

New Left Notes

Volume 3, Number 23

LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE

July 29th, 1968

New NIC Gets Down to Work



"Interim" decisions can and often do include: questions too cold or too lukewarm to have been handled at the previous National Council meeting; bucks having survived the maximum number of passes around chapter, regional, or national office structures; questions perseveringly nudged into NIC consciousness by internal, external, and peripheral cadres; and a substantial portion of questions demanding serious and careful political consideration, whose outcome must be applied to on-going activity.

It is naturally a credit to us as a whole and to any NIC in particular when its major energies go to the latter class of questions. To do so without simply further deferring other decisions would perhaps represent optimum functioning of the NIC.

On the 19th of this month the NIC began its three-day session at a farm in Indiana. Here and on the inside pages of this issue are reported the major undertakings of that session. Though some undoubtedly important matters may have been passed over, the effective priorities reflected some sense of the goal described above, and factors of timing were central to many of the issues facing the NIC.

Major allocations of discussion in Indiana were determined by the imminence of the Democratic National Convention, a number of up-coming foreign trips, and the fall National Council meeting. Issues thus separated themselves into practical considerations for the NC meeting, international inter-organizational relations, and SDS's role in the morass of Convention activity. Within the latter category there was a further significant breakdown into the directly Chicago/Convention oriented discussion and particular consideration of the particular question of the PFP/Cleaver campaign.

The latter question was prompted in part by a recent flash of rumors about SDS and PFP, and Carl Oglesby running for Vice-President on a ticket with Panther Eldridge Cleaver. In the center-fold NIC Report it is treated separately both in its "inter-organizational" ideological sense and in terms of its strategic importance to local/regional organizing past the Convention.

The material in this New Left Notes really represents an initial treatment of the NIC meeting. Details and on-going developments bearing on foreign trips, NC plans, the Cleaver campaign, and plans around the Democratic Convention will all run through at least the next several issues of the paper.

White Mother Country Radicals

BY BERNARDINE DOHRN
interorganizational secretary

"So the role of the mother country radical, and he does have a role, is to first choose his friend and his enemy and after doing this, which it seems he's already done, then to not only articulate his desires to regain his moral standard and align himself with humanity, but also to put this into practice by attacking the protectors of the institutions." (Huey Newton, The Movement, August 1968)

The existence and growth of the Black Panther Party has posed the question of black/white revolutionary movements in a clear, immediate, and real form. Until the past two weeks, the Panthers had never been approached organizationally by SDS. The several conversations that have developed between Panthers and SDS were triggered by the informal proposition that Carl Oglesby run as a Vice-Presidential candidate in the Cleaver - Peace and Freedom Party campaign.

As a newly-elected SDS national officer Carl put himself under the political discipline of the NIC; without NIC approval he would not further consider the invitation. The immediate need for a decision, then, had to do with Oglesby's candidacy. But the broader question raised by the recent Panther-SDS conversations provides the context: What is the political relationship between the black liberation movement and the white radical movement, and how do we forge that relationship?

The beginnings of an answer, after a long-drawn breath, must include some history. The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was organized in Oakland in 1965—after Watts—as SDS moved deeply into anti-war activity with newly-elected president Carl Oglesby. Under the organizing drive of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, the Panthers organized the armed black patrol of the black community, to curb the oppressive force of the Oakland pigs.

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LETTERS TO THE LEFT

N.C. NOTES - IN ABSENTIA

532 East 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028
July 9th, 1968

Dear Editor:

We couldn't go to the NC because we were in Europe. If we could have done both, we would have made the following points at the NC (in order of importance):

(1) About the telegram to the Iranian students: Benno Ohnesorg was killed by the police at the demonstration against the Shah in Berlin. Later, another student was killed in Bonn, at a demonstration against the publisher Axel Springer. Ohnesorg was not a member of SDS or a known activist of any kind. Just an ordinary guy who decided to go to a demonstration.

(2) As for Oglesby's suggestion that we invite Ali and Cohn-Bendit here, rather than relying on second-hand sources:

Tariq Ali (England) is neither a student leader nor an activist. In June, at a national meeting in London, he was booed off the stage after a particularly arrogant speech. As far as we could tell, he represents no group of English activists.

The March 22nd Movement (France) insists that Cohn-Bendit's "leadership" was the creation of the bourgeois press. Probably he was an important spokesman a month ago, but since then he has been living in Berlin, while March 22nd continues its (illegal) work in Paris. March 22nd has thousands of active, articulate spokesmen.

So much cavilling. The point is that Oglesby's suggestion demonstrates the inexcusable provincialism of American SDS. The bourgeois press has an understandable interest in transforming movements into "personalities" and their followings. We don't, so let's not fall into the trap.

Second, we have tended to rely almost exclusively on the Jet Set, that has time and money to make it to the international

conferences, for any direct information about foreign movements. Realistic interchange should take place at the level of working, chapter activists. We should think of setting up a system of exchanging activists (for several-month periods) who would actually work in their host country's movement. We discussed this with German SDS people. Is American SDS interested? For the time being, we could at least begin a systematic exchange of literature, which could be translated and read by all.

Sincerely,

Barbara and John Ehrenreich

YEAR OF THE HEROIC GUERRILLA

June 21st, 1968

Comrade:

As you well know, the 15th Anniversary of the assault on the Moncada Garrison will be commemorated on the 26th of July, 1968, the year that was proclaimed by the Cuban people in a mass rally as the Year of the Heroic Guerrilla, in posthumous homage to Major Ernesto Che Guevara, embodiment of the highest expression of proletarian internationalism of our day.

On that 26th of July in 1953, a group of young people, continuers of the heroic fighting traditions of the Cuban people, convinced of the justice of their cause and certain of final victory, struck at the powerful military garrison of the Batista tyranny. Their example, the blood that was spilled there, set ablaze the torch of national rebellion; and the Cuban people, after a long and bloody struggle of almost six years, threw off forever the imperialist yoke and won the right to build with their own work and sacrifice a better life free of exploiters and exploited.

Fifteen years have elapsed since the beginning of our struggle, and almost ten since the triumph of our last liberating feat, and yet the Cuban people live under

the perpetual menace of their century-old enemy, Yankee imperialism, the great genocide of the Vietnamese people, the great exploiter of all the people of the Third World.

The inhuman blockade of our country by the US, that is intended to force our Revolution to the most complete isolation from our brothers of Latin America, of Asia, of Africa, of our friends in Europe, makes even more difficult the already difficult task of overcoming underdevelopment.

To help us defeat this isolation, to help us defeat the blockade, we count with the militant solidarity of our friends of all countries, who are the friends of the Vietnamese people, the friends of all the just causes of humanity. On this 15th Anniversary of the assault of the Moncada Garrison, International Day of Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, we hope that you, whom we count among our friends, will express your friendship, your support of our cause, by actively participating in the acts of solidarity with the Cuban Revolution that surely will be celebrated in your country, or, if it is within your possibilities, by helping to organize talks, conferences, expositions, parties, et cetera in the circles in which you habitually develop your activities, in your organization, or among your acquaintances.

We express our appreciation and thanks, and reiterate that the Cuban people, faithful to the example of Che, faithful to the example of the heroes of Moncada, will remain firm on the road that they have undertaken, under the leadership of our Commander in Chief, Fidel Castro.

EVER ONWARD TO VICTORY!

CUBAN INSTITUTE FOR FRIENDSHIP WITH THE PEOPLES

TIMES & TIMES AGAIN

Comrades:

In the New York Times of Wednesday, July 19th, an article about the New University Conference appeared. In it I was quoted as saying that one of the

NUC's main purposes is to lend organized support to student rebellions, but that "the Conference hopes to avoid the ideological arguments and 'factionalism' it feels has split SDS in recent years." In the next paragraph, not directly attributed to me, but, in typical NYT fashion, with the strong implication that I said it, one finds this statement:

"Some recent graduates of SDS, now in their mid-twenties, have complained that the current student generation is more anarchistic, less tolerant of other viewpoints, and more willing to accept violence than the students who founded SDS...."

I did not say that. The current attempts by liberal journalists and commentators to hang the labels "irrational" and "violent" on SDS and other Movement groups is based on distorted facts and reactionary politics. Both I and the NUC regard SDS fraternally and hope to join in the struggle with you.

The NUC is a response to our Movement's need to build solid organization for the long haul. We are organizing local chapters of radical faculty members and graduate students. These chapters will be engaged in the following kinds of programs: working against the campus-based defense and security apparatus of American empire; ridding the university of its participation in institutional racism; creating the political conditions for alternatives to the system which creates war abroad and oppression at home; protecting the rights of radicals and activists on campus; and developing a critique of the present system of higher mis-education as a basis for a new system of fully humane education. I assume we can look to our SDS comrades for alliance and assistance.

Salud!

Bob Ross
National Director
New University Conference

(Editor's note: Steve Wise often covers student stories for the New York Times. We've decided not to talk to him anymore.)

France: "Wait Till Next Time..."

by Murray Bookchin
Anarchos magazine

Paris, July 16th—The barricades have been cleared away and the paving stones replaced in their traditional arc-like design along the streets. Revolutionary posters still remain on the walls, but they are tattering rapidly and many are nearly covered up by the drab election appeals of the Communist Party and the Gaullists. If you wander around looking for radicals you befriended before the May events, many of them have disappeared. In most cases, they're in hiding, not in prison. Carried along the grand boulevards by the latest flood of summer tourists, you begin to wonder if reaction hasn't triumphed completely over the spirit of revolution—that is, until you meet your first French university students.

After talking for hours to over a dozen of them during my first few days in Paris there is one thing that can be said with certainty: They mean to try it again. There is no evidence of despair or malaise; to the contrary, one phrase comes from every student's lips: "Wait till the next time...." "Next time" usually means October, when the universities and high schools open again.

As if to underscore these predictions, street fights have been breaking out since the eve of Bastille Day along the Boulevard St. Michel, at the Place de la Bastille, and along the Boulevard St. Germain. On the night of July 13th, the air at the foot of St. Michel was acrid

with tear gas, and the helmeted CRS, the "riot" police, were roaming the Boulevard in packed formation, arresting people up to 3 a.m. On the same night, at the Place de la Bastille, the crowds, mainly young unemployed workers, carried red flags and were subjected to gas and clubbings. The red flags had nothing to do with the Communists, who were conducting their own Bastille Day demonstration on the Ile St. Louis, bureaucratically oblivious to the clashes on their flanks.

On the next night, crowds again

appeared near the Odeon, along St. Germain, and the clashes were renewed. They burned a tricolor, clapping their hands to a Calypso beat that means: "Ce / n'est / qu'un debut / continuons / le combat!" ("It is only the beginning, let us continue the fight!") Again tear gas, clubbings, skirmishes through the street, arrests. The elan, the enthusiasm, the courage and festiveness of these crowds is absolutely infectious. You know with certainty that the Gaullists have won a sham victory at the polls. The electoral success of the Regime is a feeble thing

compared with this revolutionary ardor.

Looking at France from America, it is difficult to sense the scope and intentness of the May movement. Whatever may have been the original grievances that brought the students into the streets, these have long since been transcended by goals of an extremely revolutionary character. These goals represent a decisive departure from the demands raised by the "classical" revolutions of history. The revolutions of the past revolved around "bread" — around scarcity, survival, and need. The student uprising takes its point of departure from an era of potential abundance. Its appeals cry for freedom, life, desire. The walls of Paris, scrawled in black and red paint, proclaim intoxicating slogans like:

"Imagination to power"
"Life without dead times"
"Culture is the inversion of life"
"Society is a carnivorous flower"
"No more work"
"Creativity, spontaneity, life"

Inside the Sorbonne itself, a slogan sweeps around the curve of a large classical alcove at the foot of the stairway to the main auditorium:

"I take my desires for reality, for I believe in the reality of my desires."

Slogans of this kind are so numerous that they make up the contents of several recently published books. In fact books, photographs and poster collections, compendia of manifestoes and documents,

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new left notes

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STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Mike Klonsky, National Secretary; Fred Gordon, Internal Education Secretary, Bernardine Dohrn, Inter-organizational Secretary

National Office: 1608 West Madison, Chicago, Illinois 60612 (312-666-3874)
New England: 102 Columbia, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139 (617-547-8260)
New York City: 50 East 11th, New York, New York 10003 (212-674-8310)
Niagara: 308 Stewart Avenue, Ithaca, New York 14850 (607-273-0535)
Philadelphia: 262 South 38th, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104 (215-382-8084)
Southern California: Box 85396, Los Angeles, California 90072 (213-667-2345)
Texas - Oklahoma: Box 1941, Dallas, Texas 75221 (214-824-1837)
Washington, DC: 3 Thomas Circle Northwest, Washington DC (202-332-1387)

topeka strike

by Les Coleman

Some in Topeka say that "Topeka will be another Memphis." They have an understanding of Memphis, of the civil-rights movement extended into the Labor movement, which they are trying desperately to drive home to the people of Kansas. If the national movement can focus there, perhaps Topeka will be even more important. In any case, Topeka will show us a new force in our struggle.

The demands of Local 1271, the Kansas Health Workers Union, were for recognition, job training, a salary workers could live on, and a voice in the running of the State mental hospitals. On May 30th, the Union presented their seventeen demands. When the demands were given no answer, they acted in one of the most unique ways in the history of the Labor movement.

Knowing that the State board in charge of hospitals was appointed for reasons of political patronage, not by criteria of qualification in the field, the unions declared the hospital administrative authority illegitimate. No clinical operations were interrupted. However administrators and supervisors were disregarded when they gave this or that order. The hospital was run as it should be run: by the people who did the work and had the knowledge. The institution functioned better than it had for some time. The action was called a "hospital improvement action".

In response, five workers were illegally arrested and sixty were suspended from the hospital. A doctor who participated was fired.

The principle behind the strike was people's control over the institutions that determine their means of survival. It involved a fight against control by political bureaucrats—who clearly do not "serve"—of institutions designed to serve the people.

Hearing that the Administration had decided to fire thirty-five of the workers, the Union decided to take some further action. A march on the capitol building in Topeka was planned, and several organizations, including SDS, were asked to participate and support the march.

The night before, four hundred workers and people from the community had crowded into a small church to hear James Bevel and Hayward Henry speak. A mixed black and white crowd listened to the talk about black power and black pride, and were moved to a complete commitment to the strike. The united action had led the white workers to accept black workers on an equal basis, and their own conditions of employment had made them identify with a black movement that sought pride and dignity for its people.

The following day, workers, community supporters, and "outside agitators" marched to the capitol building. Emerson Stamps, Local 1271 president, declared there that the "little people" were having their day. The little people who did the work that made the hospitals function were putting their demands for "better jobs and a new life-style" before the power of the State of Kansas.

Though dismissed workers have been reinstated, the success of the hospital improvement action and the call to the Governor is still not clear. Kansas power was not won over by the principles of humanity and democracy which Kansas health workers staked their jobs to assert. The lesson of power was learned. Two days after the march, thirty-five of the suspended workers were in fact fired. The Union had to respond to non-representative power with the only power a union has. Pickets were thrown up around the hospital.

Kansas government responded with more force. Two pickets were nearly run down by police cars. A restraining order was slapped on the Union limiting to two the number of pickets at the enormous hospital. Arrests followed. Over eighty people have been arrested so far. At least one girl—sixteen years old—has been hospitalized through police violence. A union with no money at all, and no financial support from outside, is facing bonds of \$500 for many of those arrested. Jail in racist Topeka is no picnic, but the Union is determined to continue its struggle. Even though workers have since been reinstated, they remain off the job pending real settlement of the issues.

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Radical Talk-In

by Roger Lippman

Seattle, Washington—About twenty-five members of University of Washington SDS, Draft Resistance-Seattle, and Draft Resistance-Tacoma held a talk-in at the Washington State Democratic Convention in Tacoma Saturday, July 13th. We went to talk to the McCarthy supporters about the War, the Draft, and the Democratic Party, and the McCarthyites were in the mood to listen.

Grass-roots support for McCarthy in Western Washington has been quite large. McCarthy people controlled two-thirds of the King County (Seattle) delegation, the largest at the Convention. But the McCarthy forces had virtually no representation on the Pierce County (Tacoma) delegation (the second largest), although McCarthy sentiment in Tacoma also runs high. The reason for the lack of McCarthyites in the Pierce delegation is that, at the Pierce County Democratic Convention, McCarthyites were told that the Convention would start at 9 a.m.

The Humphreyites arrived at 8 and elected their own delegates.

The McCarthyites challenged the legitimacy of the Pierce delegation at the State Convention. The State Party leadership didn't give the McCarthyites a chance. Because of the obvious manipulation by the leadership, the Pierce delegation was seated. The McCarthyites got the same treatment all day. The platform adopted was entirely a Humphrey platform.

As we expected, the McCarthyites' receptivity to our positions increased throughout the day. They began to understand what we had to say about where the power is in the Democratic Party, and about the responsibility of the Democratic Party for the Vietnam War. McCarthy leaders were saying that they would challenge the Washington State delegation in Chicago in August, but the younger people knew that they would get the same run-around there. The result of the day was that we have greatly increased the amount of support we have among the young McCarthyites.



Cannon on Haight

On Thursday, July 18th, Terry Cannon—past editor and current staff of The Movement newspaper—visited friends in Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco. He, with another, was pulled out of a hostile but inactive crowd by cruising cops. He had protested the snatching of a guy next to him who'd yelled "Pigs!" at the pigs. He tells of his arrest:

THE FACTS ABOUT MY ARREST AND BEATING

During the ride to the Park Precinct Station, the three cops kept yelling at us: "So you wanted to throw molotov cocktails!" and slugging us in the face and chest. I raised my arms to protect my face, and the cop on the left reached behind me and grabbed the back of my neck, obviously trying to make me lose consciousness. With his other fist, he kept hitting me. I did not black out.

When we got to the Park Station, they pushed us into the main room. There seemed to be twenty or thirty cops milling in the room. They pushed us into this crowd of cops, who hit us as we stumbled into the room. One of the cops yelled: "Take them into the —", using a word I don't remember meaning a small interrogation room between the main room and the cells.

The four cops who had arrested us took us into the interrogation room, closed the door, and proceeded to methodically, carefully, and skillfully beat us up. They used a small sap or blackjack and their fists, elbows, and boots. They worked us over for about fifteen minutes, it seemed. I could see very little, because I was protecting my face. I could hear Epstein screaming.

The cops concentrated on my kidneys, chest, and groin. I found myself pleading with them to stop. They would not. They asked no questions except: "You're filthy, aren't you? You stink!" I was wearing two buttons, a raised fist and a Free the Oakland Seven pin. One of the cops ripped them off and threw them on the floor, yelling: "What's this Black Power shit?" I think I fell down once, which was probably when they stomped my ribs, resulting in a fracture.

After the beating ended, they took us back into the main room, where we were booked. I could barely stand. We were not told the charges against us, but were threatened with more beatings if we did not do as we were ordered. I was told to keep my chest touching the counter as my possessions were taken.

At about 10 or 10:30, after I'd been booked and locked up (I'm not at all sure about the time.), I was taken back into the interrogation room to make a phone call. I dialed my lawyer's home phone and got an "out of order" recording. As I hung up a cop shoved the phone call register at me and ordered me to sign it. I was afraid not to sign it, but also thought they would refuse me another call. I told them I hadn't been able to finish the call. "Who's your lawyer?" one cop asked. I told him it was Dick Hodge. Then he let me make another call. I reached Dick and he arrived in about twenty minutes.

At about 12:30 we were placed in a paddy wagon and transferred to City Jail. I was charged with three misdemeanors (I learned by reading my property slip): inciting to riot, resisting arrest, interfering with a police officer, and profanity. The bail was \$1,000.

I was bailed out about 3 p.m. My friends took me to Mount Zion Emergency, where I was X-rayed and given codeine to kill the pain.

As I write this (Sunday night), I still have considerable pain in my left rib cage. One rib has been fractured.

(Editor's note: Terry has filed suit against the City, which we'll be following up in New Left Notes.)

Need Money?

Be a sales representative for a socio-political-satirical new poster line. Ideal for individuals and organizations. Write for complete poster profit kit:

GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT,
Box 427, Wayzata, MN 55391.



McCARTHYITES UP AGAINST THE WALL

Although SDS has not supported the politics of mass mobilization for the past two years, the NIC discussion on SDS response to the Chicago Convention activity assumed that we would not ignore the large numbers of McCarthy supporters coming to Chicago streets. We focused mainly on ways of educating and making contact with McCarthy kids during that week. Because the national membership never endorsed or played a major role in planning demonstration/confrontations, and because of a concern that the politics of the street could only be represented as McCarthy liberal politics, we rejected any ambitious scheme to plan or define massive street activity. In general, Chicago was seen as an organizing stage and plans revolved around co-ordinating SDS organizing activity during that week.

Reports on the constituencies coming to Chicago include: two hundred thousand to half a million McCarthy Youth, large numbers of whom are angered by the professional take-over of the campaign; supporters of the Coalition for an Open Convention (overlapping somewhat with the McCarthy supporters—and thereby paralyzed until a McCarthy defeat is certain), led by Allard Lowenstein of NSA and CIA fame; the Yipees who will be organizing the music/culture end of the festival; and the National Mobilization Committee, led in their Chicago activities by Tom Hayden and Rennie Davis. The National Guard (five to fifteen thousand troops), the full mobilization of the Chicago police (seven thousand at a time), and the Military will be present. Convention security is under the direction of the Pentagon.

The Mobilization plans include a special edition of the New York underground paper, the Rat, which will be a Demonstrators' Guide to Chicago, including a hundred possible targets for demonstrations (delegates, CIA, war research, police, draft boards, et cetera). They will set up forty to fifty Movement centers around the City, where there will be films, discussions, information, et cetera. On the 27th, a special celebration is planned for Johnson's sixtieth birthday, and a massive demonstration to or around the Convention amphitheater is planned for the 28th, as the nomination takes place. McCarthy forces insist that demonstrations will be peaceful, and Lowenstein forces are watching for the possibilities of emerging with a fourth party.

We felt that it was important to not be cynical about the McCarthy supporters: to acknowledge the good reasons for their support and activity around the campaign, and to be conscious of the many organizations which see them as spoils. The critical organizing work obviously has to be programmatic alternatives in the fall when the McCarthyites return home.

SDS Chicago Regional people plan to use the Convention as a regional organizing activity. They will work with the NO in setting up an SDS headquarters for organizers who come to Chicago, in housing, planning of rallies, literature, communications. We talked about daily wall posters, workshops and rallies, ways of interpreting the chaos in governing and the brutality on streets that is the American reality. In general, we're working on ways of communicating the style and juices of SDS politics and organization in a context which negates the impact of their usual form. We don't want SDS to be just another group pushing its line in the Chicago heat.

Further development of plans for the Convention will be in subsequent issues of New Left Notes. SDS organizers who will work in Chicago that week should plan to come five days early for discussions on the politics of the Convention, strategy and tactics, and defense.

HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCES

THREE HIGH-SCHOOL ORGANIZING CONFERENCES ARE PLANNED FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST. ALL ARE OPEN TO BOTH STUDENTS AND ORGANIZERS.

1. NIAGARA SDS REGION will sponsor a conference August 3rd and 4th in Ithaca, New York for East Coast high-school activists. For details contact Ithaca SDS.
2. RADICAL EDUCATION PROJECT AND NEW ENGLAND FREE PRESS will sponsor a high-school organizing conference August 23rd through 25th in Boston. Register and get a brochure by writing Don McKelvey, New England Free Press, 245 Roxbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02119. For further information phone 617-427-0348.
3. SDS AND LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE will sponsor a national high-school underground conference August 26th through 29th in Madison, Wisconsin. (Tim Wise, Co-ordinator, High-School Conference, 3 Thomas Circle Northwest, Washington DC)

MORE NIC NOTES

DISCUSSION OF RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN GROUPS

In the past year, with little internal discussion or politically approved strategy, SDS was thrust into the thick of international radical movements: heavy international correspondence, exchange of literature, invitations to conferences and meetings, recognition from revolutionary movements and governments. Decisions or non-decisions of participation and response were forced by the immediacy of events, with no structures to tie that activity to the organization or the membership. The demands of continuity in communicating with our comrades from the government of Cuba or the Vietnamese led to justifiable charges of elitism, but no comprehensive organizational response. Our preoccupation with Third World struggles blinded us to emerging movements in advanced capitalist countries. Most seriously, almost none of the information, analysis, or contact was communicated to chapters—either in a way which related to local work or in a way which was educative enough to provide the groundwork for membership decisions on the politics of international contacts and activity.

The NIC discussions produced three suggestions for beginning to change that history. First, a temporary committee of six agreed to work with the Inter-organizational Secretary to develop specific ways of making the information and politics of international movements immediately available to chapters. Second, NACLA agreed to help set up a "data bank" on international movements to co-ordinate the large amount of material received at the NO, so that pamphlets, articles, and political analysis can be widespread. Third, SDS people who travel and foreign activists visiting here can be responsible to chapters and to internal education. The International Conference called by the Columbia Strike Committee and SDS for New York City in mid-September provides such an opportunity, as does the SDS trip to Cuba in late August and early September.

We unanimously agreed that people traveling in the name of SDS must assume a responsibility to the organization, to transmit their experience to chapter people in a way which both

is informative and relates to local activity and organizing. Cuba trippers, for example, are urged to undertake specific projects around their travel: a film, articles on specific areas (education, journalism, arts, women), theater, tapes. Participation at "briefing sessions" before group SDS trips will be required. Wherever manageable regional assemblies will recommend chapter people for trips and conferences—based on criteria which include responsiveness to local needs and competence abroad.

This is a puny beginning for a massive sore spot. Help!

The international conferences and travels in the next six weeks include the following:

There will be a fifty-person SDS trip to Cuba during the last two weeks of August and the first two weeks of September. About ninety applications had been received at the time of the NIC meeting. Where regional selection had been made locally, it was respected. The other applications were broken into geographical areas, and some proportional selection was made by the NIC up to fifty; the remaining applications were put into an alternate group, most of whom will probably go once the dropouts come in from the initial group of fifty.

German SDS and the International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace are sponsoring a Student Youth Conference in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, August 25th through 28th, to discuss anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles and student revolts: analysis and strategy. American SDS has been invited to send a delegation of at least three, and to present a report on the situation facing us in this country. It was suggested that Bernardine Dohrn be one representative, but no decisions were made. We discussed the advantage of meeting and talking with so many student movements in a concentrated way, and the disadvantages of conference formats—complicated by language barriers and international rhetoric and factionalism.

The International Student Conference being planned by Columbia for New York City in mid-September was discussed, and joint sponsorship by SDS was argued and approved. The Strike Committee has sent invitations to student movements in European countries and Canada, and plans mass meetings around specific activities in New York City. It was suggested that some of the foreign activists be invited to stay in this country for several weeks or months, to travel to chapters as a specific part of internal education.

Further details will appear in the next issue of New Left Notes.

"Coming Up"

-- Burnside's, "On the Making of the New Working Class"

-- Cohn-Bendit Interview

-- More on NIC Discussions

WHITE RADICALS

con't

There are several points of Panther politics which are key to understanding:

(1) The Panthers' priority constituency is the "field niggers". (Dig Malcolm's distinction between the house niggers and the field niggers.) They organize the street people, the have-nots, and thus the emphasis on organizing against the pigs—and the furious response of the pigs.

(2) Within the black movement, they have been open and aggressive opponents of both black capitalism and "pork chop nationalism" where that nationalism is not revolutionary.

(3) The line that anti-capitalism is fundamental to black liberation is clear: "Therefore, to be a revolutionary nationalist you would by necessity have to be a socialist." (Interview with Newton, The Movement, August 1968)

(4) Alliance with white radicals is not contradictory to black organizing and is therefore possible around tactical necessities. The arrangement with the California Peace and Freedom Party developed after the arrest of Huey Newton, explicitly to provide defense and protection to Huey and other Panthers under attack.

(5) The Panther decision to go national would be furthered by the Eldridge Cleaver Presidential campaign on a Peace and Freedom ticket. His view of the campaign is clearly outside of electoral politics—it is a vehicle to carry Panther politics and organization. It is a vehicle, however, shared with Peace and Freedom Party, and thus involves their perspectives as well.

The NIC and the twenty other people present at the NIC meeting agreed that an SDS officer (Oglesby) should NOT run as Vice-Presidential candidate, and that the more important questions concerned the building of long-term alliances on the strongest possible basis.

While SDS respects alliances made by the Panthers, alliances made by us must be evaluated on our own terms.

First, the strength of future Panther/SDS relationships lies primarily on a local level. It has been an unfortunate geo-political development that Panther organizing began and grew in the Bay Area where SDS has never dominated political activity. But the potentially potent nature of tactical alliances on local organizing levels was made clear by a question asked of us by Cleaver: "Would it have made a difference at Columbia if the Panthers had existed there?" The implications of this for chapter and regional people are clear; as Panther organization spreads, SDS can be in communication and build programs that link up with Panther programs around issues, when—and as long as—our political perspectives are similar.

Second, the different levels of consciousness between white and black movement dictate different strategies. If SDS were to commit itself to a Cleaver/Oglesby ticket, that would involve Peace and Freedom Party and the vehicle of electoral politics, as well as the Panthers. Because the discussion assumed many fundamental political differences between SDS and Peace and Freedom Party and because we agreed that our major priority was not to enter and change the politics of Peace and Freedom, Oglesby's candidacy would run the risk of not representing SDS politically or organizationally—despite what he might say on a speaking tour.

Third, an SDS decision to endorse and promote programmatically a Cleaver/Oglesby candidacy is a national decision which could only be decided by the membership at a Convention or NC.

Fourth, SDS seeks to develop not exclusive or opportunistic alliances, but solid political relationships based on common experiences and goals. This means that consideration of alliances must take into account differences as well as similarities, and that coalitions and alliances are built on a recognition of these tensions—not on least-common-denominator politics. We propose that there are stronger ways of furthering SDS/Panther ties now than through a Cleaver/Oglesby candidacy. For example:

(1) SDS might undertake the educational task of getting out to the chapters and to white radicals literature and information on the Panthers, the Huey Newton trial, and the broader issues involved in racism (its class nature, domestic and internal racism, et cetera).

(2) Oglesby might undertake to work with the Panthers, to publicize and interpret the radical politics of the Cleaver candidacy through speaking at chapters and in the white community, arranging other Panther/SDS speaking (organizing) tours (which might include Columbia SDS, whites involved in community or working-class organizing, et cetera), and encouraging campus and city programs which make these politics real at a local level.

(3) An immediate basis for local and national co-ordinated work is through the development of Defense and Self-Defense organizations. This could mean agitational work around the Huey trial which is tied in to local defense—defense which is fundamentally action, and includes legal defense as only one part of the whole.

The main point is: The best thing that we can be doing for ourselves, as well as for the Panthers and the revolutionary black liberation struggle, is to build a fucking white revolutionary mass movement, not a national paper alliance. Building a white Left movement from the ground up means we need the Panthers and black radicals there—at the ground level.

"What we look for in the white community, when we start looking for allies, are groups and movements that we can work with to achieve some specific goals." (Cleaver, San Francisco Express Times, June 19th, 1968)

TOPEKA

(con't)

The workers are primarily black, but both black and white workers support the strike and understand the racist power they are dealing with. One visitor there has called it the beginning of a new populist movement, and has said that the power structure has reason to be afraid. The force of men and women is small, but the idea is large. The idea is a challenge to minority employment throughout the country.

The facts behind the action: State mental hospitals in Topeka are a major source of employment in Kansas, and the hospitals themselves are the pride of the State. But institutional racism is seen here in its plainest form. Less than 8% of Topeka's population is black, but over 70% of hospital professionals are black. These are the jobs open to the black people of Topeka when they seek their means of survival.

The highest-paid aide, a man who has been commended time and time again for his work in the last ten years, is making only \$1.82 an hour. On the average, aides make about \$309 a month. Two-thirds of the workers must work second jobs in order to support their families. The aide is "frozen" in his job. He is given no job training, and so, although nine years may have taught him to do skilled work, and although he may in fact do the work of skilled workers, he is not entitled to the higher job classification, the higher pay, and the greater respect. Men and women who have worked, dedicated, for ten years are treated like children, degraded by suspensions and other forms of "discipline".

In Topeka, the black community are responding. They are beginning to understand the institutional racism which determines their lives. In fact, black people from all over Kansas are responding: And more: As I have said before, those white workers who were employed in the hospital see that they have been caught in the trap of minority employment. They are willing to accept and support black leadership to win their demands. They will not be fooled out of their means to decency and their dignity by the System's educated racism.

The challenge to minority employment has broad significance for the whole country. In Chicago, a caucus in the transit workers' union—predominantly black and black-led—pulled a five-day wildcat which cost Chicago hundreds of thousands of dollars in bus fares. Their demands were for improved working conditions and working hours and fair representation in their union local. Many white transit workers supported the demands to rid their union of old sell-out white-supremacist leadership.

Minority employment structures exist in many unionized as well as non-unionized situations throughout the country. In literally hundreds of places of work, black workers given the lean end on the job and in the unions are forming rank-and-file caucuses and formulating demands on their union—or directly on the company in wildcats. In many cases, white workers will support them. The System's game—to divide by uneven oppression—is beginning to falter at the grass roots. The wage squeeze predicted for the next year will come down hardest on black workers, but will hit out also at white production workers, sold out by the skilled trades and the union leadership. The pattern of black and white action against job discrimination and discriminatory control of unions will continue.

Topeka is one—perhaps one of many—of the key sources of this new struggle. And in Topeka, the basic grass-roots fights on the principle of class unity—black and white class unity—is bringing new principles and goals to the Labor movement. They are very near the principles and goals of our own student movement. And that common set of principles is the basis for a real student-worker alliance—a basis for which mechanistic support of any union wage fight cannot substitute. Our struggle lies in theirs; their struggle lies in our own. Both struggles say: Institutions which determine people's means of survival and shape their lives, dignity, and human realization must be controlled by those people. The institutions must serve the people. Both struggles are learning to identify and to fight the control of their institutions by the owning class and the government that class puts into power.

When the channels of institutional power fail to make institutions serve the people, the obvious tactic is to take direct control of those institutions—in Topeka, at Columbia, throughout the country.

The Topeka struggle is a desperate one, fighting against a political machine which depends on a largely unconcerned farm vote throughout the rest of the State. In many ways, in its isolation and its clarity of principle, it is like the early civil-rights movement in the South. And just as that struggle "generalized" itself in its most militant form to the Northern ghetto and the entire student movement, Topeka may well "generalize" its struggle throughout the American Labor force. The new populist movement, the movement which is not defeated by race divisions or divisions of student or worker arrogance and pride, is being born. SDS in Topeka is supporting 1271. All of us must support it. All of us must help to make its lessons visible. Send telegrams and contributions to the Kansas Health Workers Relief Fund, 1600 Harrison Lane Chapel, Topeka, Kansas.

Free Huey !

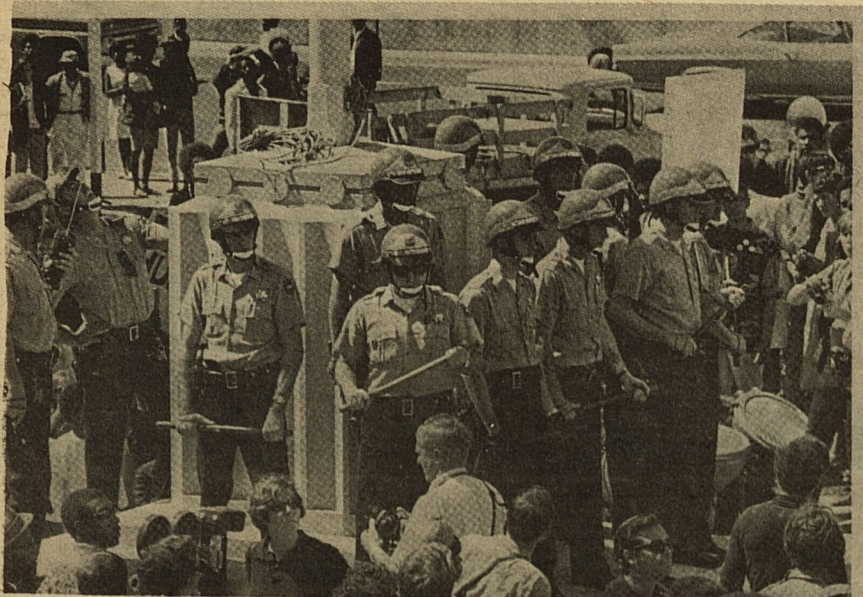


photo by s.f. newsreel: karen ross

"...OR THE SKY IS THE LIMIT"

by Mike Klonsky

The power of the Panthers is making itself felt in the Alameda County Courthouse as Black Panther Party Minister of Defense Huey Newton goes on trial for the murder of Oakland cop John Frey last October 28th.

The trial was preceded by a "Free Huey" rally at De Fremery Park in Oakland, where Minister of Foreign Affairs Jim Forman and Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver—as well as other speakers from black, Chicano, and white groups—addressed a crowd of about three thousand people—mostly black.

On July 5th the trial began with about twenty-five hundred people gathered outside the courthouse. All Panthers were excluded from the courtroom, and Huey's family and fiancée, La Verne Williams, had to be mugged and fingerprinted before being admitted. Panthers surrounded the courthouse in uniform, chanting "All our brothers in jail, cops are gonna catch hell" and "The revolution has come, time to get your gun." Many Panthers from Los Angeles were present. The general theme of the demonstration could be summed up by one chant: "If anything happens to Huey, the sky's the limit."

Charles Garry, Newton's defense counsel, introduced testimony by sociologists intended to disqualify the jury panel on the grounds that they were racists and picked by a racist system. The testimony showed how the method of compiling jury lists in Alameda County from the lists of registered voters at "random" tended to exclude from those lists persons who are actually Newton's peers—the residents of the West Oakland ghetto.

Testifying for the defense was Doctor Jan E. Dizard, an assistant professor of sociology at the University of California at Berkeley, and Edward Keating, former publisher of Ramparts magazine and lawyer assisting the Newton defense. Dizard said that 85% of the eligible voters in Alameda County are registered to vote. However in heavily black West Oakland only 52.5% are registered.

"There are numerous sociological reasons for this," Dizard said. "My opinion is that low-income people—and more specifically the Negro population—

are more apathetic vis a vis the legal process."

Such people, he continued, view the Government as "a relatively hostile and foreign apparatus". Keating said that his research showed that a low percentage of people from West Oakland were allowed to serve on juries.

At the beginning of the trial, a panel of forty-five jurors was chosen, only five of them black. A defense motion to disqualify the entire panel because of racial imbalance was quashed.

At the end of the day, the defense and prosecution were still fighting over the preliminary motions while twenty-five hundred people marched outside the courthouse. Robert Avakian from the radical caucus of the Peace and Freedom Party was arrested and charged with petty theft for allegedly cutting down and making off with the county-owned American flag. At his arraignment he learned that three more charges had been added—disturbing the peace, malicious mischief, and desecration of the flag.

The real question for the Panthers and the whole radical movement in this country remains: Can Huey be set free? Obviously much will depend on the response which will come from the white student movement outside the Bay Area. Many SDS chapters are organizing demonstrations and education programs around the Huey Newton case, as well as the trial of Floyd Nichols, who is one of the TSU Five presently on trial for murder as a result of the TSU Massacre in May 1966. An attempt is being made to hook up these cases, which incorporate the issues of racism and genocide, with those of SDS and Movement people such as Jeff Segal, former SDS Draft co-ordinator now in jail in Missouri for Draft refusal.

The Panthers have found out what the rest of the Movement is learning: that the Movement must be able to defend itself if it is to survive.

Apologia: In my article last week called "Use Us" I referred to Greg Calvert's series in the Guardian. The series has Carol Neiman as co-author. Please excuse the error.

Fred Gordon

ATTENTION

If you have a ham radio or can use one or if you know of someone who can

Please contact John Anderson:

c/o National Mobilization Committee
407 South Dearborn (Room 315)
Chicago, Illinois 60612

COLUMBIA REGIONAL MEETING
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
(EARL HALL)

10 A. M. SATURDAY
AUGUST 10TH

NEED CARS

American SDS has been invited by German SDS to send a delegation to a working conference on "Anti-Imperialism, Anti-Capitalism, the Student Movement—Programs and Strategies". The Conference will take place in Yugoslavia August 25th through 28th, and we have been asked to prepare a paper for presentation on the above theme.

People interested in submitting a paper for possible presentation or people interested in attending as the SDS representatives (so far we can send three; we have asked to send more) should contact Bernardine Dohrn at the NO. (The cost of the trip will not be provided.)

Long Beach SDS Survives Harassment

Long Beach State SDS is the newest chapter in the region. Formed early last semester, it has been one of the most active, facing more arrests and harassments than any other chapter. Early in the semester, for their first action, SDS mobilized from one hundred to five hundred people in the storming of the Faculty Senate meetings protesting the Faculty's inaction on student demands and incipient middle-of-the-roadism and conservatism. Pigs were brought on campus several times to protect the Faculty, beating a few students for good measure.

Out of these and other actions, SDS formed the May 1st Movement, a broad coalition group, in order to enlist great numbers of students. At a meeting of the May 1st Movement, at a member's house, pigs broke in and arrested all who were there on dope charges after they allegedly found grass growing in the back yard. Most of those arrested are still awaiting trial.

During the Ten Days of Resistance, Long Beach SDS had various actions and forums, and put together an impressive first issue of their newspaper, the Apathy-Axe.

Their next actions were directed at campus regulations regarding the distribution of literature in unauthorized areas. The campus administration had set up a special area for tables and the handing out of leaflets. SDS people then challenged this by setting up tables in other areas. Those sitting at the tables and handing out leaflets were put on disciplinary suspension and ordered to report to the campus disciplinary committee. The actions around the tables continued with mass rallies and mass confrontations with the Administration.

The last and culminating action was around the Spater exhibit, a group of sculptures with a sexual orientation done by a graduate student in SDS. The exhibit was being displayed on campus, as all graduate exhibits are, when it was canceled by the Administration. SDS and the May 1st Movement started to move around the

cancellation, when the Administration, not wishing to have another confrontation, canceled the cancellation. Things then quieted down for a few days until Dumke, Chancellor of the State Colleges, ordered the exhibit closed. Students shocked by his action immediately began to take action themselves, resulting in the storming of the Administration Building by upwards of four thousand people at a time. During one of the attacks pigs were brought on campus and invaded the students' stronghold, beating and arresting over forty students both inside and outside the building, when the campus was declared an unlawful assembly. Some were arrested who had never even been in the building, but who had been picked out by undercover police and campus officials for being SDS members. In all, forty-three were arrested, including some of the same people picked up in the dope raid. Two were charged with felonies.

As a result of their two major actions, one student was expelled, six were suspended from school, and fifteen were put on disciplinary probation.

It was later found out that the Long Beach Administration and city officials had been and still are keeping a tight rein on SDS. They have undercover agents in SDS and files and pictures of every SDS member and everyone associated with SDS. They have also fired all those sympathetic to SDS demands from campus jobs, have SDS houses staked out, and have set up dope busts.

As of today, SDS and the May 1st Movement are building their defenses by raising money, building community support, and pulling their own forces together for next year. The chapter has its own office, which is well stocked with literature, in Long Beach. They use the office for Draft counseling and community organizing. The office is in a poor white area right next to the black ghetto in Long Beach. They are working with the black groups in the city and will be functioning as a second regional office in the Los Angeles area.

OUR GENERATION

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Wait Till Next Time

(continued from Page 2)

an excellent bi-weekly titled Cahiers de Mai which is ferreting out the details of the student-worker movement throughout France, new periodicals like L'Enrages and the fiery, more authentic L'Action are heaped on bookstalls and kiosks. The Magazine Litteraire, the equivalent of the Saturday Review in America, has discovered the anarchists, and the cover of its latest issue proclaims: "Les anarchistes — d'ou viennent? qui sont? que veulent?"

A fever of reading has gripped the city. Everyone is buying this material—part of it obvious exploitation by the publishing industry, but much of it surprisingly good and informative. Marcuse's works, virtually unknown to most French students up to the May events, have been touted by the bourgeois press as the primary intellectual "influence" in the revolt. So now there is a sudden run on French translations of his books.

The point, of course, is that the May events have turned from an effect into a cause. Not only are they events in their own right, but they have increased the social metabolism of the entire country, adding a greater momentum to the crisis. Far from closing a remarkable phase in the revolutionary development of France, they have opened a new epoch of hope, passion, and self-discovery. Millions of people in France have been stirred into a new sense of their power over the social system, and for an incalculable number this revolutionary awakening has converged into a resolution to take up the conflict on an even-more-advanced level.

The Government knows this, and has tried to obstruct the dissemination of news about the revolt. The press has not



been tampered with, but motion pictures of the events are under a de facto ban. The police are looking for the cinematic footage of the events taken by radical cameramen, and this material, if found, will surely be confiscated. Public showings are forbidden.

The Government has also outlawed the March 22nd Movement (the most militant and authentic of the student groups to emerge from the May events), a number of anarchist youth groups, the Trotskyist JCR (Revolutionary Communist Youth), the Maoists, and, curiously enough, the FER (Federation of Revolutionary Students), another Trotskyist group that is now thoroughly detested because of its bureaucratic, manipulative methods and its efforts to divert the students from barricade fighting into orderly demonstrations.

Since the May events, however, the



repression has not been harsh. There were severe beatings during the earlier street fighting on the barricades and in the jails. Press reports of police brutality, amply reported in almost all the newspapers, greatly embarrassed the Regime, and a certain amount of restraint is now evident. Police work has revolved mainly around finding out who the "new" radicals are, and investigating the "new" movements that contributed to the uprising. Having suddenly discovered a threat to its very existence, the State is literally raking over the entire student body, gathering information on its "leaders", on "trouble-makers", and on the "enrages". Apparently, these are the people the police plan to pick up if and when "next time" comes around.

The futility of this investigation is obvious: "They", the "leaders", are

everywhere. In the event of another uprising, the police would have to pick up most of the eight million young people in France who range between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one—and not only the students, who initiated the uprising, but also the young workers who spearheaded the general strike and the seizure of the factories. It would have to change the very basis of French society, indeed, dissolve the state apparatus itself. For what these young people want, now, can no longer be satisfied by a car, a little box in the suburbs, or a secure career in a bureaucratic, manipulated society. What they want, in the words of Stephen Spender, is a revolution that is equated with "spontaneity, participation, communication, love, youth". The newly forged relations between the students and young workers "dramatize a struggle not between proletarian and capitalist interest so much as between forces of life and the dead oppressive weight of the bourgeoisie. They are against the consumer society, paternalism, bureaucracy, impersonal party programs, and static party hierarchies. Revolution must not become ossified. It is la revolution permanente."

It is this revolution permanente—conceived not as a sectarian formula but as a totality; as revolution invading every aspect and corner of life—that is now percolating through France. The youth of France are demanding not the "seizure of power", but its complete dissolution; they are demanding not the conquest of "history", but the right of each individual to control all the conditions of his everyday life.

(first of a series)

Report: The Poor People's Campaign

by Doug Youngblood
Chairman, NCU

Resurrection City is gone and the area where it stood is now filled with bulldozers, seeding machines, and park employees all hard at work to make the mall look like it did before we built the Wooden City. They will do their work well, and in a month or two no sign of what was there will remain. They will have no trouble in returning the mall to its previous state, but the bulldozers or whatever cannot change or make as before the attitudes of the people who came there with some kind of faith that Americans just needed to know and they would fix it. It is to these attitudes and what I call the positive aspects of the PPC that I am going to address myself in this report.

The initial plan was to bring thousands of poor people to Washington and wage militant non-violent demonstration after demonstration (blocking of traffic, disruption of offices, picketing of homes, filling of jails, et cetera) against the governmental departments responsible for the plight of poor people in this country. By their demonstrations and related actions, the Campaigners hoped to embarrass the Government in such a way as to force them to deal realistically with the fact that twenty million citizens are being left out of the good things and even the essential necessities of life.

This plan was based on the assumption (or hope) that America had a conscience and would respond to and support the principles embodied in the PPC. So the call went out, and from all corners of the country the poor and the deprived came, dragging with them varying degrees of faith that America would deal fairly with them. The demands of the PPC were liberal, and the entire PPC was a reformist action, but the people who came were radicals. They were radicals because they had gone against years of programming by the Establishment's schools, churches, and penal system by admitting they were poor. It was radical for them to put aside their pride and come to Washington.

Together (despite infiltration of paid

trouble-starters, hippies, middle-class whites who professed to speak for poor whites, years of being lied to about one another) they built a city and lived there, and all the press could scream was "It ain't perfect!" The rains came and still they stayed and they marched and demonstrated, and all the press could scream was "What about the mud?" But it wasn't at the marches or demonstrations where the important changes took place; it was around the campfires and the food and culture tents. For it was at these places that the most dehumanized segments of this society were able to look at one another for the

first time. It was these moments of looking that were important, for they were a mirror unto one another.

Support from a majority of the radical movement was lacking, and I believe this was a mistake that we will long regret. For here was a chance to liberate many of our brothers and sisters from the lies and chains of the ruling class. Here was a chance to convince many others (not just those in the City) that the basic nature of capitalism and imperialism will not allow any fundamental changes in its structure.

The majority of the radical movement betrayed not only the people who lived

in Resurrection City, but many others as well. They did it by condemning the Campaign as liberal and reformist, and not recognizing or remembering their responsibility as radicals, which is to radicalize others. If the people are in Washington, then a radical's place is there.

Many of us may sit back and condemn the poor or working class for being racist and reactionary, but one fact that we're going to have to deal with is that without them there will be no revolution. For it is upon their backs that capitalism rests, and until the tools to liberate them are provided capitalism will endure.

European Student Movements

(continued from Page 8)

classes, but critically, so that they can go into class and effectively expose the ideology implicit in the professor's interpretation. Many critical courses are directly related to action. For instance, a class may discuss tactics and decide to initiate an action. Or, it may work on substantive problems related to the actions of a community organizing project.

Another pioneer tactic of SDS is the "go-in": a group of students enter a classroom and challenge the professor to debate; they enter a meeting of a policy-making body and demand to be included in the discussion; they break up an examination by analyzing it out loud.

SDS tactics of exposure through confrontation worked admirably for students, but have had no effect on the staunchly anti-communist German adults. In fact, the press has succeeded in parleying student action into adult reaction—students are either perverts, Communist terrorists, or, as SDS puts it, surrogate Jews. SDS realizes that the short march stopped short at the edge of the campus, and that they must now take up "the long march of youth through the institutions of society" (Dutschke's phrase). As a start, they are experimenting

with "basis groups". A group of students goes out into a neighborhood to organize people around an issue such as rents, by leafleting, house meetings, et cetera. So far they do not seem to realize that relating people's felt needs to SDS's political analysis is a long, frustrating process. In one section of Berlin they worked for two months, then complained that "the women want to talk about rents but not about politics; the men want to talk about politics but not about rents." So they decided that rents were not a good organizing issue and gave up! SDSers were incredulous when we told them that many American organizers consider their project a lifetime commitment.

Another problem is that their theory, as soon as it is removed from the university, is very abstract. In Frankfurt and in Berlin, after the emergency laws campaign, workers came to talk with the students, who were occupying the universities. But the students didn't know what to say. They could talk theory of workers' movement, but not practice. Thus, in its relations with groups other than students, SDS is presently stymied, and is doing some of the kinds of experimenting that American SDS has been doing all through the years.

It seemed to us that SDS's extramural organizing problems are rooted in a psychological inability to break away from the university. Intra-university agitation continues, although no longer justified by base-building—the base has already been built. "After all," we were told, "if we have to spend five or six years here, we might as well learn something politically useful." No one seemed to question the value of spending the five or six years in the university. No one seemed to consider dropping out to organize full-time. (To be fair, we should add that no one seemed to spend much time studying, either, and subsistence-type jobs are probably harder to find than in the US.)

Yet neither theory nor practice seemed prepared for the inevitable fact of graduation. Individuals saw no alternative to their professions, and there is little critical analysis of the professions in SDS theory. The kind of movement sub-culture which keeps American radicals "in the Movement" long after they have no further connection with the university has not developed in Germany. SDS faces the task of translating its critical analysis of "all the institutions of society" into a working praxis for individual radicals.



European Student Movements:

part one - germany

by John and Barbara Ehrenreich

We spent most of June traveling around Europe talking to students. We went because Columbia and France (and a publisher) convinced us that something was happening and because we were sick of our own peaceful graduate school. Mostly, we wanted to try to find out why what happened happened now. (If you know how these things work, maybe you can get them to happen more often.) A little preliminary introspection provided us with a General Theory of Student Movements, which we were prepared to modify to account for national differences, of course. Well, the General Theory didn't survive a single border crossing. The Student Movement it was to describe turns out to be largely the creation of a nervous bourgeois press.

There are, however, several truly mass student movements, in France, Italy, and Germany. (We were also in England; we didn't have time or money for Spain and Eastern Europe.) They have a lot in common: anti-imperialism, anti-authoritarianism, anti-reformism, and a strenuous adherence to direct action in the face of vicious police repression. All the movements were engendered by a similar mix of Vietnam plus undemocratic universities plus general uneasiness about the function of universities, democratic or not. Not only do the proportions of these elements vary, but the elements themselves vary from country to country. The variations are fascinating and have a lot to say about the forms that capitalism has taken in different settings and the ways it adjusts to internal contradictions.

But our purpose was not a scholarly study of economic adjustments and sociological maladjustments — real scholars will be paid to do that. We wanted to import whatever European movement ideas looked useful to us. But it became clear to us that if ideas, tactics, strategies, et cetera are something more than fads, they cannot be transferred at random from country to country. This is all the more true if most people's only notion of the foreign idea comes from reading their local newspaper. International exchange of tactics and analyses will be valuable insofar as we understand the setting in which they were developed and the context in which they were applied. We hope the impressions which follow, sketchy as they are, will help.

(Amplifications and more detailed analyses will follow in a book we're working on now, to be published by Monthly Review Press.)

Germany

By 1965-66, the post-war period of rapid economic growth in Germany was over, and Germany was about to enter a substantial recession. Concerned by the slowdown, German industry began intense efforts to rationalize itself, efforts which extended to all the institutions of society. In government, the Grand Coalition between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats led to the decline of Parliament and the strengthening of the executive role. New laws such as the "emergency laws" gave the Government wide powers—including the right to ban strikes—in the event of an emergency. And, of course, the Government determines what is an emergency.

These attempts at rationalization played a significant role in the radicalization of the students. For example, the growing power of the executive and the decline in the importance of presumably democratic mechanisms of decision-making, such as Parliament, helped disillusion them about the "democratic" nature of the society. The emergency laws, clearly a giant step away from even formal democracy, eventually became the target of a major campaign linking students and workers.

The rationalization effort also extended more directly into the lives of the students. The economy, like advanced economies elsewhere, was increasingly in need of technicians, teachers, economists, and other highly-skilled and educated workers. But the universities were hopelessly inadequate to handle the increased load or the increasingly complex tasks required by industry. With the financial squeeze brought about by the downturn, however, the Government decided not to embark on any massive campaigns to expand the universities, but rather to make them more efficient, by cutting down on part-time students, establishing entrance requirements, et cetera. These university reforms became a major target of the Movement, since they directly illustrated the way the students' interests were subordinated to the needs of big business.

These attempts at rationalization of the society occurred at the same time that other conflicts were beginning to unsettle post-war student docility.

First, the irrationality of the unreformed university imposed its own strains. The university was traditionally a place for humanist (and elite) education. As enrollment increased, increasing numbers of students were dissatisfied with their education and its relevance to careers. The feudal structure of the university conflicted with its capitalist function. This much the Government leaders could try to resolve through rationalization. But at the same time, the university's humanistic themes conflicted with its rationalized purposes. The "irrelevant" content of the students' education always led them to challenge the Government's push for an industrially relevant university.

Second, these pressures occurred as the students' interests were turned more and more toward imperialism. In West Germany, where the Cold War was centered through the years when the present generation of students was in grade school and secondary school, the discrepancy between the democratic facade of capitalism and the brutal fact of imperialism was inescapable. They came down hard. The disillusionment began with Algeria, but it was not until the waning of the Cold War in Europe around 1963 and the outbreak of the Vietnamese War in its current phase in 1964-65 that it began to send students out into the streets.

It should be emphasized that all of these pressures were greatest, and appeared first, in Berlin, where the economy began to show signs of total irrationality by 1963. The ideology of anti-communism and of "capitalism is democracy" was concentrated here as perhaps nowhere else in the world, especially in the years just before and after the building of the wall (1961). Finally, the "Free University of Berlin", which was established with the help of students, partly as a Cold War weapon,

in 1948, had always given the students a nominal role in decision-making, unlike other German universities. So in Berlin, the dissonance between the democracy professed both in the university and in the society, and the reality practiced in both university and society, was greater than elsewhere in Germany. And it was in Berlin that the German student movement in its present form emerged.

From 1961 to 1965, a series of events, ideas, and actions (led chiefly by the German SDS — the Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund — began to politicize the students. As important as any single event was the revival of Left theoretical work, especially at Frankfurt, where the "Frankfurt school" of sociologists — Halbermas, Horkeimer, Adorno, and Marcuse among others — found an eager audience. In June 1966, learning from the American Movement, Free University students sat in while the Faculty Senate discussed a proposed university reform. During the following year, demonstrations on Vietnam and on university issues grew in size, always aided in their growth by the brutality of the police and by the campaign of vilification directed at the students by the press (monopolized by Axel Springer in Berlin). The combination of police and press attitudes slowly uncovered the real nature of the society in a very personal way for more and more students.

This phase of the student movement culminated in the killing of a student during a demonstration against the visit of the Shah of Iran in June 1967. There followed a desultory winter, during which a campaign against the Springer interests failed to catch fire. Then, just before Easter, 1968, Rudi Dutschke was shot and critically wounded by a Springer reader convinced that Dutschke was "Public Enemy Number One". Students, most of them recently politicized by the preceding months of agitation, reacted en masse. Almost spontaneously they descended on Springer, with the demand "expropriate Springer" and the intention of preventing the delivery of Springer papers. In one leap, the Movement had changed from being anti-imperialist and concerned with university issues to being openly anti-capitalist, in actions as well as in words. Shortly following this, the emergency laws came up for final approval, and the students were again active in opposition, this time making some contacts with workers.

Many student groups, including the national student union, the humanist clubs, and religious leagues, participated in the struggle, but SDS was at all times the avant garde. Originally SDS was the youth group of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). Just as American SDS became too radical for its parent LID, so the German SDS moved steadily toward a split with the SPD. After the break finally occurred in 1961, SDS continued to function entirely as a set of decentralized study groups.

These early years saw the intense theoretical work which was to become the basis of much later action. But they were also a time of desperation. One girl told us of those days in Berlin, living in the empty show window of capitalism, surrounded by the grim stretches of East Germany, when they read everything they could find about Third World struggles, believing they could do nothing. "We talked and talked," she said, "We felt like committing suicide." In 1964, desperation culminated in an

"existential decision" to act. This was no light decision; some groups split over it. After all, there were no "objective conditions" to inspire hope, and those who acted did so "without hope, with our backs to the wall". Spurred by the American example of direct action they began the agitation that led to the 1966 sit-in at the Free University of Berlin.

The decision to act was based on a carefully reasoned strategy. Just as Third World liberation struggles were exposing the violence of imperialism, so, they argued, direct action can expose the innate violence of modern capitalism. Once the true authoritarian nature of society was revealed, people's allegiance to the System would be shattered and they would be open to a discussion of socialist alternatives. SDS could thus make a "short march" through the institutions of society, exposing each one systematically.

The first institution on the path of march was the university. Students were seen not as a source of cadre, but as a constituency (our word) in themselves. By agitation and direct action on university issues, the repressive functions of the university would be exposed and a mass student movement would emerge. Now there was nothing reformist about SDS's concentration on student-power issues. They believed and still believe that mass politicization must be firmly based on problems experienced directly by that mass. They have no illusions about the possibility of building a "democratic" university in an undemocratic society. Students were politicized so that students could march on to other institutions. Thus, they used the university issues to ideologically expose the university; they were not ends in themselves.

What successes and failures have they had with these techniques? First, with respect to the university, they have been extraordinarily effective. The SDS membership is small—perhaps three thousand in Germany, perhaps five to six hundred in Berlin (out of twenty-five thousand students). But the vast majority of the student body at the Free University of Berlin (for example) follow SDS's lead. The student government is controlled by SDS and SDS sympathizers. The other liberal and Left student groups (such as the present youth group of the Social Democratic Party) have been moved far to the Left. As in no other place we visited, the German SDS has built a mass student movement, capable of sustained radical action. It should be stressed that this movement — began with university issues and extended gradually to other spheres of society, by linking the authoritarian administration of the university to the authoritarian suppression of student political demonstrations and to the authoritarian features of the society in general.

In the university, SDS has pioneered many original and creative tactics. Perhaps most worthy of note here is the "Critical University". This is not, like the American "free" universities, an institution parallel to the existing university, offering courses you can't get in the regular university. It is embedded in the regular university, and oriented toward the continual challenge of that university as well as toward the challenge of other institutions in society. Thus, students of history study the same history they study in regular

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