

# NEW LEFT NOTES

SDS · 1608 W · MADISON · CHICAGO · ILL.

Volume 2, Number 38

LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE

October 30, 1967

## The Washington Seige of '67

### Notes from Prison

by Raymond Mungo

liberation news service

LORTON PRISON, Lorton, Va.—In the good old days, before the taxation of the English language with nuances and oxy-morons, they used to call a funny scene "zany"—hence funny people in the movies always went by names like Zazu and Harpo, etc. The Dadaists made the materialism of the twenties into a grim joke and Erik Satie wrote crazy little pieces of music for the piano; insane people like Luis Bunuel began making zany films touching on the perversion of modern existence (e.g., 13 robbers glutting themselves on greasy foods and on a small nun in a Last Supper pose); and Joseph Heller wrote crazy things about World War II in *Catch-22*. Today, Phil Ochs is matching "absurdist music with absurdist politics," as he said at the Lincoln Memorial on Oct. 21, and the Fugs exhort us to kill for peace!; the hippies wanted to exorcise the Pentagon; Jean-Luc Godard has killed off the young boy of *The 400 Blows*, now 21 and desperately in need of a lay, in his newest film *Masculin-Feminin*; in Saigon, American GI's get live, piped-in disc jockeys from New York while in New York people throw money off the stock exchange balcony to show how little they need that kind of security; they're fucking the army all over Europe and still staging opera in Hanoi.

Of course, a necessary element of all zaniness in history has been tragedy, for it is woe that necessitates joyful relief. In the case of the Marx Brothers, the underwritten ugliness was simply that they were always being chased and clobbered (The Three Stooges overdid this last part a bit) and were perpetually without meaning. With the war in Vietnam, we laugh at what an asshole Lyndon Johnson is so we won't have to weep at the bloody dead and wounded. Such a zany scene was the National Mobilization's weekend in Washington, and the arrest of its leaders.

I walked with Dave Dellinger, Dagmar Wilson, Robert Lowell, Dwight McDonald, Benjamin Spock, Noam Chomsky, Barbara Deming and other celebrities as part of a nonviolent probing force making its none-too-stealthy way around the Pentagon, and participated in an arrest and imprisonment scene that was as funny as it was serious, as zany as it was bloody, as unreal as it was cold, actual, and hurtful. It all happened in the relative privacy of the Pentagon south entrance, forbidden grounds, while thousands of other demonstrators were assaulting the main doors and the press busily recording beards and bangles.

We stood our ground before the youngest soldiers history could ever have called to the task of slaughter, nonviolent to the last as is our faith, and talked into a small loudspeaker about the war. A



Photo by John Lower

### Power at the Pentagon

by Mike Goldfield  
U. of Chicago SDS

The confrontation at the Pentagon last weekend marked a new stage for the movement—but, it could have been much different.

The Mobilization started like a picnic. Well over 100,000 people gathered in the area that stretches from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument—the same spot where the 1963 civil rights march took place. The crowd was less hippie, but more student-oriented than the one at the April Mobilization. The speeches were impossible to hear, and most people merely wandered around finding old friends, taking literature, and buying posters and buttons. As a political act the Mobilization was depressing—everyone I knew was depressed. Eventually, the gathering slowly marched to the Pentagon with sporadic attempts by off-tune song masters to get us to sing. The first people arrived at the Pentagon at 2:30 p.m., and by 5:00 p.m. the stream of people leaving was half as big as the stream still coming. We were allowed close enough to see the Pentagon, but not close enough to feel we were very near it.

For those who weren't satisfied with merely looking, there was a magic white line across a road that eventually led to the Pentagon. Anyone who wanted to get arrested could wait for a signal from the Mobilization people, cross the line, get immediately arrested, pay the ritual fine, and feel morally self-satisfied. If the Mobilization plans for civil disobedience had come off, the choice would have been to remain depressed, or to make like a sheep about to get slaughtered and get fleeced instead. Not only would the movement have reached a new low, but the Mobilization Committee would have lost all credibility among politicians.

As everyone knows by now, the scenario was slightly different.\*

It is important to know that the Pentagon has a close resemblance to a medieval fortress. It has walks around it (or, rather is elevated on a walled plateau), several ramped roadways leading up to a mall in front of the massive building, and several stairways going up the sides of the walls. It was at 5:30 p.m. by the left ramp (facing the front of the Pentagon) that several thousand demonstrators—unwilling to commit a humiliating form of CD—forced a break in the lines of soldiers and surged up the ramp. Word spread rapidly through the crowd of 35,000 people (Pentagon estimate) that

continued on page 2

\* Any account of what happened at the Pentagon will obviously vary depending on which group one was among, and how close he was to the action, so what follows is only my own perspective on the events. People in other areas clearly saw different things, and, in some cases, were even

### D.C. Cops, Bourgeois Press Play Numbers Game

Special to New Left Notes  
by Bob Grove

The Chief of Washington, D.C. police forces admitted on Saturday evening that his officers stationed at the south end of the Memorial Bridge had officially counted 318,000 marchers proceeding from the Lincoln Memorial to the Pentagon.

This admission was made to a number of reporters at a press conference in Washington. The reporters included members of United Press International (UPI) and Associated Press (AP) and a reporter for the Los Angeles Times, Keith Wisely. Wisely and the other reporters had just been flown over the Pentagon, the North Parking Lot, the march route over Memorial Bridge and the Lincoln Memorial. In their meeting with police officials later in the evening they expressed amazement at the official police crowd estimate of 55,000 since it was apparent that many more demonstrators and marchers were present. The police chief at this point informed the reporters that police crowd control experts using counters had been stationed at the south end of Memorial Bridge and had machine counted 318,000 marchers as they passed by. The reporters were then asked to not report this real figure but instead to report the figure of 55,000, officially being released to the press by the police and military authorities. All the reporters present pledged themselves to report the 55,000 figure. They were told by the police that if the figure of 318,000 were to be reported in the nation's press "the President would be in a very embarrassing position."

I subsequently met with Mr. Wisely and was given the information regarding

the true size of the October 21 March on Washington.

Mr. Keith Wisely is a retired Colonel of the Air Force and an aerospace expert. He frequently writes for aerospace journals and for the popular press. He also writes for the Los Angeles Times and other newspapers in the area, Pasadena, Glendale, Santa Barbara. On Saturday he was on assignment for the Times. In his story for the Times Wisely reported that there were 318,000 marchers instead of the 55,000 figure. Wisely did not feel that embarrassing the President should stop truthful news reporting. If his story is published in the Times he will probably not be called in for future private briefings by the police. AP and UPI correspondents, however, have apparently kept their word and by reporting what they know to be false figures have kept the President from being "embarrassed."

Wisely stated that he asked the chief if the October 21 March was significantly larger than the August, 1963 Civil Rights March which D.C. Police, Life Magazine and AP/UPI estimated at 250,000 in numbers. He was told that it was "significantly larger." Wisely also felt that it was larger.

If the information given by the reporter Wisely is correct it would appear to indicate evidence of a network of falsification of facts extending from the White House, through the Defense Department, the D.C. Police Department, and including important elements of the press, especially AP and UPI.

# NOTES FROM LORTON PRISON

continued from page 1

nameless black sergeant gave them the order and they advanced, but gently, until they had squeezed their way around us and we were facing an undefended south entrance on one side and the backs of retreating GI's on the other. A couple of minutes passed while Dellinger regrouped the fallen to puzzle out this unlikely state of affairs, and we began marching again.

As we got closer to the Pentagon, however, more soldiers appeared out of nowhere, and we were talking into the loudspeaker again, this time Dr. Spock telling the story of the soldier who wrote him condemning the war—and to whom Dr. Spock wrote back, only to have his letter returned "verified deceased—return to sender." The black sergeant reappeared with the order, "Push 'em out now," and suddenly we were on the ground being kicked into a growing mound of human bodies. Even so, most of the GI's weren't kicking with too much ferocity and we kept talking, Dr. Spock still into his microphone. The soldiers thought well of us, I believed, but they didn't stop the blows and kicks, and I was struck with the realization that it isn't what you think anyway that counts; it's what you do. Moments later, federal marshalls got into the act because the soldiers weren't being brutal enough, and dragged off little Dagmar Wilson, all fiftyish and bristling with resistance, on the pavement. I felt an irresistible force pulling my right leg out of its socket, a billy club over my head, and two bodies wrenching my left arm so far behind my head that I let out what must have been a blood-curdling shout. Seconds before I also lost my glasses, I turned to see Dellinger and Lowell, Chomsky and McDonald, hunched up under the flailing arms of the marshalls and Spock getting repeatedly kicked in the side.

In the darkened van where we sat, unlikely paradoxes continued, and the true black comedy of our "confrontation" with sympathetic soldiers in the shadow of a monstrous valley of death became clearer. A cop politely cajoled a young girl to come along before hauling her body from the van to the arrest booth across fifty feet of lacerating pebbled concrete. When I refused to speak, the astonished arresting marshalls sputtered, "But WE don't have anything to do with the war you know!" The black guard in our caged bus patiently explained at great lengths to a bruised inmate that he would take excellent care of the latter's camera.

It was 6 pm when our jailbus roared out of the Pentagon, one of the first, and bright daylight. At 7:15 pm, when it unloaded at Occoquan Workhouse, Lorton Prison, I first realized it was dark. From the back of the bus, in a separate cage, a prisoner played "My country tis of thee/Sweet land of liberty" on a wailing harmonica.

The prison had its own simpering chaplain, straight out of the movies; he implored a guard to let him ask me one question, which turned out to be "Are you ...all right?" When I said no, he promised me a doctor (who never came) and went off sniffing, feeling like Christian Man. I had to laugh.

In the cell itself, we were treated to free tobacco, ham sandwiches and hot coffee, sheets and towels, and (in my case) a swift, hard, and utterly unprovoked kick in the ass (which, luckily, was ill-aimed and went its fury on my left buttock alone).

Infuriated, I turned on the cop who kicked me and hissed "You fucking fascist!" Another prisoner replied, "That was a gratuitous and unhelpful remark." A third began a chant of Hari Krishna. Spilled blood and American honor at stake, the war machine disrupted, and laughs aplenty during Freak Night at the

Inside the cell again, Dave Dellinger is cool and cheerful as he sips his coffee; Rev. Ashton Jones, 69 and proud, tells old prison jokes; Noam Chomsky is neat and academic, worried about getting back to M.I.T. for a Monday morning symposium; the poet Tuli Kupferberg is wonderful just to look at (the guards think he's Tullillee Kupferberg, but suspect he just made up the name anyway); Norman Mailer is unusually quiet and struts from one end of the cell to the other, his hands in his pockets; Walter Teague of the Committee to aid the NLF has drawn up a statement accusing the Mobilization Committee of disorganization and duplicity, which some sign while others bitterly argue that it will be exploited by the capitalist press; Richard Gale of the Catholic Worker is on a smiling hunger strike; Mike Rothberger of the Bronx is considering telling the whole story to his junior-high school students; and Indian named Michael Grillo from somewhere-in-New Jersey solemnly accepts five days in jail rather than sign a promise that he won't return to the Pentagon when released; and I'm thinking how incredibly mind-blowing it is to be with all these wildly different people who care what it's like to be North Vietnamese and get your skin seared off by fire from the sky.

Nobody was charged until Sunday, so we didn't know how long we'd stay; consequently, there was a big rush on the library—which consisted mainly of dog-eared paperbacks such as Betty Cavanna's *Accent on April* ("charming Kathy McCall comes through a hectic year with flying colors"), F.A.Forbes' *Saint John Bosco: The Friend of Youth* ("when asked about the secret of his success with boys, he simply answered 'love...'" ) and Ann Hure's *The Two Nuns—A Brilliant Novel of the Spirit, the Flesh, and the Mother Church* ("includes many of the elements that made A NUN'S STORY so controversial"—Best Sellers).

Some news of the protest filtered in with new prisoners and by far the most exciting was a report that three soldiers had dropped their arms to join the resisters. It came back in a rush: it's not what you think anyway that counts; it's what you do. At the next day's rapid "trials", some people insisted on pleading "not guilty" and were largely rewarded by being returned to their cells; those who gave in to expediency and tolerance, like me, pleaded *nolo contendere* and got off with the punishment of having to pay \$25 to the most murderous government of our time. "Speeches" (i.e. expressions of sentiment) we were told would not be tolerated in the "courtroom", and Norman Mailer's insistence won him a guarantee of five days.

The trouble was that Mailer's speech all had something to do with his wife's being a Catholic and how he loved her anyway. Zany.



Photo from 10/28 National Guardian

## Pentagon Seige

continued from page 1

were demonstrating in the cordoned-off area. The main entrance to the Pentagon was highly guarded, but the crowd headed toward a lightly guarded smaller entrance to the left of it.

As we reached the entrance, the MP's were struggling to close the doors. About 20 people got into the Pentagon before several hundred battle-ready paratroopers made it to the door. In formation the soldiers moved slowly down the steps, raising their boots high and swinging their rifles. Heads of many of our people were bloodied, but at one point an army helmet rose high into the air. Suddenly, everyone started sitting down, and the soldiers held their places.

Possibly, if there had been any leadership or organization of the attack, most of us could have made it into the Pentagon, but the whole thing happened so spontaneously that no one really knew what had happened until we sat down and caught our breaths. The reason people sat down was two-fold: First, if tear gas had been thrown, the rush of the escaping crowd would have trampled many people. Second, there were 6,000 armed troops; sitting down made clear that we were no longer the aggressors, and made any attempts to move us back an attack on their part.

Further events were to take place that not only made known our presence, but indicated the lack of respect we had for the seat of military power in America. A second wave of people came across the left ramp, bringing our number to over 5,000. Previous to our arrival in the mall, a large group of demonstrators had forced their way up the steps to the other side of the mall; a contingent of over a hundred people from this group later forced newsmen off a long, flat truck, got up on top of it, and raised an NLF flag (which was to remain in the air until people on the truck were arrested at 2:30 a.m. Ropes were thrown over the wall and more demonstrators hurled up.

Part of what happened the rest of the evening was unbelievably groovy. As we and the soldiers settled down for a long stay, both sides relaxed. A man with a Veterans for Peace hat then burned his discharge papers. Within fifteen minutes several hundred flaming draft cards were in the air being waved triumphantly at the Pentagon. Soon large quantities of wet rags (to protect our faces from tear gas) and large quantities of food were hoisted up the walls (by 8:00 p.m. most of us had eaten more than our fill). Bon fires were then lit all over the mall using crushed leaflets and all the wood fixtures and barricades around the Pentagon. By 9:00, most of our bladders were bursting, and we were walled in by soldiers; middle-class backgrounds were overcome as we relieved ourselves on the Pentagon (and one should note, it was a far more liberating and revolutionary act for the women there who were physically unable to act with the discreetness that many men showed). Not long afterwards, ample supplies of grass began circulating—having been generously supplied by our brothers and sisters on the other side of the wall. Some people even offered it to the troops, and rumor had it that there were some clandestine acceptances. If this had been all to the scene, we would probably be returning to the Pentagon regularly. But, surrounded by troops, we were in a physically vulnerable position, and many people suffered.

The conflict at the door resulted in a number of people being hurt, but there was little brutality. Brutality, however, by federal marshalls was to mark our whole stay at the Pentagon. It is important to distinguish between the three types of federal personnel that faced the resisters:

1. Military Police: MP's, in general, are highly trained men. In their ordinary duty, they often find themselves called to break up huge bar-room fights between off-duty soldiers, and they are skilled at doing this job while causing minimum damage to the soldiers. When the MP's saw the crowd sit down, they noticeably relaxed. They correctly perceived an exuberant group of middle-class kids. Many of their actions and casual remarks to those sitting down indicated that they were worried about us getting hurt. Because they were relaxed, and because their superiors were far away, they felt free to talk with people in the front rows and even to accept food.

2. Paratroopers: The paratroopers were very young and very frightened. They were under tight orders (their officers stood behind them) not to talk with us and to beat off anyone who tried to cross their lines, but otherwise to remain motionless. In some areas of the mall (especially where they were not replaced too regularly), we made friendly contact with them, getting some of them to talk and even share our food. In other areas, the troops were under orders to use petty brutality (kicking us in the backs, inching forward until touching us, then

Continued next page

### new left notes

Published weekly by Students for a Democratic Society, 1608 W. Madison Street, Chicago, Ill., 60612 except July and August when publication is bi-weekly. Phone 312/666-3874. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, Ill. Subscriptions: \$1 per year for members, \$10 a year for non-members. Signed articles are the responsibility of the writer. Unsigned articles are the responsibility of the editors, Carol Neiman and Lyn Kempf.

#### STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Carl Davidson, Inter-organizational secretary; Robert Pardun, Internal Education secretary; Mike Spiegel, National secretary.  
 National Office: 1608 W. Madison, Rm. 206 Chicago, Ill. 60612 (312/666-3874)  
 New York City: 41 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003 (212/675-2626)  
 Niagra Regional Coordinating Committee: PO Box 5731, River Campus Station, Rochester, N. Y.  
 Southern California: PO Box 85396, Los Angeles, California 90072  
 New England: 901 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, Mass. 02139  
 Washington D.C. 1799 Lanier N.W.

# The Mobilization - A Grand Finale

calling the marshalls to make an arrest, and even in one case—where I was sitting—to dump their canteens on us at 4:30 a.m. Sunday morning) and in one area overt brutality (consisting of inching up until they were touching people, then swinging their rifle butts onto people's heads until the group moved back). In all our talks with the soldiers, both personally and through the sound equipment, we emphasized that we felt friendly towards them, and reserved our dislike for their superiors and the marshalls.

3. The Federal Marshalls: The marshalls were distinguished by their white helmets, their big lumbering bodies, and their smirking faces. Most of them had been deputized during the week before the march from groups around Washington including policemen and firemen. Stop for a second. Imagine the type of man who would volunteer to guard the Pentagon against peaceniks (a job that the MP's and the soldiers obviously did not relish) and the proto-type marshall begins to take shape. The marshalls would try to find isolated persons, grab them, and beat them into states of unconsciousness. They would walk behind the soldiers, reach through and grab an unwary person in the first row, drag him through the line of soldiers, and attempt to club him into a blood-streaked mess.

Let me describe the incident to which I was closest (a scene that was repeated scores of times by the marshalls). An SDS girl from Boston was dozing about 2:30 a.m. in the morning about 15 feet and several rows from me. They guy next to her was grabbed by marshalls and she awoke startled. In waking she must have brushed against a soldier—it isn't quite clear. She was then grabbed by a marshall, dragged through the line, whereupon the marshall started clubbing the hell out of her.

We focused a spotlight and a camera on him. The look on his face could only have been that of someone having an orgasm. Pictures were taken. The girl, who ended up getting three broken ribs, was carried to a paddy wagon; the marshall came up to a line of soldiers, and with a sadistic look on his face, ominously held his club high towards the crowd. The crowd near the girl rose to its feet, started screaming, and had difficulty restraining itself from a suicidal assault into the several rows of readied troops. We made an announcement over the speaker to the Pentagon brass, who were watching from the main steps, that we would be bringing suit against whoever was in charge of the marshalls—and that we had pictures and many witnesses (one of whom was a reporter). Everyone knew where that would get us, but our announcement served to make public to everyone (including newsmen and brass) what was happening, and this placed some restraint on the marshalls.

Many of the troops were shocked by the brutality of the marshalls (especially those troops that had talked with us), but the most disgusted of all were the MP's who knew how unnecessary it all was. One MP who was standing near a rather brutal beating looked like he was about to vomit, broke rank, took off his helmet, threw down his gun, and walked toward the Pentagon; he was quickly replaced on the line. This reaction among MP's was apparently a common one, and there are some reports that two MP's even deserted into the ranks of the demonstrators.

By 2:30 a.m. people on the right side of the mall had all been cleared out and arrested. We began to prepare for mass arrests in our area (which still contained over 1500 people). People sat in tight, instructions about legal rights were read over the bull horns, and information about bail and lawyers was passed out. The Pentagon people were trying to bluff us into leaving—the mass arrests never came. Around 4:00 a.m. we began talking of leaving at sunrise. We had proved our point by outwitting the Pentagon and would only be sitting ducks for brutality and arrests, neither of which would gain us anything. The vote was overwhelming to leave, but at the last minute a group

of 150 or so decided they weren't going to leave. Most of us marched out at 6:00 a.m., the rest stayed.

The confrontation not only accomplished some important things, but will have a large impact on the course of the movement:

1. Symbolically (and symbols are very important when one is trying to challenge a system which has tremendous legitimacy among its subjects), the invincibility of the greatest military power in the world was attacked. Hawks, and military men especially, have chided weak-minded university administrators about their inability to put the clamps down on unruly, sissy students. Yet several thousand of us outwitted the Pentagon plans for making us look silly, kept McNamara up all night, the government confused about what to do, and blatantly broke several laws in plain view of all (i.e. draft card burning, pot laws, defacing government property, and the obvious one of charging the Pentagon). Even if this did not come across in the media—we, and many of those who are concerned about the draft will no longer look at the military machine as an efficient, invincible demon, but as a man in a top hat who occasionally has his fly unzipped.



Photo by England/Zickler

2. Perhaps most important, the Mobilization was a grand finale—the last of the nationwide mass protests and the last attempt at Gandhian-style civil disobedience (no longer will many people be willing to get arrested in an attempt to morally appeal to their oppressors—as one demonstrator implored quite unconvincingly: "Ghandi stood up to his chest in water for a year and a half trying to get one road built.") There will be dramatic disruptions, non-violent by necessity (we are in no position to challenge directly the power of the state)—"creative disorder", if you like Art Waskow's term, and arrests will be the unwanted by-products of activities necessary to carry the actions off, rather than a quantitative measure of moral witness. The move from protest to resistance has been made.

3. It is also unlikely that large numbers of movement people will again put themselves in a position where they are at the mercy of the army or police as was done at the Pentagon. If there were to be a similar action again, it would have to be planned so that the objective was attained (e.g., entering the Pentagon) or, having been stymied, make like good guerrillas and retreat. Too many heads were busted for us to place ourselves in so vulnerable a position again. Although it is unlikely that violent confrontation will be planned, tactics of self-defense (such as the traditional brick or the Zengakuren snake dance) will probably be devised. We have a lot to learn in this respect from our comrades in other countries, where police are traditionally quite brutal.

4. Perhaps the most important change was that which took place in the participants themselves. Many people had guns pointed several inches from their heads

for eight hours or more; all of us saw friends attacked and injured. It is not certain what effect this will have, but minimally it has hardened a large number of us.

The confrontation clarifies a number of tactical and strategic questions that we will have to answer more fully in the near future:

Tactically, we must plan more adequate tactics for large group disruptions and resistance. It is conceivable that we may decide that disruptions with large groups of people in one place are unfeasible. For example, if we wanted to shut down a major city, Newark, say, we might divide into 50 groups of 20, some of the groups doing very public things (e.g., blocking intersections), while others committed inconspicuous acts of sabotage (e.g., cut wires), while still others provided drama and color (e.g., hippies flying over the city in big balloons throwing peanuts to policemen). People will undoubtedly come up with more realistic schemes. We must also face the problem of publicity and coverage in the mass media. Methods must be devised which trick them into giving us the publicity we want, and here, provo tactics are probably what's called for.

ministrators, cops, senators, and Chase Manhattan seem like very silly things rather than objects to which awe, respect, and legitimacy should flow. The aim should be to make them look foolish to everybody, not just ourselves.

Most important of all, a strategy is emerging that is not only best for our long-range goals, but has more impact on stopping the war than anything else we could do. Militant tactics by radicals often serve to isolate them from their potential constituencies and to bring repression from the powers that be. There are times, however, when militant tactics, not moderate ones like electoral politics will bring about the changes that one wants. This happens when there are serious splits within the ruling groups. The Buddhists in Vietnam have little power, but their disruptive demonstrations have brought down several governments; the government was unable to cope with them because of internal fissures.

To romanticize some more, we all know that the French Revolution began with revolts by peasants and the urban poor at a time when the king and the aristocracy were split. The Revolution never would have begun without the split. Though we are nowhere near revolution, there are some analogies. In spite of what the press says, our acts are not pushing more people to support the war; divisions within both parties seem to be increasing, and public support (as well as GI morale) seems to be decreasing.

The Justice Department has indicated that it does not really want to prosecute draft resisters now. We are seen as another symptom of the times; repression might create more peaceniks. They do not see us as an isolated phenomenon. The more hell we raise, the more difficult and confusing their job becomes. Dissent can be ignored (and that includes election campaigns), even explained away; the best strategy to end the war as soon as possible looks like resistance.

It seems important, however, that we don't let our play for power at the Pentagon swell our heads and make us forget who we are and where we are at. We are a growing group of imaginative and gutsy middle-class kids, who have little support in other constituencies, and stand a chance of alienating, by careless actions, those who must eventually be organized. Because of our narrow base and the highly organized and recognized (despite disaffection on the war) system we are challenging, we are nowhere near "taking power", revolution, or whatever you want to call the prerequisites for basic change in social, economic, and political structures that we are after. Our job remains essentially what it always was: to organize and continually think about the direction in which we are moving and the society we hope to change.

the following letter was sent to lbj by a detroit fifth estate reader, sept 25

greetings, mr. president,

this is an answer to the letter i recently received from you ordering me to report for induction into the united states army. you can take that draft notice and shove it up your ass.

i believe in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. i do not believe in you. i do not vote for candidates full of shit, i do not pay taxes to war mongers, i do not wear the uniform of a killer. i am a man.

you murdered a good friend of mine. he was exhausted, all his life he fought for his humanity against evil institutions of this society and at twenty-one years he was an old man, too weary to fight the draft. they mailed him home from vietnam in a casket.

you broke the heart of another good friend. he was religious. he told the army he could not serve because it violated the teachings of his god, jesus the christ. for three years he rotted in prison.

i am not tired and i am not an idealist. you shall have to capture me.

how do you sleep at night, mr. president/ are you haunted by the ghosts of the men and women and children you have murdered/ do your dreams ache with their death cries/ do you believe in a justice beyond the grave/ how about reincarnation/ wouldn't it be droll if you came back in your next life as a virus, a reptile, or a starving yellow man whose destiny is to burned alive for his hunger.

the next time you walk down a street in america look deeply into the eyes of the people and you shall see me.

yours in wrath  
1-A

# "The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse"

"The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse", Edited by Kurt H. Wolff and Barrington Moore, Jr., Beacon Press, October 1967, \$12.50

Reviewed by Tom Rose

I was privileged to have Herbert Marcuse as a teacher. Marcuse is a brilliant creative scholar and a magnificent, in fact awe-inspiring, teacher. In an academic world where emphasis is placed on specialization, Marcuse's work, as is this book in his honor, is a beautiful blending of perspectives including psychology, philosophy, politics, sociology, and history. The titles of his books are a mosaic. He is also an international-man, writing in English, French, and German. Many of his books are published in Japanese, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, and Serbo-Croatian (Yugoslavian).

"The Critical Spirit" is a collection of essays in Marcuse's honor, but it is much more than that. The book has some unifying pattern in that all the writers have a great respect for Marcuse, in a large sense, because he has personally provoked and stimulated them. But it is not an elaboration of his themes nor a book where everyone agrees with Marcuse or each other.

There is a strong flow throughout "The Critical Spirit" about what issues matter. If there is one message, it is that we must be critical of each other and the world we live in. In an essay by some of his students, they comment, "The content and method of Marcuse's teaching reflect his belief that theory should instruct man in his attempt to establish conditions which would enable him to fulfill his potentialities for a truly human existence."

Marcuse's influence on his students is reflected when they say that "knowledge is partisan." They emphasize that "The current pretensions to 'scientific objectivity', intellectual neutrality, and value-free thinking betray the goals of knowledge itself: Knowledge is inextricably bound up with the attempt to create a free and rational human existence." We should be in the university for the primary purpose of creating a better world—one without poverty and war.

The arrangement of this book reflects the broad spectrum of Marcuse's thought. The first part is called "The Political Concerns of Philosophy". The variety is huge. Stanley Diamond, an anthropologist, in an essay titled "Primitive Society in Its Many Dimensions", takes many clues from Marcuse. Both Diamond and Marcuse deal with the whole society, and reject "the epaulets of any particular discipline". Both strive for a fusion of analysis and vision.

Howard Zinn, a political scientist and historian, has written an essay entitled "History as Private Enterprise", where he attacks historians because they do not have a concern with current affairs and trying to make the world a better place to live. "There is immense intellectual energy in the U.S. devoted to inspecting the past, but only a tiny amount of this is deliberately directed to the solution of vital problems: racism, poverty, war, repression, loneliness, alienation, imprisonment."

Professor Zinn argues there are pressures "for hiding or distorting historical events." We glide over brutality and violence in America because we like to think of ourselves as a peaceful and gentle people. He refers us to Edmund Wilson's introduction to "Patriotic Gore". Zinn's essay is a plea that the scholar can also be an activist, that we should keep indignation alive (and not in "secret crannies"), and that we should not enjoy our luxury so very much while Negro children starve and go without medical attention in Mississippi and while innocent people are murdered daily in Vietnam.

The second part of the book is called "Art, Literature, and Society". Herbert Read, the British art critic, comments that mental conflict is a basis for art. With Brecht, he is concerned that the "theater of the absurd can be justified in a rational society". Read is concerned that "since art demands for its vitality a condition of estrangement, and since our one-dimensional society does not provide such a condition, it must be artificially created or imagined." Other essays are concerned with "The problem of cultural decay in our time..."

The third section of "The Critical Spirit" is called "Industrial Society and Its Plight". Some scholars in this section

examine their own work, while others take a critical look at Marcuse. Barrington Moore, an editor of "The Critical Spirit", has written a thrilling essay entitled "The Society Nobody Wants: A Look Beyond Marxism and Liberalism".

Moore wonders why we are unable to consider seriously the idea of a decent society. It has been possible for a long time to create a decent society, but we haven't, and perhaps we have not wanted to. Conquerors, like Hitler, have failed, just as the United States will do in Vietnam. Overwhelming force will not create the decent society.

"The main factor that prevents many people from even thinking about the possi-

Books by Herbert Marcuse—

ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN, Beacon paperback, 1966

A CRITIQUE OF PURE TOLERANCE, with Barrington Moore and Robert Paul Wolff, Beacon, 1965

EROS AND CIVILIZATION: A PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY INTO FREUD, Vintage paper, 1962

REASON AND REVOLUTION: HEGEL AND THE RISE OF SOCIAL THEORY, Beacon paper, 1960

SOVIET MARXISM, Doubleday paper, 1960

bility of a less indecent society in the U.S. is of course the state of semi-permanent mobilization against a foreign enemy."

Moore concludes with a set of ideas with which Marcuse would agree. "If the good citizen is ever going to get a less indecent society, he will have to do more than be willing to let his hair grow and stop buying refrigerators. Indeed he will have to overcome the myth that he can merely plead and reason with his superiors in order to get them to do something they don't want to do. He will have to organize and be organized around specific grievances, and to struggle politically."

## CHICAGO T.O. INSTITUTE: AN ANALYSIS

by Guy Nassberg  
Missouri area traveler

I have wanted to write a critique of the Chicago Teacher-Organizer Institute for over a month, but have feared that my dissatisfaction would too easily lead to enervated generalizations. I suggested, at the Madison NC, that we whose bodies occupied Institute space meet to compose a critique, but the most frequent response was a regrettable "Uhhhh..."

My feelings are of the same intensity. But the account must be written. Too many people in SDS offices are dismissing the experience as an "acid institute", or as a "failure". The tendency to reject a model, such as a summer institute or an ERAP project, rather than to examine the interaction between people and models, should not be tolerated.

NLN readers are probably familiar with the model for the three T-O institutes. Thirteen potential organizers and two staff people hoped to form a community in Chicago, read and discuss books according to a pre-determined curriculum, and engage in organizing projects. That didn't happen. After a week's hassle over finding places to live, we decided to meet at 9 AM and 7:30 PM, five or six days a week, with reading and projects in between. Liars we were. The early risers would spend an hour getting the others out of bed, and the discussions would maintain the lethargy of earlier moments. Regardless of the subject under discussion, conversation would range from one person's thing to another's. Content became aimless and undisciplined, questions remained unanswered.

Things came to a head at the first T-session. Our thoughts about the Institute and each other came out, and delusions of instant community were shattered. Soon followed the Chicago rebellion, as it were. A meeting restricted to the proletariat resulted in a challenge to the domineering staff, and a restructuring of the institute. For many, these decisions represented a first attempt to shake off the bonds of their own passivity, an awareness that they were intimidated more by their own attitudes and immobility than by the so-called staff.

The new plan was to hold sessions whenever one of us would schedule a resource person or desire group discussion. Thereafter, the institute worked almost as well as we tried to make it work. Several of us spent time in the n.o., a few with CADRE (Chicago Area Draft Resisters). Highlights were a second T-group, a week's visit to a farm (complete with Bach, acid, corn, and the Mozart horn concert), and a group acid session. Few discussions were scheduled, fewer things happened, blank spaces.

Which means what? We arrived in Chicago with a proliferation of hang-ups, products of an atomized and unloving society. Only in the T-sessions did many

of us begin to comprehend the extent of our separation from each other and from our ideals. The cold and empty cannot successfully organize for change until they can feel what all that rhetoric of revolution means. Our summer in Chicago helped many of us realize where we were, and where we must go. If we could not move ahead together, we at least moved into the same plane of awareness. We recognized how America has fucked us over, how far some of us from the goal of liberation.

The summer was one of personal struggle and growth at the Chicago half-way house. Many of us are now organizing, some still drifting. But revolution, I must emphasize, exists on many levels. A large part of the work of the campus organizer is to turn on members of SDS chapters to their own creative potential, to the

used in NLN to describe the summer experience. A mistake. Translated into my own language, those descriptions meant that the institutes were not where it's at. SDS should continue to encourage potential organizers to meet together to deal with ideals, ideas, and themselves, but it should remember that future summer things will run smoothly only when participants are disciplined, either by regulations, or from within. External discipline, of course, is out, and internal discipline will take awhile. People who are only recently separated from the play-world of the campus and the hassle of fragmented existence can rarely be organized in two months.

Fidel has said, "each man must particularize the struggle into his personal life and generalize his personal commitment." This presupposes another struggle,

NEW LEFT NOTES  
Room 206  
1608 W. Madison  
Chicago, Ill. 60612  
RETURN REQUESTED

Second-class postage rates paid in Chicago, Illinois.

J. Walton Senterfitt  
2115 S St. NW  
Washington, DC 20008

power that is deadened by years of examinations, assignments, lectures, and anti-human regulations. Only when men achieve some kind of contact with themselves and with others can they unite to destroy that society which has fragmented them. The summer institute helped us to get in contact with ourselves, so that we can now turn others on to the struggle. It may not have met the criteria of those who have passed judgment on the experience, but those criteria are disturbingly distant from SDS's ordinarily incisive analysis of this society.

Alienated, confused, insecure individuals will continue to enter the Movement. Extremely capable of turning others off, they will have stepped away from America, but not from their internal states. These people cannot be ignored or dismissed by rejecting the idea of a summer institute. Rather, our conception of an organizer's institute, and our expectations, must move closer to reality.

I never took seriously the language of "institute" and "curriculum" which was

a struggle for commitment and self-knowledge. That struggle became central to many of us in the summer institute. It will not end with the revolution. Some of my brothers dump on all the introspective stuff. But it is too easy to suspend oneself and one's ideals for the sake of the cause. In Chicago, many of us learned what had been suspended.

M-CUP--Minneapolis Community Union Project--is in dire need of staff. Anyone, male or female, who is interested in white organizing should either call collect or write airmail in 1408 East Franklin Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55404 (612) 338-8055