It is very satisfying to recall the spirit with which those students conducted their cultural resistance struggles on the battleground of literature. I have since taught classes which were waiting for the Word on what was Good before anyone would venture an opinion. However, the great advantage possessed by the future mechanics and file clerks who made up the bulk of that high school was that grades were of no concern to them. Passing was important, but that presents a problem to very few. (High school adminis-

trations usually convey an implied grade ratio to the teachers; too many F's mean a bad teacher.) "A" grades would not help them get a job or hold one, and they knew this full well. In fact, good grades were openly devalued by the students as a sign of excessive conformity. One fellow who got an "A" for the term quite unintentionally had to put up with teasing from his friends, who made up a game called "Herbie's Road to Success," which was a maze full of dead-ends and only one right way to get out. Although "one of the boys," Herbie was not one of the cultural warriors.

But if they were unimpressed with the power of a course grade, there was still something which they held in awe. That something is the ultimate weapon in the colonial kit of the English teacher: the language—his sacred trust, the substance of his sacerdotal functions. Practically everyone who does not speak or write in the dialect of the socially powerful ("he do, don't he?") feels that his language is *bad*. Just like "bad hair" and a whole lot of other oppressive values, the language is now beginning to undergo transvaluation among Black people, but not among poor and working-class whites. The only defense they have is to keep their mouths shut and write as infrequently as possible and very carelessly. The students pretend they wrote their themes on the bus, even when they didn't, the implication being that one could do better if he had taken some time with it.

There are three types of English teachers with respect to the use of language by students: 1) The high priest who has the language on tablets which were brought down from the mountain long ago. He spends most of his time on grammar and loves it for its own sake. He also knows what is good for the students, while they do not know as yet. 2) The Protestant missionary who brings the language as a means for the clever to become socially mobile. He is *for* the students. His mission is to create Eliza Doolittle successes, and he devotes much time to correcting papers. He doesn't claim to know what is best for all his students, but he does have the secret for those

chosen few who dream great dreams. One modern, hip type spends some time on the study or discussion of dialects, which concludes with some form of the dictum that "your language is as good as anybody's, only don't use it on paper or in school." This way the teacher can prove to himself that he is not racist, nationalistic, or snobbish, and yet fulfill his function as a colonialist. After all, the department insists, the school requires, and the society demands. What else can he do? 3) The marginal church man whose ministry is in the streets, bars, and community or campus meetings, whose main battle is with church establishments to force them into "relevance" and humane uses of their power. (I called him marginal because his tenure is usually temporary.) This kind of teacher, a John Holt or a James Herndon, wants the students to speak and write with freedom and growing pride, out of their own dreams and sense of what is best for them. He neither corrects papers nor dispenses grammar, and his energies go into combatting "the way it spozed to be" in the mind-sets of his students, his colleagues, administrators, and recently even in the Modern Language Association (Mother Language Association). He also devotes himself to learning his students' language, so he can appreciate their culture, the significant patterns in their lives as they perceive and express them. Only if he has this understanding can he aid in their defense, their cultural resistance struggles. Some of this type still believe in the Eliza Doolittle myth but have too much compassion and integrity to be irrelevant to all their "normal" students and end up being captivated by what they find. Others are radicals who know that the social system does not have the capacity to absorb even significant numbers into higher levels in the hierarchy of jobs and status, and that for an individual to turn himself inside out—trade in the dialect of his family and neighborhood for a stutter and a white collar is a very bad deal. He doesn't even make more money after all that. As for power, the kind that can be gotten by non-elites, it has nothing to do with academic refine-

ments.

I have a dream: All of types one and two become transformed into type three and come forth tomorrow, burn their grammar books and their red pens out of the window in full view of the students and set about to further convince the students that it is now safe to communicate. What would happen then? In my experience, the students test the situation for a good while, then plunge into something or a variety of things with fury and passion, criticize each other, and demand reactions from everywhere. Herb Kohl and James Herndon have chronicled this experience with Black children. I have seen it happen, not only in a class of Black college students, average age of 24, but also in a ninth grade of all-white and culturally advantaged. In time, with this kind of energy released at all grade levels around the country, there would be an explosion of new cultures. People would be deeply involved in the creation and the criticism of culture that was integral to their own lives, rather than standing and watching that which is contradictory to their lives. How alienating is it to see life through the form and spirit of a musical comedy or a TV serial.

However, all would not be well in this projected future, for culture does not come to life and survive in a vacuum. As Herb Kohl observed, his sixth graders had to re-learn "the way it spozed to be" to survive in the rest of the school system, as well as in their Harlem world. This explosion of creativity and participation would attract the vultures of culture, who would swarm to package and sell it for profit to passive consumers, as we have seen happen to rock-and-roll and folk music, once-vital art that belonged to the people, not Columbia Records. This process both degrades the art and deprives the artist of his base to relate to. Thus this creation of culture must be tied to a defense of culture, a political resistance, both in the school and in the community. Culture without politics is a hundred flowers blossoming and being plucked instantaneously by the same folk who deplete our physical environment continuously.

What if a class of students write and produce a great play, but it cannot be put on in the school auditorium because it offends the powers that be—as any great play should? What if the students have had this great experience of individuality and community, yet go forth into a predatory or indifferent community where there is no opportunity to experience themselves this way again and to relate to others in co-operation? Of what good is it?

Politics without culture, on the other hand, does not move the people. People must experience their own individual worth, as well as their national worth if it has been explicitly denied them, in order to be able to feel they have a right to have rights. In the last two years at Malcolm X College I have seen dozens of students transformed through their first contact with their own culture in recognized forms and structures. They are transformed from quiet, apathetic, even anomic people with solemn, heavy faces into people with vitality, anger, humor, joy, despair, and political consciousness. These are students who jump in buses to go to the state capitol and torment legislators who are threatening the city college with a tuition increase that would stop half the student body from further education, while the white students mutter hopelessly to each other about the tuition. (The result was a narrow, fished-out-of-the-fire victory for the anti-tuition forces, until next year.) Thus I conclude that while the defense of culture is political, the soul of politics is cultural. It is that pool of common meaning and beauty that gives one courage and reason to struggle for one another and for one's self.

In the meantime, every English teacher who aids in the national effort to "civilize" the non-elite manages subtly to convey that the students' values (literature) are lowdown and crude, and that their language is ugly and unacceptable for important communication. To the extent that they do their job well, the English teacher, perhaps more than any other type of teacher, has helped to keep the natives in their place.

*Barbara Kessel teaches at Malcolm L. Shabazz Junior College in Chicago*

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(continued from page 58)

almost certainly could have refused to talk without risking jail. The last three witnesses, who planned their responses with other movement activists and lawyers, were excused by the U.S. Attorney after they pleaded the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination.

The U.S. Constitution prohibits federal or state officials from forcing anyone to give any information which might tend to incriminate him. Although technically there is no constitutional right to refuse to give information because it might incriminate *someone* else, in practice the courts are forced to accept almost all claims of possible self-incrimination, since no one can prove his testimony might incriminate another person without in the process incriminating himself.

The only legal obstacle to using the Fifth Amendment is the grand jury's power in some courts and in some kinds of cases, to offer a witness immunity from prosecution on the basis of his testimony and then to have him held in contempt if he still refuses to talk. The Chicago witnesses who took

the Fifth were not offered immunity, possibly because federal immunity laws may not cover the supposed crimes which the grand jury was investigating.

Taking the Fifth, like accepting a deferment to the draft, still involves some cooperation with the authorities and still appears to accept the legitimacy of their power. As with the draft, the alternative is total non-cooperation leading to imprisonment. (First Amendment free speech offers no protection, as a number of people on the left discovered when they were jailed for contempt in the Fifties.)

The criteria for choosing between the two possible responses are essentially the same as those applicable to Selective Service. What would be the likely political impact of total refusal, given the witness's status and constituency? To what extent does the movement seem ready and able to organize around a refusal? How would the witness use his liberty if he avoided jail? Can his use of the Fifth Amendment be explained publicly in a way which avoids (as the left did not in the Fifties) the appearance of defensiveness and of admitting having

done something wrong?

The decision almost certainly will vary with time, place and person. Whatever response is chosen, it is critically important that it be determined collectively, on political as well as personal grounds, and that it be joined with a political offensive against the Grand Jury and the oppressive legal system of which it is a part.

The witnesses who took the Fifth in Chicago first moved in a highly publicized court session to have their subpoenas dismissed. They used the court hearing and press conferences to attack the grand jury's composition and procedures, as well as the prosecutor's breach of secrecy and the bias of the judge who convened the jury. Other methods of attack might range from leaflets and guerrilla theater to providing sanctuary for a witness who refused to appear or physically invaded the grand jury room.

We need to attack the legal system of the United States—courts, grand juries, legislative committees, the ideology itself—just as we attacked its fraternal institutions, the university and the Selective Service System.

right on!

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