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A BRIEF HISTORY OF

SDS

AND THE FAILURE OF THE IDEOLOGY OF THE

NEW LEFT



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In this issue

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GIs United Boggles Brass

FT. JACKSON, S.C. (LNS)—When lawyers for the Fort Jackson Eight threatened to have their Brigade Commander, Col. Thomas Maertens, court martialed for illegally confining the men in the stockade after an antiwar meeting attended by 200 men, the grapevine on the base had it that the colonel's wife broke down in tears.

And the hysteria spread. A New York Times reporter at a confidential Pentagon briefing finally got the brass to admit to their grave concern over the new anti-warriors. Planes from the Pentagon have been flying in and out of neighboring Columbia for three weeks, Generals from the Third Army have been down twice, and the phone at the JAG office rings even on the weekends, bringing badly needed legal advice to army prosecution lawyers stuck with the legal equivalent of a lemon.

The Colonel is a West Pointer whose father, two brothers and a sister are also colonels. He has stated that he is ready to lay his career on the line in order to win this case. Anticipating the Article 32 investigation, preparatory to a court martial, the Colonel lined up nine witnesses, with but one exception all officers or non-coms, and made a special effort to get, in his own words, "some men who are angry, who have lost fathers and brothers in Vietnam."

The base commander, General James F. Hollingsworth, is the famous "Zap-Zap" General who came to public attention by hanging out helicopter doors in Vietnam, carbine in hand, "zapping the Cong." Describing his exploits to a British reporter, he declared that "There is nothing I like better than killing Cong, no sir."

In a speech Hollingsworth gave at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina, the one-star general, who was pushing for a second star, made it plain that there is nothing he would like better to do now than to "zap" the Ft. Jackson Eight and destroy their organization, GIs United Against the War in Vietnam. His chances for accomplishing that mission are looking about as remote as that second star that glimmers in his Texan eyes.

GIs United started last January when a group of black and Puerto Rican soldiers began gathering in the barracks to listen to Malcolm X tapes. The brass moved to break them up by inciting white soldiers against them. "They are black power Mau Mau advocates," the white soldiers were told. The brass urged whites to grab broomsticks in the supply closet to "beat in some heads." But the supply clerk at the time, a white soldier from Decatur, Ga., Pvt. Joe Cole, who is one of the defendants in the stockade, had the only key to the closet and he refused to open the door.

Not to be foiled, the brass then announced it was Upper Respiratory Infection Season, and that all meetings in the barracks of more than eight men would be "dangerous to the health of the company."

The next meeting was held outside in the dead of winter. Over 80 GIs attended.

Cont'd on p. 23

Marxism was dead. Television and permanent prosperity had satiated the working class. The end of ideology was proclaimed.

But suddenly, Mills and Marcuse have given way to Marx, Mao, and even — Stalin. . .

A Brief History of SDS

and the Ideology of the

NEW LEFT

By Charlie Bolduc

What is happening to SDS? A lot of people are asking this question lately. Suddenly the pages of *New Left Notes* have burst forth with a type of factionalism that SDS always told us was the exclusive province of those "irrelevant old left sects." In a recent attack on SSOC, entitled *The Man Always Gets What He Pays For*, SDS National Secretary Michael Klonsky as much as accuses SSOC of being a gang of CIA agents for accepting foundation money, (a practice many always felt was an old New Left tradition), and

advancing a kind of politics which is not remarkably different from the stuff SDS has come up with in the past. SDS seems to have suddenly acquired a lot of "Marxists," whose initial fling in dialectics often approaches parody.

In a recent issue of *The Guardian*, the radical historian Eugene Genovese finds that SDS's new "espousal of 'Maoist Marxist-Leninism' (of a kind for which neither Mao, nor Marx, nor Lenin deserve any responsibility) ought to be appreciated in an increasingly grim world . . . flower power,

nonviolence, love-everybody Quaker radicalism, and participatory democracy have finally emerged in discernible colors: a cult of violence, a marked totalitarian temperament, and a thorough-going contempt for the claims of individual human freedom." Maybe it's not all that bad, but certainly SDS has recently taken on a new coloring that needs to be explained.

In order to understand what SDS is and how it got that way it is useful to examine the group's history. In

searching for the reasons that such a peculiar formation as SDS came to be with us, we have to go back about 10 years. The influence of the cold war witchhunt, including its paralyzing effect on thought, was still present. Students saw the working class as complacent and satisfied before their TV sets. Marxism was only a quaint relic of the thirties, and only hopeless romantics and sectarians could still maintain that it had any relevance to the United States. The depression of the thirties was only a vague memory, and the post war economic boom promised unending prosperity. There was widespread agreement with Daniel Bell's thesis in *The End of Ideology* that all contradictions within capitalism had been resolved and that all that would be required from that point would be an occasional minor adjustment.

Meanwhile, a number of important developments were taking place in the left. The influence that the Stalinist Communist Party was able to exert in this country during the thirties and forties and into the fifties isn't generally understood by today's young radicals. The Communist Party was the dominant organization on the left, including the student movement, during most of this period and was able to channel a good share of radicalizing youth into its program of support to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. But the pressures of the witch-hunt and the sustained prosperity following World War Two led increasing numbers to drift away from the Communist Party.

Following Khrushchev's revelations of at least some of Stalin's crimes at the Twentieth Congress and the Soviet bureaucracy's ruthless suppression of the uprising of Hungarian workers and students, there was a mass exodus from the CP. This led to a period of regroupment of socialist forces in this country and the breaking of the CP's stranglehold on the radical movement. The resulting opening on the left made room for the emergence of SDS.

In England a similar process was going on. After leaving the Communist Party, a group of young English intellectuals founded a magazine called the *New Left Review*. In fleeing from Stalinism they fell into the classic trap of throwing out the baby with

the bath water by dismissing Leninism and much of Marxism. The thinking of these writers was to have a significant influence on the early leaders of SDS. In addition to bequeathing to SDS the term "New Left," they were guilty of what was to become the fundamental error of SDS. Instead of stopping to analyze the history of the working class movement, in particular the reason for the Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration in the Soviet Union and its effects on the Communist parties around the world, they sought to strike out anew with pragmatism as their guide.

In the early 60's the sociologist C. Wright Mills wrote his *Letter to the New Left*, addressed to the editors of *New Left Review*. Briefly, Mills found that since those "agencies" that radicals had historically looked to as the force for progressive social change had now been incorporated as bulwarks of the status quo, the problem was to find some new force. This role he assigned to the intellectuals. This theory was particularly appealing to those "intellectuals" and ex-radicals of assorted stripes now comfortably ensconced in the university, and provided part of the rationale for SDS's early focus on university work.

Events began to happen which were to have a dramatic effect on the consciousness of students. On January 1, 1959, the rebel army marched into Havana, and the Cuban revolution came to power. In early 1960 Southern black students, lashing out at the crudest manifestations of racism, began to sit in at the segregated lunch counters of national chains such as Woolworth's. Students in the North answered by picketing Woolworth outlets in their areas.

Which brings us around to the beginning of SDS. In the spring of 1960 a Conference on Human Rights in the North was held at the University of Michigan, which came to be the stronghold for SDS in its first years. A response to the Woolworth picketing, the conference was organized by Al Haber, the first of several key leaders of SDS which was then the student department of the League for Industrial Democracy.

The League for Industrial Democracy (LID) has been a fixture of the social democratic-liberal establishment for years. (Its most recent pub-

lic act has been to give its man of the year award to Hubert Humphrey). On the board of the LID sit a combination of big name labor bureaucrats and such Socialist Party types as Bayard Rustin and Michael Harrington. The Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID) had been limping along during the fifties with a handful of members whose activities were largely limited to periodic banquets financed by their elders and publishing papers. In 1959 SLID underwent a bit of face lifting and changed its name to the Students for a Democratic Society. Probably SDS's most notable activity in the first years was an attempt to intervene in NSA congresses through a coalition with campus ADA (Americans for Democratic Action), called the Liberal Study group. This annual event continued into the mid 60's.

Then, at the 1962 SDS national convention at Port Huron, Michigan, SDS adopted its first manifesto, *The Port Huron Statement*. Written by Tom Hayden, an English major and activist at the University of Michigan, this vague subjective document set a tone for SDS which was to dominate in the organization for several years. The overall political thrust is a sort of left-liberal pacifist humanism. A number of reforms were proposed in *The Port Huron Statement*, but its most concrete political point was to call for reforming the Democratic Party by eliminating the Southern conservative congressmen, long a pet project of the Social Democrats. The document is essentially a reflection of such things as the bomb, the emerging black struggle, and the beginning cracks in the cold war myths upon the consciousness of students.

SDS must be credited with having developed its own unique jargon which abounded with academic sounding, quasi-sociological phraseology. Some saw this as a way to Americanize socialist ideas, and a few early SDSers actually viewed the term "participatory democracy" as being a kind of code word for socialism. It should be remembered that significant numbers of early SDS leaders had formerly been active in Social Democratic or Stalinist groups, and they consciously viewed the new SDS approach as an alternative to the "rigid formulations of the sectarian left."

In its history SDS's activity has been characterized by a variety of different programs. However, an essential similarity exists between all of these programs: they have been pragmatic responses by SDS to larger events in this country and in the rest of the world. This pragmatism, resulting in the inability to project events and consciously intervene on the basis of a coherent analysis, has been SDS's basic weakness.

For much of its existence, SDS has been identified with the advocates of "community organizing." The community organizing tendency in SDS grew out of an erroneous and paternalistic view of the emerging black struggle. Most of the first SDSers believed that the "co-opted" working class was totally corrupt. If anybody was above all the corruption it was C. Wright Mills' intellectuals. When the movement of black people began to build up momentum it was not seen as the fight of a nationally oppressed minority for self-determination. (During Malcolm X's lifetime, many SDSers either ignored him or called him a "racist in reverse.") Rather, the objective basis of the black movement grew out of the fact that black people are *poor*. The poor, the *underclass*, came to be seen as the sole repository of un-co-opted virtue. They had not yet been bought off and corrupted by material possessions. Much

lip service was paid to building an "inter-racial movement of the poor." Students were urged to drop out of school and go into the poor community (mostly black, but sometimes white) and submerge themselves in the redeeming waters of the un-co-opted. The ERAP (Education and Research and Action Project), SDS's UAW-funded version of the war on poverty, established projects in nine Northern cities in the summer of 1964. The remnants of SDS's community organizing days is the JOIN Community Union in Chicago. For all the fine talk, very few communities were ever organized and no community organizing project went beyond the level of glorified social work.

Alongside of the community organizing wing of SDS, there was the Max faction, which was an expression of traditional class collaborationist coalition politics, oriented toward work in the Democratic Party. In the late fifties Steve Max had been a leader of the youth wing of a group within the Communist Party under the leadership of John Gates (onetime editor of *The Worker*), which left the CP after the Khrushchev revelations on Stalin. (Gates later wrote a revealing book in which he analyzed his experiences in the CP. Surprisingly, Gates was quite satisfied with the CP's support for the New Deal and general program of class collaboration. The

basic error of the CP, Gates decided, was that it had allowed itself to become unnecessarily identified with the Soviet Union. Following this logic to its logical conclusions, Steve Max wound up in the camp of the Social Democrats and became the chief advocate of the LID's politics in SDS.) The Max faction controlled the Peace Education Project (PEP), which spearheaded SDS's support for Johnson in the 1964 elections. As its counterpart to LBJ's campaign slogan "All the way with LBJ," SDS offered "Part of the Way with LBJ."

On no position has SDS been more vulnerable to criticism than its record on the antiwar movement. The United States' involvement in the war in Vietnam became a crucial test for revolutionaries in this country. At the time of the First World War the Social Democratic parties of the Second International proved their bankruptcy when the sections in the different countries engaged in the war failed to oppose their bourgeoisies' war policies. The seriousness of that error led Lenin and the Bolsheviks to call for the formation of a new international association of socialist parties, the Third International. Since that time the willingness to mobilize the masses in opposition to the wars of the capitalist class has been an acid test of any organization claiming to be revolutionary. The Communist Party flunked



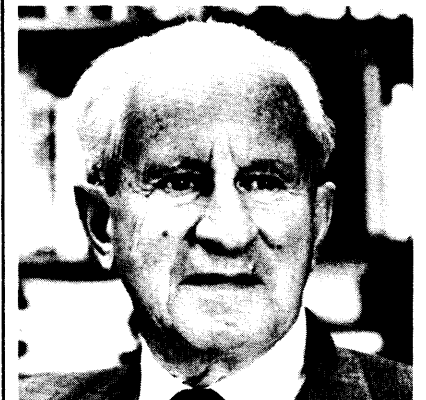
Photo By Shannon

Tom Hayden, author of the Port Huron Statement, was a key leader of SDS during the participatory democracy days. Presently, Hayden is among those framed on conspiracy charges stemming from the Democratic Party Convention demonstrations in Chicago last August.



Photo By Bruce Marcus

C. Clark Kissinger, SDS National Secretary during the period of the 1965 SDS-initiated March on Washington. At the following SDS Convention, he proposed a program of urging GIs to desert ("Kissinger's Kamikaze Plan").



Herbert Marcuse, New Left guru. His theory that the working class has lost its revolutionary potential was consigned to the trash can of history by the French workers in May/June of 1968.

that test with their social chauvinistic support of the United States in World War Two. And SDS has flunked with its refusal to take seriously the task of mobilizing opposition to the Vietnam War.

In December of 1964 the National Council of SDS issued a call for a March on Washington against the war in Vietnam for April 17, 1965. The growing war in Southeast Asia could not be ignored by SDS. The decision to call that action was the most important step ever taken by SDS. Over 25,000 people, more than anyone had expected, turned out for the demonstration, which marked the beginning of the mass antiwar movement. The SDS leaders, by refusing to bow to the pressure of Social Democrats and right-wing pacifists to exclude "totalitarian groups" (such as the YSA), stamped the antiwar movement with its non-exclusionary character and dealt a blow at the remnants of the anti-communist hysteria of the fifties. This affirmation of elementary democratic principles led the "democrats" of the LID to sever ties with SDS.

SDS came out of the March on Washington with a national reputation, and its membership jumped from around 1200 in late 1964 to over 5000 shortly after the march. Yet, at this point SDS made what was to be one of the most amazing and damning decisions in its history. Recognized as the leading force in the emerging antiwar movement, SDS consciously abdicated its responsibility to mobilize further opposition to the war!

Against the perspective of building mass actions against the war, SDS answered with the rhetoric that had grown out of its community organizing: it was necessary to do "local organizing," to organize people around "issues that affect them on the local level" (like garbage collection). SDS began to see the antiwar movement and the independent committees to end the war in Vietnam that began springing up around the country as competitors. This sectarianism masked a rightward retreat from the task of confronting the ruling class on the question of the war.

The Antiwar Movement: From Protest to Radical Politics, written in late 1965 by SDS leaders Lee Webb and Paul Booth, reveals the thinking going on in SDS at that time. They wrote:

"The movement is small, and will remain so because few do or will see the issue of Vietnam as critical to their lives. The movement will remain politically isolated precisely because the issue of Vietnam is felt by many to be unrelated to their problems." Subsequent events could not have proven this perspective more wrong.

However, SDS could not totally avoid the existence of the war. Since 1965 other approaches toward dealing with the war have been advanced by SDS. Somebody came up with the idea of organizing draft resistance unions. Mass demonstrations were boring and ineffective, so you had to organize draft age youth into these unions of draft resisters. These would spread throughout the country, so that soon there would be no soldiers to fight the war, and the ruling class, don't you see, would be forced to give up. For almost two years SDS pushed this line. People like those in the YSA who advocated accepting induction to work with GIs were branded as would be war criminals. The whole draft resistance approach amounted to an evasion of the problem of building mass actions, the driving force behind the antiwar movement. Today, SDS has almost totally dropped the draft resistance orientation. No serious analysis has appeared about why it did not work, which the YSA had predicted all along.

Then SDS discovered "Imperialism." It was no good to organize against the war in Vietnam, because the real enemy was imperialism. The thing to do was build an "anti-imperialist movement," which could end the "sixth war from now." (This theory failed to explain why it was not anti-imperialist to mobilize masses of people against the imperialist war in Vietnam.) In reality, it is far more anti-imperialist and revolutionary to organize against an imperialist war while it is being waged than to oppose "Imperialism" in the abstract.

The 1966 SDS convention issued the call for "Student Power." Student power was primarily a response to SNCC's new demand for black power, which was not understood to be the demand of an oppressed national minority. Black power was seen by many SDSers in old participatory democracy terms: merely a matter of people making decisions which directly af-

fect their lives. One of the problems with black power, as far as its effect on SDS is concerned, is that it cut white students out of organizing in the black community. So, it was decided that students should turn to organizing themselves around questions that affected *their* own lives, i.e., campus issues. Student power was narrowly defined, with little emphasis given to the role that the university plays in capitalist society.

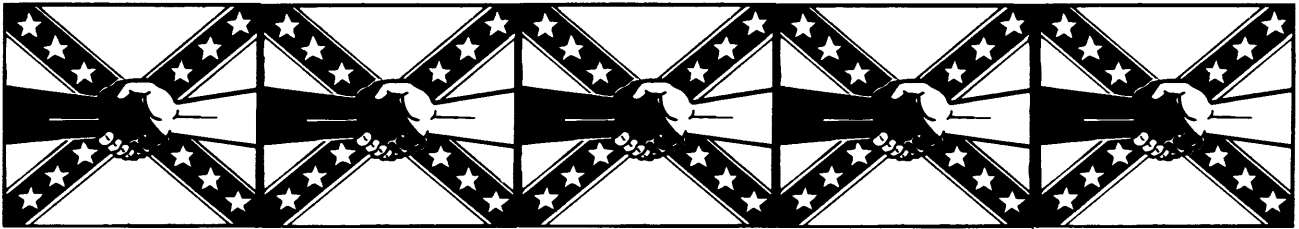
That same 1966 convention saw the initial participation of a handful of members of the Progressive Labor Party, led by Jeff Gordon and Jared Israel. Back in the fall of 1965, SDS had deleted the communist exclusion clause from its constitution, and in January of '66 the May 2nd Movement, PL's attempt to build a radical student antiwar group, had voted to dissolve itself and go into SDS. The entry of PL, a disciplined Maoist party, was to play a key role in the future development of SDS.

It is important to remember that SDS leaders had been talking about building SDS as a *movement*. At different times the class composition and tasks for that movement were seen in different ways. In *The Port Huron Statement*, Tom Hayden envisioned a new left movement made up of students and faculty that would "make fraternal and functional contact with allies in labor, civil rights, and other liberal forces outside the campus." ERAP saw as its goal building an "inter-racial movement of the poor." Paul Potter's comments at the March on Washington would indicate that he wanted everybody in the movement: "We must reach out to every organization and individual in the country and make them part of our movement."

The leaders of the Progressive Labor Party see building a Maoist party, not a "movement," as the task. At their first SDS convention in 1966 the PLers in the wings were talking about SDS becoming a student union, a sort of radical NSA. The point is that whereas the leaders of SDS had seen their organization as a multi-issue movement that would lead the fight for reform or revolution, PL sees SDS as a vehicle for recruitment to their party which itself will lead the revolution. In so far as SDS takes a position

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SOUTHERN CONSCIOUSNESS:



CONSCIOUS OF WHAT?

By Nelson Blackstock

In recent months a discussion has been going on in the South around the concept of "Southern Consciousness," which has been put forth by many members of the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) as a basis for building a revolutionary movement in the South. This article originally appeared in the Great Speckled Bird, an Atlanta underground newspaper and was written in response to an earlier article by Steve Wise, a former national chairman of SSOC and a staff writer for the Bird.

Since this article was written, SDS severed its fraternal ties with SSOC at a recent National Council meeting. Since its inception in 1964, SSOC has been a sort of Southern version of SDS, and SDS has left organizing

in the South largely up to SSOC. The reasons SDS gave for breaking off the relationship include SSOC's acceptance of foundation funds and SSOC's general political orientation, including "Southern Consciousness."

Nelson Blackstock is a former organizer of the Atlanta YSA, and a YSA National Committee member. He was a founding member of SSOC.

Ever since the leaders of the Southern Student Organizing Committee began to tell us that it is necessary to build a unique movement in the South, a movement based on what Steve Wise in the March 17 *Bird* calls Southern Consciousness (also known as Southern Nationalism, Southern Chauvinism or probably

more aptly, Southern Exceptionalism), I have been following their arguments closely. But I have had difficulty figuring out exactly what is *unique* about the South that creates the basis for Southern consciousness.

It couldn't be the black struggle or the antiwar movement. Neither could it be the current activity on college campuses or the struggles of working people to build unions. Nor could it be that capitalists have exploited working people and used the wealth of the land for their own profits. Wise says that Southern consciousness "is based on an impulse that originates in the very depths of the Southern Soul." After a good bit of soul searching, I have finally begun to get the picture, and Wise

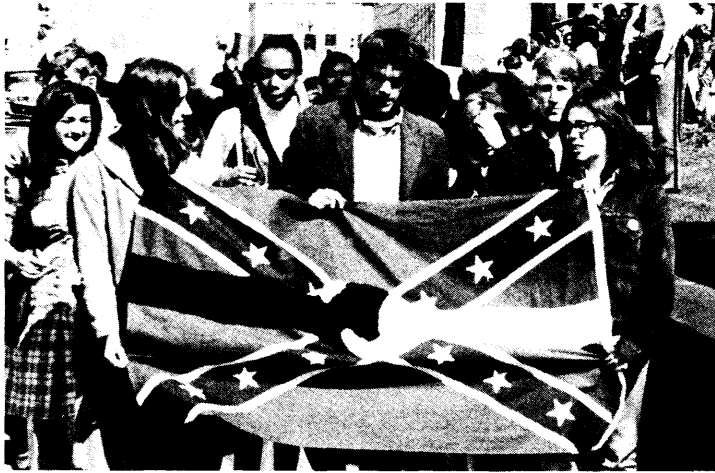
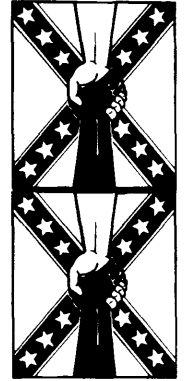


Photo By Tom Coffin



SSOC members in Atlanta demonstration carry their symbol: Confederate flag with old pre-black power SNCC symbol.

brings it sharply into focus in the concluding paragraphs of his article.

What Wise finds ultimately unique about the South, upon which SSOC wishes to create Southern consciousness, stems from the South's agrarian past. Well, I see a couple of problems in this. First, agrarianism and the consciousness produced by a society where "the relationship between the land and the people was more direct and primordial" has not been unique to the South or to this country. The agrarian populist movement was based in the West and Midwest as well as in the South. Russia also had its own populist movement—the Narodniks. Another problem is that the South has now become a predominantly industrial society; consequently, the objective basis for a Southern agrarian consciousness is dead. Shortly after World War I my grandfather found that the land in Forsyth County could no longer provide a living for him and his four children, and they moved to Atlanta to look for work. This has been the story of the South for the past sixty years.

Wise concluded with a quote from John Crowe Ransom, followed by a "Liberate the South!" It is significant that Wise has to go back to Ransom to find support for Southern consciousness. For the uninitiated Ransom was among a group of three-named Southern college professors who made up a minor literary school known as the Agrarians back in the early thirties. They were the Southern

expression of a school of thought influential after World War I which said that the solution to the problems of capitalism was a retreat to pre-industrial rural societies, even feudalism. Victims of excessive sentimentality, the Agrarians idealized the Old South, where everything and everybody, including the black man, had its place. In a collection of their essays entitled *I'll Take My Stand*, Robert Penn Warren, who later became an orthodox liberal, included "The Briar Patch," a defense of segregation. I trust the South has been largely liberated from this nonsense.

In this century, in fact, political appeals to things uniquely Southern have almost always meant a defense of the *unique* Southern institution of racial segregation and the super-exploitation of the black man. Writing in 1937, John Dollard found, "It is only when differing views on the Negro and his status are brought sharply forward that the older attitudes toward the North are reinstated."

After the Second World War, the majority of the American ruling class found it expedient to begin to eliminate old-style segregation, since it wasn't essential for the exploitation of the black workers in the big cities and since it hindered the United States in its new role as champion of the Free World. But the small proprietors and farmers who formed the base of the Democratic party in the Deep South had an economic stake in maintaining segregation and the resulting

supply of very cheap labor. In addition, the years of indoctrination by their rulers in the South had developed a strong racist ideology among a large sector of Southern whites.

These factors combined to produce a new wave of "Southern consciousness" in defense of our sacred and precious traditions: i.e., segregation. Thus we had the Dixiecrat movement in 1948. After the Supreme Court decision of 1954, we saw congressmen issuing "Southern Manifestoes," Marvin Griffin changing the Georgia flag into a semi-Confederate flag, and Orval Faubus comparing himself to Robert E. Lee. Meanwhile, the think-in of the big money was being voiced by the Ralph McGills and the Ivan Allens. The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce folks, the original segregationists, now found it financially convenient to let the old system slide.

So in the real world today, not as some might like it to be, abstract appeals to Southern Consciousness and Southern tradition spell not radical agrarianism, but racism.

Wise tells us that SSOC has seen and continues to see its primary role as working with white students. The most striking feature about the current radicalization among Southern students is not anything uniquely Southern, but its similarity to what is going on internationally. Fortunately, the radicalizing student in Macon has more in common with Danny the Red than with John Crowe Ransom. Students are moving around

the big questions posed by the contradictions of the world capitalist system; and the key political issue of the day, the issue around which it is possible to mobilize masses of people, and the issue which is at the core of the student radicalization in this country is the war in Vietnam. This is where Wise goes wrong in pushing the SSOC "Liberate the South" proposal (a vaguely radical multi-issue mishmash, with Southern consciousness thrown in as a unifying theme) as a substitute for what will essentially be an antiwar action this Sunday.

SSOC is turning to Southern consciousness not because students in the South are radicalizing around this question, but because it is seen as a means of linking up with Southern white people.

SSOC finds that it cannot organize blacks, nor blacks and whites together, because of the growth of Black Consciousness, Wise writes. Therefore, he reasons, SSOC must organize whites around the issue of Southern consciousness, which he traces back to the populist era. But the radical agrarianism of Populism was shared by *both* blacks and whites; why should Southern consciousness be limited to whites? One might expect the black people in the South, the most oppressed and militant section of the Southern population, to develop Southern consciousness as part of their struggle. Or could it be that Southern consciousness is almost synonymous with White Conscious-

ness?

The idea that Southern white workers are now, always have been and always will be one homogeneous, reactionary, racist mass must be combatted. But SSOC's Southern consciousness feeds these prejudices. Implicit in this concept is a patronizing attitude toward Southern white working people. It involves an attempt by student radicals to link up with white workers around some lowest common denominator, including an unconscious adaptation to the racism of whites. But what evidence exists to indicate that Southern consciousness will play any role in moving white workers to struggle against the system? Workers all over the country are affected by concrete developments such as the inflationary rise in the cost of living, governmental attacks on union organization and strikes, and the slaughter of thousands of their sons and relatives in imperialist wars. There is every reason to believe that class consciousness, not Southern consciousness, will be the motive force behind working class radicalization in the South.

A key factor behind Southern consciousness is SSOC leaders' feeling that they must somehow build something "uniquely Southern." This grew largely out of SSOC's need to carve out its own special niche in the movement which differentiated it from other organizations, particularly SDS. The tendency to see the South as a nation (implicit in Southern consciousness) involves a mechanical application of

the tactics, strategy and rhetoric applicable to the struggle of the black people, who have a national identity, to a situation where it really does not apply.

It is important for those of us who are trying to build a movement in the South and in Georgia to study the history of our region, and in that history we can find our true progenitors. Among those I would include: the workers at Fisher Body who in 1937-38 helped to spearhead the drive to build the UAW and CIO; the almost 8,000 Southerners who met in Thomson, Ga., in September 1919 and passed resolutions denouncing the current witch hunt and demanding withdrawal of American troops from the Soviet Union and Europe; the Southern whites who founded the first abolitionist papers in the South and started the Underground Railroad; the black slaves who continually rose up against their masters, became leaders of the abolitionist movement and, by organizing black regiments in the Union Army, gave the final push necessary to defeat the slavocracy; the poor whites who retreated into the Georgia mountains during the Civil War and fought off recruiters for the planters' Confederate Army. Finally, members of the Young Socialist Alliance, which is based on international, revolutionary socialist consciousness, count among their progenitors hundreds of the best Populists both black and white who went beyond radical agrarianism to socialism. □



ALL TOGETHER NOW!
LEFT!! LEFT!! LEFT!!



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SWP Election Campaign

FUN CITY GETS SERIOUS

By Al Rosenthal

This spring the Socialist Workers Party has been running vigorous municipal election campaigns in cities all across the country, including for the first time, a mayoralty campaign in Atlanta, Ga.

In New York City, the SWP is involved in an ambitious campaign in which it is running five candidates: Paul Boutelle for Mayor; Alfredo Pena for Comptroller; Patricia Grogan for Councilman at-large; Anthony Thomas for Borough President of Manhattan; and Jeff Mackler for President of the City Council.

The following article deals with some of the issues in the New York campaign. Its author, Al Rosenthal, is Assistant Campaign Director, a student at City College of New York, and a member of the Manhattan YSA.

Over two million New Yorkers live "below the poverty line" as defined by the U. S. government. One out of every seven substandard housing units in the United States is located in New York City. The narcotics addiction is higher, the air pollution more wretched, and the public transportation more dilapidated than in any

other city in the world.

The problems faced in running New York City have escalated to the point where the politicians and professors are debating whether or not the city is governable at all. The question is a sticky one for the capitalist politicians, who are faced with the necessity to cut back public expenditures, raise taxes, and depress wages to help finance the Vietnam war, while at the same time the black and Puerto Rican communities are pressing their demands for more and better housing, education and public services. As these demands increase, the ability of capitalist society to grant them decreases.

An added problem for the politicians is the Vietnam war. Not only is the Lindsay administration physically unable to meet the demands for more public projects because of the war budget, but his opposition on the left is growing continually, mainly due to the radicalization produced by the war. Lindsay himself has declared his opposition to the Vietnam war, an opposition which goes as far as the average reform democrat; that is, he calls for "meaningful" negotiations.

Although this position has made him a pole of attraction for left-wing Republicans, it has done nothing for the city he is supposed to run. For at the root of the negotiations position, no matter how "radically" it is put forward, is the concept of a continued American presence in Southeast Asia with all the suffering and cuts in domestic spending that such a presence demands.

The contradictions facing New York City have acquired explosive force around the issue of the schools. School construction itself has been severely limited by the war budget, and improvements for existing dilapidated schools are more for show than anything else.

However, it is the sharper issue of who will control the schools that has become a major question. With the failure of the city government to provide decent education for black and Puerto Rican students through its much-vaunted "integration" programs, the movement for community control began. From the start, this movement was sabotaged by the city government, the Board of Education, and the racist bureaucracy of the United Fed-

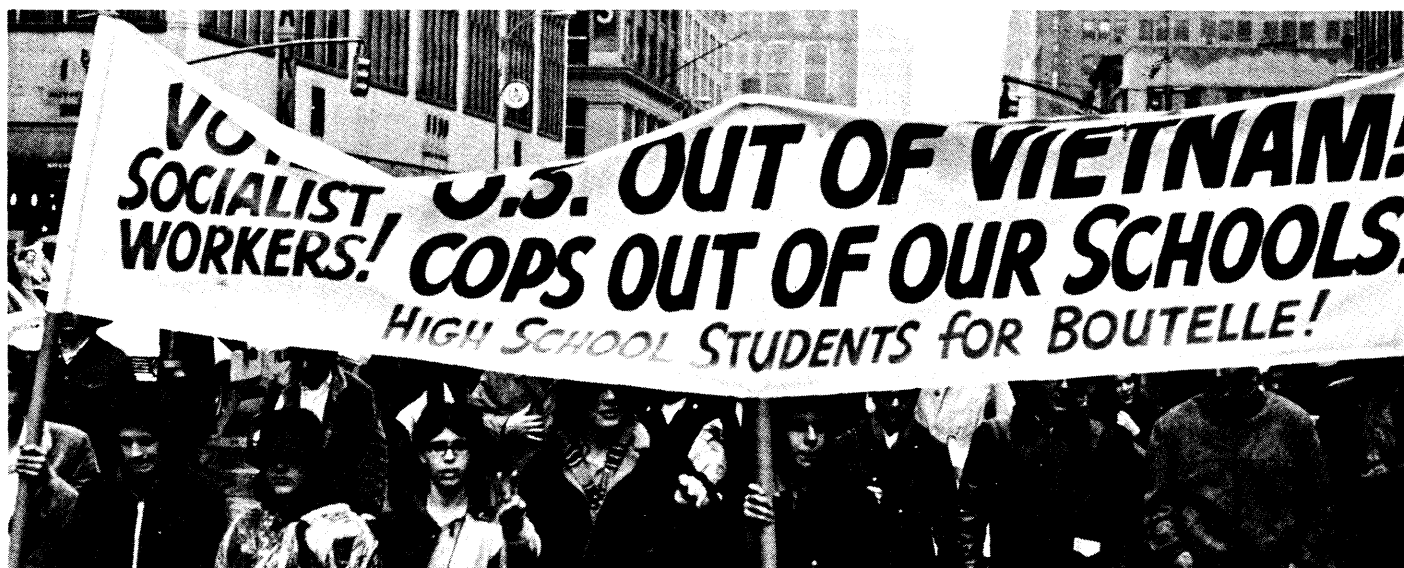


Photo By Nancy Perkus

eration of Teachers.

The black and Puerto Rican communities were confronted with the fact that there is no high school for their children in which the number of eighth graders who read on an eighth grade level is as high as 25%, and that the vast majority of students from these communities never graduate from high school. Moreover, in a school system whose students are 30% Afro-American and 22% Puerto Rican, only 2 out of 55 superintendents are black, 25 out of 711 junior high school principals are black, and none of the 153 academic high school principals is black; that nowhere in the entire system is there a Puerto Rican principal, and that only 10% of the teachers are black. Attempts to reform the situation within administrative guidelines are meaningless; even a design for a new school must go through 54 different departments before final approval.

The racist walkout by the United Federation of Teachers in Sept. '68 was Shanker's response to the demands for community control of the schools. In reply to Shanker's claim that he was merely defending union rights, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for President of the City Council Jeff Mackler stated: "The UFT claim that it is fighting for due process is fraudulent. More than 2800 teachers were 'excessed' last June, not rehired, and the UFT never said a word. The UFT spent \$500,000 opposing *all* proposals for decentralization of the schools. It is clear that the real issue is black and Puerto Rican control of the schools." Mackler is a leader of the New Coalition, an opposition caucus in the UFT which fought against the strike.

In its determination to block the demands of the black and Puerto Rican communities for any degree of self-determination, the city government has been resorting more and more to police occupations of high schools. These occupations have stirred wide protests in the black community and have helped shatter any illusion which may have remained about the sincerity of the Lindsay administration. A key plank in the SWP campaign will be immediate withdrawal of these police forces from the schools. This plank distinguishes the Socialist Workers campaign from the



Photo By Nicholas Goldsmith

Alfredo Pena, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Comptroller of New York City.

capitalist ones, all of which have come out in favor of the use of police in the schools. For even those candidates who have come out against "police brutality" are too tied to the financial and political interests which run the city to vigorously denounce the use of repressive forces in the schools.

Police attacks against the black community have been increasing at a tremendous rate. Last September some 200 off-duty cops attacked a group of Black Panther members and sympathizers in the hallway of the Brooklyn Criminal Court; the failure of the Lindsay administration to take any action against the attackers has served to further encourage vigilante attacks on the Afro-American and Puerto Rican liberation movements. The recent arrest of 21 Black Panthers on the charges of allegedly "conspiring to blow up five stores in mid-town Manhattan" is only the latest in a series of victimizations of the Panthers.

The high school movement has been a key target of these attacks. Student political organizations and underground newspapers have been

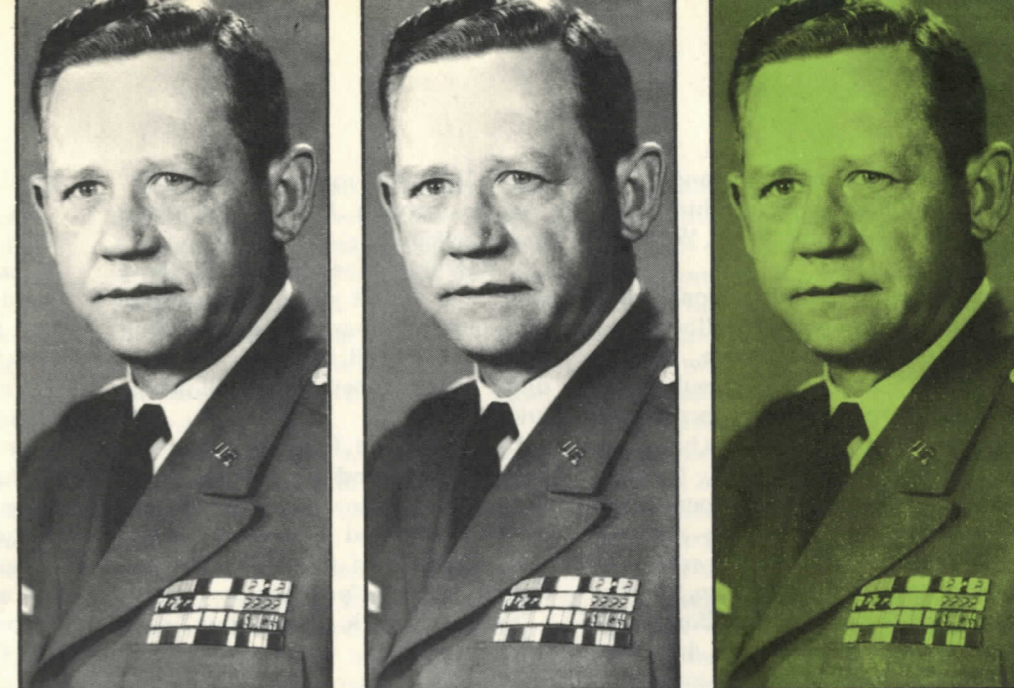
marked for reprisals. At Evander Childs High School in the Bronx, the Militant Forum Club, a group which held a memorial meeting for Malcolm X which drew 1000 students, was abolished on direct orders from the Board of Education after it held a meeting at which Paul Boutelle spoke. Evander Childs is now occupied by police.

The immediate future may well see high school and college students uniting over the issues of cuts in the budget for public education, such as occurred in the March 18 demonstration of 13,000 in Albany. The State Legislature has decreed a 20% cut in funds to the City University. This will mean a cutback of 3500 in admissions to city colleges, and if further cuts occur, as expected, in city spending on education, this figure could be substantially larger. Already, City College, one part of the City University, has announced that it will not be taking in a freshman class. Boutelle is the only mayoral candidate who has demanded free public education for all who desire it.

An added factor in New York politics this year is the plethora of mayoral candidates. No less than six Democrats will be vying for the nomination, and three Republicans have already declared their candidacy. The foremost contenders appear to be Herman Badillo, a liberal Democrat who seems to have caught the eye of the Communist Party; James Scheuer, another liberal Democrat who is running with the blessings of the Socialist Party; and of course John Lindsay. All of these candidates are distinguished by their total inability to operate independently of the capitalist system. All of them have called for "real negotiations" with the NLF as opposed to immediate withdrawal of all troops; all of them have declared in favor of police occupations of the schools; all of them call for the subordination of the struggles of students, Afro-Americans and Puerto Ricans to the reform wings of their various capitalist parties. The Boutelle candidacy is the only one which not only demands immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, an end to police occupations of the schools, and a full program for black and Puerto Rican control of black and Puerto Rican education, but which stands for a definitive break with the capitalist political system. □

VIETNAM, June 1966—"No, Sir. There's nothin' I love better than zappin' Cong," declares Gen. James F. Hollingsworth of the U.S. "Big Red 1" Division.

FT. JACKSON, S.C. 1969—Commanding General James F. Hollingsworth zapped by lawsuit charging him with violating rights of antiwar GIs.



THE ZAP ZAP GENERAL



Originally titled "The General Goes Zapping Charlie Cong," the following article appeared in the London Sunday Times of June 5, 1966. It attracted wide notice in the antiwar movement at that time. After GIs United Against the War in Vietnam at Ft. Jackson ran up against one Gen. James F. Hollingsworth, the article was rediscovered.

After a light lunch last Wednesday General James F. Hollingsworth of the U.S. "Big Red 1" division took off in his personal helicopter and killed more Vietnamese than any of the troops he was commanding.

The story of the General's feat begins in his divisional office at Di-Na twenty miles north of Saigon where a Medical Corps colonel is telling me that when they collect enemy casualties they find themselves with more than four injured civilians for every wounded Viet Cong—unavoidable in this kind of war.

The General strides in, pins two med-

als for outstanding gallantry to the chest of one of the colonel's combat doctors. Then he strides off again to his helicopter and spreads out a polythene-covered map to explain our afternoon's trip.

The General has a big, real American face, reminiscent of every movie general you have seen. He comes from Texas and is 48. His present rank is Brigadier General, Assistant Division Commander, 1st Infantry Division, United States Army, which is what the big red figure one on his shoulder flash means.

"Our mission today," says the General, "is to push those goddam VCs right off Routes 13 and 16 running north from Saigon toward the town of Phuoc Vinh, where we keep our artillery. When we got here first we prettied up those roads, and cleared Charlie Cong right out so we could run our supplies up. I guess we've been hither and thither with all our operations since, an' the ol' VC he's reckoned he could creep back. He's been puttin' out propaganda he's going to interdict our right of passage along those routes. So this day we aim to

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zapp him, and zapp him, and zapp him again till we've zapped him right back where he came from. Yes, sir, let's go."

The General's UH 18 helicopter carries two pilots, two 60-caliber machine-gunners and his aide, Dennis Gillman, an apple-cheeked subaltern from California. It also carries the General's own M 16 carbine (hanging on a strut), two dozen smoke bombs, and a couple of CS anti-personnel gas bombs, each as big as a small dustbin. Just beside the General is a radio console (where he can tune in on orders issued by battalion commanders flying helicopters just beneath him, and company commanders in helicopters just below them.)

Under the interlacing of helicopters lies the apparently peaceful landscape beside Routes 13 and 16, filled with farmhouses and peasants hoeing rice and paddy fields.

So far today, things haven't gone too well. Companies Alpha, Bravo and Charlie have assaulted a suspected Viet Cong HQ, found a few tunnels but no enemy.

The General sits at the helicopter's open door, knees apart, his shiny black toecaps jutting out into space, rolls a filtertip cigarette to and fro in his teeth and thinks.

"Put me down at Battallion HQ," he calls to the pilot.

"There's sniper fire reported on choppers in that area, General."

"Goddamn the snipers, just put me down."

Battalion HQ at the moment is a defoliated area of four acres packed with tents, personnel carriers, helicopters, and milling GIs. We settle into crushed grass. The General leaps out and strides through his troops.

"Why, General, excuse us, we didn't expect you here," says a sweating major.

"You killed any 'Cong yet?"

"Well, no, General, I guess he's just too scared of us, today. Down the road a piece we've hit trouble, a bulldozer's fallen through a bridge and trucks coming through a village knocked the canopy off a Buddhist pagoda. Saigon radioed us to repair that temple before proceeding—in the way of civic action, General. That put us back an hour."

"Yeah. Well Major, you spread out your perimeters here a bit, then get to

killin' VC's will you?"

Back through the crushed grass to the helicopter.

"I don't know how you think about war. The way I see it, I'm just like any other company boss, gingering up the boys all the time, except I don't make money. I just kill people and save lives."

In the air the General chews two more filtertips and looks increasingly forlorn. No action on Route 16, and another Big Red 1 general has got his helicopter in to inspect the collapsed bridge before ours.

"Swing us back along again," says the General.

"Reports of fire on choppers ahead, sir. Smoke flare near spot. Strike coming in."

"Go find that smoke."

A plume of white rises in the midst of dense tropical forest with a "Bird Dog" spotter plane in attendance. Route 16 is to the right; beyond it a large settlement of red-tiled houses.

"Strike coming in, sir."

Two F105 jets appear over the horizon in formation, split, then one passes over the smoke, dropping a trail of silver, fish-shaped canisters. After four seconds silence, light orange fire explodes in patches along an area fifty yards wide by three quarters of a mile long. Napalm.

The trees and bushes burn, pouring dark oily smoke into the sky. The second plane dives and fire covers the entire strip of dense forest.

"Aaaaah," cries the General. "Nice. Nice. Very neat. Come in low, let's see who's left down there."

"How do you know for sure the Viet Cong snipers were in that strip you burned?"

"We don't. The smoke position was a guess. That's why we zapp the whole forest."

"But what if there was someone, a civilian, walking through there?"

"Aw come son, you think there's folks just sniffing flowers in tropical vegetation like that? With a big operation on hereabouts? Anyone left down there, he's Charlie Cong all right."

I point at a paddy field full of peasants less than half a mile away.

"That's different son. We know they're genuine."

The pilot shouts, "General, half right, two running for that bush."

"I see them. Down, down, goddam

you."

In one movement he yanks his M16 off the hanger, slams in a clip of cartridges and leans right out of the door, hanging on his seatbelt to fire one long burst in the general direction of the bush.

"General, there's a hole, maybe a bunker down there."

"Smokebomb, circle, shift it."

"But General, how do you know those aren't just frightened peasants?"

"Running? Like that? Don't give me a pain. The clips, the clips, where in hell are the cartridges in this clip?"

The aide drops a smoke canister, the General finds his ammunition, and the starboard machine-gunner fires rapid bursts into the bush, his tracers bouncing off the ground round it.

We turn clockwise in ever tighter, lower circles, everyone firing. A shower of spent cartridge cases leap from the General's carbine to drop, lukewarm, on my arm.

"I want you to shoot right up the ass of that hole, gunner."

Fourth time round the tracers flow right inside the tiny sandbagged opening, tearing the bags, filling it with sand and smoke.

The General falls back off his seatbelt into his chair, suddenly relaxed, and lets out an oddly feminine, gentle laugh. "That's it," he says, and turns to me, squeezing his thumb and finger into the sign of a French chef's ecstasy.

We circle now above a single-story building made of dried reeds. The first burst of fire tears the roof open, shatters one wall into fragments of scattered straw, and blasts the farmyard full of chickens into dismembered feathers.

"Zapp, zapp, zapp," cries the General. He is now using semi-automatic fire, the carbine bucking in his hands.

"Pow, pow, pow," sounds the gun. All the noises of this war have an unaccountably Texan ring.

"Gas-bomb."

Lieutenant Gillman leans his canister out of the door. As the pilot calls, he drops it. An explosion of white vapour spreads across the wood a full hundred yards downwind.

"Jesus wept, lootenant, that's no good."

Lieutenant Gillman immediately clammers across me to get the second

gas bomb, pushing me sideways into his own port-side seat. In considerable panic I fumble with an unfamiliar seatbelt as the helicopter banks round at an angle of fifty degrees. The second gas bomb explodes perfectly, beside the house, covering it with vapour.

"There's nothing alive in there," says the General, "or they'd be skeddaddling. Yes there is, by golly."

For the first time I too see the running figure, bobbing and sprinting across the farmyard towards a clump of trees, dressed in black pyjamas. No hat. No shoes.

"Now hit the tree."

We circle five times. Branches drop off the tree, leaves fly, its trunk is enveloped with dust and tracer flares. Gillman and the General are now firing carbines side by side in the doorway. Gillman offers me his gun. No thanks.

Then a man runs from the tree, in each hand a bright red flag which he waves desperately above his head.

"Stop, stop, he's quit," shouts the General, knocking the machine-gun and so tracers erupt into the sky.

"It's going down to take him. Now watch it everyone, keep firing roundabout, this may be an ambush."

We sink swiftly into the field beside the tree, each gunner firing cautionary bursts into the bushes. The figure walks toward us.

"That's a Cong for sure," cries the General in triumph and with one deft movement grabs the man's short black hair and yanks him inboard. The prisoner falls across Lieutenant Gillman and into the seat beside me.

The red flags I spotted from the air are his hands, bathed solidly in blood. Further blood is pouring from under his shirt, over his trousers.

Now we are safely in the air again. Our captive cannot be more than sixteen years old, he head comes just about up to the white name patch—Hollingsworth—on the General's chest. He is dazed, in shock, his eyes calmly look first at the General, then at the Lieutenant, then at me. He resembles a tiny, fineboned wild animal. I have to keep my hand firmly pressed against his shoulder to hold him upright. He is quivering. Sometimes his left foot, from some nervous impulse, bangs hard against the helicopter wall. The Lieutenant applies a tourniquet to his right arm.

"Radio base for an ambulance. Get the information officer with a camera. I want this Commie bastard alive till we get back. Just stay with us till we talk to you, baby."

The General pokes with his carbine first at the prisoner's cheek to keep his head upright, then at the base of his shirt.

"Look at that now," he says, turning to me. "You still thinking about innocent peasants? Look at the weaponry."

Around the prisoner's waist is a webbing belt with four clips of ammunition, a waterbottle (without stopper), a tiny roll of bandages, and a propaganda leaflet which later turns out to be a set of Viet Cong songs, with a twenty piastre note (about 1s 6d) folded in it.

Lieutenant Gillman looks concerned, "It's OK, you're OK," he mouths at the prisoner who at that moment turns to me and with a surprisingly vigorous gesture waves his arm at my seat. He wants to lie down.

By the time I have fastened myself into yet another seat, we are back at the landing pad. Ambulance orderlies come aboard, administer morphine and rip open his shirt. Obviously a burst of fire has shattered his right arm up at the shoulder. The cut shirt now allows a large bulge of blue-red tissue to fall forward, its surface streaked with white nerve fibres and chips of bone (how did he ever manage to wave that arm in surrender?).

When the ambulance has driven off the General gets us all posed round the nose of the chopper for a group photograph like a gang of successful fishermen, then clambers up into the cabin again, at my request, for a picture to show just how he zapped those VCs. He is euphoric.

"Jeez I'm so glad you was along, that worked out just dandy. I've been written up time and time again back in the States for shootin' up VCs, but no one's been along with me like you before."

We even find a bullet hole in one of the helicopter rotor blades, "That's proof positive they was firin' at us all the time. An' firin' on us first, boy. So much for your fellers smellin' flowers."

He gives me the Viet Cong's water bottle as souvenir and proof. "That's a chicom bottle, that one. All the way

from Peking."

Later that evening the General calls me to his office to tell me the prisoner had to have his arm amputated and is now in the hands of the Vietnamese authorities, as regulations dictate. Before he went under, he told the General's interpreters that he was part of a hardcore regular VC company whose mission was to mine Route 16, cut it up, and fire at helicopters.

The General is magnanimous in his victory over my squeamish civilian worries.

"You see, son, I saw rifles on that first pair of running men. Didn't tell you at the time. And, by the way, you mustn't imagine there could have been ordinary farm folk in that house when you're as old a veteran as I am you get to know about those things by instinct. I agree there was chickens in the yard, but then them VCs they bring chickens for food with them, strung up on a pole. You didn't see anything bigger, like a pig, or a cow, did you? Well then."

The General wasn't certain whether further troops would go to the farmhouse that night to check who died, although patrols would be near there.

It wasn't safe moving along Route 16 at night, there was another big operation elsewhere the next day. Big Red 1 is always on the move.

"But when them VC come back harrassing that Route 16, why we'll zapp them again. And when they come back after that we'll zapp them again."

"Wouldn't it be easier just to stay there all the time?"

"Why, son, we haven't enough troops as it is."

"The Koreans manage it."

"Yeah, but they've got a smaller area to protect. Why Big Red 1 ranges right across to the Cambodian border. There ain't no place on that map we ain't been."

"I'll say perhaps your English generals wouldn't think my way of war is all that conventional, would they? Well this is a new kind of war, flexible, quick moving. Us generals must be on the spot to direct our troops. The helicopter adds a new dimension to battle."

"There's no better way to fight than goin' out to shoot VCs. An' there's nothing I love better than killin' Cong. No sir." □



A YS Interview

Socialism, Nationalism, Student Power: The Movement in Belgium

Introduction: The first three months of 1969 have witnessed a series of massive struggles by Belgian students. In the following interview taken March 25, Francois Vercammen explains the origins of the Belgian student movement and what has happened in the most recent protests. Vercammen, a student at the State University of Gent, is the National Secretary of the Jeune Garde Socialiste-Socialistische Jonge Wacht (Young Socialist Guard), a revolutionary socialist organization of French-speaking and Flemish youth which has been in the leadership of the recent student struggles.

* * *

Q: Would you explain the background of the Belgian student movement and the main issues which have been involved in the recent struggles.

A: There are several major conditions underlying the Belgian student movement. The first concerns the question of who controls the universities. There

are two types of universities in Belgium. One is the "free university," controlled by the Church or by sections of the bourgeoisie, such as the University of Leuven, which is controlled by the Catholic Church, and the University of Brussels, which is controlled by sections of the Brussels bourgeoisie. The other type is the state university, such as the state universities of Gent, Liege and Antwerp. The fact is, however, that 80 to 90 per cent of the funds for all the universities—even the "free" universities—come from the state, although the "free" universities are not publicly controlled but controlled by private interests.

This situation has been opposed by many students, who think that since public funds support all the universities, they should be under the control of the community and not the Catholic Church or certain capitalists.

Another major factor in the Belgian student movement is the national question. Belgium has a population of about 10 million, of which 5 1/2 million are Flemish-speaking (living in Flanders, the Northern part of the country) and 4 1/2 million are French-speaking (living in Wallonia, the Southern part of the country). The Flemish universities are in Antwerp, Gent, and Leuven, while the French

universities are in Liege, Brussels, and also in Leuven. In Brussels, which is largely French-speaking, there is a small Flemish section. But in Leuven, a Flemish city, there is a large French language university with only a small Flemish sector.

This inequality in university facilities for Flemish-speaking people is due to the fact that historically (since the French Revolution) the Belgian ruling class has come from the French-speaking section, while the Flemish people have been mainly workers, farmers, and middle-class, but not part of the big bourgeoisie or the government. So the Belgian ruling class created more university facilities for its own offspring, which were of course French-speaking.

The third main condition underlying the student movement is the technocratic reform of the universities which the capitalists are trying to institute in order to bring the educational system into line with their needs for skilled technicians.

A plan has been outlined, called the Vermeulen-Dubois Plan, proposed by the Flemish and Walloon Ministers of National Education and Culture, which has two main aspects:

1. Linking of the universities and industry.

RED POWER reads banner in photo on facing page. Photos on pp. 16-19 were taken at anti-NATO demonstration in Brussels March 9, 1969.



2. Transformation of the university into a "technical high school," in the sense that its main purpose would be to create technicians for industry.

Also, through this plan the capitalists hope to increase the differentiation within the working class by increasing wage differences according to education and by encouraging differentiation of consciousness, i. e., hopefully, the technicians would identify with the ruling class rather than with the working class, and would act as a "watch-dog" over the working class and dampen their struggles.

According to the Vermeylen-Dubois Plan there would be special recruitment of students for different types of higher education to serve the different needs of sections of industry. Two "super-universities" would be set up in Brussels and Leuven to train high administrators for the large U. S. corporations and big Belgian companies. Other universities would train the middle layer of technocrats. And the "non-university higher education" (technical schools between the ordinary high schools and the university) would recruit mainly from the working class to train masses of skilled technicians. This plan envisages a high degree of social selection, to find the students whose "attitudes" would suit their future role in industry. For instance,

the Plan would make entry to the various types of schools by stiff examinations including psychological "maturity proofs." The number of students who could enter and graduate from the different schools would be rigidly set according to the needs of industry.

This plan is seen generally by the students as an anti-democratic and anti-social transformation of the educational system. Students favor one unified program of higher education available to everyone, rather than the stratified and fragmented university system embodied in the Vermeylen-Dubois Plan.

Q: How did the student struggle begin?

A: The origin of the present student movement was among the Flemish students at the University of Leuven in 1965. This was an unexpected place for the struggle to start, first of all because Leuven, a Catholic university, had always been one of the most conservative, strictly under the control of the clerics. And secondly, because the right wing Flemish nationalists had always been in control of the politically active students.

A struggle began for two demands: 1) an end to the dictatorship of the Bishops over the university and 2) the transfer of the French-speaking sector of the university to some other

French-speaking city, since Leuven was a Flemish city. The traditional influence of the right-wing Flemish nationalists among the students was connected with the fact that one of the demands was the transfer of the French sector out of Leuven, but the struggle developed with a logic of its own in a radical direction.

The slogan of "Leuven for the Flemish" which was raised in this struggle, had a progressive social content. Twelve percent of the Flemish students at Leuven were from working class backgrounds and the rest mainly from the middle class, while only two percent of the French-speaking students were from working class backgrounds and eighty percent from upper-bourgeois families in Brussels. So the struggle took on the meaning that the university should serve the community rather than the bourgeoisie.

After a two-year struggle at Leuven, including a long student strike and several violent clashes between students and the police, the leadership of the students passed to Marxist-influenced students, and Flemish nationalism lost its influence on the students in Leuven. This had historical importance because Leuven is in a sense the capital of Flanders, and therefore a center of Flemish nationalism.

This struggle which began in 1965



was in the end defeated, although great strides had been made in the students' consciousness. In 1968 the struggle erupted again in Leuven. This time the demand for the transfer of the French-language sector to a Walloon city was combined with the demand for democratization of the university. The Leuven struggle sparked struggles in universities and high schools in every Flemish town. The struggles in 1968 were massive in scope, with student strikes and demonstrations in almost every school in Flanders. Catholic and non-Catholic students, including very young high schoolers, were in the streets together in solidarity with the Leuven students and demanding the democratization of the educational system.

These struggles in 1968 were on such a scale that they brought about the fall of the Belgian government, and also the students forced the government to agree to the transfer of the French language sector of Leuven.

In the fall of 1968 the first struggles began again in an unexpected place: Liege. This is the most reactionary university in Belgium, controlled by the big bourgeoisie in Brussels. A student strike took place, and mass meetings involving about 500 students each time. This was the beginning of

a new mass movement. Their demands were for democratization of the university and student control over the university restaurants, over government funds given to the university, etc. The significant thing about this struggle was the high degree of participation of high school students and also the effect on the workers. High schoolers, especially from the technical high schools, came to the university to participate and were some of the most active participants. The students decided to appeal to the workers for support to their struggle, and leafleted factories explaining their demands. They found significant sympathy among the workers, because the Liege workers have been for many years outside of the control of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party of Belgium. The leaders of the Liege struggle, also, were left-socialist students.

The next explosion came in Antwerp at the end of January, 1969. Antwerp did not have a complete university system, but only two partial universities with two year programs. One was the state-controlled University Center of Antwerp, and the other was St. Ignatius, a Catholic-controlled "non-university higher education."

The students favored uniting the two

existing university institutions into one complete university with a "pluralistic" policy regarding professors; that is, professors could be either Catholic or non-Catholic and of all political points of view. However, the three main political parties, the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party all agreed to a change in the university system without consulting the students or professors. They decided to keep the two existing partial universities, and start another university institution.

An "active strike" was called by the students, with discussions going on in the auditorium every day with 1,000 students participating, virtually the entire student body. The struggle was successful, and the government backed down and could not implement their plans.

At the end of February, the main student leaders from Flanders and Wallonia got together and adopted a common program:

1. Any reform of the universities should be adopted in a democratic manner, with all points of view presented and the students able to choose.

2. The new university should be democratic in its internal functioning through student control, and democratic in terms of contact with, and



service to, the community, not the bourgeoisie.

Also, the Flemish General Union of Students (VVS—Vereniging van Vlaamse Studenten) decided to hold 3-day congresses on March 11, 12, and 13 simultaneously in Gent, Antwerp, Brussels, and Leuven, where all the students could express their views and decide on the next step for the student movement.

The next event in the developing struggle was a massive march of 20,000 people, almost all young, in Brussels against NATO and the Vietnam war on March 9. The march was preceded by a mass meeting of 1,500 students at the University of Brussels sponsored by the Jeune Garde Socialiste. Since most of the leaders and militants of the student movement are also active in the anti-imperialist struggle, they were all in Brussels for this march and many were at the JGS meeting. There was much discussion of their experiences in the student movement and it was clear to all that one spark could bring explosions in all the universities.

On March 12 the congress called by the VVS was going on in Gent.

The evening of the 12th, students who had been attending the congress planned to attend a film-showing

sponsored by a left cultural association. The film was a scientific documentary on pornography. The director of the university, however, prohibited the showing of this film. The 500 students who had come to see it decided that they would react militantly to defend their right to freedom of expression.

The next day about 200 went to the office of the director and demanded to talk with him to get an explanation for his banning of the film. When they were told that he was not there, they said they would stay until he spoke with them. Then the students were told that he would speak with only one of them because, he said, "it is impossible to speak to 200 people." The students replied that it was obviously not at all impossible, and waited. Then the director called in the gendarmerie (a special tactical police force) and the students were beaten brutally.

The reaction to this incident was immediate. Every day there were demonstrations and nightly mass meetings, with a constant mobilization of about 2,000 students, which is 20 percent of the student body.

At the same time, a similar congress was proceeding at the University of Leuven. On March 11, 30 Flemish students dressed up like soldiers with

NATO uniforms and marched through the streets to hold a press conference to say why they were against NATO. Suddenly, for no reason at all they were set upon by the gendarmerie and beaten severely, two hospitalized. Mass meetings were held against this repression.

At the same time, French students at Leuven had seen the Flemish students win their demands through militant struggles, and they began formulating their own demands. They wanted financial guarantees that their sector of the university would actually be reestablished in a French-speaking city. The French-speaking students went into the streets for these demands for the first time in many years. The Flemish students, very glad to see this development, went into the streets with them in solidarity. This demonstration of 2-3,000 students marked the appearance of an influential left wing in the French student movement for the first time.

Also in Liege at this time students held an occupation of the university for democratization and student control, with 500-1,000 students participating in free assemblies discussing the problems of the university.

Following these massive outbreaks of student protest in each of the major

cities, a national meeting was called for March 13 by two organizations: the VVS and the MUBEF (Mouvement Universitaire Belge d'Expression Francaise—Belgian University Movement of French-speaking Students). These two organizations, both supported by government funds, are the most representative and most recognized organizations of the Belgian students. Both organizations had recently elected very left-wing leaderships, a reflection of the mounting student movement.

The great significance of this national meeting, in which 1,200 students participated with delegations from all across the nation, was that it showed students wanted to unite in their struggle, Catholics and non-Catholics, Flemish and Walloon. This is the first time Belgian students have united, and it will be very important for the future movement. It means the elimination of national chauvinism between students in Liege, Leuven, and Brussels, and it means that students want to fight against the concept of an elite university and for a university in service of the whole community of French-speaking and Flemish working people. Also it was clear from this meeting that the student movement saw itself as a part of the broader class struggle, and was consciously looking for areas of united action with the workers.

After this national meeting in Leuven, the students went out into the streets on a demonstration. After a short time the gendarmerie appeared,

herded the students into a corner, blocking their exit, first threw tear gas into their midst, then sprayed the trapped students with water hoses, and then, when everybody was on the ground, the cops beat us with their clubs. The demonstration was then dispersed, but the student leaders sent out relays on bicycles to inform the students that they should gather again that night to decide what to do about the repression.

At the meeting that night the cops again intervened, entering the meeting hall where a peaceful discussion was going on and forcing the students out of the room.

Students were enraged by this police provocation in denying their right to free assembly and discussion. The main student leaders nationally met again March 16 to decide a policy for the coming week. They decided on four steps:

1. to respond to the repression by opposing the policy of the police and of the universities in permitting the police actions,

2. to put forth our own program of a democratic university in service to the community and explain it to the masses of students,

3. to organize meetings in each city on the same demands: against the repression of the student movement and for democratization of the universities,

4. to organize an information campaign to explain the students' demands to the workers.

So during the next week fairly successful mass meetings were held in all

cities, students would interrupt classes to explain their demands, and thousands of leaflets were distributed to factories and high schools, and were very well received. During this week (March 17-22) there were occupations of universities and demonstrations in at least 8 major cities.

But in Gent, the university authorities decided to try to stop the movement. The mobilization of students in Gent by March 20 was still quite high, with about 1,000 students meeting in mass meetings every day. The students had taken over the main building of the university, the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, to hold their meetings, and they also took over the functioning of the building, setting up information bureaus and special rooms for contacts with the press.

On the evening of March 20, about 800 students were meeting in the building and saw the gendarmerie approaching the building. They had been called in by the university administration. The students voted to stay in the building. The cops came through the doors swinging their clubs, but then stopped, when they saw the large mass of students and didn't know what to do, since they were vastly outnumbered if the students had decided to fight. They negotiated with the students and made a deal that none would be arrested if they left the building peacefully. But as the students left they were picked up and taken to the police station ten at a time for identity checks, and photographs were taken of them.

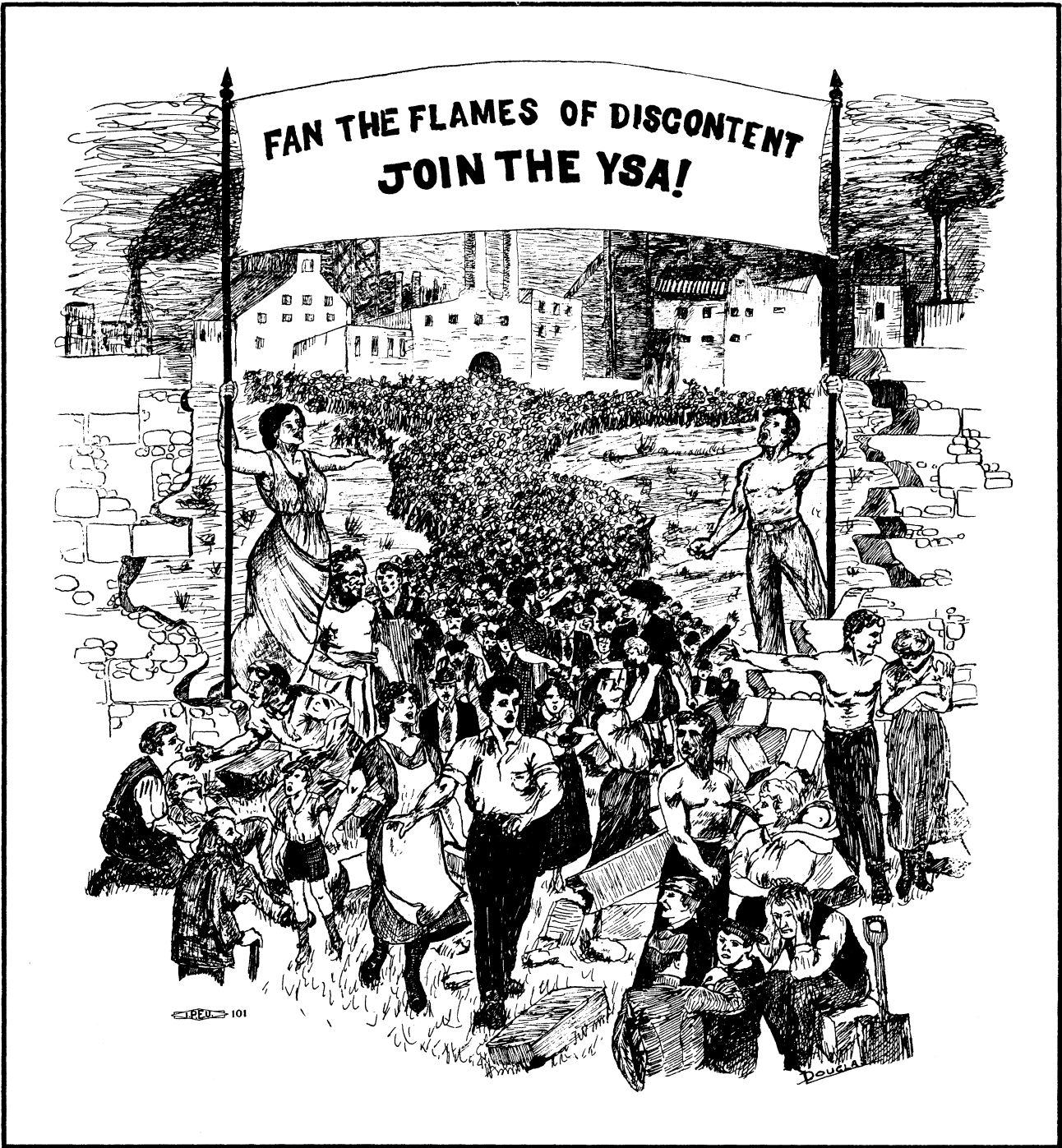
The next day the directors of the university had closed the Faculty of Letters, so the students took over the Faculty of Engineering for their meetings.

Q: What are the future perspectives for the student movement?

A: There will certainly be a continuation and intensification of the student movement, because in 1970 the Vermeulen-Dubois Plan will be considered by the Parliament and possibly enacted, which will evoke great struggles by the students. And also the government is planning to put new taxes on the workers. This may cause large workers' struggles, which the students would also join and could create a very explosive situation. □

Mass meeting of 1,500 students at the University of Brussels sponsored by the Jeune Garde Socialiste March 8, 1969.





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SDS, Cont'd from p. 6

on different political questions, PL wants its position to carry.

The SDS leadership through most of 1967 and into early '68 offered mainly a combination of student power and draft resistance. The ideas of Herbert Marcuse began to have some influence, and the "New Working Class" theory appeared.

But, as with earlier changes in direction on the part of SDS, events in the world demanded a new response from SDS. The French events of May-June 1968 shattered many illusions about the nature of the working class among students. The theory that the working class in the advanced capitalist countries had lost its revolutionary potential has been a hallmark of the New Left. In a matter of days the powerful upsurge of the French workers shattered these notions. There was a deepening radicalization among students and a growing acceptance of socialist ideas. The militancy among blacks deepened throughout 1968, and the Black Panther Party grew.

These events, combined with the influence of PL, have been reflected in the recent developments in SDS.

At the June 1968 convention it was clear that PL was gaining strength within the organization. PL had been pushing a consistent line. When contrasted to the National Office grouping, PL was able to present itself as a serious, disciplined and reasonable alternative. Primarily because of fear that PL was out to take over SDS and its inability to present a coherent alternative to PL's politics, much of the SDS leadership resorted to a red-baiting attack on PL.

Subsequently, the leadership began to experiment with other ways of dealing with PL. At last fall's NC it was clear that the Klonsky-Dohrn leadership was moving left in the search for political answers to PL. Then at the December NC Klonsky-Dohrn and followers posed as Guevarists in an attempt to reply to PL's charges that the Cuban leaders are petty-bourgeois and that guerrilla warfare in Latin America is adventurist. But their uncritical endorsement of all Cuban policies left them open to some of PL's criticisms. They even defended Castro's support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. PL was able to get through its anti-

black nationalist line because the SDS leadership had no answer to PL's false arguments. Klonsky even said that while he didn't agree with PL's analysis of black nationalism, the resolution was better than none at all!

However, the real kicker came at the Austin NC in March when the Klonsky-Dohrn group suddenly emerged as Maoists. Again as a *response* to PL they decided to try to outflank them from "the left." They presented themselves as the real revolutionary communists and the authentic Maoists. They even resurrected Stalin as a true proletarian leader. Yet, with all this revolutionary rhetoric, the NC failed to take any action in support of the upcoming antiwar actions in April!

These demonstrations occurred in the midst of a deepening of antiwar sentiment among the American people and featured the participation of GIs as a growing and dynamic new component of the movement. The YSA wrote an open letter urging the SDS NC to endorse the April actions, but the question did not even merit consideration.

A movement to stop a war by withdrawing troops while the shooting is going on is unprecedented in this country. The struggle against the war in Vietnam has been at the root of the radicalization within this country and among students throughout the world. The war has become the focal point of the struggle against imperialism. As Che Guevara wrote in 1967, "There have been limited confrontations on all continents . . . but obviously, at the present moment, the contradictions are centered in the territory of the Indo-Chinese peninsula."

SDS's continued refusal over the past four years to take any responsibility for building the mass movement against the war in Vietnam points up the fundamental weakness of the organization.

SDS has no coherent ideology or world outlook. Thus, it cannot anticipate events or act in a coordinated way. Its entire history shows that it has been unable to do any more than respond to events and forces outside itself in an awkward and pragmatic manner. The current Maoism of the SDS leadership has to be seen in the context of a pragmatic and demagogic response to the challenge of PL. □

A brochure put out by SDS last year says the organization contains "a variety of political positions: socialists, anarchists, communists and humanist liberals." That's really only a starter. There is no "real SDS position." There are uncounted numbers of hyphenated SDS's: from SDS-PL, SDS-CP, SDS-ISC, to SDS-Yippie and SDS-Motherfucker.

Such a diverse organization cannot lead a revolution, much less mount effective, nationally co-ordinated actions. Nor can it develop a revolutionary program, without fracturing into separate, mutually exclusive components. At best it can only serve as a debating forum, a way station, or a recruiting ground for the different political tendencies and individual operators.

The New Left has turned out to be a fraud. While billing itself as a new departure, the New Left was really no more than a big detour from the problems its founders had tried to escape. Ironically, the New Left began as a retreat from Stalin, and, now the New Left SDS finds itself awarding him praise.

The YSA bases its existence and its program on the history of the victories and defeats of the working class movement, on a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of world revolution today. The founders of the YSA realized that there are three fundamental tendencies in the world working class movement: social democracy, Stalinism, and Trotskyism. They realized that a socialist youth organization could not long exist independently of these three ideological currents. After examining each, they decided that the program of the Trotskyist movement represented the continuation of Marxism.

The organizational basis of the YSA is the Leninist conception of democratic centralism, which allows for free and open democratic discussion combined with the ability to launch co-ordinated and disciplined actions. It seeks to build a socialist youth vanguard by recruitment to the program of revolutionary Marxism. The program, the world view, of the YSA serves as a guide to its involvement in day to day struggles. As Lenin put it, "Without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary practice." □

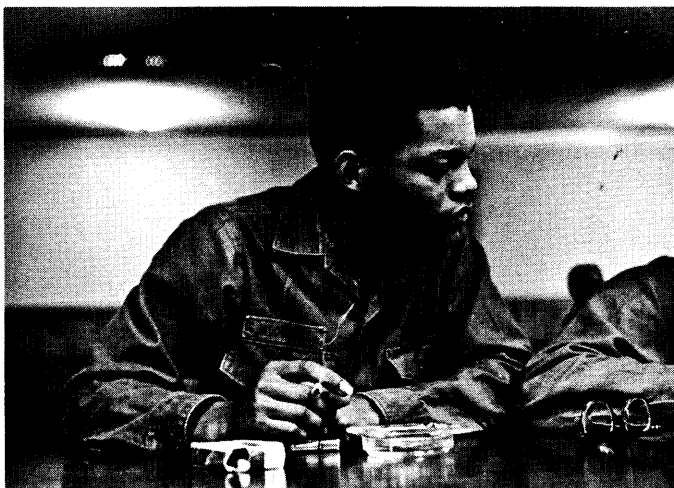
GIs United, Cont'd from p. 2

Membership in the newly-named GIs United was extended to those who opposed the war and who supported GIs' First Amendment rights to express themselves on the question. In order to broaden support, white GIs too became members, but only on the condition that they supported the principle of self-determination for blacks and Puerto Ricans.

Realizing that strength is in numbers, the GIs started a petition campaign as an organizing tool. Maintaining their First Amendment right to petition the government to redress grievances, and using that as a shield, the soldiers circulated through the base on their off-duty hours, talking to other GIs about the war and asking them to sign a petition directed to the General which asked that he provide the facilities for a base-wide meeting—open to anyone—to discuss the war, racism in the Army, and other grievances the men had. Within a week, nearly 300 names were collected.

Fearing that the night of the presentation of the petition was imminent, the brass tried to prevent the men from reaching headquarters. In one week they called three inspections—one to determine if the men's pants came down to the third shoelace hole—and two mandatory basketball games. The harassment caused GIs United to grow even bigger. At outdoor meetings, still citing the First Amendment umbrella of free speech, they talked about the root cause of the men's discontent—capitalism.

Explanations of the racist and imperialist nature of the war came down. Army harassment of enlisted men was seen as an attempt to turn men into mental vegetables, all the more pliable. The question of free speech was seen ultimately to mean that the Army couldn't fight an undemocratic war with a democratic army.



Tommie Woodfin, one of the leaders of GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, at Fort Jackson, S.C. Originally threatened with court-martial, Army brass was forced to back down, and has decided instead to discharge him.

Much that is rotten in American society comes to a head on a military installation—rigid class distinctions, racism, meaningless work, boredom, and of course, authoritarianism.

On one occasion, one of the defendants pressed the free speech argument on the Inspector General. He answered that the men had no right to think, and that their only right was "to obey orders and die proudly." As for himself, well he was accountable to only two people—"my commander and God."

Because of the draft, the Army represents a fairly good cross-section of the American population. Fort Jackson contains 30,000 men, 10,000 of whom are being trained in some combat capacity. These are men who have at least been exposed to the struggles taking place in the schools, streets, and the communities.

As a result, most enlisted men oppose the war, albeit often in a confused way. Black soldiers, of whom there are disproportionate numbers in combat training, oppose the war nearly to a man.

It is thus not surprising that blacks played a vanguard role in launching GIs United. The unity they achieved enabled them to withstand the Army's greatest weapon of intimidation—fear. Alignment with militant whites, on a principled basis of supporting self-determination, gave the organization its crucially needed widespread appeal.

The fear of participating, of coming to meetings, of expressing anti-war and pro-black views, was broken down. Photos of pin-up girls and hotrods disappeared from the barracks—up went large photos of Malcolm X on footlocker doors. GIs United adopted the clenched fist salute and chances are now that if you make the gesture to an enlisted man on the base, it will be returned—with a smile.

When the GIs insisted that their activity is perfectly legal and constitutionally guaranteed by the First Amendment, the Army fell flat on its face. Its attempt at repression by arresting the Ft. Jackson Eight rebounded and thrust the movement up to a new level.

GIs United did not die as the Army expected. Meetings are held and a petition campaign in support of the men is being conducted. Another GIs United group has sprung up at Fort Bragg, N.C., containing a number of Vietnam Vets and a half dozen or so Green Berets. Airmen from nearby Shaw Airforce Base are starting now to build their own organization as are similarly inspired Marines from the Beaufort Air Station. And a former Ft. Jackson soldier, now in Vietnam, has written to Jose Rudder, one of the defendants in the stockade, that there soon will be a GIs United in Nam.

And Pvt. Joe Cole, one of the defendants, has written over his cell door: "Through these doors pass the most pissed off colonels in the world." □

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