

NEW LEFT NOTES

SDS · 1608 W · MADISON · CHICAGO · ILL.

SDS JOINS SUIT AGAINST HERSHEY

The Case for the Case: Fighting Political Repression

On Oct. 26, General Hershey of SS fame stated in his infamous letter to draft boards "...deferments are given only when they serve the national interest. It is obvious that any action that violates the military Selective Service Act or the regulations or the related processes cannot be in the national interest. It follows that those who violate them should be denied deferment in the national interest. It also follows that illegal activity which interferes with recruiting or causes refusal of duty in the military or naval forces could not by any stretch of the imagination be construed as being in support of the national interest...."

The first major national attempt at the political repression of the New Left had begun. On Monday, SDS and a broad spectrum of liberal student organizations filed suit against General Hershey, suing to enjoin him from enforcement of his statement.

Given the rather unique style of SDS and its general aversion to becoming involved in any political activity which is defined by the liberal establishment, the decision of the National Interim Committee to enter a legal suit against anyone might seem contradictory. (Take for example Carl Davidson's statement at the National Guardian's conference that if Joe Pool of HUAC served him a subpoena,

he—Davidson—would tell hairless Joe "to shove it up his ass".) That attitude reflects an almost instinctual guerrilla tactical sense in SDS that "you don't let the enemy define the battleground".

In general, that New Left sense of tactics has been sound. Why then did the NIC decide to become engaged in a court battle?

First, it is essential to understand that General Hershey's threat is not an isolated case of local harassment but rather an all-out attempt at the national level to use a powerfully organized system of coercion to destroy the New Left. As such, it constitutes the first systematic attempt at the political suppression of our organization and the suppression of that broad range of disruptive activities in which we have become engaged. In the face of repressive power, the last thing to do is to back down—particularly if the form of repression leaves the enemy totally vulnerable.

Secondly, in the light of our recurring paranoia about the inevitability of the "repression", we have been offered a unique opportunity to fight repression on the best grounds available: openly, publicly, nationally. By entering a suit against Hershey, we engage in a political offensive. Furthermore, the real beauty of the "SDS et al versus General Hershey" case is that we cannot possibly lose. Hershey's arguments are such a clear violation of the most clearly guaranteed

civil and political freedoms that either the rulers of America must back down or they must abrogate bourgeois civil liberties and resort to open fascism in order to control political opposition. Somehow we had all assumed that the New Left would be picked off—one by one—that we would be destroyed as isolated individuals or in small defenseless groups. General Hershey has offered the opportunity to break out of our isolation and to build the kind of public legal barriers against repression which provide the kind of intermediary buffers necessary to sustain our political work in a non-revolutionary situation.

From the point of view of America's ruling class, Hershey's statement can only be regarded as a colossal blunder. For us, blunders by the ruling class and its lackeys, their contradictions, must always be an opportunity to move ahead.

Many SDSers will ask themselves why we have become involved in a legal action which involves, as co-plaintiffs, a broad range of corporate liberal and left-liberal organizations including the National Student Association, the Campus ADA, UCM, and a large number of student council presidents. Are we selling out to the liberals? Are we becoming engaged in coalition politics which will inevitably water-down our radicalism?

No. On the contrary.

Our opposition to the liberal civil-libertarian politics is not based on formalistic arguments regarding legality versus illegality. Our radicalism is based

continued on page 3

News Release

on the Hershey Case

Following is a short passage from a Selective Service document entitled "On Channeling":

Delivery of manpower for induction, the process of providing a few thousand men with transportation to a reception center, is not much of an administrative or financial challenge. It is in dealing with the other millions of registrants that the System is heavily occupied, developing more effective human beings in the national

interest.

Educators, scientists, engineers, and their professional organizations, during the last ten years particularly, have been convincing the American public that for the mentally qualified man there is a special order of patriotism other than service in uniform—that for the man having the capacity, dedicated service as a civilian in such fields as engineering, the sciences, and teaching constitute the ultimate in their expression of patriotism. A large segment of the American public has been convinced that this is true.

It is in this atmosphere that the young man registers at age 18 and pressure begins to force his choice. He does not have the inhibitions that a philosophy of universal service in uniform would engender. The door is open for him as a student to qualify if capable in a skill badly needed by his nation. He has many choices and is prodded to make a decision.

The psychological effect of this circumstantial climate depends upon the individual, his sense of good sportsmanship, his love of country and its way of life. He can obtain a sense of well-being and satisfaction that he is doing as a civilian what will help his country most. This process encourages him to put forth his best effort and removes to some degree the stigma that has been attached to being out of uniform.

In the less patriotic and more selfish individual it engenders a sense of fear, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction which motivates him, nevertheless, in the same direction. He complains of the uncertainty which he must endure; he would like to be able to do as he pleases; he would appreciate a certain future with no prospect of military service or civilian contribution, but he complies with the needs of the national health,

continued on page 2

The International Days of Resistance or 10 Days to Shake the Empire

by Carl Davidson and Greg Calvert, NIC

The discussion of the National Mobilization Committee (NMC) during the NIC meeting was, in many ways, a microcosm and repetition of the debate going on within the SDS membership for the last two years. However, there were significant differences. Most of us felt a new responsibility for SDS to respond creatively and constructively to a growing anti-war movement which had reached a new level of development.

In the past, national SDS stood apart from the wheelings and dealings of the various mobilization committees. Somehow, we felt the tactic of big demonstrations inadequate; we talked about "organizing to stop the seventh war from now". We separated ourselves from the anti-war marches by insisting on a program of on-going multi-issue, local organizing. Our rhetoric called for the development of permanent radical constituencies with a capacity for long-term resistance, rather than the broadening of an anti-war constituency committed mainly to protest activities.

Our program was never real. To be sure there was JOIN, a community union of poor whites in Chicago, or a union of hospital workers in Boston. But projects of this sort were exceptions, the work of a dedicated few. The mass of SDS members on the local level, as well as the younger students just entering the movement, were mainly involved in the anti-war programs emanating from the mobilization committees. Of course, SDS politics had an effect on the mobilizations. The marches were larger and more militant

due to the participation of our local membership. The draft became a major issue at our insistence. And the themes of black liberation and the powerlessness of the poor were woven into the movement rhetoric partially as a result of our pressure.

Nevertheless, we made several serious political mistakes. First, we assumed that since we had tired of marches and protests, then everyone else had grown weary of these tactics as well. We failed to grasp the importance for others to

continued on page 2

PLAN FOR THE DECEMBER NC BLOOMINGTON IND.

DETAILS - PAGE 2

LETTERS

Editors:

Brother Clarence Major's piece on "Hippies" on the Lower East Side was informative, but incorrect in major facts which were omitted. The Hippy phenomenon is basically a combination of revolt against the hypocrisy of this system, and revolt against regulations forced upon youth by the Establishment, and a desire to avoid responsibility as long as possible while trying to determine a non-compromising role in the framework of society (in the context, primarily of earning a living).

Unfortunately, the leadership/Gods of this group (Abbie Hoffman, Dana Beil) have no concern with this group of kids' (that's what they are) welfare or life. They encourage youths to run away while failing to provide adequate shelters or food for them. Since no employer will employ an underage high-school drop-out, most of these kids are forced to become nickel-dime dealers or into subtle forms of prostitution (Live with Me)—in fact they become part of a society which is harsher, crueler, and rougher than the worst that the Establishment has to offer.

Whenever large quantities of drugs are dealt, "Love" loses its significance and "bread" gains. The Lower East Side drug scene is a jungle since it is one of the main distribution points nationally. Don't be afraid to make that statement in print—even the feds know that. Like any jungle it hardens people up—or fucks them up. Those who become good dealers are fit to enter any business on management level—There are busts, burns, and breaks in the line.

Something should be done to provide an orientation to get the kids to see the hypocrisy of their leaders/Gods and to prevent them from falling into a new set of false values. Drugs can give a new outlook on life by setting aside certain set perceptions and allowing new ones to form. And drugs are enjoyable—they do not act as Marx thought of alcohol—making people content with the system. They do allow individuals to see the triteness of dogmatism and the ego-games and political games that stem from them.

In the past year or two SDS has taken a very dogmatic line. It pretends to know what is wrong with this society, what it should be like, and how it should get there. It talks of revolution, but when has that ever achieved anything? I always get frightened when I hear someone who claims to "know" just how to change things. Our society is so complex that the effects in one sphere affect totally unrelated spheres. An example: integration of restaurants in some Southern towns has meant the bankruptcy of some Black restaurants as Blacks preferred the white ones when they could enter.

Although SDS claims that it is useless to try to treat just the symptoms of the illness of our society, and the significant change will come only with revolution, it forgets that technological progress and attitudes of individuals can and must have effect on society. We have forgotten that. The "Hippies" say if this society is corrupt we will drop out of it. Then it will change because they will want us back because we love and broadcast love and

goodness. It works, I have even seen it work on cops.

When we have power we play games with it and work with it like any old-line politician. In that sense then, we are still playing the same old game of politics. These innocent kids see it and sense it. When we act trite they see our hypocrisy and tell us, but we say they do not understand—They understand only too well. We often laugh at these things among ourselves later, much later. But being the big tough men and women we are we will never let the world know, we might have to laugh at ourselves. Well the "Hippies" are laughing because they can see through a facade.

Viva Love,

Ed Rosenthal
N. Y. Regional SDS
Youngstown State U. P.O.D. 67'

Dear Editor,

Thad Marty's article "On Resistance Strategy" (11/20/67) made interesting reading, but there is a gross mistake at the end that I wish to comment about:

...as American capitalism loses the world struggle of competing economic systems it will become ever more hysterical, it will thrash about more wildly, it will act more and more short-sightedly.

I maintain that "loses" should be changed to "wins", because information from almost any source (except Marty's) clearly indicates an ever increasing American economic triumph in Europe. (Witness socialist England devaluating and France, Germany, etc. becoming more dependent than ever before on the US advanced technology.)

Conall O'Leary
Kansas University SDS

News Release

continued from page 1

safety, or interest—or is denied deferment.

Throughout his career as a student, the pressure—the threat of loss of deferment—continues. It continues with equal intensity after graduation. His local board requires periodic reports to find out what he is up to. He is impelled to pursue his skill rather than embark upon some less important enterprise and is encouraged to apply his skill in an essential activity in the national interest. The loss of deferred status is the consequence for the individual who acquired the skill and either does not use it or uses it in a non-essential activity.

The psychology of granting wide choice under pressure to take action is the American or indirect way of achieving what is done by direction in foreign countries where choice is not permitted.

It should be clear to all of us that the Selective Service System is one of the most powerful instruments in American society for determining the life-choices of young Americans. Deferments, like 2-S, are an essential part of this gigantic system of manpower channeling. The 2-S deferment ensures that millions of young Americans will accept a choice which is within the spectrum defined as the "national interest". They are told, in effect, that they will have the privilege of not being forced to kill or to be killed in the armed services if they will undertake a course of training and occupational activities which have been defined as "essential" in relation to this pre-defined "national interest". We are forced to ask: What is this "national interest" and who defined it? The answer is clear: it is the interest as defined by what President Eisenhower termed the military-industrial complex. This interest can only be termed "national" if we assume that the interests of the military and corporate industrial leadership are equivalent to the interest of the nation.

This system of indirect coercion has been in operation for a long time. What is new is the recent threat by General Hershey to extend the scope of the coercion. General Hershey has suggested

that those of us who disagree with the definition of the national interest given by the military-industrial complex, and who choose to engage in political action which is directly opposed to that definition, should be coerced in a new fashion. Hershey has said, in effect, that those of us who oppose the channeling of manpower for the ends and interests which he represents are going to have our energies channeled back out of university training for industrial-productive ends and interests, and into military training for repressive-destructive ends and interests.

In fact, General Hershey is threatening our right to engage in active political activity which opposes the given definition of the national interest and attempts to redefine that interest. His threat is an outright attempt to suppress political dissent and active political opposition.

The threat behind any deferment, student or otherwise, is that of being punished for not fitting into the channeled modes of behavior. General Hershey's new threat is that of being punished for explicitly political behavior which opposes the defined modes. It is a direct violation of constitutionally guaranteed political freedoms and is the first major attempt at the political repression of the New Left.

SDS wishes to make it clear that it does not support the existing system of deferments. We have publicly denounced the 2-S as representing the special privileged status of those whose cultural or economic background enable them to engage in university training. SDS opposes a system of privilege which permits middle-class white students to pursue their training while obliging poor Americans, both black and white, to fight and die in Vietnam. SDS has opposed the draft both because of its coercive nature and because of the political ends which it serves. SDS will continue to oppose the use of young America's manpower for interests and ends which it feels are not those of the nation. Furthermore, it will fight against this attempt to repress the political opposition of the New Left.

At present, that opposition has mainly manifested itself in our struggle against the war in Vietnam. It is our firm belief that the U.S. government's genocidal war of aggression against the Vietnamese people and its imperialist foreign policy in general are not in the best interests of the American people and the people of the Third World. We will continue our resistance to that foreign policy, to the Selective Service System, and to all other institutions that make those actions of the government possible.

We want once again to make it clear that we are entering this case not to protect the privileged status of students or the system of manpower channeling, but to resist this attempted escalation of the repression of political opposition in America.

We insist that it is not only our constitutional right but also our duty to the American people to work for the redefinition of those ends which are truly in the interests of the nation.

DECEMBER 27 - 31 NATIONAL COUNCIL BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

CHAPTERS WISHING TO BE REPRESENTED AT THE NC SHOULD ELECT THEIR DELEGATES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND SEND THEIR NAMES IN TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE BY DECEMBER 20TH.

All local chapters wishing to be officially recognized by national sds at the December NC should send immediately to the N.O.:

- the names of at least 5 national members
- a chapter constitution or statement of purpose (can be brief — must be non-exclusionary and in broad general agreement with the aims and principles of national sds.)
- a request for official recognition as a local chapter of national sds.

Chapters that are recognized at the NC will be eligible to be represented there by voting delegates (the number of delegates is determined by the number of national members there are in the chapter — one delegate for the first 5 to 25 members or part thereof — i.e. 51 national members-3 voting delegates.)

WATCH NEW LEFT NOTES FOR FURTHER DETAILS

new left notes

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The Case for the Case

continued from page 1

on a historical-moral certitude that we are "right"—in our analysis, our vision, and our actions.

In abstraction, sincere liberals agree with our vision, our goals. In action, these liberals believe that the values which we may share can be realized within the defined limits of political activity which are given to us. Radicals share a conviction that those values cannot be realized except in a totally new context of political action and social reality. The "Hershey Case" is our opportunity to join with them in the testing of our premises—and theirs.

The liberals will argue that the case involves the "constitutional right to dissent". We argue (see the press state-

ment) that it involves the (equally constitutional) right to political freedom—the right and the duty to find a revolutionary alternative to the "national interest" as defined by General Hershey and the empire—interests which he represents.

It is true that the liberals may desert us. The "Hershey Case" offers us the opportunity to talk about that possible desertion as a public, a political act.

He says that as long as people believe in certain institutions we must work with them within those institutions until either their belief or our critique proves itself to be historically viable.

Mike Spiegel
Greg Calvert
National Interim Committee

NEW LEFT NOTES
SPECIAL ISSUE

Featuring:

A Summary of the New Draft Laws
by Jeff SegalIMMUNITY: Student Organizing
by Carl DavidsonA Radical Speaks in Defense of SNCC
by Staughton LyndVIETNAM: This is Guernica
By Carl Oglesbyand a list of universities granted
PROJECT THEMIS research contracts
by the Department of Defense.LARGE QUANTITIES FREE TO CHAP-
TERS FOR COST OF SHIPPING
Write Lit Secretary c/o SDS**National Secretary's Report
On Organizational Responsibility
and Political Maturity**Mike Spiegel
National Secretary

By this time, most of you should have received a fundraising appeal from the National Office, asking you to financially support an expanding national operation. We are attempting to break through what has become a vicious circle—the lack of relevance which the N.O. has for many members, and the consequent lack of financial support for the national organization which reinforces the inability to establish a real relationship. In order that the N.O. function as a clear reality with political responsibility to the membership, the office must spend most of its time in direct political service to

a rapidly growing membership. Instead, while political duties remain, the office must spend an inordinate amount of time insuring its own survival. When the latter is the case, there is the inevitable tendency for the N.O. to become further and further alienated from the membership; it takes on an internal logic of its own.

Obviously, this is a harmful situation for the organization. The political duties which the office must fulfill are growing as the movement grows and matures—to carry them out with less than complete contact with the membership and its political direction cannot realistically reflect the state of the movement. One role of the N.O. is to represent the attitudes of the membership in its opera-

tion on the national level—to help set the national context for local actions. The broad (and sometimes fairly specific) outlines of programs and policies are set by the National Councils and Conventions, but the N.O. is mandated to carry them out, and that job demands a realistic appraisal of where SDS is at. Relationships with other groups and mass organizations are established, and a political stance is put forward which can determine certain contexts. Unfortunately, the case is now that those decisions on how to deal with specific situations have been made and handled with too little knowledge of the state of the membership.

Is it conscious elitism which motivates such methods and processes of decision-making? That is merely silly, since if anyone has a consciousness of the problems of elitism, it is they who are constantly attacked on those grounds. There are objective conditions and contradictions within the organization which give rise to such phenomena. The decisions which the national officers face are always going to be there; to ignore the making of those decisions or the taking of a course of action, though organizationally pure in our present state, is politically immature. The solution is not to take no course of action, but rather to make courses taken responsible to an active membership. To take no course on the national level is to take a course of total unintentionality about the history which we are creating and living through. We must have sound political reasons for not acting as well as acting—an intentional attitude toward SDS's role in a political situation. This means that we cannot permit an organizational breakdown to inhibit our political maturation and involvement in politically significant courses of action—it must be repaired. To make those decisions and to represent SDS on the national level without complete cognition of the state of the membership and, from that, the probable directions in which we are heading, places illegitimate authority in individuals who are without the benefit of real contact with the membership.

The analysis is theoretical and somewhat abstract—the problems are real, and their causes are clear. An N.O. which is forced to concern itself with its own survival as a paramount consideration cannot psychologically or politically be

continued on page 4

10 Days to Shake the Empire

continued from page 1

go through the experience of the mass protest actions of our political past. Secondly, we failed in offering a counter-program capable of involving a mass student movement. Our organizing projects were geared mainly toward a politically sophisticated and highly committed minority of the radical student movement.

Both of these mistakes grew out of a failure on our part to understand the significance the war in Vietnam has had for American political life. Much of our political discussion was prefaced with remarks like, "What if the war ended tomorrow, where would we be then." Despite our analysis of the war's not being an aberration or a mistake, we failed to see that Vietnam was symptomatic of a general political crisis in American foreign and domestic policy, a crisis that would continue even if this particular war were to end. The crisis we are confronting is the disruption and dislocation of the political economy of imperialism in the face of wars of national liberation, of which Vietnam is only one front. The struggles of Third World movements abroad and black America at home have marked the beginning of the end of U.S. corporate capitalism. This is not to say that the political and economic struggles of the white poor and working people of the United States are irrelevant at this point. Quite the opposite. What we must understand, however, is that the conditions from which the struggle of white America has developed have been initiated by the actions of liberation movements abroad. The cost of the war in Vietnam bankrupts the war on poverty. Defence production requires anti-strike legislation. An inflated war economy requires wage freezes, and so on.

None of this is new to us; we have made these "connections" in our analysis before. However, while we have made the connections in analysis, we have yet to make them in strategy. The conclusion we must draw is that the primary task for the radical student movement at this time is to develop a political strategy of anti-imperialism. We must see the Vietnam war and the black rebellions at home as a general crisis for the next period of our work. Many aspects of an anti-imperialist strategy are still undeveloped or unclear. In the ghettos, we support the black liberation movement; we fight racism by organizing the white community into radical politics. In the university we at least continue our struggle against the military. In high schools and poor and working class communities we at least develop draft resistance projects. Finally, we must begin a new relationship with the anti-war movement.

How is that to be done? First, we should realize that our past mistakes have grown out of a general failure of SDS to plan, advocate, and coordinate a national program of opposition to the war in Vietnam. It is true that SDSers have taken active roles in the Pentagon confrontation, the Oakland Stop the Draft Week, and a host of resistance activities involving war recruiters and institutional

complicity with the war machine. Unfortunately, much of the potential impact of those activities was lost on both the American public and on the participants themselves. This state of affairs is mainly the result of the unwillingness of SDS to take a position of political leadership which would have permitted an effective programmatic propaganda to make our political message clear. Furthermore, a coordinated program would have established a more coherent picture of the relationships between a wide variety of activities which, on the surface, seemed disparate and unrelated.

The time has come for SDS to assume a leadership position within the anti-war movement. It is the political responsibility of the organization to develop a coherent program of interrelated activities at the local and regional level which will be accompanied by a major propaganda effort at the national level. The failure of SDS to assume this responsibility would be a serious retreat on several fronts.

1) Political leadership. SDS must take responsibility for making its radical anti-imperialist perspective clear to the nation. We must attempt to demonstrate, to as many Americans as possible, both inside and outside the anti-war movement, that the perspective of the New Left offers the only real hope for the country. The present imperialist crisis has resulted in tremendous economic, social, and political problems for ordinary American people. We must make known to the American public the difference in solutions offered to those problems by liberal analysis and dissent, on the one hand; and a radical analysis and resistance, on the other hand.

2) Propaganda. Related to our other mistakes has been our failure to develop an effective propaganda apparatus for the dissemination of our ideas. Much of the SDS experience with the establishment press has led to our disillusionment of getting our perspective across through any of the public media. Since "the bourgeois press lies", SDSers have preferred to ignore its existence. The result has been a persistent failure to make clear the politics of our actions which are constantly reported in the press.

3) Communications. Along with the weakness of our public propaganda effort has gone the inadequacy of communication within SDS. It is a sad fact that we are forced to read the New York Times to learn about the activities of our local chapters. We badly need a radical news service to link our organizers and information sources and coordinate their work with the work of those newspapers which share our perspective (New Left Notes, The National Guardian, The Movement, etc.). Liberation News Service, which has made a beginning in this direction, has been inadequate to the present needs of the movement.

4) Coalitions. SDS must develop a positive, although critical, view toward relating to other groups or coalitions within the anti-war movement. To continue our previous position of separating ourselves from other anti-war forces, without ad-

vocating an independent program of our own, would be an indulgence in a sectarianism which neither we nor the movement could afford. This does not mean we should submerge political differences. On the contrary, SDS should have enough confidence in its power and politics to enter into relationships with other groups for the purpose of winning people over to our perspectives, strategies, and tactics. When persuasion fails within certain groups, we should make further efforts within those coalitions to co-opt, neutralize, or contain their politics under the hegemony of our own perspective. However, before we can engage in this kind of political work, it is imperative that we develop a clear, independent program and the apparatus needed to make that program operational.

PROGRAM

In light of these problems and with a view to the necessity of meeting these new demands placed on SDS, we propose that the National Council adopt the following program for the spring of 1968.

SDS will initiate a call for a ten-day program of actions in resistance to the war in Vietnam centering on the period of April 10-20. The action will be subsumed under the title "Ten Days to Shake the Empire" and/or "The International Weeks of Resistance". A variety of targets for direct action on and off the campus, as well as the tactics for dealing with them will be chosen, not only for their moral symbolism, but mainly for their effectiveness in developing a more sophisticated political consciousness regarding the operations of American imperialism at home and abroad. Where possible and appropriate, financial and corporate industrial targets should be attacked, rather than a single aspect of imperialist repressiveness such as the Selective Service System. This is essential if we are to develop a focus on the economic aspects of corporate capitalist imperialism. The cooperation of NACLA and other radical research groups should be solicited to help pinpoint those targets.

The international aspects of the program should be developed 1) through coordinated speaking tours by those who will have traveled to North Vietnam and Cuba, and 2) through encouraging anti-imperialist youth groups abroad (e.g. German SDS, French UNEF, Japanese Zengakuren, etc.) to plan direct action in their own countries to coincide with ours.

The National Office will assume responsibility for the coordination of the program and the development of an effective propaganda campaign stressing the anti-imperialist perspective of the program and the necessity for building a radical grass-roots resistance in America.

Finally, National SDS will attempt to persuade other organizations, such as the National Mobilization Committee, to adopt, endorse, or participate in all or certain parts of SDS' program. In dealing with other groups, we must keep in mind the importance of 1) the political inde-

pendence of our program and all that goes with it, and 2) the importance of developing a variety of secondary programs for those less radical groups and sectors of the anti-war movement. At this point, when tremendous efforts are being made to divide the anti-war movement along "responsible" and "irresponsible" lines in the eyes of the American public, SDS should make every effort, short of watering down its own radicalism, to enable those who will be involved in moderate liberal protest activity to identify themselves within the overall scope of our program.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to render the actions of April 10-20 as effective as possible and to strengthen our communications and propaganda apparatus on a long-term basis, the National Office, under the supervision of the National Interim Committee, and within whatever guidelines are established by the National Council, should proceed to:

1) establish a Radical Press Service which would provide for the coordination and exchange of information sources and articles between New Left Notes, The Movement, The National Guardian, Liberation News Service, and other publications within or sympathetic to the movement.

2) publish a news monthly designed to propagandize our program and analysis to the largest possible audience.

3) send travelers out to coordinate information and encourage participation in the program.

Free Speech and Left Authoritarianism

Pat Probst
Houston

I read with much obfuscation Carl Davidson's remarks to the National Guardian anniversary dinner concerning deobfuscation of the bourgeois trick calling for free speech for CIA, Dow, etc., recruiters on campus. Davidson advocates for us not to be duped by the administration's call for free speech for these ogres. It is, as he points out, a game that the bourgeoisie plays with us. But by merely putting the label of "bourgeois" on it (ergo free speech is a game of the devil), this does nothing to 'deobfuscate' anything. In deed what it does do, is establish a legitimacy among us radicals to the so-called "vanguard" infallibility. Not being a believer in this infallibility, whether Davidson's or anyone else's, I wish to examine this issue to perhaps deobfuscate brother Carl's intentions.

If we take his remarks to their obvious logical conclusion we end up with some rather perplexing (obfuscating) contradictions. If we do not let CIA, Dow, etc., have free speech because they are anti-democratic (which they are without doubt) then we come to the dilemma of choosing who is a democrat and who isn't. One step further we then fall in the bourgeois role in which it boils down to—not who is anti-democratic or democratic—but rather who is on our side and who is against us. The former can have free speech, the latter can't. Voila! It's no longer free speech in any sense of the meaning of freedom!

Second, who is to choose who is the democrat and who is the anti-democrat? In the two cases mentioned it is easy to choose—both are anti-democrats. But the choice may not be so simple in future encounters. In fact, by following this line of thought, it seems that free speech must take a back seat to social justice (if I read Davidson's remarks correctly). I say NO! We as radicals must hold out for both, in other words, "have our cake and eat it" too. And this cake bit is one more connotation of what a radical is—in counterdistinction to the bourgeois authoritarianism and the social democrat's failing.

The social democrat says we can only have our cake (usually he will side with the free speech over the social justice) while the bourgeoisie allows free speech as long as it remains innocuous and is not effective in tampering with the status quo. If it does pose a threat (real or perceived) then he (the bourgeoisie) squelches it. A recent good example of this is the Chicago police's raid on JOIN hdqtrs. Evidently, either real or perceived, JOIN has become an effective threat—therefore the squelch raid. The Washington Mobilization was also an example of "just in case it becomes a threat" squelch of free speech and assembly.

There is only one more defense for blocking the free speech of anti-democrats. That is to assume that the campus recruiters are there without the consent or assent of the students. In judging this we have only one way to follow—to stay democratic and not lapse into Right or Left authoritarianism—that being majority rules. It is obvious that on most campuses the majority of students do not disfavor the recruiting of CIA, Dow, etc. We are in the minority and have only one course—that of trying to persuade other students that the recruitment is not in their or humanity's best interests. Otherwise we fall into the same boat with the Right authoritarians whom we despise and the Left authoritarians who have forsaken the revolution. Let us have our cake and eat it. Let the people decide.

Revolution is the complete turnover of structural and cultural relationships.

Reform is only a temporary palliative to the existing relationships. If we replace Right authoritarianism with Left authoritarianism we have made a great reform movement, not a revolution—the structural and cultural relationships remain the same with a few changes in the legal fictions.

Revolution, as opposed to reform, does not mean how it was accomplished but how much and to what degree was accomplished. Viva Revolution! Morte Reform!

I have been increasingly dismayed at the authoritarian tendencies and authoritarian rhetoric that has been creeping into our movement especially from SDS. It is understandable. The constant frustrations that fulltime movement people are confronted with sometimes are overwhelming. After knocking ourselves out in full dedication to our revolution we see little concrete results, little that we can call successes, and thus little fuel to keep our faith burning. In moments of despair we let dogma creep in cloaking it with pseudo-divine authority to justify ourselves and our actions. It gives us an air of unreal predestination or divine mission. If this happens to the movement—if we need a "history will absolve us" clause—then we like the Bourbons have learned nothing. We are doomed to make the same mistakes and create the same monsters as the so-called revolutions of the past. We are no longer the New Left but back in the Old Left bag.

The revolution we fight for in America is unlike in means and goals any revolution in history. The only guideline we have is not to make the same mistakes. The origins of our movement were in rebellion against authoritarian structures and institutions and their subsequent social injustice, and led to the realization of the sickness of our society exemplified by racism, imperialism, and selfish aggrandisement of the establishment at the expense of rank&file Americans and the Third World. If we forget these origins our revolution is doomed—even if we win the battle—to another First or Second World grotesque abnormality.

The deobfuscation of the free speech and assembly crap lies not in crushing anti-democrats. And surely it is not a free speech issue. We put our minds and bodies on the line for a much different reason. THE CIA, DOW, etc., AND THEIR ACCOMPLICES—either by commission (the administration) or by omission (the apathetic students)—ARE MURDERERS. It makes no difference if murderers are in the majority or minority. Murderers must be stopped. It is for this reason we commit ourselves.

The above critique was written before Davidson's article "Resistance and Bourgeois Civil Liberties". It stands, I think, more confirmed by Carl's statements in this article (NLN Nov. 13).

No amount of rhetoric on "legitimacy" can be of any use. Legitimacy, like pornography, is in the mind of the beholder. In deed, legitimacy is established by and means no more than who holds the reins of power.

Davidson says, "Our critique argues that the social order we are rebelling against is totalitarian, manipulative, repressive, and anti-democratic." So is the U.S.S.R., China, Mexico, and Great Britain. In fact, in more or less degree so is every other established social order in the world. To call civil liberties and rights, free speech and assembly "bourgeois" is as fruitless as calling their abolishment "revolutionary". Civil liberties and rights, free speech and assembly, as pointed out above, do not exist in their true sense in a bourgeois social order or any other social order that is totalitarian, manipulative, repressive, and anti-democratic. Our revolution is to build a new social order in which they do exist; not another totalitarian, manipulative, repressive, and anti-democratic social order.

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I DON'T THINK he meant it this way, but this is how it came out dept. (Sargent Shriver on Merv Griffin's show): "The War on Poverty is doing a great job. We had hundreds of boys who couldn't even qualify for the army—now with the help of the anti-poverty program we have been able to send 600 of these boys to Vietnam and six have been killed already."

Herb Caen, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Organizational Responsibility

able to devote itself to the overwhelming primary task at hand—servicing the membership by fulfilling its bureaucratic needs and maintaining contact with the membership in order to reflect its needs and direction at the national level.

The problem of financing has its own internal political logic also. It is foolish to think that the sources of income can help but reflect themselves politically. Not that there are any strings attached to money which we solicit and/or receive, but subtle mechanisms must come into play which make those receiving the income conscious of how the movement survives financially. Anything but reliance upon that movement itself is politically unhealthy. About a month ago, Leif Johnson from New York and I carried on the following correspondence:

Dear SDS,

I noticed in a recent NAC Minutes that Mike Spiegel had collected \$12,000 during a recent fundraising drive, but there was no indication as to where this money was collected. Was it collected from the membership or, as I suspect, from rather well-to-do friends? Was the money a charitable handout from the middle class which likes our libertarian ideas?

It seems to me that this is the least desirable way of raising money. You cannot avoid becoming beholden to that money; its easy collection destroys initiative to find other money.

Money should only be raised from the membership, in dimes and quarters, if necessary, because SDS should be beholden only to us. You might set up a pledge system of a buck a month for students, five or ten a month for workers. For workers, I think the minimum should be ten a month. There is no reason to give less.

This kind of financing would stabilize income and make the organization financially responsible to its members. It would also reduce the influence of the middle class....

Very truly yours,

Leif Johnson

Dear Leif,

Your letter disturbs me very much, not because I disagree with it, however, but because I agree very much. The problem of how to finance our activities is one of my central responsibilities, and the problems you raise are central to that.

First, your analysis of where the \$12,000 came from is basically correct. However, the contributor did not in any way mandate the way the money was to be used.

Well, what to do about money from the membership—it undoubtedly exists out there, but getting it from there to here is the problem, one which has plagued every National Secretary and N.O. staff. The membership apparently does not feel the urgency of self-financing which you do, and would rather let the N.O. spend its time hassling contributions from people than respond to a fund-raising letter in any real sense. The pledge system never worked very well; there are perhaps ten other people beside yourself who actually follow up on pledges they ever made. A chapter tax was passed in April, and a total of \$1600 came in, \$750 of it from one chapter. In May a membership mailing was sent out, netting \$1000 after the costs of mailing. Our annual budget

this year will run somewhere around \$100,000. The problem is apparent. NC's and Conventions will continue to mandate the N.O. to carry out certain activities, without giving much thought to the need to finance those projects. We are attempting to expand our printing operation with the thought in mind that it will be self-supporting from doing outside jobs, while perhaps providing a small profit for us. This then presents the problem of the N.O. being partially self-sufficient financially without actually being beholden to the membership....

For more membership participation, Mike Spiegel

Dear Mike,

Thanks for your answer to my complaints about SDS financing. It is something that has bothered me for two reasons. First is the obvious one of what would happen if the "easy money" were gone. We've seen how the finances of SNCC were destroyed when they became more radical. What would happen to SDS with its growing membership and activities if the government were to begin a drive to suppress us and our easy money dried up? Or if we began a large organizing drive and our finances were unreliable? I think we would be seriously hurt by our lack of foresight.

The other factor is the SDS membership. A radical organization is not built upon mystical ideas of "correct objective conditions" or "mass alienation" of people. It is built because certain students and workers perceive the need for a radical force and then decide to do whatever is necessary to build it. The organization requires its members to contribute analyses of social conditions and movements and description of radical activity, to organize other students and workers, and to contribute money so that we may have full-time organizers and a newspaper. Every SDS member should feel (in addition to organizing and contributing ideas) an obligation to contribute financially. Yours for more money now, Leif Johnson

None of this is to say that any change should take place in political priorities which we have set—priorities which place the greatest emphasis on grassroots activity. The political role of the N.O. has been defined, but the financial support for it to carry out that role has not come forth. Consequently, because of the lack of financial support and because the N.O. and its role do exist, it has attempted to fulfill that role in what cannot help but be a distorted fashion.

As SDS grows and assumes a more primary political role on the left, its internal structure must be examined. We cannot afford to become more mature politically while permitting a weak spot in our internal structure to continue to hold us back. It presents us with the problem of taking ourselves seriously as a political organization. We must take the responsibility for seeing that within SDS we reflect the kind of politically responsible organization which we hope to build in a future society. For within an organization as aware of the evils of elitism as SDS, people must realize individual and collective responsibility for seeing that conditions cannot arise where elitism is possible. Starving the N.O. has perhaps been the unconscious

continued next page

New Left Notes needs other things besides articles — like artwork (political cartoons, all-purpose illustrations, etc.) and photographs of action in your area. Not returnable.