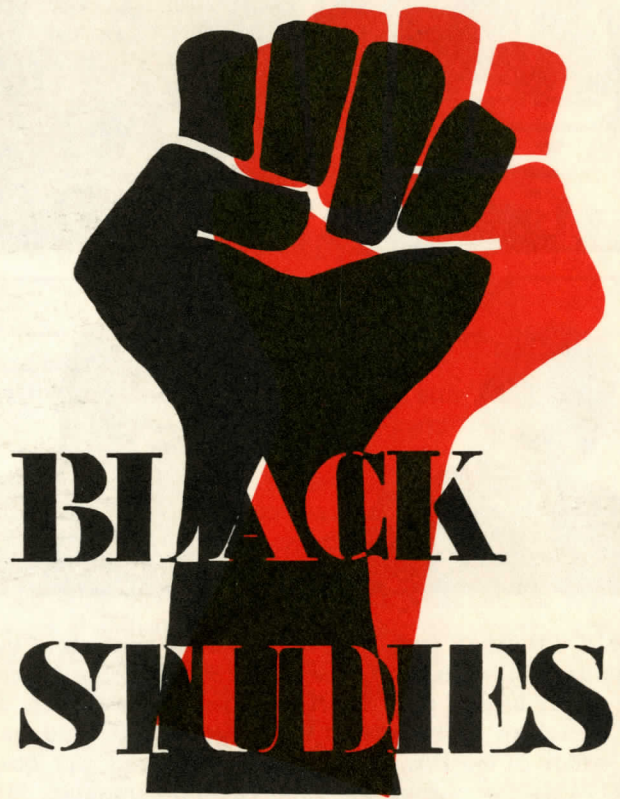


young socialist

JUNE 1969

25¢

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AN ANALYSIS CCNY BINGHAMTON INDIANA PLUS,
FRANCE, ONE YEAR LATER; HOW TO FIGHT IN THE ARMY

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In this issue



TONY THOMAS (*top left*), who does the analysis of the campus explosions, is a member of the National Executive Committee of the YSA. He was formerly a student at the American University in Washington, D.C., and was the editor of the *Afro-Americans for Halstead and Bou-telle Newsletter* during the 1968 election campaign. MIGUEL PADILLA (*top right*), a member of the Manhattan local of the YSA, is presently a student at City College of New York. RUSSELL BLOCK (*center left*) is a member of the National Committee of the YSA and a founder of the Bloomington, Indiana, YSA local. Russell is a graduate student at Indiana University. DAVID THORSTAD (*center right*), YSA National Committee member and a former organizer of the Twin Cities YSA, was a member of the Paris Secretariat of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal. . . . Following the French events last year, the YS devoted an entire issue to the subject, complete with first-hand reports from the YSA's national chairman at that time, Mary-Alice Waters, pictured above with Alain Krivine, Trotskyist candidate who received 1.06% of the vote in the June 1 French presidential elections.

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The two posters on the cover were done by students in the Harvard Graduate School of Design during the Harvard strike and are reprinted from *The Old Mole*.

4 ON THE CAMPUS



1/THE STUDENT REVOLT: AN ANALYSIS

By Tony Thomas

The explosion of campus struggles in the past nine months has been an important advance for the antiwar, student and black liberation movements. They have helped to expose the rottenness of the dying capitalist system with its wars, racism, and imperialism. These evils can only be removed if the system itself is destroyed. The student explosion is demonstrating the kind of uncompromising struggle needed to smash capitalism.

An analysis of these struggles and of the upswing of the student radicalization and the black liberation movement shows that the issues are not limited to the campuses but are central issues facing society as a whole. The spilling over of these struggles from the student movement to other sectors of society largely accounts for the ruling class' fear of them.

The two central issues which have precipitated these struggles have been

the Vietnam war and the struggle for black liberation.

The Vietnam war, as the most significant aspect of the struggle between imperialism and the forces of revolution, has had a strong impact on the development of the campus struggles, both on an objective and subjective level. The war has played a central role in radicalizing masses of students, not only on college campuses but in the high schools.

The economic effects of the war have also been important. Cutbacks in spending and hikes in tuition have spread from campus to campus. This has had an especially adverse effect on Third World students, who are hit most severely by them. On an immediate level, university complicity with the war machine has been an important target of the student struggles, many of which have centered around fighting ROTC and war research.

In this context, the importance of building the mass movement to bring the troops home as a central means of deepening the campus radicalization and as part of the crucial need for solidarity in action with the Viet-

namese people and the growing GI antiwar movement cannot be over-emphasized.

The second major component of these explosions is the struggle for self-determination of black and other Third World students. This struggle has been sharpened by the war because the draft, the deaths and the cutbacks particularly affect the oppressed national minorities. The struggle on the part of blacks and other Third World people to control their own communities has found its most concrete focus thus far in the struggle for black studies programs controlled by black students and the black community, and for open admission of Third World students to universities. City College of New York (CCNY), Cornell, San Francisco State, Southern University, and Howard are just a few examples of the vanguard role Third World students have played in unleashing the new wave of explosions.

Within the black struggle, the black student struggles have played an important role in pointing out a revolutionary axis for organizing—around

Cont'd on p. 22

2/CCNY

By Miguel Padilla

The struggle being waged by Black and Puerto Rican people for the right to determine the educational destinies of their communities, which was the main thrust of the recent struggles at Ocean Hill-Brownsville, has now been unleashed within the walls of one of the main bastions of the racist, capitalist educational system in New York City.

Back in October 1968 Black and Puerto Rican students at City College of New York (CCNY) held a meeting to discuss their grievances against the college administration. A list of demands was formulated and presented to the administration in December. The demands called for:

- 1) A Black and Puerto Rican School of Studies.
- 2) Separate freshman orientation for Black and Puerto Rican students.
- 3) Student voice in setting all guidelines for the SEEK program, including the hiring and firing of all SEEK personnel [SEEK is a special program to allow a handful of Black and Puerto Rican students to attend city colleges without the usual requirements].
- 4) All future entering classes to reflect the racial composition of the New

York City public high schools.

5) Courses in Black and Puerto Rican history and the Spanish language to be required of all education majors.

The administration gave the students the run-around. Some minor disruptions followed which prompted the administration to set up committees which would address themselves to the five demands. These committees, however, turned out to be nothing but paper committees which met infrequently if at all. The Black and Puerto Rican students, realizing the game which was being run down on them, called for a strike to begin on April 21.

The first day of the strike was a success with approximately 30% of the student body staying out of class. A march through the campus supporting the demands was held in which about 2,000 students participated. The Black and Puerto Rican students, however, did not see the possibility of mobilizing support from the majority of the student body, which is 91% white. The next day over 350 Black and Puerto Rican students staged an occupation of the college's south campus. The school was shut down. It was to remain shut for fourteen days.

As soon as the news of the occupation got out, community support began to flood the south campus.

Food, blankets and donations, along with messages of solidarity and support were received throughout the entire occupation. Many people from the community came up to visit and discuss the issues with the students.

A new atmosphere began to develop among the students. Whereas, previously, all discussion had been centered around the five demands, it now began to focus on the university itself. The university, if only temporarily, was at the complete disposal of the students and the surrounding community. A week after the seizure of the south campus, the students held a rally where CCNY was renamed the University of Harlem. The occupation had signalled the beginning of a serious commitment on the part of the Harlem community to the struggle being waged by the students. The administration, fearful of the possible reaction of the community, did not call in the police and was forced to start negotiating with the students.

The negotiations continued for eleven days, producing agreements on demands 2, 3 and 5. It was not until demands 1 and 4 began to be discussed that the true issues involved came to the fore. On the ninth day of the occupation the students and the administration began to discuss the demand for proportional representation in the entering classes. The ne-



Photo by Shelley Ramsdell/New York Press Service

gotiators became deadlocked over the proposal submitted by the student negotiators, calling for a dual admissions policy which would allow the college to admit Black and Puerto Rican students in proportion to their numbers in the public high schools. Two days after this proposal was presented to the administration, a court injunction ordering the students to evacuate the south campus was issued on behalf of the Board of Higher Education. The students, feeling that they

had enough community support and not wanting to get tied up in legal hassles, evacuated the campus but remained on strike.

The next week was marked by repeated racial incidents on campus. The President and the faculty voted to close down the school, but they were overruled by the Board of Higher Education. Five hundred police were brought on campus to enforce the Board's ruling. President Buell Gallagher resigned, not wanting to

face the political pressure being exerted by the Board of Higher Education on the one hand, and the Black and Puerto Rican communities on the other. The new acting President, Joseph Copeland, faced with a growing resentment on the part of the students and faculty over the presence of police on campus, was forced to remove the police and resume negotiations with the students.

The new negotiations produced agreement on all five of the demands.

The agreement would have drastically changed the character of CCNY, but a racist campaign was then launched by the city administration against it. Spearheaded by the City Comptroller, Mario Proccacino, who is seeking the Democratic Party nomination for the mayoralty elections in November, just about every candidate running in the Democratic and Republican primaries attacked the agreement, including Mayor Lindsay and Herman Badillo, Borough President of the Bronx. The only candidates who expressed support for it were mayoral candidates Norman Mailer, who is seeking the Democratic Party nomination, and Paul Boutelle of the Socialist Workers Party.

The attacks have focused on the proposal for proportional representation in the entering classes. Cries of "quota system" and "separatism" have been splashed across the pages of the bourgeois press. Local hacks from the Board of Higher Education have warned that if the proposals are accepted, the standards of CCNY will be compromised, making a diploma from the College a "worthless scrap of paper!"

All of these arguments are shallow, reflecting nothing but the racist mentality of those who present them. The proposal submitted by the Black and Puerto Rican students calls for a dual admissions policy. Under this policy 50% of the entering classes would be admitted on the basis of traditional academic criteria. The other 50%, however, would be recruited from thirteen specified ghetto schools located throughout the city. These ghetto schools are approximately 45% white. On this basis Black and Puerto Rican students would be able to enter City College without being penalized for the inadequate education which they receive at these notoriously inadequate schools in which they are concentrated. The charge that this policy constitutes a quota system, which in the past has been used to keep out minority groups from schools as well as jobs, is nothing but blatant hypocrisy on the part of those who make it.

Another argument repeated by opponents of the dual admissions policy is that if "those" students (meaning Black and Puerto Rican) are admitted, the standards of education at CCNY will drop. This is an out and out

racist insult, similar to that used by real estate agents who refuse to rent housing to non-white people on the basis that the property value of the neighborhood will drop.

Black and Puerto Rican students participating in the SEEK program have proved that this argument has no basis in reality and is in fact nothing but a figment of the racist imagination of those who employ it. The overwhelming majority of SEEK students, who are Black and Puerto Rican students who did not qualify academically to enter college upon leaving high school, go on to earn Bachelor's degrees in college. The argument that a poor record of achievement in high school will lead to a poor record in college is simply another racist argument which seeks to make the victim the criminal and the criminal the victim.

It is the racist educational system, which stamps the mark of this racist society upon non-white peoples, that is the cause of the cultural and educational deprivations which Black and Puerto Rican people suffer in New York City.

The charge of separatism has no basis whatsoever. The demand for a Black and Puerto Rican School of Studies reflects the need for an education that is relevant to them and their communities. Such a School of Studies is needed to fill the educational gap left by schools like City College, whose purpose is to miseducate and mislead in order to maintain the status quo.

The real issues involved are not quota systems or "separatism," but whether or not City College is going to relate to the Harlem community which surrounds it. The real issue in the dispute over proportional representation is whether or not Black and Puerto Rican people are going to receive their rightful claim to a higher education. As of now, the racist educational system in New York City pushes Black and Puerto Rican children out, forcing them to occupy the lowest rung on the economic ladder and to provide the cannon fodder for American imperialist aggression in Vietnam. The Lindsays, the Proccacinos and the Badillos want to keep it this way. The Black and Puerto Rican student community at City College does not. □

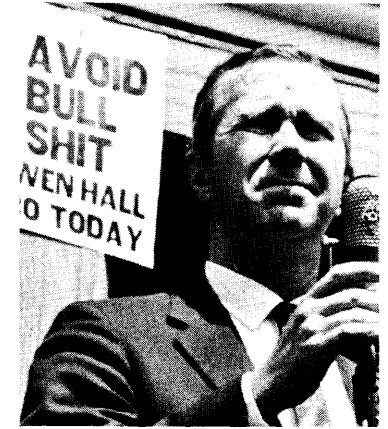


Photo by the Spectator

IU Dean William Madden at mass rally failing to heed advice of sign at his rear.

By Russell Block

Students at Indiana University are now in the midst of protest action against a drastic 68% increase in instate fees for the coming semester. As this article is being written, a grand jury investigation is underway. With the possibility of indictments against black students for their part in a "lock-in" of faculty, administrators, and student negotiators at a meeting held on May 8, the movement is far from over. It is not too early, however, to take stock of the lessons learned from the earlier phase of the action which is now completed.

The roots of student discontent at I. U. go much deeper than just the fee increase. This fact is clear from the militant opposition to the fee increase among students who can afford to pay it. The fee increase itself was a detonator which set off a reaction to a deep feeling of resentment about the powerlessness of students to influence the decisions which affect their lives.

The corporation tax in Indiana is 2% compared to 5-7% in neighboring states. The state rulers prefer

3 / INDIANA

heavy taxes on small property owners and regressive taxes such as a 2% sales tax and excise tax on liquor, cigarettes, and gasoline to taxing corporations and industrial property. Last November Republican Gov. Edgar D. Whitcomb had been elected on an unrealistic promise to not raise taxes. Consequently, the Indiana legislature met in its biannual session in January and February and passed a budget that was woefully inadequate. Expected cuts were made in the areas of education and mental health.

Also, the legislature imposed punitive budget cuts on the two major state universities, I. U. and Purdue, in order to put unruly students in their place before things got "out of hand", as they had in places like Columbia, Berkeley, and Wisconsin. The legislators especially objected to the underground newspapers the *Spectator* at I. U. and its Purdue counterpart, *Bauls*, and to the recently instituted policy of open visitation at I. U. which permits students to entertain members of the opposite sex in their dormitory rooms three days a week.

The tactic taken by the administration and student government at I. U. to head off the expected budget cut was the "coat and tie approach." The vast majority of I. U. students, who at the time still believed that the problem was one of correcting an unfortunate misimpression in the minds of legislators, accepted this approach. Leaders of student government, the fraternities, and sororities were dispatched to the state capitol in Indianapolis in their most impeccable attire to convince the legislature that open visitation was really a confirmation of student responsibility, that radical activist students were only a tiny fraction of the student population, and that no one listened to them anyway. The failure of the "coat and tie approach" went a long way toward convincing I. U. students that living up to ruling

class standards of respectability was not the way to gain concessions.

Students resented the Neanderthal attitude of the legislature and the cavalier attitude of the administration which imposed the levy of student fees. This laid the basis for building a mass movement. An outdoor rally of 2,500 students on Thursday, April 24, called in support of the anti-fee hike movement at Purdue, called for a meeting with trustees and administrators the following Monday. We spent the weekend building the Monday meeting using the considerable resources of the reluctant student government.

Ten thousand students showed up at the Monday meeting. The trustees, who have the final decision-making power on matters such as setting fees, did not appear. David Derge, the heavy-handed acting president of the university, explained that they were busy men with many responsibilities. One was off trying cases in the Federal District Court, another was junketing in Europe, the others remained unaccounted for. Derge was drowned out by a chorus of boos. Students rightly interpreted the absence of the trustees as a slap in the face. It was clear that they did not feel that their responsibilities included meeting with students on issues of vital concern to the university, and that they represented the interests of the rich and the arrogant, not of the university community at large. We were further able to underline the class nature of the conflict over fees by pointing out that although the administration flatly refused to raise fees on the dozens of services offered to the Indiana business community on a cost basis, it thought nothing of imposing the entire burden of the budget deficit on students. We further suggested that the residence hall "counseling" staff be done away with and the money thus saved be used for scholarships for

students to be awarded on the basis of need, not willingness to serve as an administration policeman in the dormitories. The largest show of support came when we suggested that the ROTC program be abolished to save money. Several thousand students jumped to their feet, clenched fists raised and roared their approval. Once again this was an illustration of the class nature of the struggle. Students resented their fees going to train the forces to suppress people who were like themselves fighting for control over their own lives. The threat of the national guard being called in at the first minor "provocation" strengthened the feeling of resentment about ruling class use of military force. The rally voted approval of four demands: 1) Immediate annulment of the fee increase; 2) A student budget committee with parity (veto power over the budget); 3) A graduated fee scale based on income by 1970; 4) No tuition by 1972. The administration was given 48 hours to reply.

At a Tuesday night rally to discuss tactics the YSA proposed calling a two-day boycott of classes at the Wednesday rally with another rally on Sunday evening to reconsider. Student government was unhappy about the prospect of a boycott which smacked too much of disruption for their taste. They were afraid of the mass movement and wanted to disperse it. Their plan was to encourage students to go back home to talk to the grass roots and explain the student demands. We explained to students that, although it was important to explain the anti-fee hike movement to the people of the state, our real power was in the mass movement at the university—in calling a boycott, mobilizing thousands of students and showing that we could close the university down. The vehicle for explaining our demands was to explain the

boycott. At the same time we would be putting pressure on the administration, the trustees, and the legislature to explain why their decisions had led to massive if peaceful disruption of the normal university process. A large-scale boycott could not be explained away as a few radicals making trouble. They would be forced to make concessions to get us back to class.

Another criticism of the boycott came from the ultralefts. This group wanted to declare the campus in a state of rebellion (one can imagine what the rabid Indianapolis press could have done with this) and encourage people to take unspecified actions in small groups. These actions were to be initiated by a millin at the administration building. Their theory was that if you don't make it clear at the outset what you plan to do no one can claim that you have failed! We argued that this approach would totally derail the movement, which would be reduced to thousands of apprehensive students waiting to see what one or two hundred "committed" individuals would do. It would play into the hands of the governor, who was waiting for the slightest excuse to flood the campus with cops and discredit the movement as the work of a few "violent" people. A two-day boycott would give every student on campus a way to participate in the anti-fee hike movement on the basis of *minimal* commitment. At the same time we proposed that students not invade administration territory, but rather fight on their own grounds by taking control of the dormitories.

The Wednesday rally voted for a two-day boycott and against the millin. In several dorms boycott committees sprang up. One dormitory established a clearing house for information, another published a boycott news bulletin. The committees took over the offices, supplies and mimeograph machines in their dormitories. As long as the mass movement was strong, no one dared stop them. It is one thing to send police into an administrative building to remove students and quite another to send them into the dorms which students consider to be their homes.

Proof of the strength of the mass movement came at a rally the next

day called to hear the administration reply to the demands. Forty-five minutes before the beginning of the rally a fire broke out in the graduate library. Smoke from burning books hung over the crowd as acting chancellor John Snyder delivered the administration's answer to the student demands. Snyder tried to use the fire to break the strike. He said that people all over the state would blame the fire on dissident students and demanded that students get back to class. But much to Snyder's surprise, students reacted with rage to his innuendo. A chorus of boos swept through the crowd. Defiant students shouted, "You set it yourself." Snyder, who had expected students to crawl back to class, was forced at the end of the meeting to retract his statement and make it clear that he believed the boycotting students were not responsible for the fire.

A committee of about forty representatives from campus political groups, housing units, fraternities and sororities was set up. The purpose of this Campus Caucus was not to resolve all differences and present a single plan of action to the mass rallies, but rather to discuss and settle superficial differences to simplify the decision making at the rallies, and to provide for a fair representation of conflicting opinions so students could decide. It was an attempt to enforce principled politics on the student government.

At the Sunday rally to reconsider the boycott, student government violated the agreement on agenda and presentation of proposals and tried to impose its own views on the rally of some 10,000. The attempt failed and student government was further discredited, but a great deal of confusion resulted. The final split occurred on Tuesday evening. An expanded caucus committee voted to reaffirm the demands, the boycott and to support Purdue students who had been arrested in a sit-in that afternoon. Student government, the fraternities and sororities, and the Inter-residence Halls Association (IRHA), who wished to see the boycott end with the march to the capitol planned for Wednesday, quietly pulled out. At the same time, SDS announced that it was calling a secret meeting to plan small group actions.

Finally, the success of the boycott depended largely on the actions of the faculty. With final exams approaching, students began to fear losing the whole semester. Only by keeping up the pressure of the boycott could the faculty be persuaded to give "incompletes", and only by persuading the faculty to give "incompletes" could the boycott be maintained with finals only two weeks away. The contradiction was insoluble and the boycott dwindled toward the end of the week. A meeting of about 1,000 students voted to call it off on Friday, eight days after it had begun.

During the boycott the political level of the campus sky-rocketed. Discussions among students which began on the issue of the fee increase branched out to consider every aspect of society. Several dorms organized free universities which invited in speakers and held discussions on the relevance of bourgeois education to social problems in the ghettos, whether ROTC belonged on campus, the tax structure and power structure in Indiana, tactics for changing society, etc. One informal discussion between YSAers and members of a boycott committee lasted five hours.

On the Thursday before the boycott was ended black students seized the initiative by blocking the doors at a negotiating session between administration, faculty and students and declaring that no one would leave until the trustees had agreed to live up to their responsibilities and meet with students to consider the four demands. The administration retaliated by calling upon the Monroe County prosecutor to launch a grand jury investigation of the incident. The call for a witch-hunt did not produce the desired results as students whose level of combativity was raised by the mass movement refused to deplore the black students' action but instead called a rally of about 1,000 to launch a vigorous defense. After the rally about 300 students marched on the county court house where the grand jury proceedings were in progress and declared their intention to file charges against the governor, trustees and university administrators for their part in depriving students of an education. It is generally felt that I. U. will never be the same. □

4 / BINGHAMTON

THE MAKING OF A PRESIDENT 1969



PRESIDENT WURTZEL

When YSAer Gary Wurtzel entered the race for President of the student government at Harpur College in Binghamton, New York, few on campus would have given him a chance of winning. Yet, when the final vote was counted in a run-off election, Wurtzel had defeated his nearest opponent by nearly a 3 to 1 margin; YSA candidate for Secretary, Andrea Baron, won by better than 2 to 1, and the other candidates on the YSA slate made impressive showings. A record turnout of 86% of the student body had voted.

The YSA campaign stands as a model. In talks, debates and frequent leaflets the YSA ran a hard-hitting socialist campaign. A sample of the kind of literature used is the following list of frequently asked questions and answers.

Q. If you are elected, will you serve? In short, are you running a serious campaign?

A. If any of the socialist candidates are elected, they have every intention of serving and carrying out the mandate the students would have given them. We are running a serious campaign, around serious issues. When we run for a USG post, it is because we wish to see our ideas implemented in USG.

Q. By running aren't you only helping the conservatives by drawing away votes that would normally go to liberal candidates?

A. We don't see too much difference between USG liberals and USG conservatives when it comes down to what actually gets done. There is a saying that "action speaks louder than words." The liberals in USG are very good at passing resolutions and at setting up sub-committees, but it is quite a different story when the necessity for massive and militant action arises.

The only thing a vote for a USG liberal will accomplish is another year of inaction on the part of USG.

Q. Is it true that you're running only to convert USG into a vehicle to start strikes and riots?

A. Our position is very clear. If we are elected, it is because a majority of the student body favors our political orientation and election platform. When parliamentary action by USG fails, as it does on many occasions (for example, California table grapes, nature of the judicial system, tripling, war, etc.), it is our belief that a mass movement is needed to advance the struggle. We don't elevate student strikes to a political principle. Its necessity or desirability is relative to objective political conditions and circumstances. However, should the occasion call for mass action, we promise militant and resolute leadership.

Q. If military recruiters are banned, doesn't that interfere with their right of free speech?

A.Neither YSA, SDS nor any campus radical group favors denying the Marines the right of free speech. They have a right to come to the university and speak in favor of the war, the virtues of military service or anything else they want. However, it's quite another thing to allow the Marines to use university facilities to advance their criminal, immoral objectives. By the same token, we'd allow the KKK to come to campus and speak on the virtues of racism, but we would not permit them to recruit people for a lynch mob.

Q.What educational reforms do you favor?

A.We support the demands for abolition of mandatory grading. We feel that students who do not desire grades should have the option of pass/fail. We are also opposed to final exams, not seeing any particular educational value that they serve. We feel that students should have the option of a paper. Course requirements should also be abolished. While we realize that it is impossible to have a free university in an unfree society, we nevertheless believe in fighting for needed educational reform.

Q.Why are you running as socialists?

A.Our candidates believe that it is this system which is responsible for the problems America faces—racism, war, poverty—rather than individual personalities or the psyche of one or another nationality group. We realize that if we change a personality in the administration building, the basic character of the university will remain intact. We thus feel that it is impossible to separate the problems of the university from the problems of society, and those concerned about the problems of the university should seek solutions in the basic nature of society. This concept, of course, shapes our political policy. Our goal is a society free from exploitation of man by man, a society free from war, racism, and poverty—in short, we desire socialism.

Q.What will a vote for the candidates accomplish?

A.Even if we are not elected, a significant socialist vote will be meaningful in that it will indicate widespread feelings on the part of students that fundamental change is needed in both the university and society. A vote for the candidates of the YSA is a vote for a radical alternative in USG and vote for a new type of politics on the Harpur campus. □

JOIN THE YSA



IF YOU SUPPORT THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT, THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE, THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE, A SOCIALIST AMERICA, YOU BELONG IN THE YSA. . .

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I want to join the YSA

I would like more information

It is now one year since the JCR (Revolutionary Communist Youth)—the French counterpart of the YSA—played a leading role in igniting the explosion that came close to toppling French capitalism and dramatically demonstrated the possibility of revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. The de Gaulle regime soon saw fit to reward the JCR by outlawing it, along with several other left groups, including the PCI (Internationalist Communist Party), the French equivalent of the Socialist Workers Party.

Since then, former members of the JCR and PCI have been going about the difficult task of consolidating a revolutionary vanguard. "Rouge" ("Red"), an attractive and professionally done newspaper, has served as a focal point for their work. In key factories in the south of France they have been getting out "Taupes Rouges" ("Red Moles"), locally-oriented educational and agitational bulletins.

The culmination of this work was the birth of a new revolutionary socialist organization, the Communist League. In one of its first actions, the Communist League created a national stir by running former JCR leader Alain Krivine for President of the French Republic.

The following analysis, which outlines a strategy for success in the struggle to overthrow French capitalism, is taken from an article in the April 16 issue of "Rouge." The translation is by the Young Socialist.

FRANCE, ONE YEAR LATER:

THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

On April 5-8 the first convention of the Communist League was held. The new organization was born out of an internal selection from the "Rouge" Supporter Clubs formed around the newspaper. The "Rouge" Supporter Clubs essentially grouped together activists from the ex-JCR, the ex-PCI, and especially activists who came into politics during May. It would have been possible to form a new organization in September, but it would have been nothing but an extension of the pre-May grouplets. The "Rouge" Supporter Clubs permitted the establishment of a working-class base, which radically modifies the nature of the new organization in comparison to the former groups.

Out of a differentiation within the "Rouge" Supporter Clubs, "Rouge" Cells were created. The 220 mandated delegates from these Cells held the Convention after three months of preparatory

discussions. The discussions saw the formation within the "Rouge" Cells of tendencies grouped around different documents. There were three such tendencies, whose documents and supporters were free to circulate within the "Rouge" Cells.

This discussion, which was on a high political level, vigorous and often very polemical, is a good sign for the future of the Communist League. By renewing the traditions of workers' democracy, it proved it was possible to have an open debate without ending in the legendary splits. The phenomenon is particularly educational for an organization 65% of whose members are between 19 and 25 years old, that is, an organization that is socially and politically young, since 55% of its members came into politics during and following May. The dangers of sectarianism and a hardening of positions to an extreme were real. They were avoided, which is also a sign of the nature of the present period: the reality of revolutionary perspectives corrects and erases the ani-

mosities which hasten degeneration and splits in a period of ebb.

The extent of its roots and still unfinished character of its program do not permit it to call itself a party; but already its political position with regard to the CP is such that it can avoid all redundant terms of distinction (revolutionary communist, internationalist, or Marxist-Leninist) and simply call itself communist.

1) AFTER MAY: THE NECESSARY ORGANIZATION

May changed the position of the vanguard groups, increased their possibilities and multiplied their responsibilities: today they must go beyond their marginal role of commenting on the class struggle to become protagonists in it . . . or else degenerate into revolutionary student currents. It is not a question of seeing this change as an athletic feat, but as a vital necessity for revolutionary perspectives



Two views of Communist League campaign rally of 10,000 in Paris May 28.

in France. It is the purpose of the Communist League to help bring this about.

The Gaullist regime has had trouble digesting May. The bourgeoisie hardly has any more confidence in its one-time savior after the resurrection of the proletariat. In November, while trying to reassure itself by applauding at military parades, it was sending its money out of the country; today, while de Gaulle asks it to close ranks for the referendum, it is uneasy, it rants, debates, gossips and argues with a vengeance.

The monetary crisis gnaws away at the regime like a fever. The bosses are trying to take back the Grenelle concessions; the shopkeepers refuse to pay the cost. Each hollers and tries to get what he can, and the other be damned.

Following May, people with a schematic approach thought history was like an intersection of broad avenues, all leading straight ahead: either to social democracy or fascism. But it is hard to see just where the bourgeoisie would have found the basis for pacifying the working class once the FGDS [Federation de la Gauche Democratique et Socialiste—Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left] had burst into pieces . . . unless the CP could have been made a part of such a solution; but its subservience to Moscow was still too suspect. As for fascism, it is not enough to just brandish it like a fan. You also need the means to bring it about. The means—force—for smashing the organizations of the working class and atomizing the proletariat; the means for separating out a militant petty bourgeois social base; the means for carrying out an economic policy confined to the borders of France. All of which, for the immediate period, seem quite ridiculous.

In reality, the bourgeoisie finds itself confronted with one compelling alternative: either restore the strong State, set up by Gaullism, and rebuild a political vacuum around it, or else fall back into a policy of concessions to the petty and middle bourgeoisie, which would go against the interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

The turbulence of the petty bourgeoisie adds a new unknown to the chronic, latent crisis of the regime. The crisis will not be unravelled without workers' struggles and the intervention of a conscious, organized vanguard.

The working class after May, in fact, remains willing to struggle, but disabled. Having been educated in the old social-democratic blueprint of the minimum and maximum program, militants ought to have been in full disarray after the electoral debacle in June: the tourniquet no

longer works. With the parliamentary outlet blocked, the mass mobilizations—strictly limited as they were to making economic demands—are rudely revealed to be exactly what they are: nothing but slow, excessive, constantly repetitious work. The result is a process of dismemberment at the heart of the class, separating the mass of the workers, who are willing to struggle yet have no perspective and are on the defensive, from a few isolated vanguard militants who are drifting towards ultra-leftism for lack of the slogans and objectives which can rebuild class unity.

In this situation, we see two apparently contradictory phenomena. On the one hand, faced with the bosses' repression, which takes the form of speed-ups and politically-motivated lay-offs, the workers will hesitate to enter into struggle without the legal cover of the union. On the other hand, certain militants firmly established in the same shop are taking advantage of the contradictions of automation to take the initiative in the struggle and, by virtue of their situation in the enterprise, to completely paralyze one or several related factories. . . . Thus, by their effectiveness, these actions provide militants with a new margin of maneuverability with regard to the union bureaucracy and a greater opportunity to resist the bosses.

Yet, these actions have not managed to spread from one enterprise to others. For them to spread, the union remains a necessary relay. And without this relay, the skirmishes fizzle out.

To prevent the crisis of Stalinism from turning into an ideological stampede, to offer a revolutionary alternative to a decadent Gaullism, and to rebuild working-class unity in struggle, a revolutionary organization is no longer merely theoretically necessary—it is urgent.

II) BETWEEN THE GROUPLETS AND THE PARTY—THE LEAGUE

What characterized the grouplets before May was their marginal relationship to the realities of the class struggle. Having salvaged a few odds and ends of revolutionary strategy from the theoretical ruins of Stalinism, they were able to understand fairly well the fluctuations of the political struggle, as well as the Stalinist and revisionist betrayals. Today, they have gained ground in the struggle itself and can no longer be satisfied to merely comment on it, but must prove their abilities to provide leadership, if only on a small scale.

However, the road to building the revolutionary party is not broad and straight.

The working class is not a new reality, pure and uncommitted, but a class which has been politically and ideologically deformed by 40 years of Stalinist education and methods. This phenomenon imposes a course of building the revolutionary party which is not simple, but which proceeds FROM THE PERIPHERY TOWARDS THE CENTER.

From now on it is necessary to try to direct ourselves to the decisive, central nuclei of the working class. To the vanguard workers at Renault, for example. But they cannot be convinced of our abilities to organize them by our good faith alone. We must give practical, concrete proof of our abilities to organize and lead mass struggles. This is why building vanguard organizations today begins by exploring the cracks in Stalinism, by shaking its weak links. Thus, the role of the students in May can be explained by the fact that the student movement, providing the Stalinist apparatus with a weak handle, was the first to come under the influence and control of the vanguard groups.

Today, this concentric building of the revolutionary party from the periphery towards the center goes on in several ways. The new vanguards, having given proof of their ability to lead mass student struggles, have acquired a certain audience and influence in the working class, and have softened up the Stalinist corset. Yet they are not able to organize and lead struggles in the traditional sectors of the class. Their ability to take the initiative is inversely proportionate to the weight of the Stalinist apparatus. Thus, the sectors which are most receptive to their propaganda are often those of a young proletariat with few traditions of struggle and organization (Chemistry), or else certain layers of the CFDT [Confederation Francaise et Democratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor] which are innovative and unclear by comparison with the campaigns mounted by the CGT [Confederation Generale du Travail—General Confederation of Labor]. Finally, and especially, their ability to stand up to the CP and to gain an advantage over it through dynamism and initiative is developing much faster in the provinces than it is in Paris.

There the CP's apparatus is often short of breath, worm-eaten, barely infused with new life, linked to local dignitaries, and does not have at its disposal the social base that it has in the red suburbs. Moreover, confrontations between the vanguard and the CP quickly take on a general character. While the separation between the place of work and place of residence in the Parisian suburbs tends to

fragment the class, break down the relationship of forces, and leave the leftists in each enterprise standing alone before their boss and the bureaucrats, in the provinces cities often constitute political units where an event at a particular point immediately takes on a local significance and dimension. That is why, in the immediate period, the CP will be encircled by the provinces and will suffer its sharpest defeats there. Parallel to that, diligent work in the strong-holds of the CP will make it possible to highlight both the significance of its defeats and the progress of the vanguard, as well as increase the authority of the revolutionary militants.

. . . the League has to compensate for the possible consequences of its primarily young, student composition by reinforcing the criteria for selecting militants, and through the centralization of the organization. Controlling the organization is not the only goal of this centralization. It is also the only way to create a nation-wide relationship of forces with the CP. The vanguard will not outwit the CP by running up a series of confrontations within individual enterprises. The iron collar of Stalinism will not be torn off bit by bit. Just as workers' struggles are easily led astray into an economist, reformist struggle if they remain limited to a single enterprise, confronting a single boss, and are not politically united against the bourgeois class and its State, so the vanguard will not overcome the bureaucracy by confronting and fighting each bureaucrat in each enterprise. **WHAT CHARACTERIZES THE BUREAUCRACY IS ITS ATOMIZATION OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE, ITS SCATTERING OUT OF BATTLES. IF THE BUREAUCRACY IS TO BE OVERCOME, OPPOSITION TO THE CP MUST STEM FROM AN ABILITY TO ORGANIZE ON A NATION-WIDE BASIS.**

Thus, building the revolutionary party implies a real strategy, not improvisation. In order to avoid a fruitless scattering of the effects of its intervention, and to prevent the CP from isolating the "leftists" so as to be better able to fight them, the organization has to divide up its forces, centralize its information (by region, by industrial branch), de-compartmentalize its struggles, and oppose the CP with a centralized national organization, not a formless, soft fringe of local groups and isolated militants.

III) THE INTERVENTION OF THE LEAGUE

In order to no longer be a vanguard of the student movement but a revolutionary organization intervening in the student milieu (among others), the Com-

munist League declares its priority of priorities to be work in the working class. It is not simply a question of thereby mechanically conforming to the rudiments of Marxist theory, but of reaffirming in practice the historic role of the proletariat after Stalinist betrayals have served as a pretext for all kinds of sociological vagues about the affluent society and the disappearance of the working class.

As far as work in the working class is concerned, the Communist League will have to solve two fundamental problems. The first is that of finding the slogans which will make it possible to reunite the working class through struggle and to re-educate it after forty years of Stalinist blueprints on the dual program. This practical reeducation can be accomplished by working out a **TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM** which gives political dimension to the elementary demands of the class, and which makes them converge on the question of power by formulating them around slogans of veto power and the theme of workers' control. For example, after *May*, when increase in productivity and lay-offs were at the heart of the bosses' policies, the slogan of the right of veto over production line tempos, lay-offs and factory closings would have had its full significance. It implies that workers in struggle organize into committees in order to exercise this veto without taking any part in the running of the factories. With the relationship of forces inherited from *May*, these committees would have deepened the existing political and economic crisis by helping bring about a policy which went against the interests of the bosses, and they would have thereby even laid the groundwork for further, inevitable direct confrontations.

In order to respond to the political crisis of Gaullism, to recreate working-class unity in struggle, to give direction, orientation and perspective to the brutal but brilliant struggles of the working class, from now on the formation of a **TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM** is the central task of the vanguard.

But unfortunately, a program has no magic virtue all by itself. The development and reinforcement of the vanguard are the only necessary guarantee and the only real means for politically arming the working class. Ideas are not enough. Without the forces that carry them, they are mere soap suds at the mercy of reformist winds. And yet today a layer of fighting workers has broken loose from the hold of the CP. Nonetheless, these workers do not see any vanguard group giving proof in practice of its abilities to really lead working-class struggles.

The weakness of the relationship of

forces between the vanguard and the CP means that a number of vanguard workers are now evolving in a no man's land of uncertainty between the CP and the groups, unable to definitively choose without having gone through the testing ground of struggle. Therefore, the Communist League must adopt forms for gaining roots in the class, helping to polarize these elements without imposing upon them a formal agreement with every point in its program. This is the role of the "Taupes Rouges" which are spreading in the south, and which, under the political control of the League, are bringing worker militants into its activities without asking them to accept all of its positions. These "Taupes Rouges" are establishing a political relationship of forces with the CP in political units (factories, branches of industry, suburbs, provincial cities, sections of town), and multiplying them is today one of the primary tasks for the development of a working-class base, as well as the necessary means for developing and deepening our program.

In order to carry out this task, the Communist League must subordinate all of its activities to it and play its role to the fullest extent, particularly in the student milieu, which remains uncommitted and capable of being mobilized.

Having become a real mass movement in the last eight years, the student movement—the weakest link in the Stalinist chain of influence—has been forced by the weakness of the developing vanguard groups to play a role of substituting itself for the vanguard in various ways. When workers' struggles were quiescent ('63-65), the student movement set itself up as the bad conscience of the workers' movement, countering its own program . . . to the do-nothing policies of the Stalinist leadership. With the revival in workers' struggles . . . and by mounting a campaign through student and teachers' unions around broad trade-union themes (Social security, professional training, employment), the student movement changed into a pressure group on the workers' movement. . . . The room for maneuver was small, and the student movement could not play this role indefinitely without becoming one of the submissive components of the so-called "democratic" forces. Throughout this whole period, the vanguard groups which came out of the UEC [Union des Etudiants Communistes—Communist Students Union] were maturing within the student movement, but the student movement continued to glide on in the narrow, syndicalist formations inherited from student corporatism, in which it found the necessary format for playing

its role with regard to the workers' movement.

March 22 marks an abrupt departure. Under the impulse of vanguard militants, the student movement risks taking the initiative. It is no longer flowing along in the pre-established molds of UNEF [Union Nationale des Etudiants de France—National Union of French Students]. The vanguard groups move into the foreground and structure the movement into the March 22 organs of struggle—the Action Committees—which reunite its political forms of action (anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-bureaucratic) which up until that time were split apart from each other. Thus, essentially through its forms of struggle, the student movement can play a tactical vanguard role, and be a detonator and accelerator of the class struggle.

Today, the forms of struggle are no longer enough. For student struggles to have meaning for the working class they will have to convey an alternative pro-

grammatic content to the orientation of the CP. But this content cannot emerge from the student movement itself. It can only come from the vanguards who determine political and tactical initiatives in relation to an over-all understanding of the class struggle and the political context. Thus, in its role of tactical vanguard and substitute, the student movement must from now on give way to the strategic vanguards in the process of regrouping.

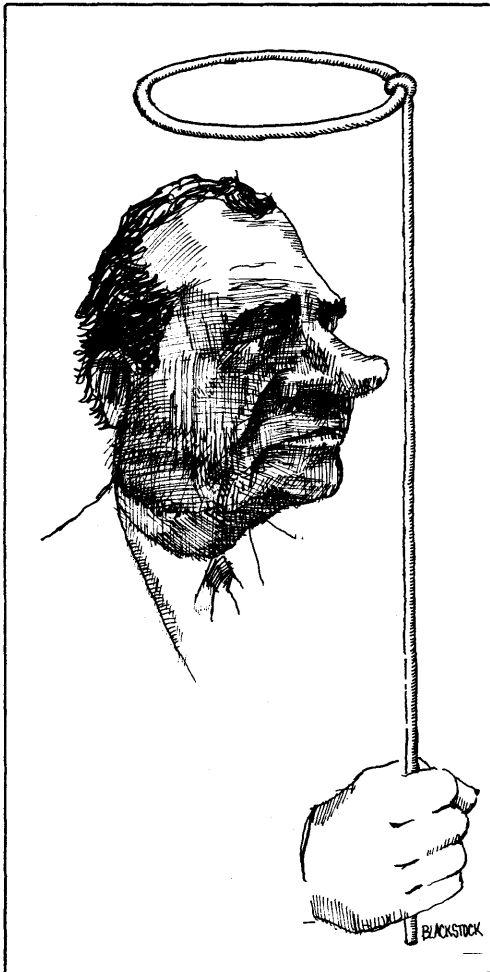
The principal tasks of the Communist League in the immediate period are: To establish a framework for the vanguard so it can fight against ultra-left and reformist ideologies born from the relapse of the student movement; define tactical objectives for the movement in accord with an over-all political analysis; reunite its formations of mobilization. These tasks must enable it to be not a student grouplet among others, but a revolutionary organization intervening in the student milieu on the basis of an understanding of the

historic interests of the proletariat. . . .

This, then, is where the Communist League stands in regard to the crisis of Gaullism, the social-democratization of the CP, and the main necessities of political action. But just as the relationship of forces with the CP cannot be seen as the mere sum total of our respective activists, but rather as a political relationship of forces on a national scale, so the struggle against imperialism and Stalinism cannot be reduced to the sum total of forces appearing on various fronts at random, empirically developing their line. The struggle against imperialism must be international. And if the struggle against Stalinism is international, it too will speed up the regroupment and programmatic development of the new vanguards and give precision to their strategic involvement in the mass movement. It is to this end that the first Convention of the Communist League voted to join the Fourth International. □



Alain Krivine addressing Renault workers.



NIXONESE

This article originally appeared in the British newspaper the Black Dwarf. The illustrations were drawn for the Young Socialist by Nelson Blackstock.

I think it is vital that Britain be a part of Europe.

I say that the time has come for other nations in the free world to bear their fair share of the burden of defending peace and freedom around the world.

What we've got to do is walk softly and carry a big stick and we can have peace in this world.

I would withhold aid from any country which directly or indirectly was providing aid and assistance to any enemy of the United States.

Let those who have the responsibility to enforce our laws, and our judges who have the responsibility to interpret them, be dedicated to the great principles of civil rights. But let them also recognize that the first civil right of every American is to be free from domestic violence. And that right must be guaranteed in this country.

And to those who say that law and order is the code word for racism, here is our reply: 'Our goal is justice, justice for every American. If we are to have respect for law in America, we must have laws that deserve respect.'

There is no mystery about what causes inflation. It springs from the desire of politicians to bestow upon the people more favors than the people are prepared immediately to pay for.

Rather than more millions on welfare rolls, let's get more millions on payrolls in the United States. I will initiate programs in which the Federal government will provide tax credits and other incentives to train the unemployed.

The reason there are going to be some Texans in my Administration . . . is because there are a lot of brains in this state. And I am not saying this because I am on a Texas radio program.

**WHITE CAPITALISTS SHOULD STICK
TOGETHER**

**WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO PUT A GUARD
ON EVERY ESSO PUMP IN THE WHOLE WIDE
WORLD. HELP OR ELSE.**

**IF YOU'RE THINKING OF OPENING YOUR
MOUTH, OPEN IT WIDE, BECAUSE WE'RE
GOING TO DROP A BOMB IN IT.**

**WE DON'T NEED TO CONQUER THE WORLD.
LET'S BUY IT.**

**THE BLACKS ARE HUMAN BEINGS. THIS
ENTITLES THEM TO THE RIGHT TO
BE OPPRESSED.**

**AND TO THOSE WHO SAY THAT BASH
THE BLACKS MEANS BASH THE BLACKS,
HERE IS OUR REPLY: 'BASH THE BLACKS.'**

**THE POOR HAVE THE PERMISSION TO ROT.
IF THIS IS NOT ENOUGH, WE WILL CONCEDE
THEM THE RIGHT TO BE KILLED.**

**IN ORDER TO HELP THE POOR, I WILL GIVE
THE MONEY TO THE RICH.**

I'M A HYPOCRITE AND PROUD OF IT.

AND ENGLISH



"Most of us working together at Hood don't see the demonstrations serving no purpose except to stick your neck out for no reason . . . We're not interested in getting up front in a demonstration and giving reformist organizations legitimacy . . . They see themselves in supportive roles, and we don't need supporters, we need fellow combatants."

— Ex-GI Dave Kline in **NEW LEFT NOTES**.

"The fact that 100,000 people turned out in the bloody rain to back us up—now we're ready to do anything."

— A GI participant in the New York April 5 antiwar demonstration.

"It is absolutely essential for us to operate on an open basis, with everybody knowing who we are and where we are. That's the only way we can be an effective force in the movement against the war. This idea of operating underground, you know, passing the newspaper under the mess hall table to the next man, who sticks it under his shirt and sneaks into the latrine and reads it—damn that approach."

— Jose Rudder, **GIs United Against the War in Vietnam**.

HOW TO FIGHT IN THE ARMY: A REPLY TO THE UNDERGROUND

By David Thorstad

On May 20 military authorities at Fort Jackson, S.C., realized they had no case against antiwar GIs on the base and decided to drop charges against the last of the activists of GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, and to release them from the stockade, where they were being held because of their antiwar views. Their release marked a spectacular victory for the right of servicemen to oppose

the war. It demonstrates not only the fact that GIs have the right to voice their antiwar views, but that they can defeat attempts by the brass to prevent them from openly organizing other GIs to do the same.

Furthermore, this victory reflects the considerable progress that is being made in organizing the widespread and potentially explosive antiwar sentiment existing within the military.

The increasing visibility of the GI antiwar movement has led the mass media to give it a great deal of attention recently. In the last couple of months, for example, the *New York Times* has carried numerous articles

on Fort Jackson GIs United, attempting to diagnose the severity of the antiwar infection within the ranks of the Army. And it seems to be quite severe. One of the leaders of GIs United claims that 80-90% of the more than 20,000 men at Fort Jackson alone are antiwar.

The radical movement, too, is beginning to examine the implications of this phenomenon. Even those who, like SDS and *The Guardian*, were somewhat tardy in recognizing the symptoms are devoting more attention to it.

In the process, contrasting and even radically conflicting views on the most desirable and effective way for GIs to

Photo by Shelley Ramsdell/NYPS



Jose Rudder addressing New York Memorial Day antiwar demonstration.

advance their struggle have emerged. Some of these views are remarkably naive. Unfortunately, that fact alone is not sufficient to discredit them.

One of these is the concept of "underground barracks organizing." Underlying this approach is the assumption that GIs have no rights, and that any political activity inside the armed forces must be carried out on the sly. Advocates of this "undergroundism" do not believe masses of GIs can be organized against the war. Nor, if they could, would that be "revolutionary" enough for their tastes. Justifications for their "undergroundism" are often punctuated with revolutionary-sounding phraseology which

serves as a smoke screen for their abstention from organizing in the barracks or anywhere else. If you can imagine David in a hiding place, too busy explaining the need to destroy Goliath to actually get around to making a sling, then you have a fairly good idea of what "barracks organizing" is all about.

"Barracks organizing" is frequently counterposed to the concept of the GI as a citizen soldier, that is, a citizen who is temporarily in uniform, but who retains his constitutionally guaranteed democratic rights of free speech and assembly, and who exercises them openly inside the Army. This is the concept underlying the approach of GIs United at Fort Jackson.

Although SDS has taken no formal position on this question, the "barracks organizing" view is shared by many of its members. The January 22, 1969, issue of *New Left Notes* contains an interview with two ex-GIs which puts forward this view. The interview, obtained by SDS Inter-Organizational Secretary Bernardine Dohrn, is a bit prematurely entitled "Revolution in the army."

In the interview, Dave Kline, an ex-GI from Fort Hood, Texas, speaks of organizing in the Army in terms of "slipping around and keeping cover." He caps off his comments on this point with a highly confused but nonetheless determined criticism of mass demonstrations. While stating that he sees the purpose of demonstrations being to get GIs to stick their necks out for no reason, he explains that people of his persuasion are "trying to overthrow the system" and "trying to build up consciousness to take back home." The implication is that for GIs to express their views on the war in demonstrations is both risky and reformist, and that waiting to return "back home" to begin to overthrow the system is revolutionary. Distilled of its rhetoric, "barracks organizing" is essentially an excuse for doing nothing.

This concept of "barracks organizing" is strikingly similar to the argument, once popular with SDS and the DuBois Clubs, that "community organizing" was what serious people were engaged in, and that mass demonstrations were merely cooked up by others in order to divert them from this endeavor. Yet the fact is that organizing in the community was one

of the ways people were mobilized for mass demonstrations.

A similar view is expressed in a recent editorial in *Fatigue Press*, a GI newspaper at Fort Hood, criticizing mass antiwar demonstrations of GIs and civilians: "It appears that the civilians involved are receiving all of the good from this sort of joint action while the GIs get nothing. For instance, if GIs lead a march, they are the ones who'll get busted first and much more seriously than the civilians. The civilian organizations will get all kinds of fine publicity but this helps GI organizing not at all. When this sort of thing happens, it creates animosity among soldiers towards the civilian movement and discourages them from being politically active after discharge.

"Furthermore, this type of action pulls soldiers off posts and orients them toward civilian activities, thus shifting their emphasis from the post where it should be, to the campus and city. In addition, the kind of soldier who would consent to participate in the sort of activity which would single him out so obviously probably has potential as an organizer. But if he is out marching, he is separated from those he should be organizing."

Organizing in the barracks and mass demonstrations are, of course, complementary. It is difficult to imagine how large numbers of GIs could be organized to participate in mass antiwar demonstrations without barracks organizing. Moreover, nationwide demonstrations such as those on Easter weekend give an impetus to barracks organizing. Furthermore, this organizing will intensify following such demonstrations, as an article in the *Washington Post* of April 17, 1969, noted: "Many of the servicemen who marched in the peace parade in New York on April 5 went back to their bases emboldened to spread the word to their colleagues with greater aggressiveness than before."

In an interview in the April *Young Socialist*, Pvt. Jose Rudder of Fort Jackson GIs United explained the necessity of having a strategy of developing unity through action on a national scale if the war is to be ended. Barracks organizing, to be effective, must be a part of this strategy, not an end in itself: "This 'barracks organizing' is important in initiating

the movement, in getting it started. You have to make personal contacts with people, you have to organize on an individual basis, but this can't be the end of your program. You just can't take an egg out of the refrigerator and put it on the table and expect it to cook itself. You can't just go into the barracks and talk to individual GIs and just by talking to them and not doing anything expect the movement to blossom and flourish. You have to get people together from other companies, from other barracks, and start a program of direct political action. You have to take that egg, and put it in the frying pan, you have to put the fire to it, and you have to cook it."

What those who advocate the "underground barracks organizing" approach reveal is their inability or unwillingness to develop such a strategy that can lead from the particular to the general, from the individual to the mass, from the local to the national.

There is little point in indulging yourself, as does Kline, with talk of "overthrowing the system" if you can't develop the strategy to bring it about. Making a revolution requires a great deal more than good ideas. And "undergroundism" doesn't even qualify as a good idea because it sees no way of mobilizing *masses* of people in struggle against the system. In fact, it does the exact opposite. It perpetuates a feeling of isolation, frustration and impotence. Now making a revolution *is* a good idea. But since they lack a strategy for mobilizing masses of GIs and civilians to help bring it about, the "underground" barracks organizers will never get beyond the stage of talking about it.

One of the main reasons is that there is a key flaw in their approach. They quite correctly recognize that the brass and lifers are not at all pleased with GI antiwar activity, and that they will do whatever they can to stop it. But here they make a serious mistake. They mistake attempts by the brass to stamp out this dissent as proof positive that what the brass has been telling them all along is true, namely that they have no rights. This view is explicitly stated in the same *Fatigue Press* editorial referred to earlier: ". . . civilians say, 'If you get busted,

stand up for your constitutional rights of freedom of speech and assembly,' completely overlooking the fact that constitutional rights exist only for the rich. Also, crying 'fight for your rights' implies that these rights do exist and shifts the center of our attention from revolution to reform."

GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, having just won a resounding free speech victory against the Army, must be puzzled to learn that "constitutional rights exist only for the rich." None of them are in that category. True they had to fight for their rights. But they proved that they could be won. And in winning them, they have won a tremendous victory for the entire GI antiwar movement. How did they do it?

From the very start GIs United at Fort Jackson has charted an alternative, far superior course to "undergroundism." Growing out of sessions of mainly black and Puerto Rican GIs listening to tapes of Malcolm X, the group soon was holding regular meetings in the barracks attended by 50-100 soldiers. These meetings were really classes in which the war, capitalism, imperialism and racism, among other things, were discussed. The soldiers also circulated a petition requesting the Commanding General to provide them with facilities for an open meeting on post where they could discuss the war and related issues.

The central issue around which they organized was the right of GIs to discuss the war in Vietnam. There are several reasons for this. First of all, as with youth in the civilian population, the Vietnam war is the central issue radicalizing GIs. It is the one which confronts them most directly. Second, no one has a more appropriate right to discuss the war than the men who are expected to risk their lives fighting it. Third, it is legal. This is no small detail. It means that if their constitutional rights are violated, the onus unmistakably rests on the brass. On that basis, it is possible to win a battle against the armed forces, both in the courts and with public opinion. Furthermore, the fact that this antiwar activity is legal encourages more GIs to get involved in it.

Finally, by defensively formulating their activity as merely the exercise of their constitutionally guaranteed rights of free speech and assembly,

they were able to call their own plays and put the Army on the defensive, as well as to gain widespread sympathy among the public at large. The brass was put in the embarrassing position of trying, in its customary, unadroit manner, to defend its illegal behavior before hostile soldiers and an increasingly unsympathetic public.

From its inception, GIs United operated on an open basis. It would have been a bit incongruous, not to say impossible, for them to organize around their constitutional rights in the "underground." Their openness was one of their key strengths. Not only did it make it possible for large numbers of soldiers to participate; it also made the Army look ridiculous when an undercover agent was uncovered in the group. GIs United was interested in winning victories for GIs, not in sitting around whispering about how GIs have no rights and can't do anything about it.

They recently gained national celebrity by filing an historically unprecedented suit in Federal court against the Army to force it to uphold this constitutional right of assembly. They have also seen their pioneer effort spread to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where a new group of GIs United has been formed.

Army authorities resorted to every conceivable kind of harassment and intimidation in an attempt to convince these GIs to cease their antiwar activities, including that of railroad-ing their leaders into the stockade. This was very serious and had to be combatted, but it was hardly surprising. The Army has never been known for its civil libertarianism.

However, it would have been a sign of shortsightedness for revolutionaries to fail to detect and make use of the inherent weaknesses in the Army's sledgehammer approach. The fact is that soldiers can fight for—and win—the same right to discuss the war as civilians. The fact is that the Army is violating this constitutional right. And the fact also is that by forcing the Army to uphold that right, an important victory can be won, and a significant precedent set, the implications of which require only a rudimentary imagination to understand.

Imperialist wars, like the one in Vietnam, cannot be effectively waged



Photo by Shelley Ramsdell/New York Press Service

if the troops are actively opposed to them, if they don't see the point of fighting. Seriously, legally organizing large numbers of GIs to openly oppose the war is a concrete step toward destroying the fighting power of the imperialist army. To destroy the fighting power of an army whose job it is to protect the world-wide profits of the capitalist system is to deal a serious blow to the system itself. Far from being "reformist," fighting for democratic rights inside the armed forces is eminently revolutionary. To "underground" partisans of "instant revolution" this method may seem too complicated. That is why they are underground. With their approach, their earnestly hoped for revolution will never see the light of day.

An aggressive defense on behalf of GIs whose constitutional rights have been violated by the brass is the only way to help assure an ultimate victory. To be effective, it must be carried out the way the defense of the Fort Jackson Eight has been organized by the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee.

What is needed is a campaign to mobilize public opinion around a broad defense which welcomes the support of anyone, regardless of his political views, who opposes the violation of the rights of the defendants. Such a defense effort recognizes the widespread antiwar sentiment in the general public, as well as in the Army itself, and it effectively utilizes the sincere commitment to democratic rights among broad layers of the American people. It understands that GI and civilian opponents of the war are struggling together toward a common goal. Needless to say, such a defense cannot be organized by sectarians or from the "underground."

Such a defense is also a valuable revolutionary tactic which can be used to exacerbate the existing divisions in

the ruling class over the Vietnam war by playing one part of it against the other.

One of the reasons the *New York Times*, for example, has given extensive coverage to the activities and issues raised by the Fort Jackson GIs is that it reflects the thinking of a section of the capitalist class that hopes thereby to pressure the Nixon Administration into ending the war before the Fort Jackson example becomes the norm throughout the armed forces.

The contrast between the pessimism of "undergroundism" and the activist optimism of GIs United is poignantly highlighted by an excerpt from the statement made by Pvts. Andrew Pulley, Jose Rudder and Jole Cole on their victory: "Never again will the Army be able to interfere with the constitutional rights of American soldiers without the prospect of a repetition of the Ft. Jackson 8 defense campaign.

"Our case has struck a blow at the very heart of the American bureaucratic military structure—military injustice. It should now be apparent to the brass that today's 'New Action Army' does not consist of mindless robots but of men who feel they have the right to question policy—especially policy which they will be deployed to enforce.

"The GI antiwar movement has chalked up a tremendous victory and the brass reels from another defeat. There is no telling what can happen when right is on one's side."

"Revolutionaries" who fail to appreciate the relationship between the defense of free speech and the fight against the war; who recoil at the strengths of the enemy, but are unable to turn his weaknesses to his disadvantage; who mistake revolutionary potential for revolution itself, and yet have only a foggy idea of the strategy whereby the one could lead into the other: such people hardly deserve to be called revolutionaries.

It is very important to understand the relationship between the civilian and GI components in the antiwar movement. Civilians can do much to aid GI opponents of the war by building mass, legal demonstrations in which GIs can participate, and by launching a vigorous campaign of defense for victimized GIs. GIs, on the other hand, are an encouraging stimulus to large numbers of civilians to intensify their struggle to end the war. One is no substitute for the other. They are integral parts of the same movement. The significant GI participation in the massive antiwar demonstrations on Easter weekend was the most striking indication to date of the ability of GI and civilian antiwar forces to join together in this common struggle.

In the process of organizing this fight against the war, just as many civilians are developing a better understanding of the capitalist system and the need to destroy it, so it is with GIs. But the strategy for helping to accomplish this is not to be found in the subterranean, provincial "bar-racks organizing" per se, but in an approach which consciously leads to mass participation of people both in and out of uniform.

To neglect or refuse to fight to end the war in favor of abstract rhetoric about the need to "destroy the system," and thereby deny the possibility of beginning to do precisely that inside the Army, is in the final analysis to accomplish neither.

To recognize the need to destroy capitalism, as the *New Left Notes* interview does, is the beginning of political wisdom. However, to be unable to develop a strategy linking this objective to the fight against the war—both inside and outside the armed forces—is to miss an excellent opportunity to graduate out of the beginners' class. □

2 POEMS DIANNE GANNON

Let my rage take form,
Not to dilute this passion,
Nor be transformed into docility,
But so that I may become steel
Itself, like a sharpened body
Headlong towards the mark.
In such a moment what matter
The length of waiting, or,
If considered, then the past
Falls away as completely
As the butterfly ignores his cocoon:
All preparation is brought to bear
On that simple motion,
The silver thrust of steel
Piercing its mark fully.

MOST COUNT MORE

Most count more in death than when alive,
The body before us proof of existence,
And best it is that death has stilled
The squalor of their days, for the record
Is detail enough, penned entries precisely date
The few and formal facts, from this thin line
A man is drawn, research, then tagged.
Who shall weep over such a dead man, or,
If weeping, refuse the state's modest benefits
To wear a widow's dress most bitterly,
Who would stay the mechanical hand, and how?
For has not the prophecy been written:
"Like sheep led to the slaughter" and youth
Is but a commodity cheap upon a flooded market,
And none shall moan as long as there be
This velvet courtesy returning each body home
In some condition, like a Damaged Goods corner
In a store, even when a body no more but stone;
Such are those who went lately to war with a wave.

Revolt, Cont'd from p. 3

the transitional demand of control—for black control of black studies, for black control of the black communities. The involvement of the masses of the Third World communities has been of central importance in showing how the black liberation movement must be built and how struggles can be won—by organizing the masses. This has pointed the way for the mass black political party that is needed.

A series of errors has cropped up within the struggle, errors that have led to defeats. The principal one is the ultraleft tendency to substitute the consciousness and actions of a political vanguard for the consciousness and actions of the masses of students. This short-sighted view fails to understand that the ramifications of the contradictions of the imperialist university go beyond the small handful of organized radicals. The result of this trend of thought is adventurist acts in line with the so-called "spark" theory, elitist and sectarian organizational concepts, and a catch-all piling up of demands that diffuses the struggle.

Substitution of the vanguard for the masses leads to failure because it cuts down the size of forces that enter the struggle and because it forgets the fundamental tasks of revolutionists: to raise the consciousness of the broadest masses through revolutionary struggle.

According to the "spark" theory, all that is needed for a successful struggle is a bold act on the part of a small group, regardless of the political situation and the consciousness of the masses of students. Somehow such an act is supposed to instantly mobilize and organize the masses of students, or else by sheer audacity overwhelm the power of the bourgeois state and university, and lead to instant victories.

The "spark" theory attempts to "get rich quick" by avoiding the most important political question—the consciousness and organization of the masses for struggle. The vanguard aims at building a mass movement because this is the only way a revolutionary victory can be won, whether in a campus struggle or in a revolution itself. Serious revolutionaries utilize every chance to organize the broadest possible section of people, not only to spread the heightening of consciousness, but also because this is the only way the power of the ruling class can be set back. They have the guns, but we have the numbers.

One other problem of this ultraleftism in the campus struggles is closely related to the "spark" theory. This is the tendency to reject democratically organized united fronts for elitist and sectarian forms of organization.

The best and most effective way to organize for struggle is through a united front, that is, a coalition of all groups and individuals who are willing to struggle around the agreed

upon demands. Within such a formation, all decisions should be made through open and democratic discussions, including the election of leadership which should try to represent the various points of view. There are several important reasons for this: 1) Only through democratic and open discussion can the highest possible understanding of the issues and appropriate tactics be developed among *all* those involved in the struggle; 2) Only by such discussion can the leadership find out whether the actions are supported by the rank and file; 3) Only through democratic functioning can new policies, tactics and leadership be developed to replace old ones that have shown themselves to be inadequate. The more prolonged, the wider, the sharper the struggle, the more important is the maintenance of democratically organized united fronts for broadening the struggle and adjusting the leadership and strategy to the objective needs of the struggle.

Ultraleftists oppose sectarian and elitist forms to this conception. This is especially true of SDS. They say that their political organization should hold a monopoly of the leadership of the struggle instead of uniting with all who are prepared to struggle. They also attempt to impose their program on all other issues whether or not it is relevant to coalitions or united fronts. They furthermore tend to act outside of the control of these united fronts. They seek to build their organization before advancing the struggle and as a result

wind up setting the struggle back and isolating their group from the broadest sections of militants.

There is also a tendency among such groups and among a few Third World student groups to organize themselves in an undemocratic fashion. This was especially true in the CCNY struggle. The demands and tactics are handed down from the top. The organizations are divided into small cell groups. Negotiations are carried on between the leaders and the administration, while the masses are kept in the dark. The result is that the rank and file does not understand the political axis of the struggle, many tactics with which the leaders may not agree are not implemented, suspicion develops between the rank and file and the leaders, new leaders and policies do not come forward when old ones fail, and eventually the struggle dissipates.

A third expression of this substitutism is the attempt to add catch-all demands to the basic issues of the struggle. This usually takes the form of either insisting on an anti-imperialist consciousness as a prerequisite for struggle, or of a feeling that demands that can be met are reformist or counterrevolutionary.

SDSers often make *verbal support* to an anti-imperialist position rather than readiness to struggle against the imperialist war, the imperialist uni-

versity or the imperialist state a precondition for struggle, or even a central demand. This approach actually hinders the real anti-imperialist struggle. The contradictions of the university, the war, the oppression of Third World peoples are the outgrowth of the imperialist nature of society. Anyone who really understands imperialism should understand that those who struggle against imperialism in its concrete forms are carrying out anti-imperialist struggle. This insistence upon verbal anti-imperialism hinders the development of real anti-imperialist consciousness among the broad mass of students because real anti-imperialist consciousness flows from real struggle against real imperialism, not from verbalism.

The addition of irrelevant demands and issues to the struggle only serves as an obstacle to winning its objectives. This is often the result of an attempt by one group to impose its full program on the others and can only needlessly split the movement by diverting its focus away from the central issues.

The idea that demands that can be met (that is, won) are bad demands is incorrect and simplistic. Revolutionary movements are built from victories, not defeats. Struggles for demands that can be met (that is, reforms) are not "reformist" if they

teach the masses how to struggle in an independent, anticapitalist fashion. By fighting for reforms in a revolutionary way, revolutionaries can reach the vast majority of students who have not yet reached revolutionary consciousness. Moreover, refusing to fight for reforms leaves the leadership of these struggles to the real reformists.

In the face of these campus explosions, the position of the Young Socialists is clear. YSAers have intervened in and helped lead struggles from Arizona State to Brandeis, and from Duke University to San Francisco State. Third World YSAers have intervened in the struggles of Third World students at such campuses as Berkeley and CCNY. To build these movements in the broadest, most militant way possible is the aim of the YSA.

The YSA puts its revolutionary Marxist analysis, the product of the historical experience of the international working-class movement, into use in these explosions. Furthermore, the YSA intervenes not only in the campus struggles but in the antiwar, Third World, GI and other struggles against the capitalist system. The new stage of campus rebellion shows more than ever the need to build the revolutionary socialist youth vanguard — the YSA. □



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