



THE STUDENT REBELLION:

AFTER PARIS?

isc

THE STUDENT is published by the International Student Conference (ISC) four times a year in English, French and Spanish, as a forum of fact and opinion for students and student leaders. It is sent free of charge to National Unions of Students, Local Unions, national and international organisations, universities and to student and national publications.

Opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of other members of the ISC Secretariat.

A subscription for one year costs US \$2 for students and US \$3 for non-students a year seairail, and US \$4 airmail.

THE STUDENT is edited and designed by David Robertson.

Volume XII No. 6

July/August, 1968

ISC

THE STUDENT REBELLION:

AFTER PARIS?

a special issue of
THE STUDENT
the magazine of the
International Student Conference

Postbox 36, Leiden, Netherlands

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
THE STUDENT REBELLION	7
COHN-BENDIT AND SARTRE; A DIALOGUE	59
FRENCH STUDENT CHARTER	67
STUDENTS AND EMANCIPATION	69

Acknowledgments

The interview between Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Jean-Paul Sartre was first published in *LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR* on May 20 th, 1968, and has since been reprinted in book form in *LA REVOLTE ETUDIANTE; LES ANIMATEURS PARLENT*, published by Editions du Seuil, 27 Rue Jacob, Paris VI, France.

The article by Rudi Dutschke on "Students and Emancipation" was published under the title "Die geschichtlichen Bedingungen für den internationalen Emanzipationskampf" in *REBELLION DER STUDENTEN ODER DIE NEUE OPPOSITION*, published by Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, Hamburg, Germany, in May, 1968.

INTRODUCTION

During the spring and summer of 1968 profound and lasting changes in the political life of several countries, notably in Europe, were effected as a direct result of student activity.

At least one Government, in Belgium, was toppled after a national crisis in which students played a major role, while in Czechoslovakia a massive programme of liberalisation, largely inspired by students, led to the resignation of the Prime Minister, and the emergence of a popular regime (a regime whose brief career has since been curtailed after an armed invasion by troops of the Soviet Union and some of its allies).

In two European countries in particular - France and Germany - an articulate and acutely political minority of students have succeeded in exerting a profound influence on national life, and in France almost succeeded in toppling the Government.

While the activities of students in these countries have captured world attention, elsewhere in Europe students have assumed a new role in influencing the course of public affairs. In Italy, Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Yugoslavia, Holland, Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey, students have protested against academic and Governmental restrictions, and have demanded the right to participate in the running of their colleges and universities.

There have been major student demonstrations too, outside Europe. In America students have continued the movement of opposition to racial discrimination and the war in Vietnam. In Indonesia students played a decisive part in the replacement of the corrupt and inefficient Government of Sukarno by a Government more acceptable to the people; while in many Latin American countries students have formed a focus of revolutionary activity.

Student protest against oppression and injustice is not a new phenomenon. Students have always been in the forefront of protest against oppression in all its forms, but during the recent months the scope and intensity of direct student action has increased remarkably.

"Student Power" has become a political force of immense significance and the illusions of those who saw student activity as irrelevant to the main stream of political life have been violently shattered. That in many countries students have exerted so crucial an influence on national life, marks an important historical watershed.

Many elements of society - the leaders of Government, political parties and business; the University teachers and administrators, and even some of the students not directly involved in student action find it difficult to comprehend the reasons for widespread student protest and

demonstrations. Many of them regard the student protest as a problem of law and order and would like the machinery of the state responsible for preservation of law and order to deal with this 'problem' effectively. We believe this is a misdirected approach and can bring only disastrous results for all concerned.

There are others whose minds on the subject are more open. They sincerely wish to understand the student motivations for vigorous protest. Thus there is a great need for recording together major features of student rebellion during the last few months and explaining the reasons for student revolt. This booklet is an attempt to fulfil this need.

It is, of course, too early to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the events of the last few months or of their significance in the long term. These events are too recent and the situation is changing too rapidly for such an analysis to be possible at this moment. This booklet does not seek to provide such an analysis.

It merely sets out to record some of the highlights of "The Student Rebellion" particularly those that have occurred in France and Germany, and with the help of those who have led the revolutionary movement of these countries to explain the motives, objectives and ideologies of those movements.

At the same time the booklet seeks to relate events in these two countries to those elsewhere, and to examine the extent to which common trends can be seen to have developed in all those countries where students have been in conflict with authority.

The booklet contains a survey of the events of 1968 together with comments by Rudi Dutschke, the West German student leader, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the leader of the Paris March 22nd Group - an anarchistic student group which was to a considerable extent responsible for the co-ordination of the events of May and June in France. The comments by Cohn-Bendit take the form of an interview with the celebrated left-wing French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, who has shown considerable sympathy with the French student rebellion.

This book does not represent a coherent statement of policy, on the part of the International Student Conference, towards "The Student Rebellion". It is intended as a factual survey, and the opinions expressed in each of the articles - including that written by a member of the Secretariat of the ISC - are those of the authors.

Ram L. Lakhina
Secretary-General
International Student Conference

THE STUDENT REBELLION

David Robertson

Students have always been rebellious.

They have rebelled for two notable reasons; because they believe their views about society and about the universities and colleges in which they work to be as valid as those of their elders; and because they believe society and the universities are so ordered as to make it impossible for those views to be heard or put into effect.

The expression of this rebellion has, frequently and inevitably, led to conflict between students and society. Throughout the history of civilised society, students have protested at what they believe to be intolerable injustices, and have demanded the right to influence the complain - against prejudice and intolerance; against the domination of one people by another; against the immorality of political relationships based on collective avarice and the worship of the material; against aggression and war.

They have, from time to time, been able to exert a real influence on the course of history, and in many countries the introduction of liberal and progressive measures - or the abolition of inhuman ones - have been directly attributable to student action.

In countries where notable injustices are practiced in the name of 'good government' - in Spain, Portugal, South Africa, Rhodesia and Greece - students have always been at the forefront of demands for reform.

More than ever before, however, a minority of extreme students are demanding more comprehensive and far-reaching political reforms. In several countries, notably in Europe, revolutionary students are now challenging the existence of governments traditionally thought to be stable and democratic. It is this challenge that marks 1968 as a major historical watershed, and which has focused world attention on 'the student rebellion'.

In almost every country that has a system of higher education, students have demanded the right to participate in the running of their daily lives.

while in some this demand has been extended to one for participation in Government.

The most important event of the student rebellion, however, has been in France. During 1968 this powerful industrial European nation was brought almost to a standstill, its contacts with the outside world broken, and its political institutions brought almost to the point of destruction.

Alliance between students and workers in France was the most notable success so far of Student Power, and may be only the first stage in a momentous political explosion.

significance

It is too early to assess the true significance of what happened in France during the 'nights of the barricades' in May and June 1968. This was certainly no more than the first act of a continuing situation, and may seem insignificant by comparison with events in the Autumn.

No Government ought to think itself so stable and popular that it can resist the impact of massive and coherent student action. If Governments learn the lesson of France and enter into meaningful dialogue with students they may - perhaps - help the situation. Meaningless concessions - like the lowering of the voting age - will not be sufficient.

The influence of student activity on political affairs has become immensely significant. In earlier years students in many parts of the world have played a major role in the political development of their country. Over large parts of Asia and Africa for example, students were amongst the most influential and vociferous supporters of early independence from colonial rule, while in America students have been in the vanguard of the battle against racial inequality, and in the growing tide of opposition to the Vietnam war. In Latin America students have traditionally played a significant part in national affairs, and have often been at the centre of major upheavals. In Europe, where political institutions have traditionally been more stable than in many other areas - and hence less responsive to the demands of vocal, but relatively powerless minorities, students have played a major part in a number of significant events and have, for instance, constituted the most capable opponents to the dictatorial regimes of Franco in Spain and Salazar in Portugal. Most recently students have taken leading positions in the clandestine organisations attempting to restore democratic government in Greece, following the military coup of April 1967.

Traditionally student organisations have based their activities on two major issues; the reform and democratisation of the institutions in which they study; and the place of the individual in society. Thus in their political activities for example, students have tended to concentrate on



major issues of principle, almost always within the general framework of Human Rights. They have opposed apartheid and racism; the imperial domination of one country by another; the persecution of religious and political minorities and the corruption of democracy. Within the universities and colleges they have called for the abolition of barriers to entry based on class and income; the integration of university teaching within society; the development of the role of students in determining the structure and operation of courses and the running of the institution and the abolition of feudal systems of university government based on the supreme authority of the professoriate.

The relative importance of these two aspects of student concern has depended largely upon the political character of each country. Roughly, a division can be made between the countries of the developing world on the one hand and those of the developed world on the other. Students in developing countries have, inevitably and rightly, lent their support chiefly to the struggle for national independence, political and economic development, and political maturity. University reform has been subservient to national growth. You must have a university before you can reform it.

Within the countries of the developed world - notably Europe, North America and Australasia - on the other hand, student bodies have concerned themselves with the structure of academic institutions, and their own role within those institutions. Only in the fairly recent past have more directly political issues assumed any major significance; the concept of the 'student as such' - of the student as a learner rather than as a member of the society in which he lives - has been abandoned as the basis for organised student activity.

While students in the less developed areas of the world have maintained their dominant interest in national development, those in other areas have increasingly become concerned with 'external' political issues. The Charter of the International Student Conference (ISC) places major emphasis on the struggle against the evils of colonialism, imperialism, militarism and social injustice; it defines the object of its members as the achievement of a 'Free University in a Free Society' - an apt summary of the goals of most student political activity.

By long-standing tradition, students have played a leading role in the intellectual life of the communities in which they live. Deprived by constitutional limits based on age from direct participation in government, they have seen their role as that of a 'conscience' to society. Trained to study the world around them critically, and provided with the time and opportunity to pursue that study, students have, inevitably

questioned traditional governmental structures and political assumptions.

That questioning has, more often than not, led to criticism and conflict.

The differences between the political involvement of students in developed and developing countries provides a useful pointer to the lack of cohesion within the international student community. While students from many nations are quite willing and able to work with one another - and do so within the framework of the student internationals - in their national situation their activities and policies are considerably divergent.

conspiracy

This fact must temper claims that student unrest is the manifestation of an 'international conspiracy' or plot, directed towards the overthrow of established political institutions in the service of Eastern or Western Powers. Whilst there are major points of unanimity amongst students from all over the world, they are by no means so united in aim as the as the holders of the conspiracy theory would seem to believe.

But the divisions amongst the student movement are far more comprehensive than this.

In many countries student extremists have, by the nature of their demands and - more significantly - by the tactics they have employed to further them - isolated themselves from the sympathies not only of the mass of the population, but of the majority of their colleagues.

'The student rebellion' is by no means the united international movement that the term may suggest. Though the kinds of demonstration that occurred in France and, to a lesser extent, in other European countries, may have captured the imagination of students in many other countries of the world, they do not accurately represent the nature of student demands in every country.

Student unrest has broken out this year in virtually every country of the world where there are students. Though no outbreak has been so unexpected and bizarre as that in France, protests of major proportions have occurred elsewhere.

A brief summary of the most important protests will serve to demonstrate how the student rebellion has been. The list is by no means exhaustive.

- There have been massive - often violent - demonstrations by students in Italy, who are demanding a comprehensive reform of the antiquated system of higher education. Throughout the year there have been clashes between students and police, and many hundreds on both sides have been injured.

- In Brazil at least four students have been killed, and many others injured, in demonstrations called to demand an increase in government investment in higher education, and greater student participation in university affairs.

- Throughout India there have been massive student protests against university conditions, poor grants, and lack of participation. In the years

Student demonstration in India



since Independence there has been a vast expansion in the university population of India, and in the number of institutions, without proper control and with no corresponding increase in investment or facilities. There are now, for instance 66 universities and nine other institutions of university status; in 1947 there were 19.

- Relationships between staff and students have traditionally been poor and it is possible for a student to complete his course without ever speaking to his professor. At the same time the quality of university teaching is low, and lecturers tend to deliver stereotyped lectures. Academic salaries are low, and teachers often feel insecure in their jobs.

- Students have also become embroiled in bitter disputes following the Government's proposal to keep English and Hindi as official languages.

- In Belgium too, student violence has centred on the language problem, and on the tension between the country's French and Flemish speaking communities.

- In Spain and Portugal students have maintained their crucial role in the vanguard of opposition to the fascist Franco and Salazar regimes.

- Argentinian students have protested strongly against regulations banning 'political, racial or religious action or propaganda leading to physical violence or moral coercion'. Though ostensibly designed as a means of 'maintaining academic freedom' students see the new law as a pretext for Government action against legitimate student demonstrations.

- In South Africa students have traditionally played a leading role in opposing the country's apartheid policies, and further moves by the government to curb opposition have merely strengthened the hand of their opponents.

- Battles between students and police in Algiers resulted in the closing of the university for several months.

- In Britain students have protested against Government decisions to increase the fees of overseas students and to cut by half a proposed increase in student grants, while several universities and colleges have been occupied by students demanding participation in government and the modernisation of courses.

- Japanese students have rioted on several occasions in protest against the presence of American bases in their country and against their Government's support for American action in Vietnam.

- In several African countries student protests have resulted in strong Government action, and one National Union of Students - in Tanzania - has been banned for opposing Government plans for non-military national service. In other countries students have protested against the adoption of 'European' attitudes and clothes.

- Egyptian students protested violently at what they thought were lenient sentences on army officers responsible for their country's defeat in last year's Middle East War. As a result the country's universities were closed for several weeks.

- In Greece the National Union of Students (EFEE) was banned after the military coup of April 1967. Since then students have played a leading role in opposing the military regime, and many have been imprisoned for their activities in organisations committed to toppling the regime.

- Students in Chile occupied the University of Valparaiso for 145 days in protest against Government plans to nationalise the university.

- After student demonstrations in Panama, the Minister of Education announced that 'Education is more important than Politics' and said the university term would start on time.

- In the Lebanon, students staged a hunger strike in sympathy with their teachers - who went on strike for 44 days to demand more pay.

- Chinese students have played a crucial role in Chairman Mao Tse Tung's Cultural Revolution, at an early stage of which universities and colleges were shut down to free students for their participation in the revolutionary movement. Subsequently most have re-opened, though students are still active in political life. A number of extreme revolutionary movements - dissatisfied with the rate of achievement of the Cultural Revolution - have come into existence during recent months

- In Turkey a number of universities have been occupied by their students while at others students are boycotting classes, in a demand for university reform and student participation.

- In Holland students protested against an attempt to increase ten-fold matriculation fees in the universities.

- In Indonesia, where students have played a central role in determining their country's political development, students continue to be regarded as a major force. Of the 414 Members of Parliament, 14 are students.



Campus protest at Columbia University, New York

One of the most powerful student protest movements has been that in America which, in many ways, has provided the inspiration for much student activity in Europe. The conjunction of two major political issues - the Vietnam war and the race question - and a vast, articulate and politically sophisticated student body - has bred massive and violent unrest. Thousands of students have taken part in demonstrations against both the War and the position of the Negro. It was in America - during huge student demonstrations in Berkeley, California - that the phrase 'student power' was born. Much of what has occurred on the campuses of American universities has been repeated elsewhere. Student unrest has reached enormous proportions, and both student and police have been killed and injured in clashes.

During the Summer of 1968 students occupied Columbia University in the Harlem district of New York, in protest against a plan to build a gymnasium on a plot of land traditionally used for recreation by the population of the city's ghetto-like areas, but the sit-in was motivated by feelings far more significant than those aroused by the gymnasium plan. It was a protest against racism, against the alienation of the individual in a society so vast and impersonal that it spawned the world 'multiversity' as an admission that its universities no longer bore any relation to the real meaning of the word - and against the lack of participation by students in university decision making.

It is within Europe, however, that the most startling developments of 'student power' have taken place. For the first time students have challenged the foundations on which their countries have been governed, and have demanded changes so substantial that they can come about only through a fundamental political revolution. It is this that makes the student rebellion in France, and to a lesser extent the conflict in Belgium, Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, of so much importance.

demands

The demands of extremist student groups in these countries, and elsewhere in Europe, have borne a close similarity. They are calling for government by the working class, and for participation in government for every member of society. While in the countries of Eastern Europe this represents a challenge to the ruling Communist administration it is expressed in the West as a demand for 'pure marxism'. Yet, this seeming contradiction is in fact an appeal for one thing - the abolition of government by democracy. Students in East and West have challenged their governments on almost identical issues, and though the expression of that challenge may have varied, its content is unchanged.

In Poland and Czechoslovakia, massive student demonstrations broke out in the Spring of 1968 in support of greater freedom of speech, and the liberalisation of political life. Its results have been unprecedented. The President of Czechoslovakia was forced to resign and a new regime, in substantial sympathy with student demands, took its place. Similar though far less reaching demands were made in Poland. They were unsuccessful.

In Yugoslavia a programme of liberalisation followed an announcement by President Tito that he would resign if he failed to satisfy student demands.

In Western Europe the collision between students and society was brief but bloody. In West Berlin massive street battles followed the attempted

assassination of one of the leaders of the student revolt, Rudi Dutschke, an articulate and militant member of the Socialist German student movement (SDS). The attack on Dutschke, by a right-wing fanatic later found to have pictures of Hitler by his bed - was the culmination of a year of fierce conflict.

The attack on Dutschke is seen by German students as symptomatic of the hostility of West German society towards them. Even those whose views were less extreme than Dutschke's identify themselves with him,

Daniel Cohn-Bendit arrested during a Frankfurt demonstration





Troops in Mexico fire over student demonstrators

and his attempted assassination has - like the shooting of a student by police during demonstrations against the Shah in 1967 - united the student movement far more successfully than the propaganda of the most militant activists. The effect has, indeed, been identical with that of the brutality of the French police, whose heavy-fisted reaction to the earliest student demonstrations in Paris moulded a diverse and incoherent student community overnight into an exceedingly effective guerilla army.

Motivating German students has been the extraordinarily antiquated structure of much of the country's higher educational system, and the innate conservatism of the people. This conservatism found its expression through the virulent anti-student attitudes adopted by the newspapers of Axel Springer, a millionaire publisher, who controls the bulk of the country's popular press. As relations between students and society worsened, Springer became the major target of demonstrations, and students demanded the expropriation of his massive business. In several nights of fighting in Berlin, Springer delivery vans were attacked and burned in an attempt to prevent the distribution of his papers.

The most decisive victory for 'student power' in Europe was the toppling of the Government in Belgium, after months of fighting on the language crisis that has always dominated Belgian politics. Conflict between the country's French and Flemish speaking communities culminated in demands that the University of Louvain should be split, and its Flemish and French speaking sections housed separately. A decision by the governing body to maintain the two faculties within the same building provoked months of clashes between students and police - and between rival student groups - and, ultimately, the fall of the Government. At the same time, students demanded the right to participate in decision-making and the opportunity to influence national affairs. In the early summer of 1968, several Belgian universities were occupied by their students.

france

Not since the days of the Paris Commune of 1871 has France been so near to Civil War as she was during the 'revolution' of May 1968. The French businessmen who loaded their cars with cash and drove over the border to Switzerland were clearly convinced that Civil War was imminent; so was General de Gaulle, who flew to Germany to ask the commanders of his toughest troops whether they would fire on students and workers; so were students, who suddenly found that they had established a meaningful alliance with the workers to challenge the State. And those outside France, cut off from detailed news by the almost total shut-down of all forms of communications, could only guess that Civil War was near.

To say that the Revolution failed to realise the ultimate objectives of its militant supporters - the abolition of French capitalist society and the overthrow of the Gaullist Government - understates its significance and, more important, fails to emphasise by what a tiny margin it fell short of its aims. A multiplicity of 'ifs' and 'buts' surround any post mortem. If,

Students in Paris hurl bricks at police



for instance, the French Trades Union Movement and the Communist Party had thrown their weight solidly behind the workers' and students' revolt; if General de Gaulle had attempted to use armed troops to disperse demonstrations; if students had been better able to communicate their intentions to the mass of the French public; if their violence had been eschewed from the start as a medium of student action, the results might have been different.

The answers to questions like these might help to explain more clearly what happened last time; they would certainly provide a key to what may in the future when, as is inevitable, the confrontation is repeated. And the answers will be sought during the months to come as students evolve their plans for the second round of the battle.

challenge

What happened in France during May is of considerable relevance to any consideration of student unrest in other parts of Europe. In France a challenge to governmental authority was taken to extremes unknown elsewhere in Europe, and was more nearly successful in that challenge than elsewhere. At the same time, it was a challenge on a far broader front than in other countries. While Belgian students, for example, fought very largely on the issue of language, and those in Germany, Italy and in several other countries on educational issues, students in France challenged the very existence of their society. Their struggle had far more in common with that of students in Spain and Portugal - who for years have led the revolt against the autocratic regimes of those two States - than with those in Northern Europe.

The uprising of May 1968 was by no means as unexpected and spontaneous as many reports have suggested. For years a minority of French students had been in bitter and sometimes violent conflict with authority. The Algerian crisis of the late 1950's had the effect of politicising French students and, though it divided rather than united them, it gave many their first taste of political action. The growing crisis in French higher education provided them with an opportunity to exercise their political facility.

Like other industrialised nations, France has been faced with a gigantic increase in student numbers since the War. While there were 170,000 students in higher education in 1958, for example, the figure jumped to 514,000 by 1968. And, as in many other countries, the French Government failed adequately to anticipate either the extent or the pace of this increase. The provision of physical facilities in the universities fell far short of what was needed, and the result was overcrowding, the use of make-shift buildings and equipment, and lack of amenities for staff and students. The provision of lecturing staff, too, was (and is) grossly in-



adequate, so that overworked lecturers are forced to address their classes in shifts. A single class in the Institute of English Studies at the Sorbonne has 1,700 students.

But while buildings are overcrowded, facilities inadequate and staff at a premium, an added and crucial student grievance has been the almost total lack of contact between students and their academic seniors. While to a considerable extent this lack of contact is built in to the structure of French higher education, it has inevitably been exacerbated by the growth of student numbers and the shortage of staff.

Traditionally, French universities have afforded students no say in their administration, and little contact with their professors. At the same time, the professor has been granted total authority. A professor is God within his own Faculty, and a minor deity outside it. He can be removed only for serious misconduct or dishonesty - but not for academic incompetence; and with some worthy exceptions few of the major French universities have attempted to modify this custom. As a result student unrest within the universities has been substantially directed towards the abolition of their 'feudal' system of administration, and the introduction of direct student participation. It was this that formed the focus of student demands during the May Revolution.

The first major attempt of the French Government to remedy the university situation was embodied in the Fouchet Plan, published in 1966 and named after the then Minister of Education, M. Christian Fouchet. The plan set out to abolish some of the anomalies in the French examination system, and to simplify the departmental structure of the universities. It offered no hope of substantially increased investment in higher education, nor of any concessions to student demands for participation. It was rejected by lecturers and professors as unworkable.

French students reacted sharply, and massive demonstrations greeted the announcement of the Plan's major recommendations. It was the first major clash between students and the administration on an educational issue, and it alerted large numbers of students to the significance of educational reform.

A year later, in September 1967, an even more drastic and, to students, abhorrent proposal was made by the new Minister, M. Alain Peyrefitte. Basically, it was that for the first time, the concept of selection should be introduced into French higher education. It has traditionally been understood that any school leaver who is successful in his Baccalauréat examination should, as of right, be granted admission to a university or college. It has been, indeed, a cardinal principle in the higher educational traditions of most of the countries of Continental Europe that every child who satisfactorily completes secondary education may proceed to further

study. Only a few countries in northern Europe - like the United Kingdom do not adhere to this doctrine.

In defence of his proposals, Peyrefitte, and Prime Minister George Pompidou, argued that the 'excessive influx' of new students into the universities could only involve longer periods of study for young people who could not properly benefit from them, and would escalate the failure rate. Already a substantial proportion of French students failed to obtain degrees; in one Faculty at the Sorbonne only one student in seven managed to graduate, while elsewhere the figure was lower, but still alarmingly high. As it was, numbers had soared to unprecedented proportions. The Dean of the Faculty of Science at the Sorbonne had said that he could take no further students, but had been told by the Minister that this was unacceptable and that registration must continue.

estimates

Students rejected the proposal decisively, and were joined by representatives of the country's teaching organisation, and by technical employees in the universities. More than 2,000 students took part in a demonstration in the Latin Quarter of Paris, timed to coincide with the official opening of the new academic year at the Sorbonne by the Minister of Education. The demonstration also protested against conditions in the universities, the shortage of teachers, and the delay in opening several faculties for the new session. Large forces of police were called out and though several clashes occurred, no-one was seriously hurt. All the roads to the Sorbonne were blocked by police armed with rifles, and fire engines patrolled the main streets ready to use hoses if things got more serious.

During a Press Conference after the demonstration leaders of UNEF (The National Union of French Students) which had been primarily responsible for its organisation, described the situation in several Faculties of the University of Paris as 'catastrophic'. In the Faculty of Letters only 75 teaching posts had been allotted, while the Faculty had asked for 400. Several classes had been withdrawn because of the lack of teachers and tutorial groups were so large that they could not function properly. In some subjects a third of the teaching hours were being undertaken by secondary school teachers, while in others neither practical nor supervised work could begin until January because of the shortage of facilities.

In the Faculty of Science, new buildings designed to cater for 20,000 students were not yet complete; 29,000 students were expected that year.

The Deputy General Secretary of the major Higher Education Trade Union, M. Odent, said the present difficulties could have been foreseen by comparing the estimates of student numbers prepared by the Ministry of Education and the Universities on the one hand, and the national education budget on the other. The Government, he said, had 'seriously compromised the future of French universities' by supporting an inadequate budget. Nothing had been done to provide university capacity in the Paris area.

While the majority of students were thus deeply interested in the reform of French higher education, an influential minority had for years been aware that educational change must be linked with changes in society. The structure of education was determined by the structure of the society around it; if education was class-based, so was society; if society demanded an elite, education would produce an elite; if society was undemocratic, so was education. Thus, they argued, no meaningful reforms were conceivable until society had itself been reformed.

It was against this background that the ideas which found their expression in the May Revolution were articulated and developed.

Student posters during the "May Revolution"



the may revolution

It is difficult to pinpoint any event which directly 'caused' the Revolution of May 1968. The events of May were the logical outcome of what had happened in the preceding months and years, and they were not triggered off by any single experience.

If it can be said to have started anywhere, it started at Nanterre, a satellite campus of the University of Paris in the western suburbs of the city. It was at Nanterre, early in 1967, that police, for almost the first time, were called in to a university building to deal with a student demonstration, thus violating the ancient sanctity of the universities. It was this act of deliberate provocation which more than anything began the chain of events leading to the barricades of May.

The demonstration was in itself of little significance; a protest against dormitory regulations. The handling of the demonstration - in the first instance by the university authorities and, later, by the police - was the cause of student anger.

A few months later, students discovered that the police were still keeping them under observation, and that plain clothes men were frequently on the campus. A strike was called and within a week the university and the Minister of Education agreed to student demands for more staff and an improvement in facilities. Direct action had proved its value.

The most colourful confrontation between students and authority occurred at Nanterre early this year, during the visit of the Minister of Youth, M. Missoffe, to open a swimming pool. It was this confrontation which for the first time focused public attention on a future leader of the Student Revolution, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a 23 year old sociology student of German origin.

As Missoffe passed a group of noisy students he walked over to talk to them. One, Cohn-Bendit, told him he had read the Minister's book about the problems of French youth. 'I do not altogether agree with you on some points' Cohn-Bendit told the Minister, 'because there is nothing in it, from beginning to end, about the sexual problems of French youth'. The Minister's reply was concise: 'In my day', he said, 'I had a special way with these problems. It was better to go to the swimming pool to solve them.'

The exchange was harmless enough, but it had one crucial result; Cohn-Bendit became a student hero, and ideas which had previously been confined to a minority suddenly found a broader audience.

With a popular figure-head, students gained new confidence. A fresh protest against the presence of police culminated in the occupation of the Main Hall of the University. The Dean panicked and, for the second time, the police were called in. On this occasion, however, they were less successful; the appearance of police had the effect of unifying the student body, and soon a thousand students were in the hall. The police were ejected.

After that, events moved with extraordinary speed. On March 19th, a Vietnam rally in Paris led to the arrest of a number of students, including one from Nanterre. 800 students took part in a protest meeting, and again direct action won the day. Students marched to the University's administrative building, made a token occupation of the Dean's office and left. At some time during the events which followed the first of the movements to be born of the 1968 Revolution, the March 22nd Committee was formed. It was this anarchist group which largely co-ordinated the events which sparked off the May confrontation.

This time, Dean Grappin acted more decisively; he closed the University. But he had already been overtaken by the tide of student action. The closure was ignored, and students in hundreds piled into lecture halls to debate educational reform, the political future of France, and their own tactics. In two days the University was re-opened, on the understanding that only one lecture hall could be used for student debate. Again, he was ignored and before the end of term the University was closed again. Again it was re-opened, but this time with a major concession to student demands; that each Faculty could decide for itself how much responsibility students should have in its administration. It was an important breakthrough, and a significant tactical victory for students. For the first time they had achieved 'participation'.

Within days, news of the victory had been spread throughout Paris, and students at the Sorbonne itself - where problems of overcrowding and impersonalisation were more critical than at Nanterre. On May 2nd, Nanterre was once again closed by the Dean in the face of fresh student demonstrations. And Daniel Cohn-Bendit, hero of the Nanterre campus, was ordered to appear before the disciplinary tribunal of the University of Paris.

Police line up behind a barricade of cars and bricks in Paris



On the following day, Cohn-Bendit and 400 students from Nanterre, arrived at the Sorbonne. Simultaneously, students from the extreme right-wing organisation, Occident, who on the previous day had wrecked the offices of the Student Union, were preparing to go into battle to remove left-wing student groups from the University. Violence was inevitable. Once again authority panicked, and police were called in. The University was surrounded, and after brief skirmishes students were persuaded to leave. Many, including some who had taken no part in the demonstration and a few bystanders, were beaten and arrested. For the rest of the day a running battle between students and police raged throughout the Latin Quarter. And as a culmination of a day of disorder, the order was given by the Rector to close the Sorbonne.

The decision was without parallel; the Sorbonne had been closed once before in its 700 years history, during the Nazi occupation of Paris. It was the final push that was needed to send the situation careering into chaos.

At once the leading student group, UNEF, and the University Teachers Organisation, SNE Sup, proclaimed a strike.

Throughout Paris University students and teachers responded willingly, and the movement soon spread to the rest of the country. Within hours the first major battle between students and police had begun in the Latin Quarter, and the first barricade of cars, street signs, paving cobbles and other bric-à-brac was thrown across a street. 15,000 students were in the Quarter; by the next morning more than 300 of them had been injured, some seriously.

Within days the situation had escalated into full scale insurrection, as mounting numbers of students took to the streets, in the face of fresh squadrons of the hated Riot Police (CRS), called in by the Government of De Gaulle to squash the rebellion by force. Students marched into the Sorbonne and held it fast against attacks by police, and this occupation was quickly followed by the take-over of the other major Faculties of the University in Paris. At the height of the rebellion every large Faculty and Lycée in Paris was occupied by its students, and run on the principle of a commune by its besieged tenants. It was within these Faculties and Lycées that the most significant intellectual achievements of the rebellion were reached. During long hours of discussion and argument, students formulated detailed plans for the future government of their universities, and of the country. Workers, professors, writers and a mass of interested visitors from abroad were asked for their views, in night-long assemblies that realised in practice the student concept of 'participation'. Much of what emerged from these sessions may have been extravagant or unworldly, but as an exercise in collective thinking it was almost without parallel.

A typical debate, at the Faculty of Fine Arts, concerned the future of art education. Once the institution had been 'democratised' (with students in ultimate control of its administration and courses) revolutionary students argued, anyone who wished to express himself through art would be allowed to come to the Faculty. But should he be trained in the use of materials, the principles of design, technique? Some thought training was bourgeois; interference in what should be an entirely personal experience. Others thought that the art student was bound to use his own knowledge for the benefit of those who wanted to use his form of expression. Probably this discussion was never completed; it took place a few hours before police re-occupied the Faculty. But it was symbolic of the kind of problem which was thrashed out during the endless sessions in the occupations.

Many of the conclusions of these sessions will be put into practice once the University re-opens for the new academic year in November. Professors and students in several Faculties drew up solid plans for their joint administration by staff and students.

workers

The most crucial development of the Revolution was the emergence of an active coalition between students and workers - something left-wing students in many other countries have tried in vain to achieve.

The reasons for the French success are hard to pinpoint. Students argue that it was a matter of simply the identity of their aims, but the same - in economic terms at least - could be said of other countries where open hostility has characterised dealings between workers and students.

A more plausible explanation concerns the nature of French society. As a nation France became industrialised far later than most of her European neighbours. Even today, a higher proportion of Frenchmen earn their livelihood from the soil than is the case in any other major industrial nation. The 'peasant' mentality is thus still firmly entrenched in the French mind, making the average French worker unusually conscious of the divisions of society between rich and poor; worker and master: and, therefore, unusually susceptible to Marxist dialectic. At the same time the pay of the average French worker is substantially lower than that of his opposite number in almost any other European nation.

And, deep in every Frenchman's consciousness, is the knowledge that in France no major political change has come about by peaceful means. The Revolution of 1789, the most important historical step towards

total democratisation in France, was symptomatic of the inclination towards violent rebellion that seems inbred in the nation. Thus, when students went to the factories they encountered sympathy rare in Europe, though it was laced with the usual layer of suspicion that has greeted every attempt by an intellectual movement to make contact with the worker. The French worker, particularly the young worker, was favourably disposed towards the idea that violence might be a means of improving his capacity to influence the running of his factory, or to participate in the decisions that affected his daily life.

But crucial to any attempt to involve workers en masse in the revolt was the attitude of the Trade Unions and of the orthodox Communist Party. Both, in the early days of the student uprising, seemed to react in a way which, depressingly, identified them more with the Government than with their leftist members. 'National Unity' was more important than democracy; student 'groupuscules' - trade union short-hand for the newly-emerged political organisations - were not the basis of a genuine popular revolution.

So for the first few days both Unions and the Party stalled; only when it was clear that strikes would occur whether or not they endorsed them, did they publicly advocate industrial action. And even then their endorsement was conditional and unenthusiastic. It was almost certainly this fact which took the real sting out of industrial participation in the rebellion, and denied it total success. By accepting increased wages as an excuse for calling off the strikes, they unloaded the gun that had been held to the Government's head.

Workers at the Renault factory during sit-in strike



the nights of the barricades

The events of May have been well chronicled, and need little further elaboration.

Within hours of the first major clashes in the Latin Quarter, fresh squads of riot police were moved into the area. Soon the fighting spread, until large areas of Paris were involved. During several successive nights pitched battles occurred over barricades across many of the smaller streets of the Latin Quarter, and even some of the larger Boulevards (including St. Michel and St. Germain).

On May 11th, the day after the first Night of the Barricades, a meeting of the Senate of the Sorbonne agreed to institute a new constitution, giving 50 per cent of the voting power to professors and 50 per cent to be divided equally between students and lecturers. Though it fell short of the demands of the most radical student groups, the proposal might have formed the basis of a satisfactory compromise.

But events had already moved too far and too fast for compromise to be acceptable.

Two days later, on May 13th, a 24-hour general strike was proclaimed by the CGT (the major Communist Trade Union) and the CFTD (the Catholic Union). The Unions' intention was that the strike - which they thought of as a token affair in sympathy with students - could easily be confined within the 24-hour time limit, and would satisfactorily re-establish their own authority. They were wrong. Workers, like students, had had their first taste of direct action, and they saw the chance to achieve far more than tokens.

As the 24-hour period came to an end it became clear that in several major industries workers had no intention of returning to work. But, significantly, some younger strikers saw the opportunity to achieve more than the conventional goal of industrial action - higher wages and better material conditions. Their own demands for 'participation' had been ignored by factory managements; the strike movement - coupled with the spirit of democratisation which had been stimulated by student protests - encouraged a bold move towards the democratisation of industry itself. In a number of important factories - notably the Renault works near Paris - workers ejected or imprisoned their management, occupied the plant, and resisted any attempts to remove them. It was a first step towards the ultimate goal of all Marxist and socialist ideologies - control by workers of the means of production.

Within a few days France had come almost totally to a standstill. In every major industry, in business, commerce, and communications - as well, of course, as in the whole of the educational system - workers were on strike. In some cases factories were occupied, in others merely picketed. But the net result was the total paralysis of the nation. There was no postal and only a skeleton telephone service. Nothing was made, and in some areas food was scarce. As drivers joined the strike movement, nothing could be carried. Petrol ran out, and cars were forced off the roads. Public transport was brought to a standstill, and all ports, airports and stations were closed down. It was virtually impossible to enter or leave the country, though some restrictions were lifted as customs men joined the strikers.

The attitude of the French public towards the student demonstrations wavered from hostility to support and, after nearly a month, to hostility again. But during the height of the insurrection in Paris, public opinion was solidly behind the students - a phenomenon, like worker participation almost unknown elsewhere.

Paving and rubble are torn up and thrown at police in a Paris demonstration



The reason, above all, was the attitude and behaviour of the French police. And in particular, of the special Riot Police, the CRS, trained to quell violent uprisings and concerned only with success, not with the morality of its methods.

Accounts of the callous brutality of the riot police during the month of demonstrations are almost unbelievable. Scores of students were injured for life after beatings, or through contact with tear gas grenades (which on many occasions were hurled directly at students instead of over their heads). A highly potent form of gas, designed for use by American troops in Vietnam, was introduced by the police, and accounted for many of the more lasting injuries. Most serious of all were the vicious attacks on young demonstrators, already injured, who were being taken from the scene of the fighting - frequently on stretchers. Neither the injured, their doctors, the Press, nor innocent bystanders were safe from the CRS.

An account of some of the worst incidents, each one observed by witnesses, was published in June at the end of the fighting. It makes horrifying reading.

'A demonstrator' writes one student, 'apparently unconscious, was lying on the barricade. A CRS man was hitting him repeatedly with a baton while the barricade was beginning to burn. A Red Cross man, wearing signs on his cap, his chest and his back so that he was easily identifiable even from a distance, approached to try to remove the wounded man. The CRS man hit him straight in the face and knocked him down, then went back to work on the still motionless demonstrator.'

And another states:-

By five in the morning the atmosphere was unbreathable (from gas) in the Rue Gay-Lussac. I took my fiancé, who was choking and had burning eyes, to a house in the street. With several friends, we took shelter with a woman who lived there. About six o'clock a plain clothes policeman rushed in, revolver in hand; he had forced her to open the door, threatening her with prosecution for sheltering rioters. He made us stand in the landing while he stationed about 30 CRS men on the stairs, from the fourth floor to the ground floor, armed with batons. Going down was terrible.....I tried to protect my fiancé as best I could..... In the street they picked us up and made us walk to the police station, hands on our heads. Baton blows rained on us. I tried to tell the CRS to stop hitting my fiancé, saying that she only weighed 45 kilos and obviously couldn't throw cobblestones. This only worked them up and they went on calling her a tart and saying they'd take care of her. In the police station they went on beating us up.

While the behaviour of the CRS on the streets was appalling, even more serious was their treatment of demonstrators who had been arrested. A nurse, arrested and taken to a detention centre, writes:-

We got out of a bus and were beaten up; then, going between two ranks of CRS, reached a stadium surrounded by barbed wire. I waited, standing in the rain. From time to time CRS buses delivered men and women, hit or gassed, with very bad head

PATAKOS
SALAZAR
FRANCO
DEGAULLE

wounds, broken arms, etc. Chinese or Vietnamese and blacks especially were treated with great violence. Then we were taken indoors one by one. A CRS man said to me 'Come along and I'll shave you, curly-locks'. He hit me. An officer intervened, but a girl ahead of me had all her hair cut off. I was taken to a cell, three metres by six. After five hours, it contained 80 of us. We had to stand up. I could see a courtyard; a young man went by half naked, legs lacerated with baton blows, bleeding, holding his stomach, urinating everywhere. A young woman who'd been beaten with him told me the CRS beat him till he fainted, then undressed him and hit his sexual organs till the flesh was in ribbons.

Some girls arrived, among them a schoolgirl of 16 who told us she had been arrested by the CRS at St. Michel. They took her into their bus and four of them raped her. She told me she let them do it, otherwise they'd have beaten her up and shaved her head. Her clothes were torn and she was bruised. Another girl was crying. She had a broken finger. She had to wait 18 hours in that cell before she got medical attention at a hospital - then she was brought back to the cell.

The book contains also accounts of the use of CS gas (a highly toxic gas designed for military use). A policeman is described as walking up one street opening every door indiscriminately and hurling a gas grenade inside. Other accounts describe attacks on Press men, bystanders and students sitting peacefully in cafés.

The behaviour of the French police, and particularly of the CRS, is the most repugnant aspect of the official reaction to the student uprising. To extremist students it showed the state to be what they alleged that it was; an impersonal, totalitarian machine, concerned not with democracy and the good of its people but with its own defence and the maintenance of an existing order.

Of the strikes that occurred during the Revolution, one of the most important strikes was that of almost the entire staff of the French Radio and Television Service, RTF. For years programmes had been strictly censored by Government officials, to an extent where criticism of the Government was almost totally eliminated. Though writers, producers and announcers were unanimous in their hatred of the system, nothing

had been done, and protest had proved ineffective. The point of no return occurred when, after the earliest student protests, a film about the student movement, including reportage of some of the demonstrations, was censored. Producers demanded that it be shown, or they would strike. A compromise was reached, and a heavily edited version was screened. But later attempts at censorship proved too much. A strike of almost the entire staff of both radio and television services brought almost to a standstill, and only a skeleton service - mainly of news, music and old films - was maintained during most of May.

Only the promise of substantial reform - and threats of unemployment - finally brought staff back to work. The prospects of major changes, though, seem dim.

Barricades of overturned cars block Paris street



For almost a month the total paralysis of France continued. Fighting, which reached a peak around May 10th, diminished for a period, then blazed up again, culminating on May 24th with the second and major 'Night of the Barricades'. Street battles on that night covered most of Paris. Thousands were hurt, many hundreds arrested. The tide of popular support for students began to wane; Paris had had enough. For the people, it was time to quit.

Reaction from the Government was confused. Panicked initially into a show of force that defeated its own ends by uniting the student movement and arousing massive public support for its cause, the Government seemed for several weeks to be without any real idea of what to do. Eventually it capitulated; students had won a partial victory.

General de Gaulle promised a referendum for the French people to determine the future course of Government policy. It was pitched in such a way that the alternatives to Gaullism were anarchy and chaos. But it was clear at once that this satisfied neither students, workers nor the rest of the French public. It seemed certain De Gaulle would resign.

Scared, De Gaulle flew secretly to Germany to see the Generals of his toughest professional troops. Would they, he asked, be able to order their men to fire on students and workers if the need arose? The answer was yes. Reassured De Gaulle returned to France, and in a broadcast announced that he intended to remain President. He would not resign. The General Assembly would be dissolved and in a General Election the French people could determine how they wished to be governed.

In an unconventional and, students thought, unconstitutional campaign, Gaullists hammered home one message: the choice lay between stable government - or 'communist dictatorship'. Fearfully, with a substantial majority, De Gaulle's party was returned. Reaction, in the end, won the day. For the time being, France is calm again.

results

The "student revolution" in France had a profound influence on the political development of the country, and is bound to have affected the future course of its administration. Widely disparate groups united in an attempt to topple what they believed to be an autocratic regime, and it was this unity which so nearly achieved that aim.

Its concrete achievements are significant. No French university can in future afford to ignore student demands for participation in its affairs, and no factory can think it safe to exclude workers from decisions

Government control of French radio satirised in a student poster

LA POLICE

A L'ORTF



C'EST LA POLICE CHEZ VOUS

seriously affecting their welfare. Though the workers' rebellion may have been halted by promises of better pay and shorter hours, more fundamental demands surfaced during the May revolution, and a society which ignored those demands would be foolishly insensitive.

Intellectually the Revolution stimulated an explosion of ideas that was like a rush of cold air in an overheated room. French political debate had become sterile and irrelevant. The injection of new concepts into political thinking can only be beneficial. To whatever extent the kind of proposals that were formulated during the long hours of discussion in the occupied universities are accepted, the value of those discussions cannot be doubted. If only by the quality of their argument, French students have proved themselves capable of assuming, at least in some measure, the responsibilities which they demand.

tactics

The situation in France can certainly not remain static for long. In November the universities will re-assemble for the new academic year, with substantially increased numbers. In Paris the Government have tried desperately to find new accommodation for the Sorbonne. Meanwhile the Minister of Education, M. Faure, has issued new proposals for the kind of participation in university affairs he thinks should be granted to students.

These fall substantially short of the demands of the revolutionary student groups - who will be satisfied only with total student control of the universities. On the other hand they may, perhaps, provide the basis for an acceptable compromise that may diminish the chances of further violence.

But tactics will probably differ. The use of open violence cannot be regarded as successful. In the last analysis, the Government is bound to have the upper hand - for at its disposal are the entire resources of the French armed services. Many student leaders are well aware of the risks that a further outbreak of violence might provoke far stronger repressive measures than was the case in May, and few are eager for a bloodbath.

Propaganda and persuasion are to be the mainstay of the student rebellion in the future. It was perhaps because they had not clearly made themselves understood to the mass of the French people that students toiled last time to mobilise public support for their cause (though they attracted sympathy because of the reaction of the Government). The causes of student and (to a lesser extent) worker unrest are as yet not fully understood.

the student rebellion

The student rebellion is by no means so universal and cohesive as both its extreme opponents - and supporters - would seem to believe. Considerable differences in emphasis exist between the motives and objects of student unrest in every country where it has occurred, and there is far less unanimity within the revolutionary movement than is suggested by much of the publicity it has received.

But though students at each university and college have been concerned with a wide range of domestic political and educational issues, certain overall similarities can be detected between the objects of student protest on a national and international level. Indeed some of its primary causes are very closely related.

That they stem from something far more significant than individual systems of government is obvious; student unrest has occurred in countries of every conceivable political colour.

It bears no direct relation to capitalism or communism — it has occurred in poor as well as in rich nations.

The student revolution seems incomprehensible and vaguely terrifying to governments and to the middle-aged everywhere, very largely because it is a revolution against institutions and traditions which, in their minds, the young should welcome. Those who fought two world wars against facism thought they were defending democracy. They are shocked and pained that their children should seem to want to destroy that democracy.

The problem of communication between the generations is central to the conflict which the student rebellion has provoked. Parents are perturbed because they can understand neither why their children are angry, or what it is in society that they seek to reform. One immediate success of the French Revolution of 1968 was to give the population of that country at least some clue as to what students were demanding.

It is primarily a rebellion against pressures: from within their academic institutions; and pressures from society. To ask which is more important is a little like asking about chickens and eggs, for the two are so closely related that it is hard, and unwise, to make too great a distinction between them. While the vast majority of students in Europe are concerned solely with improving the conditions under which they study, their relationships with their teachers and their participation in administration, a highly articulate minority has discerned that a

system of higher education is a product of society, and is very closely tied to the mores of that society. Thus, they believe, changes in the pattern of higher education can only be brought about through changes in society. Some students (in France for instance) have temporarily abandoned their interest in the detailed problems of student participation and the structure of classes, in order to concentrate on the more important struggle for reform of society.

Those students who have appreciated the significance of the relationship between society and the universities, see it as their function - and their duty - to transmit this knowledge to their colleagues.

Paris, May 1968; a student throws a brick at police

It is precisely this argument which provided the key to the French student rebellion and which, to a lesser extent, perhaps, is behind student unrest elsewhere.

Students, particularly in North America and Europe, are protesting against what Herbert Marcuse, the chief ideologue of the student revolution, described as the 'comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom' that prevails in industrial society. Modern society, he argues, is so determined to maintain its structures and its assumptions; its worship of the material; its insistence on 'sameness' that, terrified of rebellion by those who perceive its inherent artificiality, it allows them permissible channels of expression for their oppositions, channels which are structured in such a way as to prevent them from implementing real



changes in 'the system'. Thus 'liberalism' is thought the worst enemy of the student rebellion. It is indeed regarded as more insidious and more hard to beat than straight forward conservatism. Conservatism, in its most form, unsubtle, hard conservatism, is immediately identifiable, and easily confronted. It is easy not only to identify the target for one's own attack, but to persuade others to join that attack. Liberalism, on the other hand, is seen as an ally of society, behind its apparent support for change and freedom, these students believe, is a dogged determination to see that change does not go beyond 'natural limits' and that, when the chips are down, society as at present conceived, survive.

society

The rebellion is a rebellion against a society in which the individual is prevented by the structure or a supposedly democratic system of government from making any authentic contribution to national life. It is this 'participation gap' which has caused much of the frustration leading to violent clashes between student and authority.

It is a gap felt most closely by students because, more than any other element of the population, they experience it from day to day within their universities, and are unusually sensitive to it. The gap between students and professors and the unwillingness of the vast majority of universities to allow students any significant say in the running of their affairs, has brought home to students the existence of the same kind of gap at a national level.

The gap is noticeable particularly in the universities of Europe, and those elsewhere which have been created on the same traditions. Within the system, epitomised by the universities of France and Germany, the authority of the professor is absolute, and his own position inviolate. It is typical of the kind of situation so angering students that in many countries a professor cannot be removed for academic incompetence. He can be fired sometimes, for theft, or assault, or drunkenness - but he cannot be removed for being a bad professor. It is this kind of anomaly which angers students.

Within the universities the kind of reforms demanded by students are surprisingly similar in all the countries where there have been student disturbances - and the key to their demands have been 'academic reform', 'student participation' and 'study conditions'. Students see that on the one hand many of the courses which they are studying lack any relevance to the world into which they will go when they leave the institution, and on the other that they are powerless to influence the



Helmeted riot police struggle with student in Japan

direction in which these courses can be changed. At the same time they demand radical improvement in the conditions under which they study. This is particularly true in the developing countries of the world.

At the same time students are demanding substantial reforms in the structure of university teaching and reject, for example, the strict division between academic disciplines and the examination system.

Their desire to abolish examinations has often been interpreted as a desire to avoid work; those who make this assumption entirely misconstrue the motives behind the demand. It is quite the opposite -

students are asking for more efficient - and in some cases - tougher methods of assessment than are provided by the conventional examination. An examination, they argue, does not more than test a student's ability to recall enough of what he has read in such a way that he can repeat it. This does not measure his knowledge nor his ability to learn, or his ability to think. Students demand instead, a form of 'continuous assessment' by which a student's performance throughout his course can be measured, and an award given on the basis of that work.

An interesting development in modern education which has had a considerable bearing on the attitudes of many students, has been the tremendous improvement in the quality of primary and secondary teaching. Children are now being taught to think for themselves in a way that their elders never knew. No longer does repetitive learning occupy the majority of pupils' time; even at the primary level children are taught to think creatively, and to relate their learning to the world around them.

Students are calling for participation in university government for two reasons - because they reject the theory that they are incapable of running their own affairs and feel that they should be treated as equals in the academic community, and because they can see no chance of modernising and revitalising university teaching unless they can themselves influence or control the content and administration of courses.

The degree to which students wish to influence the work of the universities varies from country and from group to group. The ultimate position - adopted by the militant of the French and German student

position - adopted by the militants of the French and German student movement - is total student control of the universities, in co-operation with junior members of the academic staff. Councils composed of students and young lecturers would be responsible for drawing up courses, allocating university income, awarding 'degrees', assessing student performance and would employ senior academics, administrators and specialists to supervise the technical and administrative operation of the institutions. Vice Chancellors, Principals and Rectors would, therefore, become the employees of their students. In a sense, these students are demanding the resurrection of a medieval pattern of university education that found its most mature expression in the universities of Italy and Scotland. In both countries, the university was regarded as a 'community of students and scholars', where students had virtual control of the administration and of the appointment of their teachers; they were substantially 'student-oriented', unlike the universities of Germany and most of northern Europe, which were always 'teacher-oriented'. Most students adopt a far more moderate position, arguing simply for the right to participate in the making of decisions which profoundly affect their career.

If students seem obsessed with the 'structure' of the institutions within which they are struggling, their concern is levelled primarily against the use to which those structures can be put. Domination of an institution by a powerful - sometimes a minority - clique, can be maintained by structural or constitutional means, even where - theoretically - those institutions are meant to be responsive to the will of the majority. Parliamentary Government is seen by some students as the ultimate example of this kind of manipulation, with the universities themselves not far behind.

At the same time structure has a major influence on the character of an institution; and, by extension, the nature of the structures which make up a society have a major influence on the character of that society, in rather the same way that the structure of genes in a living organism determine the nature of that organism.

control

There are some enlightening differences between the concept of student involvement advocated by students in various countries. The official policy of the National Union of French Students (UNEF) for example, is that the struggle must continue until students gain total control of the universities. An offer of 60-40 per cent academic-student participation will be rejected. Only student control will do.

In Germany, on the other hand, detailed proposals for the administration of faculties of the Free University of Berlin have been drawn up by students, and have been submitted to the Academic Senate. So far those that advocate significant student control have been rejected, but militant students intend to persist until one such plan is accepted and is put into operation. They believe that when a single faculty is seen to function successfully, on the basis of equal participation between students and staff, the concept of student participation will be accepted.

CRS (Riot Police) advance against French student demonstrators



It is also important to bear in mind that for example differences in attitude and tactics between students in France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, on the one hand, and the countries of the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon bloc will remain so long as innate differences in character between the two peoples exist. Southern Europe has by and large regarded violence as an inevitable part of political life to a far greater extent than the North. At the same time democratic traditions have always been stronger in more northerly countries.

It is sometimes argued that since students spend only a few years of their lives at a university, it is meaningless for them to expect a responsible role in its administration. Quite the opposite argument is used by many

Students under arrest after riots in Mexico



students; precisely because they are at university for so short a time - and because that time is amongst the most formative in their lives - they believe it to be vital that they should have some say in how they spend that time. This means not only they should be free to plan their daily routine as they wish and control their own leisure-hours (something that is denied in many institutions), but that the subjects they study, and the way they are taught, should be also under their own control.

Student interest in the reform of society is at the same time a logical extension of their concern for the reform of the universities, and an expression of their role as members of society. The concept of "students as such" - of students as distinct and separate beings, whose life bears no direct relation to that of society and is played out in "ivory tower" universities, separate from the mainstream of life outside - has been rejected by students and by student organisations everywhere. While once it formed the basis of the activities of national and international student groups; it has now been rightly discarded.

The idea of a "free" university, open to everyone, prepared to use its resources for the benefit of all who wish to gain knowledge and to participate in debate, is gaining increased support. In several countries Free Universities have been opened independently by students, though most have lasted at most for a matter of weeks, chiefly because resources were insufficient, and buildings difficult to obtain.

Ultimately, many students hope, every university will to a considerable extent be "free". Though students, in the formal sense, may remain the focus of university life, its role as a centre for discussion and learning for all will they believe become far more important. This has been a key issue in the French student rebellion.

productive

The concept of a student as someone who, by virtue of the fact that he is undertaking full-time study, is set apart from the remainder of society, has been widely rejected by students themselves. In many countries the concept of the "student worker" - whose studies are as much productive as is that of the factory worker, and who is similarly independent and free, has found considerable support. Several revolutionary-sindicalist student organisations hold this - and the concept of a student "salary" rather than a grant or scholarship - as the fundamental canon of their philosophy.

A recurring theme of those who attack student involvement in politics is that - as "junior citizens" - they have neither the "right" nor the qualifications to influence political affairs.

There are two obvious replies. Firstly, students seem themselves as the only members of society to apply moral judgement to the conduct of public affairs. While in their attitude to, say, apartheid or dictatorship, most adults set their moral concern against what they believe to be vital

economic considerations, students will judge the same situations in a purely moral light. They believe - probably rightly - that they are the only people to do so, and they condemn governments for their failure to do the same.

And students often believe themselves to be the only group in any society which understands - and cares about - the way in which personal liberties are curtailed in the name of democracy. Others, they feel, are fooled into believing that freedom of speech and thought are sacrosanct when in fact they are not.

Young people have always adopted a simplistic morality - a morality that differentiates sharply between right and wrong; acceptable and unacceptable. And in general they adhere totally to that morality in their judgement of the events they see around them. In particular, they judge the policies of their Governments in the light of that morality and more often than not, find those policies unacceptable. Indeed, pragmatic government is one of the main causes of student unrest. Students react sharply against decisions that seem to be based on economic or political self-interest, and which ignore the demands of any moral code. However hard a government may try to justify its actions by reference to "the national interest" - a concept only governments, seemingly, are capable of defining, they cannot convince their own young people that their actions which look morally wrong are in fact right. It is a conflict between "public" and "private" morality. And an appeal to economic advantage will have little effect on a student population - something many governments seem to ignore. A government may defend a seemingly immoral decision because to act otherwise would risk lowering the standard of living of some of the people; but a student will reject this as a valid reason. Not only is he less affected by economic sanctions; he would personally prefer to lose a proportion of his income in a just cause.

qualified

Secondly, students reject the idea that they are not "qualified" to comment upon and participate in political life, both because they are as mature as contemporaries who may have been at work for several years, and because, by virtue of their studies, they have read more deeply and considered more seriously many of the political issues which concern them.

Today students see themselves as full and equal members of the society in which they live, qualified and willing to participate in the life of that society. That they are prevented from participating on the one hand by limits on the age at which a person may vote, and on the other by governmental systems which prevent individual participation, is a primary source of their frustration and anger.

While many students reject the concept that they are an "elite", given privileges that other members of society are denied, they believe that their

Student beaten by Police in Rio de Janeiro



training and skill should be put to the use of society. So long as they have the leisure to consider the problems of society, they believe they should be given the opportunity of having their analysis put into effect. They reject the idea that they are too young, or too inexperienced to participate in government, for they believe the fact that they are still in the process of learning makes them qualified to participate.

Another problem worrying many students - and a significant cause of student unrest - has been the difficulty faced by graduates in obtaining jobs. In several countries the production of graduates in some subjects has far outweighed demand, so that qualified students are finding it impossible to secure the kind of work for which they have studied. They believe universities should be far more responsive to the real needs of society.

There is, of course, a considerable danger that revolutionary changes in academic or civic life, forcibly introduced by one generation of students, might be unpalatable to their successors. Those setting up a new system of government must be aware that its continued existence depends upon the co-operation and goodwill and initiative of subsequent generations. It may be argued, therefore, that a pedagogic and academic (and for that matter a political) revolution should not be based on the attitude of one generation. A number of practical dangers are involved. If, for instance, students win the right to appoint their own lecturers and professors, they must recognise that those same professors will be in office long after they have themselves ceased to be students, and, that to a considerable degree their decisions will affect the careers of subsequent generations of students. Professors are thus exposed to the possibility of being removed within a three or four year period when a new class of students finds their teaching irrelevant. At the same time, the introduction of a system of academic government which grants a major decision-making role to students, depends for its success on the availability of a large number of politically conscious and active students. Once these become scarce - as conceivably can happen - the system becomes unworkable.

The reply of student activists in Europe and North America to this charge is that the chances of subsequent generations of students being either reactionary or apolitical are exceedingly rare. The introduction of political reforms they argue, in itself will determine the political atmosphere in which future students will work. And, as true revolutionaries, students believe in the rightness of their own philosophies, and that, if necessary, they must be imposed by force on any Society - and its students - which opposes them.

Why is it that students have suddenly felt obliged to demand participation in government. There are two major reasons; because they have matured more quickly than their ancestors in earlier generations; and because a far greater number have taken an active interest in politics.

The sociological and physiological reasons for this advancing of maturity need not be examined in detail here. It is clear - and has been demonstrated

by investigation - that young people are becoming mature at an earlier age than 50, 25 or even 10 years ago. Partly this is because society has on the one hand demanded that they do so in order to fulfil various functions (like fighting wars) and partly because the demands of the young are catered for in a way that was not the case even 20 years ago. Whole industries catering for the young have developed.

The politicisation of young people is a result of two factors - the increased proportion of the population of every advanced country who are entering higher education, and the political events of the last five years. Of these, the most critical are the war in Vietnam and the race problem. Between them these phenomena have been directly responsible for the tremendous increase in political awareness of a high proportion of the world's young people.

The Second World War, too, was a primary cause of the politicisation of several generations of students. It is the conjunction of this rapid politicisation - with its growing awareness of the nature and effectiveness of political action - and their increased dissatisfaction with the physical and intellectual character of their universities, that has been the primary cause of student unrest.

exploitation

Differences between the developed and developing areas of the world, too, have had a profound influence on student thinking. The exploitation of colonial (and former colonial) territory by the major powers - and, in particular, the attitudes adopted by these powers towards the demands for independence and freedom - have disgusted most of the younger generation. Thus amongst the "heroes" of many extreme participants in the student rebellion are men like Ché Guevara, the Bolivian guerrilla, whose death at the hands of Bolivian troops has elevated him to almost mythical proportions.

Though the techniques employed by Guevara and his comrades in the Bolivian jungle are of little relevance to the streets of Paris, Berlin or Berkeley, it is Guevara's role as a champion of an oppressed people for which he is admired. Few students seek to learn directly from his methods.

Communications, too, have played an important role in this politicisation. Wars are no longer followed at third hand. Today's communication media make it possible for events in any part of the world to be seen on television or heard by radio in any part of the globe within hours, and in a great many cases as they happen. Live television coverage of the war in Vietnam has been an enormously potent influence.

At the same time a new kind of "internationalism" is playing a key role in the thinking of many students. National barriers are seen as irrelevant - both because of the personal contact between young people through travel, and because the communication explosion brings far away places and events so vividly to life.

Characteristic of this "internationalism" has been the close contact between student groups in different parts of the world, and their rejection of even the concept of nationality. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, one of the most influential leaders of the French uprising, was German by birth. Tariq Ali, a prominent figure of student unrest in Britain is Pakistani. When the French Government tried to ban Cohn-Bendit's return after a visit to Germany students were prepared to march in mass over the frontier to return him; only when it became known that armed police were waiting with orders to shoot any student attempting to cross the frontier was the plan abandoned. (Later, Cohn-Bendit slipped quietly into France with the aid of a sympathetic Customs Officer; the Government did nothing).



Cars and shops burn in a Latin Quarter demonstration

Contacts between students from all parts of the world - both at a formal level, through international student organisations, and informally, has been intensive. Students from many countries visited Paris at the height of the uprising, and word of what was happening in France quickly spread to other centres of student unrest. Demonstrations of solidarity with French students took place all over the world.

This "internationalism" has been manifested, too, in the concern which students have shown over political events in countries far from their own, and their sympathy for peoples suffering from persecution of any kind. Student interest in the effects of the Nigerian Civil War on the people of Biafra, for example, and their reaction to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, were notable examples.

An important part of the work of all student and youth organisations is the mobilisation of support for students suffering from oppression and persecution, and "solidarity" is frequently expressed in the form of practical and financial, as well as moral, aid.

These factors are making young people increasingly critical of the quality of life around them. At the same time, it is making them far less willing to accept without question the assumptions of their own societies. It is difficult for a young American to accept as logical the argument that his country is fighting a war "for freedom in Vietnam", when he sees for himself through television and films the barbarous and meaningless way in which that war is being conducted. The student in Western Europe cannot accept the argument that the peace of the world depends on the strength of the U.S.A., when he sees that country torn apart by racial strife and violence. America - as the epitome of all things free and good - is no longer a valid idol.

The Cold War dominated the political life of the 1950's and students were in many cases as guilty as their elders of distorting political truth to support their own political system. The behaviour of Governments both in the West and the East since then has shocked the vast proportion of its youth into rejecting the Cold War.

At the same time, the increasing complexity of modern society is aggravating the frustration felt by the young.

bureaucracy

The student rebellion is to a considerable extent a rebellion against bureaucracy - both capitalist and communist. When students in Czechoslovakia and Poland cry out against centralisation and illiberalism, they are fighting the same enemy as their colleagues in France, Germany and America. They are crying out against the alienation of government from governed, teacher from student and rich from poor.

Among the minority of politically extreme students, The focus for this discontent has centred on the class struggle. This struggle, the basis for every major revolution in history, the foundation of Marxist socialism and the force behind the struggle of black against white, has come to form an important element in the student rebellion.

It is this struggle which has provided the mainspring of the French student rebellion, which provides the ideological basis of the struggles of students in Germany.

"The struggle of the workers", a French student said, "is the same struggle as the struggle of the peasant in Vietnam". Thus students in Europe internationalise their own domestic battles.

In every revolution, some group has to provide leadership and inspiration; in the student rebellion it is the revolutionary students who see themselves as providing inspiration to the workers. Though the concept of leadership is rejected, it remains true that students have taken on themselves the task of making workers aware of their own problems and of the nature of the struggle they must undertake to solve those problems.

Workers, they argue, have their own grievances, and are able to act independently to solve them. Students can co-operate simply by explaining to workers the political implications of action that goes far beyond the traditional strikes and marches. While some students believe total revolution may be the only path to true reform, workers need to be convinced that it will serve their economic and personal interests, and have to be shown - it necessary by example - how it is to be achieved. The successes scored by students in achieving participation in university government, they believe, can serve as a direct example to workers of the effectiveness of direct action, and of the possibility of change.

The attempt to establish meaningful contact with workers will, increasingly, become the preoccupation of revolutionary student groups. Most have no illusions of the difficulties this will entail. In an interview with the celebrated Marxist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, Daniel Cohn-Bendit has acknowledged that the majority of workers are naturally mistrustful of students, and unwilling to believe that their own problems and those of students are inter-related. At the same time, the fact that large numbers of students have marched to the factories - even where they have been rebutted - is a sign of progress. The majority of students, at least, are now aware of the necessity to relate student protest with the demands of the workers.

Many politically active students admit that they have no precisely defined aim, but they do not concede that this is important. It is far more important, they argue, to show what is wrong with a system, and to allow every individual to formulate his own ideas as to how best it can be put right, than to establish formal models of what should replace it. In the process of destroying the existing system, new models will emerge. Above all, nothing must be imposed; all must participate in the planning of the new society, and the system must be acceptable to the majority.

When revolutionary students do talk of the society they would like to establish, its frequent definition is "pure marxism". No socialist society they believe has been based on pure marxism; all have been interpretations - by Lenin and Stalin; Mao; Castro. Mao has said (ironically, in an interview with a member of the de Gaulle Government, André Malraux), "There is no such thing as abstract Marxism". His view would be disputed by students in France and elsewhere. There are, they admit, no pure marxist societies. This fact, however, does not lead logically to the assumption that a pure marxist state could not exist. Indeed, the fact that no such state exists makes students all the more determined to create one.

This, certainly, is the aim of the activist leaders of French student movement. Ownership of the means of production by the workers is

central to the philosophy of the May Revolution, and will be the key issue when the conflict is resumed. It student control of university government is one side of the coin, worker control of the factories is the other. The concepts are inseparable and it is inconceivable to many students that one could be obtained without the other. Both are expressions of a form of society that, so far, has never existed, but which students believe should and will come into being.

In Germany, too, some students are determined ultimately to create a pure socialist society. But their task is infinitely harder than that of their colleagues in France. The German worker is, they argue, to all intents and purposes, a member of the bourgeois. He is paid well, is amply supplied with material comforts; and has an inbuilt and overwhelming suspicion of the Left. In Berlin, especially - where the Cold War is most forcibly expressed - attempts to involve workers in student protest have been aggressively rebutted, and German students are conscious that any attempt to persuade workers to appreciate their position will be a long and unrewarding task.

Many common assumptions about the nature of Man are attacked by revolutionary students. Some, for example, challenge the belief that man is naturally acquisitive. While they reject private ownership of means of production - a standard component of most Socialist ideologies - many also repudiate the concept of private ownership itself. Property and possessions, they believe, should be collectively held, and available to all. No man need "own" the material necessities of his daily life. Ownership, they believe, is a divisive concept, which tends by definition to discriminate between individuals, and which obstructs the creation of truly socialist societies.

At the same time, many students oppose the glorification of economic and material wealth as signs of personal success.

But many students are themselves unsure to what extent an innate desire for material possessions motivates man. Whether, for instance, most men are more concerned with "equality" than with wealth is a question to which considerable attention has been given by the ideologists of the student movement. Earlier revolutions were to a considerable extent inspired by the desire of the poor to achieve standards of wealth and possession denied them by their feudal masters. This was largely true of the French Revolution of 1789.

A large number of students see no objection to the attainment of high standards of personal wealth, provided that those standards can be applied universally, without discrimination between nations or individuals. At the most primitive level, the individual can be liberated politically and intellectually only if he is already liberated from the needs of hunger, fear and disease. In an advanced society standards of "reasonable" personal wealth may have to be defined. Revolutionary students, for instance, would raise no objection to the possession of a car or a washing

machine; but many would reject outright the ownership by one individual of two cars, on the grounds that this goes beyond the bounds of reasonable necessity. Above all, what most students reject is the idolatry in many industrialised societies of material standards, and the development of industrial systems based on the concept of deliberate over-production.

Left wing students are well aware of the fact they seem better able to define what they are "against" than what they are "for"; it is easier to destroy what seems evil than to create something good. But some see this as one of the great strengths of the revolutionary movement. Politicians, and society, they point out, react far more fearfully against anarchy and disorder than against a tidy political platform, whose arguments are concise and which can be opposed through conventional political argument. "The strength of our movement", Daniel Cohn-Bendit the French student revolutionary leader, has said, "lies exactly in the fact that it is based on "uncontrollable" spontaneousness, that it gives a stimulus without attempting to channel or use the action which it has set going for its own benefit. Today there are, in our opinion, clearly two solutions. The first consists of gathering five politically well-trained people and asking them to draw up a programme, to formulate immediate sound-looking demands, and say 'this is the position of the student movement, do with it what you like'. This is a bad solution. The second consists of trying to make not all students, not even all demonstrators, but a large number of them understand the situation. To this end one must avoid creating an organisation at once, avoid defining a programme which would inevitably have a paralysing effect. The movement's only chance is exactly this disorder which allows people to speak freely and which could lead to a certain form of self-organisation. We must, for instance, renounce impressive gatherings and try to form working, militant groups. This is what we tried to do in Nanterre".

In the process of destroying what one opposes, students believe, one achieves a consciousness of what one wants in its place.

It is of course impossible to predict with accuracy the course of the student rebellion in the coming years - or even months. What is certain is that students will, increasingly, insist on involvements in the administration of their universities and the government of their countries. Equally, it seems likely that many will draw from the French "student revolution" of May 1968 the conclusion that direct action can be an effective means of realising their ambitions. It is this fact which must be of paramount concern to governments in a wide variety of countries, upon whose ability to discern the trends of student unrest will depend the future course of student action in their countries.

The student rebellion has injected a new and important element into the political life of a large number of countries, and it is an element which is likely to become of growing significance.

David Robertson is Editor of THE STUDENT

COHN-BENDIT AND SARTRE

A Dialogue

Jean-Paul Sartre: Within a few days, without any call for a general strike, France has practically been paralysed by strikes and occupation of factories. All because the students have taken the streets in the Latin district. What is your analysis of the movement you have set in motion? How far can it go?

Daniel Cohn-Bendit: It has taken a scope we could not foresee in the beginning. Now, the aim is to overthrow the regime. But it does not depend on us whether this is attained or not. If it were really the objective of the Communist Party, of the General Workers Confederation and of the other trade unions, there would be no problem: the regime would tumble within two weeks because it has no reply to give to a trial of force with all the workers.

J.P.S. For the moment, there exists a clear disproportion between the massive character of the strike movement, which would allow, in fact, a direct confrontation with the regime, and the demands made by the trade union which are limited - wages, organization of labour, pension, etc.

D.C.B. There has always been a difference in workers' fights between the vigour of the action and the initial demands. But the success of the action and the dynamism of the movement may on the way alter the nature of the demands. A strike called to attain a partial conquest may turn into an insurrectional movement.

From this point of view some of the demands made today by the workers are very far-reaching: a real forty-hours week, for instance, and at Renault, a minimum wage of 1.000 francs a month. The Gaullist regime cannot accept them without completely losing face and if it stands fast, there will be confrontation. Let us suppose that the workers stand fast also, and the regime falls. What will happen? The left will come to power. Then all will depend on what it does. If it really changes the system - I confess I doubt it - it will have an audience and it will do well. But if we get, with or without the Communists, a Wilson-type government, which only proposes minor reforms and adjustments, the extreme Left will gain strength and it will be necessary to continue raising the real problems of organizing society, of workers' power, etc. But we have not arrived at this point, and it is not at all certain that the regime will fall.

J-P, S. It sometimes happens in a revolutionary situation that a movement like yours does not stop, but that its impulse subsides. In this case, one should try to go as far as possible before it stops. What, in your opinion, could be an irreversible result of the present movement, supposing that it stops soon?

D.C.-B. The workers will be given satisfaction on a certain number of material points and important university reforms will be introduced by the moderate elements in the student movement and the teaching staff. It will not be the radical reforms we want, but we will anyway have some influence: we shall make definite proposals and undoubtedly some will be accepted because they will not dare to refuse us all. This will be progress of course, but fundamentally nothing will have changed and we shall continue to reject the system as a whole. Anyway, I do not believe revolution is possible just like that from one day to another. I think one can only achieve more or less important successive transformations, but these transformations can only be imposed by revolutionary action. The student movement, which in spite of all will have achieved an important university reform even though it temporarily loses its strength, will therefore be an example for many young workers. By using the traditional methods of the workers' movement - strike, occupation of the streets and premises - we have crossed the first barrier: the myth that "nothing can be done against this regime". We have proved this to be untrue. And the workers stood in the breach. May be this time they will not fight it out to a finish. But other explosions will follow later. What is important is that the effectiveness of revolutionary methods has been proved.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit



Students and workers can only be united in dynamic action if the student movement and that of the workers each preserve their impulse and head for the same goal. For the moment, there exists a natural and understandable mistrust on the part of the workers.

J-P.S. This mistrust is not natural, it has been acquired. It did not exist at the beginning of the 19th century and did not appear until after the massacres of June 1848. Before that, republicans - who were intellectuals and small middle class - and workers marched side by side. There has been no such unity since, not even in the Communist Party which has always carefully separated the workers from the intellectuals.

D.C.-B. Nevertheless, something happened during this crisis. At Billancourt the workers refused to let the students enter the factory. But the fact that students did go to Billancourt in itself is new and important. There have been, in fact, three stages. First, overt mistrust, not only on the part of the workers' press, but of the workers themselves. They said "Who are these blue-eyed boys who come bothering us?" And then, after the street fights, after the students' struggle against the police, this feeling disappeared and solidarity became effective.

Now we have reached a third stage: workers and peasants have, in their turn, entered the fight, but they tell us: "Wait a little, we want to fight our own battle ourselves!" This is normal. Unity can only come later if the two movements, that of the students and that of the workers, preserve their impulse. After fifty years of mistrust, I do not think a so-called "dialogue" is possible. It is not only a question of talking. It is normal that the workers should not receive us with open arms. Contact will be made only if we fight together. One can, for instance, set up joint revolutionary militant groups, in which workers and students raise problems together and take action together. In some place this will not work, in others it will.

J-P.S. The problem remains the same: transformation or revolution. As you said, all you achieve by violence will be used by the reformers in a positive sense. Thanks to your action the University will be reformed, but within the framework of the bourgeois society.

D.C.-B. Obviously, but I believe this to be the only way to move forward. Let us take the example of the examinations. There is no doubt that they will take place. But not, surely, the way they used to be. A new formula will be found. And if they take place only once in an unaccustomed way, an irreversible process of reform will have started. I don't know how far it will go, I know it will go slowly, but that is the only possible strategy.

To me it is not a question of being metaphysical and to see how "the revolution" will come about. As I have already said, I believe that we are rather moving towards a perpetual changing of society, caused, at each stage, by revolutionary action. A radical change of the structures of our society would not be possible unless there were, for instance, the sudden coincidence of a serious economic crisis, action of a powerful

labour movement and strong student action. Today, these conditions do not exist. At the best one can hope to make the government fall. But one must not dream of breaking up the bourgeois society. This does not mean that nothing can be done. On the contrary, we must fight, step by step, on the basis of outright rejection.

The question of whether there can still be revolution in developed capitalist societies and what one should do to provoke them does not really interest me. Everyone has his theory. Some say: only the revolutions in the Third World will cause the capitalist world to collapse. Others: it will be thanks to the revolution in the capitalist world that the Third World will be able to develop. All analyses are more or less grounded on fact, but they are, in my opinion, of little importance.

Let us see what just happened. For a long time, many people have been looking for the best way to make the student world explode. In the end, no-one found a way, and it was a situation itself which provoked the explosion. There has, of course, been a little push from the regime - the occupation of the Sorbonne by the police - but it is obvious that this tremendous blunder was not the only cause of the movement. The police had already entered Nanterre, a few months earlier, and that had caused no chain reaction. This time there has been a reaction which no-one has been able to check - and which enables us to see what role an active minority can play.

What has happened during the last two weeks refutes, in my opinion, the famous theory of the "revolutionary vanguards", considered to be the leading forces a popular movement. In Nanterre and Paris there has simply been an objective situation, born out of what is vaguely called "student unrest" and the desire for action of a part of youth, disgusted by the lack of action of the classes in power. Being theoretically more conscious and better prepared, the active minority has been able to light the detonator, charge through the gap. That's all. The others could either follow or not. It so happens that they did follow. But no vanguard, neither the UEC, nor the JCR nor the marxists-leninists, has been able to take the lead of the movement. Their militants have participated influentially in the action, but they were absorbed by the movement. They are to be found on the co-ordinating committees, where they play an important role, but there has never been question of any of the vanguards playing a leading role.

That is the main point. This shows that we must abandon the theory of a "leading vanguard" and adopt the much more simple and much more honest one of the active minority playing the role of a permanent ferment, inciting to action without trying to take the lead. In fact, though no-one wants to admit it, the Bolshevik party did not "lead" the Russian revolution. It was carried along by the masses. It was able to work out the theory on the way, push one way or another, but it did not, alone, launch the movement, which was largely spontaneous. In certain situations, with the help of the action of an active minority - spontaneousness regains its place in the social movement. This, and not watchwords from a leading group, is what makes it possible to push ahead.



Jean-Paul Sartre

J.P.S.

What many people do not understand is that you are not trying to work out a programme, to give your movement a structure. They reproach you for "breaking everything" without knowing - anyway without saying - what you want to put up in place of what you destroy.

D.C.-B.

Of course! Everyone would be reassured, Pompidou above all, if we founded a party and announced: "All these people there now belong to us. These are our aims and this is how we propose to achieve them."

They would know what they were facing and could find an answer. They would no longer be confronted by "anarchy", "disorder", "uncontrollable unrest".

The strength of our movement lies exactly in the fact that it is based on "uncontrollable" spontaneousness, that it gives a stimulus without attempting to channel or to use the action it has set going for its own benefit. Today, there are, in our opinion, clearly two solutions. The first consists of gathering five politically well-trained people and asking them to draw up a programme, to formulate immediate sound-looking demands and say: "This is the position of the student movement, do with it what you like!" That is the bad solution. The second consists of trying to make not all students, not even all demonstrators, but a large number of them understand the situation. To this end one must avoid creating an organization at once, avoid defining a programme which would inevitably have a paralysing effect. The movement's only chance is exactly this disorder which allows people to speak freely and which could lead to a certain form of self-organization. We must, for instance, renounce impressive gatherings and try to form working militant groups. This is what we try to do in Nanterre.

But now that the word is all of a sudden free in Paris, we must first let people express themselves. They say confused, vague and often uninteresting things, because they have been said a hundred times, but, having said all this, it will enable them to ask themselves the question: "And then what?". That is what is important, that the largest possible number of students ask themselves: "And then what?". Only then can one talk of a programme and a structure. To ask us already today: "What are you going to do about the examinations?" is to want to drown the fish, to sabotage the movement, to break the dynamism. The examinations will take place and we shall make proposals, but leave us some time. We must first talk, think, look for new formulas. We will find them. Not today.

J-P.S.

The student movement, as you said, finds itself at the moment on the crest of a wave. But the holidays are coming and with them a decline and undoubtedly a retreat. The government will use this to introduce reforms. It will invite students to take part and many will accept, saying either: "We only want reforms", or: "These are nothing but reforms but it is better than nothing and we have achieved it by force". You will then have a transformed university, but the changes may very well be nothing but superficial and affect mainly the development of material facilities, buildings, university restaurants. All this would bring no fundamental change in the system. These are demands that the government could comply with without endangering the regime. Do you think you can obtain "transformations" which really introduce revolutionary elements into the bourgeois university - which make, for instance, university education contradictory to the main function of the university under the present regime: that of training an élite, well integrated in the system?

D.C-B.

Firstly, purely material demands can have a revolutionary content. As regards university restaurants, we have a demand which does go to the core of the matter. We demand that university restaurants as such be suppressed. They must be turned into youth restaurants where all young people, whether students or not, can eat for F 1,40. And no-one can reject this: if young workers work during the day, there is no reason why, in the evening, they should not eat for F 1,40. The same goes for the cité universitaires: we want them to be youth cités. There are many young workers and young apprentices who no longer want to live with their parents but who cannot rent a room because that costs F 30.000 a month; open the cités to them where the rent is F 9.000 to 10.000. And the sons of high class families who read law or political science will go elsewhere.

In reality I do not think that the reforms which the government may introduce will be sufficient to demobilize the students. The holidays will, of course, bring a decline but they will not "break" the movement. Some will say: "Our attempt has failed" without trying to explain what has happened. Others will say: "The situation was not ripe." But many militants will understand that we must treasure what has just happened, analyse it theoretically, and prepare to resume action when the university opens again. Because the opening of the university will be disastrous, whatever the government's reforms may be. And our experience in disordered, unorganized and government-provoked action, will enable us to make that which may come in the autumn more effective. The holidays will enable the students to explain their own confusion during these two weeks of crisis and to think about what they want and can do.

As to the possibility of turning university education into an "anti-education" which no longer trains well-integrated élites, but revolutionaries, this seems to me a rather idealistic dream. Even after reform, bourgeois education will train bourgeois élites. The people will be caught in the machinery of the system. At best, they will become members of a well-thinking Left, but objectively they will remain the wheels that ensure the functioning of society.

Our aim is to succeed in imparting "a parallel education, both technical and ideological". We ourselves must set the university on entirely new foundations even if this lasts only a few weeks. We shall appeal to leftist and extreme leftist teachers, willing to work with us in seminars and help us with their knowledge - by renouncing to their position of "teacher" - in the research we shall undertake.

We can organize seminars - not authoritative lectures, of course - in all faculties on the problems of the workers' movement, on the use of technique for the service of mankind, on the possibilities offered by automation. Not from a theoretical viewpoint (there is not one sociology book today which does not start with the sentence "Technique must be placed at the service of mankind") but by raising concrete problems. This education would, of course, be contrary in orientation to that of the system and the experiment could not last long: the system would be quick to react and the movement would collapse. But what is important is not the elaboration of a reform of the capitalist society, but the

launching of an experience which breaks completely with this society, an experiment which does not last but which shows a possibility: one sees something in passing and it stops. But it is sufficient to prove that this something can exist.

We do not hope to build a socialist kind of university in our society, for we know that the university's function will remain the same as long as the entire system does not change. But we believe that there can be momentary ruptures in the cohesion of the system and that we can use these to make breaches.

J-P.S. This presupposes the permanent existence of an "anti-institutional movement" which prevents the students from setting up a structure. What you can blame UNEF for, in fact, is that it is a Union, that is, a necessarily sclerosed institution.

D.C-B. We reproach it especially for being, in its organizational forms, incapable of organizing a movement for demands. Defence of student interests is, moreover, a very tricky question. What are their "interests"? They do not form a class. The workers, the peasants form a social class and have objective interests. Their demands are clear and they are addressed to the employer, to the representatives of the bourgeois. But the students? Who else but the entire system oppresses them?

J-P.S. The students are in fact not a class. They are defined by an age and a relation to knowledge. The student is someone who, by definition, must one day cease to be a student, in any society, even that which we dream of.

D.C-B. That is exactly what must be changed. Under the present system one makes a distinction between those who work and those who study. But one could imagine another system in which everyone participates in production work - reduced to a minimum thanks to technical progress - and where each has the possibility to study constantly at the same time. This is the system of simultaneous work and studies.

Of course, there will be specific cases: one cannot work on higher mathematics or medicine and develop another activity at the same time. It is not a question of laying down uniform rules. But the basic principle must be changed. We must, from the start, reject the distinction between student and worker.

Of course, this cannot be done tomorrow, but it can be started and will continue necessarily.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit, an influential student leader during the demonstrations of May/June 1968, is a member of the March 22nd Group, one of the major bodies coordinating student protest.

Jean-Paul Sartre is an internationally known Marxist philosopher.

FRENCH STUDENT CHARTER

National Assembly of the Universities of France

Article 1. The student movement is not merely a response to police repression, nor a reaction against the deficiencies of education or lack of opportunities. It is a protest against a university which is forbidden to probe into the conflicting nature of social relationship. Starting from the demand for revision of the university, the student movement rejects a certain type of society. It has found its true expression in joining the workers' struggle against the capitalist society.

Article 2. Social reality and the university's attitude towards it are constantly being criticized and questioned. We must divert academic institution as a whole from the function which the ruling class and political repression impose upon it and turn it into a place which sets forth means of critical comprehension and expression of reality.

Article 3. In this situation of no return, this charter, the expression of a common will, sets forth the following principles:

Article 4. The workers, labourers and intellectual workers together denounce capitalist exploitation. This struggle shall not be restricted to any field; it shall be declared and organized wherever oppression in any form takes place.

Article 5. The university does not hold an abstract and neutral position towards the class society: it is fully incorporated in it because of the social function it fulfils. Teachers and students reject the nature and mechanisms of this incorporation: content and form of imparted knowledge, recruitment of teaching staff and forms of administration.

Article 6. The knowledge imparted may not be a stagnant knowledge. Research must question all knowledge in order to renew it. It shall pass criticism on the acquired knowledge, on the ends of economic and social life, on the prevailing ideology.

Article 7. Access to education should, at all levels, be in accordance with three fundamental principles of democratisation:

1. To free the students of all financial restrictions by making society take charge of the cost of all education.
2. To free them from cultural restrictions, inheritance of the

class society passed on by the family and environment, by imparting a basic theoretical education and constant teaching.

3. To reject any selection based on social differences and on the long- and short-term needs of the economy.

Article 8. The teaching function must be based on:

- the acquisition of knowledge.
- effective practice of research.
- the possibilities to transmit knowledge.

Changeableness and co-ordination of these three elements are the only criteria for revision of this function. Consequently, recruitment of teaching staff shall no longer be done on the basis of university degrees or nationality but of competence alone judged by the same standards.

Autonomy

Article 9. Free exercise of all freedoms and practice of direct democracy at all levels shall give the revision its true value.

Article 10. The educational structures as a whole shall be independent of any power or pressure group. The revision shall make it possible to introduce into the system of autonomy the guarantees of its existence which it does not contain itself.

Article 11. Exercise of all freedoms (political, syndical, etc.) shall be ensured by providing all groups and people, whether they belong to the university or not, with quarters and other facilities (printing, posting, subsidies, etc.). The university premises shall be inviolable.

Article 12. Direct democracy shall preside over the university's administrative organisation: at each level the authority will be in the hands of General Plenary Assemblies. The right of initiative shall be sacred. The system of delegation shall be just a means. Representative mandates shall be subject to repeal.

Article 13. The administrative bodies, elected by one single council comprising all parties, shall be mixed, thereby replacing the hierarchical opposition of the bodies by one basic unity, fundamentally defined by joint work.

Article 14. The university shall be broadened by the integration of all establishments having as their mission education and research.

(This text was put to the vote on Saturday 22nd June, 1968 at 0.15 hours in the hall of the Council of the Nanterre Faculty of Letters and Humanities. Of the 160 present, 143 voted for, 9 against and 8 abstained.)

STUDENTS AND EMANCIPATION

Rudi Dutschke

Any kind of radical opposition to the existing political system - a system intent on preventing us by every means possible from bringing about conditions in which people can lead a creative life free from war, hunger and repressive work - must today be of a global nature. The "globalisation" of the forces of revolution is the most important task of the period in which we are now living and working for the emancipation of mankind.

Under-privileged peoples all over the world represent the real historical basis of the liberation movement. With them alone lies the subversive and explosive character of international revolution.

In the 1940's, the Third World - those peoples who are suffering under the terrorism of the world-market mechanism, controlled as it is by the "giant corporations", and whose development is prevented by imperialism - began this struggle, inspired by the impressions and experiences gained from the first "betrayed" (Trotskyist) "proletarian revolution" in the Soviet Union. The decisive difference was the mass character and duration of the revolutionary process, which had already been recognised in the theory as a permanent process.

The 1960's saw the beginnings of a new stage in this process with the revolutionary changes in Algeria and Cuba, and the uninterrupted struggle by the South Vietnamese liberation front against the Diem dictatorship.

Of these, only the latter attained world historical importance for the opposition movement throughout the whole world. The aggression by the United States of North America could no longer be overlooked. It occurred openly and brutally at a time when the most varied mechanisms of "exerting influence" were recognised as being no longer adequate to prevent the victory of the revolutionary forces of liberation in South Vietnam.

It was the historical misfortune of the American power elite - to be more precise: of US imperialism - that it had to dismantle its only "basis of legitimisation", i.e. its anti-communist ideology, in order to make possible the crushing of social-revolutionary liberation movements under the flag of anti-communism. This apparent paradox is explicable if we realise that the recognition of the Soviet Union's coexistence ideology by the imperialist camp was the result of a desire to stabilise at least one "peaceful zone" of the capitalist system in central and western Europe in order to maintain an area of calm at the rear and thus leave the way free to carry out the short-term, effective destruction of the liberation

movements within the Third World. This historical "guilt" of the Soviet Union consists in its complete failure to recognise the full significance of this strategy of imperialism and to respond to it in a subversive-revolutionary manner.

The aggression of the US imperialists in Vietnam, which is increasing from month to month and from year to year, manifests itself in the highly developed capitalist countries as the "abstract reality of the Third World in the metropolises" (O. Negt), as an intellectual productive force in the process of becoming conscious of the antimonies in the present-day world.

authority

As Vietnam became a living problem for us in talks, discussions, films and demonstrations during the 1960's, we revolutionary socialists were in a way able to sublimate our feelings of guilt in an historical sense by considering the existence of the Wall in Berlin and of Stalinism in East Germany, for we propagated the concept of a difference between the seizure of power by force (though without the revolutionisation of the masses) and the spreading of the idea of social liberation amongst the masses, as was the case for example in the revolution in Vietnam. But now Vietnam represented a priori more than a means of compensation or a "peg" on which to hang the activities of the left-wing students. The historical significance of the struggle by the Vietnamese people, the exemplary importance of this conflict for the ensuing struggles against imperialism, soon became the central point in the discussions on Vietnam. But the fact that this decisive aspect was able to imprint itself so quickly on the student mind seems to us to have its materialist explanation in the specific productive situation of the student producers. From a sociological point of view, we students occupy an intermediary position within the total social reproduction process, even if this position differs from one faculty to the next. On the one hand we are an intellectually and educationally privileged section of the populace. At the present time, however, this privilege means nothing more than frustration. Frustration because the student who is educating himself - and especially the politically committed student - experiences every day (intellectually and sometimes physically too) the stupidity of the incompetent political clique of irrational authority. Added to this is the fact that these anti-authoritarian students have not yet taken up any materially secure positions within society, that they are still relatively distant from power interests and power positions. This temporary subversive status of students generates a dialectical identity with the direct, historical interests of producers everywhere. It is, therefore, most likely that the vital needs and interests of peace, justice and emancipation will be able to materialise in this sociological position. But the students did not develop any real virulence until they became political as a result of the anti-authoritarian struggle within the environment of their own institution (the university) and began to fight more resolutely for their interests and needs within the general political conflict. The direct relationship between the student producer and his educational environment should not be forgotten. His

situation as a student at the university is determined by the dictatorship of ever-expanding examinations and by the dictatorship of the professors. The professors for their part are servants of the state. The ever-growing power of the state in the whole of society forms the basis for an understanding of the anti-state and anti-institutional of the radical extra-parliamentary opposition.

All this has meant that Vietnam has lost much of its apparent abstractness. The productive settlement of the direct and emancipatory interests of the anti-authoritarian students can only take place in the midst of conflict, in the political struggle. The restrictionist policy of the university bureaucracy, the brutal action by the West Berlin civil-war army during various demonstrations, the permanent education of the people about social contradictions and the forms of action which systematically "violate" the rules of bourgeois society, and finally the process of leaning accompanying it - all these things created our anti-authoritarian approach, an attitude which is still based on revolution and the education and self-education of man in this direction. And so in this way the anti-authoritarian attitude was "hammered" into us by the ruling classes themselves. But our opposition is not directed against any small "defect" in the system. Ours is a total opposition to the entire way of life as practised until now by the authoritarian state.

class

The historical task of late-capitalism is to convert the masses into a collective which reacts functionally in the interests of the ruling class, and to keep them usable and ready at all times for military and civil purposes. But it is precisely this decisive task which it is less and less able to fulfil in the Federal Republic of Germany. The cultural-revolutionary transitional period, which has mobilised relevant social strata both inside and outside the university since 2nd June 1962, at the latest, is far from over, and it could only be "ended" by the use of massive and brutal means of repression.

The ruling class has changed very considerably. For a long time now it has no longer been identical with the nominal owners of the means of production. Marx himself had already seen the emergence of a new "class" of "industrial bureaucrats" and produced the beginnings of an analysis of it. All this does not do away with the basic contradiction within bourgeois-capitalist society, but rather it brings it to a head. It ushers in the last phase of bourgeois society in which all the functions of capital have been "socialised", delegated to certain groups and institutions: "The greater the extent to which a ruling class is capable of absorbing the most important men from the ruled classes, the more solid and dangerous is its control" (Karl Marx: Capital, Vol. 3). Historical development has already passed this phase and has completed the repressive socialisation of capital. Herein lies the strength and weakness of the late-capitalist system. It in fact permits no groups to exist outside

the repressive total context; it attempts to control everyone by means of a "system of concessions within the capitalist framework" (Sering). This structural framework is guaranteed by the "mute coercion of circumstances", by the internalised norms and ideas of bourgeois-capitalist society. If, however, any socially relevant fraction of the underprivileged, outside the "interest-exchange", (at which the social product is politically "distributed") should contravene "the self-evident restriction of interests and needs to the prevailing limits", the whole system is called into question: "Thus the breaching of false consciousness can supply the Archimedian demand for a more comprehensive emancipation - even though only at an infinitely small place, but it is on the widening of such small places that the chance of a change depends" (Herbert Marcuse: Repressive Tolerance, 1966).

consciousness

It is precisely this breaching of false consciousness that we have begun. The control and administration of the individual by the capitalist system is structurally called into question by our political work, by our educational work, and by our provocations and mass action. And it is precisely for this reason that the "left-wing liberal critics" of the system - ranging from the "Spiegel" to the "Zeit" - are now, too, beginning to take an obvious political turn against us. They have realised the approaching threat to late-capitalism which will become fatal for it when we succeed (by increasingly effective dialectics of enlightenment and mass action) in arousing the spontaneity of the wage-earning masses which the parties have destroyed: "The fact that, after the betrayal by their own bureaucracy since 1914, after the development of the political parties into world-spanning machineries for the annihilation of spontaneity and after the murder of the revolutionaries, the workers behave in a neutral manner towards the totalitarian social order, is not a sign of imbecility" (Max Horkheimer: Die Juden und Europa). The memory of the last fifty years of the German labour movement holds no fascination except for the contemplative intellectual. For the masses these years represent a so far uninterrupted chain of betrayals by the intelligentsia on the political left and right.

One must not make a fetish out of the historically correct restriction of our work to the confines of the university. Revolutionary dialectics of the correct avenues of transition must recognise the "long march through the institutions" as a practical-critical activity in all social spheres. We must aim at the subversive-critical deepening of social contradictions, something that has become possible in all institutions which participate in the organising of daily life. In the cultural-revolutionary phase of our movement, there is no longer any section of society that is exclusively privileged to express the interests of the movement as a whole.

The luke-warm opposition movement is dead, spontaneous resistance - often in still completely unorganised form - has begun. Whether in

Frankfurt or in Bremen, in Berlin or in Hamburg, we - the anti-authoritarian camp - already control the decisive links in the chain of the emergence of human awareness, i.e. the educational establishments outside the university, the plenary assemblies of the students inside the great universities, and the assemblies of the pupils at the schools. The abundance of school and student newspapers is a mobilising and educational factor of the movement as a whole. Everywhere one can witness the formation of "self-appointed avant-gardes" who - independently and without being organised or manipulated by any central authority - have begun to carry out what they have recognised as the necessary struggle against the manipulation and suppression of the creative abilities of mankind. Herein lies the strength of this anti-authoritarian movement - the fact that the practical-critical work of the anti-authoritarians is the real expression of the individual's own needs and interests. Putting into practice one's own needs, interests and sufferings prevents the monopolisation of historical human interests

Rudi Dutschke addresses a Berlin audience



within a member-party' "representing" the masses. Already we control the streets of the large towns, and we get along quite well in the "thicket of the large city" (Brecht); but the real injection of the idea of social-revolutionary liberation into the minds of the masses has not yet taken place.

The first autonomous base-groups have been formed in the industrial undertakings. Loosely co-ordinated with the other groups according to the principle of mutual assistance, they are introducing into the factories the anti-authoritarian methods learned in the street and during educational meetings, and they are trying to combat the authoritarian coercion by the hierarchy existing within the factory-staff structure.

State bureaucracy is completely helpless. It sees in socially produced conflict the work of a few ringleaders or a temporary conflict of generations. It has to personalise the problems, because for it history is simply the work of "great personalities" whilst the masses are merely the "material" of the "elite".

The leftists on the other hand are often in danger making "the proletariat" into something metaphysically absolute, and no longer recognising the concrete and difficult dialectics of the process of awakening the awareness of the masses, no longer recognising the temporary division between radical minority awareness-groups and the broad masses. The other danger to us is that of intellectual arrogance which, pushed to its logical conclusion, is fear of the creative abilities of the newly awakened masses. Between these false alternatives lies the practice of historically correct emancipation work.

emancipation

The old concepts of socialism must be critically suspended, not destroyed and not artificially preserved. A new concept cannot yet exist, it can only be worked out in the practical struggle, in the continuous interplay of reflection and action, of practice and theory. Revolutionary science is only possible today within the anti-authoritarian movement, as a productive force in the liberation of mankind from the unrecognised and uncontrolled powers of society and of nature.

Today it is no longer an abstract theory of history that holds us together, but the existential disgust we feel for a society which prattles about freedom and at the same time subtly and brutally suppresses the direct interests and needs of the individual and of the world's peoples struggling for their socio-economic emancipation.

The radical dialectics of sentiment and emotion (Marcuse) - radical because this affects mankind as a whole - (the theory represents the conscious expression of these dialectics), hold us more strongly together than ever in our opposition to this state-run authoritarian society. This makes possible a unity amongst anti-authoritarians, without any party programme and without any claim to monopoly.

The subtle and brutal methods and techniques of social integration no longer carry any weight with us. In the struggle with the power-organisations within the system (i.e. with the state-social bureaucracy, with the police, with the machinery of justice and with the bureaucracies within the oligopolies) the emotional refusal becomes an **organised** refusal, becomes practical-critical knowledge, becomes the revolutionary will to destroy the run-away productive forces - the inhuman machinery of war and manipulation which every day deals out death and horror in the world and which every day might be the cause of a world-wide genocide. The struggle sees the development of new radical needs such as for example, the desire to liberate at last the totality of those productive forces that free man from long working hours, manipulation and misery arising from the chains of capital and bureaucracy, and the desire to subject them at last to the conscious control of the producers in every possible way.

But let us have no illusions. The world-wide network of organised repression, the continuity of government, these things are not easy to abolish. The "new man" of the 21st century (Guevara, Fanon) who is the pre-condition for the "new society", is the result of a long and painful struggle. He is familiar with a rapid rise and fall in the fortunes of the movement. Temporary advances are followed inevitably by new "setbacks". In the "classical" concept of the revolutionary theory, our cultural-revolutionary transitional phase is a pre-revolutionary phase in which persons and groups still entertain a number of illusions, abstract notions and utopian projects. It is a phase in which the radical contradiction between revolution and counter-revolution, between the ruling class in its new form and the camp of the anti-authoritarians and the underprivileged has not yet begun to manifest itself concretely and directly. What is already a clear-cut reality in America has (with certain modifications) considerable importance for us too: "It is not a time for sober reflection, but a time for exhortation. The task of the intellectuals is identical with that of the organiser in the street, with that of the conscientious objector, and with that of the digger: To speak with the people and not about the people. The operative literature now is underground literature, the speeches of Malcolm X, the writings of Fanon, the songs of the Rolling Stones and of Aretha Franklin. All the rest sounds like the Moynihan Report or a "Time" -essay - explaining everything, understanding nothing and changing nobody" (A. Kopkind). Up to now we have no broad scope of continuous underground literature, there is still no dialogue between the intellectuals and the people - from the point of view of the real (i.e. the direct and historical) interest of the people. There are the beginnings of a desertion campaign in the American army of occupation, but there is no organised desertion campaign in the West German Bundeswehr. We dare to attack politically American imperialism, but we have not yet the will to make a break with our own ruling apparatus.

Comrades, anti-authoritarians, people! We haven't much time. In Vietnam we too are being destroyed every day, and that is not a metaphor, not a mere cliché. If US imperialism is able to prove convincingly in Vietnam

that it is capable of successfully defeating the revolutionary people's war, this would mean the fresh start of a long period of authoritarian rule from Washington to Vladivostok. One historical chance remains open to use. It depends primarily on our will how this period of history will end. "If the Viet Cong is not joined by an American, a European and an Asian Cong, the Vietnamese revolution will fail just like those that went before it. A hierarchical functionary state will reap the fruits that it did not sow" (Partisan Nr. 1, Vietnam, die Dritte Welt und der Selbstbe-trug der Linken, Berlin 1967). And Frantz Fanon says on behalf of the Third World: "Let's go, comrades in arms, it is better if we decide at once to alter our course. We must shake off the great night into which we had sunk, and leave it far behind us. The new day that is already visible on the horizon must find us steadfast, alert and resolute" (Die Verdammten dieser Erde, Frankfurt am Main 1966).

revolution

Let us at last accelerate on our correct course. Vietnam is coming closer, the first units of the revolutionary liberation front are beginning to fight in Greece. The conflicts in Spain are coming to a head. Following thirty years of fascist dictatorship, a new revolutionary force has arisen within the united front of workers and students.

The school-pupils in Bremen have shown how the politicisation of the immediate needs of everyday life - the struggle against the increased fare charges - can develop subversive explosive force. The way they demonstrated solidarity with the wage-earning masses, the correct way they dealt with contradictions, and their clashes with the authoritarian - militaristic police force - all this demonstrated clearly what great opportunities for our struggle are inherent in the system of late-capitalism. Everywhere in the Federal Republic of Germany this clash is possible in a radical form. It depends on our creative ability, boldly and resolutely to deepen and to politicise the visible and direct contradictions, to hazard actions, and boldly and universally to develop the initiative of the masses. True revolutionary solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution consists in the day-to-day weakening and the procedural upheaval of the centres of imperialism. Our former ineffectuality and resignation was part of the theory.

The revolutionisation of the revolutionaries is, therefore, the decisive pre-condition for the revolutionisation of the masses.

Rudi Dutschke, a member of the German Student Socialist organisation (SDS) has been an influential member of the student movement, and was shot by a would-be assassin early in 1968. He is still recovering from serious head wounds.



AIR-INDIA



Direct flight Brussels/Bombay every Wednesday.
12 flights a week Europe/India connecting to Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Australia, Indonesia, Fiji-Islands etc.

AMSTERDAM,
60, Leidsestraat

ROTTERDAM,
47, Vijverhofstraat



KLM was the second airline in the world to fly with stewardesses.

KLM is often accused of inventing the stewardess.

And it's not true. Just because we've been in the business longer than any other airline doesn't mean that we're always the first to come up with something new. Certainly, we were the first airline to schedule regular flights between Europe and South East Asia. And the first European airline to own and operate the

DC-8 jet. And the DC-9 jet. And the first airline in the world to own the Super DC-8-63. But as for inventing the stewardess, we are forced to deny that accusation. And there's one more thing. We didn't invent our reputation. Of being the most reliable airline in the world.



The International Student Conference (ISC) is a world-wide organisation grouping National Unions of Students in every continent. With a full-time Secretariat based in Leiden, the Netherlands, the ISC carries out an extensive programme of activities for the benefit of its members, and works particularly as a means of channelling assistance to students and student organisations in developing countries.

The programme of the ISC - drawn up at regular Conferences, and implemented by the Secretariat in co-operation with member National Unions of Students - includes conferences and seminars, technical and financial assistance to National Unions in developing countries, scholarships, publications, political statements and action, and concrete activities in the field of student travel, education and welfare.