

STUDENT ANARCHY

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This issue is devoted to the student revolt of May and June 1968, with a glance at its precursors abroad but with particular reference to what happened in British universities and Art Colleges. It is a compilation from many sources and we must offer our acknowledgements to the people quoted and the publications looted. The cover is by Rufus Segar.

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Student anarchy

a survey of the student revolt

ONE THING ON WHICH MOST OBSERVERS of the international student revolt are agreed upon is its anarchist character, and this is in spite of the fact that most of the revolutionary thinkers alleged to inspire the students are not anarchists—Marx, Mao, Marcuse, Debray, Guevarra. Thus *Time* magazine remarked (24.5.68): "The black flag that flew last week above the tumultuous student disorders of Paris stood for a philosophy that the modern world has all but forgotten: anarchy. Few of the students who riot in France, Germany or Italy—or in many another country—would profess outright allegiance to anarchy, but its basic tenets inspire many of their leaders. Germany's 'Red Rudi' Dutschke and France's 'Red Danny' Cohn-Bendit openly espouse anarchy. 'In theory,' says West German political scientist, Wolfgang Abendroth, 'the students are a species of Marxist, but in practice they are anarchists.' Not since the anarchist surge in the Spanish Civil War has the Western world seen a movement so enthusiastically devoted to the destruction of law, order and society in the name of unlimited individual freedom."

And the London *Times* (3.6.68) in an editorial on anarchism remarked that "the black anarchist banners have been carried in the recent upheavals and demonstrations in several western countries. Some of the student leaders call themselves anarchists. The creed is being talked about again, and in the same breath many of the old misunderstandings about it are revived." And Milton Shulman revealing some of these in the *Evening Standard* (19.6.68) wrote about the notorious TV programme, "What emerged through the stumbling English was a kind of simplistic, almost William Morris, anarcho-syndicalism that

desired an end to capitalism and a withering away of the state apparatus so that men could, untrammelled by bureaucracy, reach their true destinies. Far from being new, these views have well-known philosophical roots going back as far as Christ, and have had as their mouth-pieces spokesmen like Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin and Rosa Luxembourg."

Anarchist flags flew not only over the Odeon in Paris, but over the University of Kent at Canterbury. Anarchist slogans were heard not only at Columbia University, New York, but at the Hornsey College of Art in North London, and when a student spokesman there declared that "a state of anarchy exists" when the students took over the college on May 28th, he didn't mean the word in a derogatory sense. "Perhaps," suggested Richard Boston in *New Society* (23.5.68), "leader writers who still use the word 'anarchy' as a synonym for 'chaos' should try and find out what anarchism means, for it is a mood of anarchism, not chaos, that is sweeping the universities."

It is as easy to exaggerate the importance of the student revolt as it is to underestimate it. Granted that many who are shouting militant slogans today will be comfortable reactionaries in a few years' time, granted that, as Maurice Punch put it, the majority of students are "ordinary, dull, mundane, inarticulate, apolitical, ill-informed, philistine sheep", granted if you like, that they are, as Novotny called them in Czechoslovakia before he was pushed out "a pampered petit-bourgeois elite", they still contain the most radical element in the population of most countries, East and West.

In the United States students comprise 30 per cent of their age group there, as opposed to 11 per cent in Britain (the pre-war figure here was 2.7 per cent). Paul Goodman declared in his "Thoughts on Berkeley" early in 1965 that "At present in the United States, students—middle-class youth—are the major exploited class. (Negroes, small farmers and the aged are rather out-caste groups; their labour is not needed and they are not wanted.) The labour of intelligent youth is needed and they are accordingly subjected to tight scheduling, speed-up, and other factory methods."

YOUTH AS A CLASS

In a long and closely argued article "Youth as a Class" (*International Socialist Journal*, February 1968), John and Margaret Rowntree take the bull by the horns and declare that youth is now in "the crucial pivotal class position within the United States, and that the young are increasingly becoming culturally and politically conscious of their class exploitation. Three propositions are used in support of this argument:

1. The American economy is increasingly dominated by two industries that are large, public and rapidly growing—defence and education.

2. The defence and education industries serve crucially as successful shock-absorbers of surplus manpower, particularly young manpower.

3. Economic exploitation in the United States is increasingly directed at the young.

The Rowntrees tell us that total employment *directly* related to the defence industry in the US was estimated by the Department of Labour to be 7 million jobs in 1962; 1 in 10 employed workers in 1962 were *directly* employed by the defence industry. (They deliberately select figures which do not relate to current war spending.) Educational outlay in the US has been rising by 10½ per cent a year for the last decade making it one of the major US growth industries. They quote Clark Kerr, ex-president of the University of California, as saying in his book *The Uses of the University*: "The university has become a prime instrument of national purpose. This is new. This is the essence of the transformation now engulfing our universities. Basic to this transformation is the growth of the 'knowledge industry', which is coming to permeate government and business and to draw into it more and more people raised to higher and higher levels of skill. The production, distribution and consumption of 'knowledge' in all its forms is said to account for 29 per cent of gross national product, according to Fritz Machlup's calculations (in *Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States*); and 'knowledge production' is growing at about twice the rate of the rest of the economy."

Defence and education between them have absorbed not only huge numbers of young people, but a rapidly increasing *proportion* of the potentially productive population. "The growth of the defence and education industries are the crucial modifications in the organisation of the US economy that have led to the formation of youth as a class. It is know-how and force that keep the capitalist system together; and the exploited workers in these two critical industries are, overwhelmingly, young." The way, they say, to evaluate exploitation in the armed forces is to see how much it would cost to recruit volunteers. (Milton Friedman, in advocating a volunteer army declared that "Conscription is a tax in kind—forced labour exacted from the men who serve involuntarily. The amount of the tax is the difference between the sum for which they would voluntarily serve and the sum we now pay them. . . .") As to students: "Since school is a full-time but unpaid job, most students work part-time or not at all, living on loans or family charity. Professor Theodore Schultz estimates that 55 per cent of the costs of a college and 43 per cent of the costs of a high school education are foregone income. The Council of Economic Advisers' foregone earnings estimate of \$20 to \$30 billion, can also be seen as an index of exploitation. This estimate implies that, for all students 16 and over, foregone earnings amount to about 40 to 60 per cent of their 'investment in human capital'. This is roughly \$2,000 per student 16 and over. These estimates are themselves exploitive, since they assume high unemployment and low wages. Yet students, like soldiers, lack real choice: they must stay in school (and be exploited), face the draft (and be exploited) or face exploitively high unemployment rates and/or

low wages."

It is clear, they say, that the American young, "while they might not prefer to join the military or go to school and live at a low standard of living, have limited alternatives when they face unemployment rates three times those of the labour force 25 and over. . . . What are our conclusions? Increasingly, young people are labouring in the two dynamic 'socialised' sectors of the administrative imperialist system. If they venture outside army or school they are rewarded with unemployment rates two or five times the average. The young therefore form the new proletariat, are undergoing impoverishment, and can become the new revolutionary class. This new class is not a *lumpenproletariat*, like pensioners, welfare recipients, and the disabled. Instead they are in the classic proletarian position, growing worse off within an industry that is itself the engine of prosperity in the economy. They may not be the poorest group; nor are they by any means, the only exploited group."

The situation in Britain is different. Students in any kind of full-time higher education—in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics or technical colleges are only 10 or 11 per cent of their age group. As Eric Robinson says in his excellent book *The New Polytechnics*, "Ninety-tenths of our young people between the ages of 18 and 21 are not in full-time education at all: they are working in factories, shops and offices and a smaller number of them have the privilege of one day per week out of work to attend the local college. What price the egalitarian principles of comprehensive education at this stage? A disproportionate number of middle class children enjoy five or six years' full-time education beyond the norm at a cost to the taxpayer of at least £5,000 per head. True they sacrifice five years' adolescent earning power but they

The most illiberal education is the one which makes a student mere fodder for the industrial machine; but the man most vulnerable to the industrial machine is the one who must enter it without knowing or understanding anything about it. To pretend that the real world of "muck and brass" does not exist is the worst disservice higher education can do a student. The most liberal education he can receive is one which enables him to make his way in employment without being its prisoner, which enables him to serve but also to change industry, which teaches him not merely how to use his leisure and live in spite of his work but how to make his work an integral part of his life. Our system of higher education fails dismally to provide such education. In its timidity and social conservatism it imposes continual pressure on students to conform and to surrender to social pressures. This is why students are in revolt—not because of the superficialities of institutional organisation or the inadequacies of teaching techniques but because of the basically restrictive conception of the education to which they are subjected.

ERIC ROBINSON: *The New Polytechnics*

gain in compensation a greatly increased earning power for the rest of their lives." Peter Marris, in *The Experience of Higher Education* found that "Most commonly they expect an income of about £2,000 a year (1962/3 figures) and, judged by the findings of a survey of Cambridge graduates only a few will be disappointed." The Bow Group estimates the cost of educating a B.Sc. in a university to be £6,000 and a Ph.D. £16,000 and Alan Day concluded recently in the *Observer* that "all the calculations suggest that the private rate of return to the individual from higher education is considerably higher than the social rate of return". Ninety per cent of British students have grants from local authorities (who have reacted quickly to student rebels by threatening to withdraw their grants). The young in general may be an exploited minority, but university students are a privileged elite. Their social importance was best expressed by John Vane in ANARCHY 89: "Socialists of all kinds have stressed the importance of the deserters from the middle class, especially the intellectuals, and especially the young. Students are precisely young middle-class intellectuals (whatever their origin and whatever their intelligence), and they are at a particular stage in their lives when they are temporarily taken out of contact with the economic realities of their position, and at the same time brought into contact with the theoretical implications of it. Which group is more likely to desert the middle-class, and which group is more able to do so—though only temporarily in most cases? Not that 'the students' as a class will rebel—most students are 'overwhelmingly and irredeemably bourgeois', as Liz Smith put it in ANARCHY 82, and their class function is to become the brain workers of the authoritarian, managerial society (whether officially capitalist or communist) which supports them for a few years and which they support for the rest of their lives. But the students who *do* rebel are among the most significant students and also among the most significant rebels, so they are doubly important."

IT STARTED AT BERKELEY

THE STUDENT REVOLT of the giant University of California at Berkeley, began in September 1964 when the university Dean issued an order forbidding campus political organisations to engage in off-campus political and social action. It was directed at student participation in the Civil Rights Movement. When the students defied the order the university called in the police to beat them up and arrest them. This in turn led to a battle between the students and the administration which called into question the whole purpose of the "multi-versity"—the giant education plant mass-producing quiescent conforming graduates for the upper layers of the managerial society.

There had already been rumblings of protest at the way the American university machine was operating (see, for example, Maurine Blanck's article "Benevolent Bureaucracy" in ANARCHY 17 of February 1963), and in an influential book *The Community of Scholars* (see ANARCHY 24), Paul Goodman examined the way in which the univer-

sities had become subservient to the "organised system" and proposed as an alternative, secession. Since the significant reforms needed in the universities are the very ones which administration must resist, since they curtail administration's reason for being and jeopardise its security ("reforms toward freedom, commitment, criticism and inevitable social conflict, endanger the Image"), why not go right outside the present collegiate framework? Secession—the historical remedy of bands of scholars seceding and setting up where they can teach and learn on their own simple conditions, was, he claimed, difficult but not impracticable, and "if it could succeed in a dozen cases—proving that there is a viable social alternative to what we have—the entire system would experience a profound and salutary jolt". Pointing out the relevance of Goodman's continual search for something that can be done *now*, Theodore Roszak remarked recently in *The Nation* that "The defection has since taken place, spilling over into the many 'free universities' that are springing up, and Goodman was on hand at one of the best of them, San Francisco State's 'Experimental College', to offer a year of his time in residence." The first of these free universities sprang up in the Berkeley strike. "Before they beat and dragged us out," a student wrote to us at the time, "we constructed a community. We founded the Free University of California and held fifty classes in Sproul Hall. Graduate students taught in the stairwells. . . . We set up a kitchen and a first aid station. Blankets were distributed. We governed ourselves. Peace and order prevailed, although we were exhausted and attack by the police was imminent. In evolving a community, in confronting the latent totalitarianism of the larger liberal society and coming to a better understanding of our place in the world, we emerged healthier people, with a brightness that will show. . . ." The same story has been told since time and time again in many colleges, for the Berkeley revolt had an immense influence in America, where there is hardly a college which has not been touched by it, as the general political situation, with the escalation of the war and of racial discontent, grows more tense and divides American life more and more fundamentally.

SITUATIONISTS AT STRASBOURG

IN NOVEMBER 1966, says the Situationist International pamphlet *Ten Days That Shook The University*, Strasbourg University was "the scene of a preliminary skirmish between modern capitalism and the new revolutionary forces which it is beginning to engender. For the first time, a few students abandoned pseudo-revolt and found their way to a coherent radical activity of a kind which has everywhere been repressed by reformism. This small group got itself elected, amidst the apathy of Strasbourg's 16,000 students, to the committee of the left-wing students' union. Once in this position of power, they began to put union funds to good use. They founded a Society for the Rehabilitation of Karl Marx (*sic*) and Ravachol. They plastered the walls of the city with a Marxist comic-strip, "The Return of the Durutti Column". They

proclaimed their intention to dissolve the union once and for all. Worst of all, they enlisted the aid of the notorious Situationist International, and ran off ten thousand copies of a lengthy pamphlet with poured shit on student life and loves (and a few other things). When this was handed out at the official ceremony marking the beginning of the academic year, only de Gaulle was unaffected. The press—local, national and international—had a field-day. It took three weeks for the local Party of Order—from right-wing students to the official left, via Alsatian mill-owners—to eject these fanatics. The union was closed by a court order on the 14th of December. The judge's summing-up was disarmingly lucid: "The accused have never denied the charge of misusing the funds of the students' union. Indeed they openly admit to having made the union pay some £500 for the printing and distribution of 10,000 pamphlets, not to mention the cost of other literature inspired by Internationale Situationiste. These publications express ideas and aspirations which, to put it mildly, have nothing to do with the aims of a student union. One has only to read what the accused have written, for it to be obvious that these five students, scarcely more than adolescents, lacking all experience of real life, their minds confused by ill-digested philosophical, social, political and economic theories, and perplexed by the drab monotony of their everyday life, make the empty, arrogant and pathetic claim to pass definitive judgements, sinking to outright abuse, on their fellow-students, their teachers, God, religion, the clergy, the governments and political systems of the whole world. Rejecting all morality and restraint, these cynics do not hesitate to commend theft, the destruction of scholarship, the abolition of work, total subversion and a world-wide proletarian revolution with unlicensed pleasure as its only goal. In view of basically anarchist character, these theories and propaganda are eminently noxious. Their wide diffusion in both student circles and among the general public, by the local, national and foreign press, are a threat to the morality, the studies, the reputation and thus the very future of the students of the University of Strasbourg."

SDS IN BERLIN

THE CAMPUS STRUGGLE IN BERLIN (writes Neal Ascherson), "flamed up in 1965. By the first months of the following year, it had produced collision with the university authorities, non-violent action, and the first demands for student power. As the city authorities used the police to back the Rector, the SDS (Socialist Student League) argument that bourgeois society must be knocked out before democracy could be brought to the universities gained persuasiveness. By late 1966, the student unions were claiming the right to call and plan political actions. The riot against the Shah of Persia in June 1967 spread the rebellion across West Germany; sixth-formers also began to accept the doctrines of the SDS. Police repression kept the temperature rising until the Easter shots at Rudi Dutschke produced a full-scale explosion. Mar-

ginal signs of interest from the extremely conservative working class are now appearing in Frankfurt and Berlin. The 'Provo' episode in Amsterdam, between 1966 and 1967, offered alluring examples of practical anarchism (like the white bicycles which anybody could take and ride). Meanwhile the Italian universities were approaching their own crisis, which burst this April with occupation of the faculties in Rome, and student rebellions in at least seven other cities. . . .

"It was the Berlin student leader Rudi Dutschke who led an SDS mission to Prague in March, to exchange 'lessons won in the struggle' with Czech students. The SDS fears that the Czechs, having overthrown Stalinism, will 'merely turn it into a formally democratic Parliament on Western lines: the bureaucracy will use democratisation to preserve itself and give only a fraction of its power over to the producers'. The Prague students actually did set up spontaneous councils."

In May and June this year the student revolt spread to the other German cities, to Belgrade, Madrid, Vienna, Zurich, Istanbul. . . .

THE NEW PARIS COMMUNE

OBVIOUSLY ITS MOST SIGNIFICANT and far reaching manifestation was in Paris, discussed in ANARCHY 89 (*The May Days in France*) and in the admirable Solidarity pamphlet *Paris May 1968* from which these extracts express both the flavour and meaning of the rebellion:

"As I left Censier I could not help thinking how the place epitomized the crisis of modern bureaucratic capitalism. Censier is no educational slum. It is an ultra-modern building, one of the show-pieces of Gaullist 'grandeur'. It has closed-circuit television in the lecture theatres, modern plumbing, and slot machines distributing 24 different kinds of food—in sterilised containers—and 10 different kinds of drinks. Over 90 per cent of the students there are of petit bourgeois or bourgeois backgrounds. Yet such is their rejection of the society that nurtured them that they were working duplicators 24 hours a day, turning out a flood of revolutionary literature of a kind no modern city has ever had pushed into it before. This kind of activity had transformed these students and had contributed to transforming the environment around them. . . .

"Under the influence of the revolutionary students, thousands began to query the whole principle of hierarchy. The students had questioned it where it seemed the most 'natural': in the realms of teaching and knowledge. They proclaimed that democratic self-management was possible—and to prove it began to practice it themselves. They denounced the monopoly of information and produced millions of leaflets to break it. They attacked some of the main pillars of contemporary 'civilisation': the barriers between manual workers and intellectuals, the consumer society, the 'sanctity' of the university and of other founts of capitalist culture and wisdom.

"Within a matter of days the tremendous creative potentialities of the people suddenly erupted. The boldest and most realistic ideas—

and they are usually the same—were advocated, argued, applied. Language, rendered stale by decades of mumbo-jumbo, eviscerated by those who manipulated it for advertising purposes, suddenly reappeared as something new and fresh. People reappropriated it in all its fullness. Magnificently apposite and poetic slogans emerged from the anonymous crowd. Children explained to their elders what the functions of education should be. The educators were educated. Within a few days, young people of 20 attained a level of understanding and a political and tactical sense which many who had been in the revolutionary movement for 30 years or more were still sadly lacking."

The Sorbonne is such a council today, a roaring mass of spontaneous student committees and assemblies running their own revolution. Already the secondary network of workers' councils is springing up across Paris. In Berlin, the Technical University, after Easter, housed the "Committee of Workers, Schoolchildren and Students", and here too, the net of "Basis-gruppen" has spread across the city. Even in the University of Essex, students occupying the campus want a mass body of the whole student population to take over responsibility. Such "councils" mushroom in most revolutions: the Paris Commune, the Soviets of the Russian Revolution, the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils of the 1918 Revolution in Germany, in the Spanish Civil War, even in the Hungarian uprising of 1956. As Hannah Arendt has written, "Wherever such councils appear, the entire party bureaucracy from extreme Left to extreme Right treats them with the utmost hostility . . . but even more typical is the strangely persistent way in which the people proposes them when it actually gets round to raising its voice."

NEAL ASCHERSON (*The Observer*, 19.5.68)

From Brussels (*The Guardian* reported on May 24th), "A committee of 40 students and teaching staff took over the management of Brussels University and eliminated the old academic council from the scene in a non-violent coup d'état. A banner nailed to the front of the university's main building proclaimed: 'This university is open to the entire population.' The invitation was taken literally by passers-by, some of them with children, who slipped inside to listen to non-stop speeches by students in the main hall. Red and black flags (red for revolution and black for freedom, as one student explained) were fixed to the statue of Theodore Verhaegen." Six days later it was reported that "The authorities at Brussels University have given in to student pressure and decided to include students and workers in a democratically elected body in the hope that this will end the occupation of the building. . . . When a group of 500 out of a total of 10,000 took over

power last week it did so in protest against 'an obscurantist oligarchy' which refused any form of democratic consultation whether on administrative or scientific policy. They demanded student representation on faculty bodies which set the curriculum and this too has now been accepted by the council. However the hard core militants, now in possession of the main building were not expected to give up their strategic position merely on the basis of this reform programme."

SDS in New York

AN EXCHANGE ON COLUMBIA

AN OPEN LETTER TO DWIGHT MACDONALD

Dear Dwight,

Thank you for your letter asking me to contribute to the SDS. My instinctive sympathies tend to be on the side of protestors, demonstrators, and dissenters. They are the yeast of society. (For eight years I have been working for Amnesty International, and our group has secured the release of political prisoners in many parts of the world; this again would put me on the side of people, like the SDS students at Columbia, who are asking for amnesty.)

But I fear I can have little sympathy with the leaders of the recent demonstrations who, impatient with slower and more boring methods of (as you put it) "shoving society", decided to resort to violence. I could go on ad nauseam explaining the events of the past months at Columbia that have led me to this conclusion. But I think it is all epitomized in a recent news story that you must have read: during one of the "liberations" of Hamilton Hall the results of a decade of historical research (on the French Revolution, as it happens) by Professor Orest Ranum were deliberately destroyed by demonstrators who regarded him as antagonistic to their cause.

Please try to imagine what you would feel if one of your masterpieces, on which you had spent ten years of work, were to be destroyed by people because they happened to disagree with your political or other views. And let me add that it could easily happen. If you justify violence of this kind, there is no guarantee that it will be practised exclusively by people on your side of the fence. Intellectuals, especially those of the Left (Old and New), will be the natural underdogs in the United States if violence is ever allowed to take over. Surely they should be the last people to condone it now.

Columbia University

IVAN MORRIS

Dwight Macdonald replies:

I'm grateful to Ivan Morris for an opportunity to explain why I concluded, after visiting the campus to see for myself, that the Columbia

student strike was a beneficial disturbance. My fund-raising letter for the New York chapter of SDS which stimulated his Open Letter to me was undertaken mostly because I admired the Columbia SDS for the spirit and the courage with which they gave the initial stimulus to the strike. (The amount needed has now been raised, I'm glad to report, and the new SDS headquarters are a reality.)

But first let me deal with Professor Morris's specific accusations—or, more accurately, assumptions. He accuses "the leaders of the demonstrations" of a "resort to violence", including arson, and me of justifying "violence of this kind". But so far as I saw in my five visits over six weeks to the campus, or read in the not overly sympathetic (to the strikers) *New York Times*, there was remarkably little violence: scuffles between "jocks" and strike sympathizers around Low Memorial (black eyes, bloody noses total damages, and the jocks weren't exactly pacifists), vulgar taunting of the police and some throwing of pop bottles at them when they invaded the campus those two frightening nights—I deplore the taunts and the missiles but much more so the invasion—and minimum resistance when the police cleared the occupied buildings, unless Professor Morris considers, as the cops do, that going limp and refusing to move when ordered by a policeman are categories of "violence". No, that commodity was monopolized by New York's Finest, as they used to be called, and they used it freely, sending a Dean and a University Chaplain to the hospital along with many students and some faculty members. Or perhaps by "violence", he means the immobilization of Dean Coleman in his office? I don't justify that—I'm even against restricting the freedom of movement of Dow recruiters, or, indeed, anybody, but it seems not a crucial charge: the Dean could have freed himself by a phone call to the campus cops; that he didn't was a tactical decision; he and his three fellow immobilizers were not threatened, were well fed and treated by their own account, and they emerged from their ordeal unruffled, unstruck, and unindignant; anticlimax.

Or by "violence" does Professor Morris mean the occupation of the buildings (which I do justify)? If so, he confuses illegality with violence. I oppose the latter, on tactical as well as principled grounds, and I've criticized in my *Esquire* column the romantic exhortations of certain New Left and Black Power leaders for a scorched-earth violentist policy aimed at bringing on a "revolutionary" catastrophe. I can see a catastrophe resulting from such tactics, but it will be a counter-revolutionary one. In the last year, however, as a founder of Resist and a Vietnam tax refuser, I've lost some of my bourgeois inhibitions about illegality. In certain circumstances—as when an Administration, of a nation or a university, chronically ignores lawful protests against its destructive policies—it seems to me more moral to break a law with Dr. Spock than to obey it with President Johnson, or President Kirk. (This is also, by the way, a bourgeois reaction.)

As for the burning of Professor Ranum's manuscripts, must I explain to my old friendly acquaintance Ivan Morris that I think it base and disgusting, and that far from "justifying" it, I should have had

nothing to do with a group that used or tolerated such acts. But how does he link that act with my letter, which was written a week before it happened, or, more important, with the demonstrators he assumes were responsible for it? Is he not aware that the fire broke out after all the demonstrators had been removed by the cops from Hamilton Hall and were safely on their way to jail? I don't know who set it—hope he is arrested and given the maximum—or the four or five other small, so to speak symbolic, quickly extinguished fires that broke out in other buildings around the same time that night. Perhaps some nut fanatics among the students, perhaps ditto from outside the campus, perhaps police provocateurs. The *Times* reported at least one police spy—disguised as a hippy—who was up to no good on the campus. There is also testimony from eyewitnesses who saw the police, at the time of the first “bus”, breaking up furniture and otherwise vandalizing the occupied buildings during or after the removal of the demonstrators—destructive acts which are often blamed on the students.

Whoever the arsonists, to assume, as Professor Morris does—also some others who have troubled to write me, usually *molto vivace* if not *agitando*, explaining just why they wouldn't be caught dead giving a nickel to SDS, really unusual to hear from people who *won't* contribute—as I was saying, whoever the arsonists, it seems to me absurd, logically, to assume they were encouraged by the strike leaders, SDS, or others (for there were others, one shouldn't forget). To believe this one must also believe they lacked all tactical sense, indeed all common sense. For one would not have to be a genius of manoeuvre to foresee that arson—and arson escalated to such vindictive meanness as burning the papers of a faculty member who had prominently opposed the strike, thus adding an instant solution to one detective problem: motive—that this was admirably calculated to alienate all the sympathizers so hardly won and patiently wooed. Fortunately, not many of us jumped to the soggy conclusion Ivan Morris has bogged down in. In my case, leaving aside the fact that no evidence has yet been produced as to who did it, I cannot believe that the student leaders who for six weeks out-manoeuvred President Kirk—perhaps no great feat—and, more impressive, accumulated increasing support on the campus until the original “tiny minority” had won the sympathy of the majority of Columbia undergraduates for its six demands, I cannot believe that such leaders could have calculated that burning Professor Ranum's papers would help their cause. And if it is argued that the atmosphere of “violence” and illegality, no quotes, created by the strike leaders may have stimulated some of their less stable followers to set the fires, I would have to agree, adding that such are the risks of any rebellious effort to shatter an undesirable *status quo*, and the question is are the probable gains greater than the probable risks? (Note that I have refrained, with some difficulty, from saying you can't make omelettes without breaking eggs. To think I should come to this in my sunset years!)

I've written so much that I haven't space for much detail on my own reasons for backing the strike. When I first read about it in the press, I was against it on general principles: I don't approve of “direct

action” that interferes with the freedom of others, nor could I see the justification for a minority occupying college buildings and closing down a great university—or even a small, mediocre university. That was in general. But, as has often happened in my life, the general yielded to the pressure of the particular. On Friday I went up to Columbia to see for myself. I was egged on by my wife, who was sympathetic to the strike, on *her* general principles, and stimulated by Fred Dupee who, when I phoned him to ask what in the world was going on, said: “You must come up right away, Dwight. It's a revolution! You may never get another chance to see one.” I came up and he was right. I've never been in or even near a revolution before; I guess I like them. There was an atmosphere of exhilaration, excitement—pleasant, friendly, almost joyous excitement. Neither then nor on any of my four later trips to the campus did I have any sense of that violence that Ivan Morris sees as a leading characteristic of the six weeks. Everybody was talking to everybody those days, one sign of a revolution; Hyde Parks suddenly materialized and as abruptly dispersed, all over the place; even the jocks were arguing. It was as if a Victorian heavy father had been removed from his family's bosom (or neck)—later I got a load of President Kirk on TV and I realized my simile was accurate—and the children were exulting in their freedom to figure out things for themselves. A fervid rationality was the note, a spirit of daring and experiment, the kind of expansive mood of liberation from an oppressive and, worse, boring tyranny that Stendhal describes in the Milanese populace after Napoleon's revolutionary army had driven out the Austrians. The SDS putsch became a revolution overnight: like the Milanese, the Columbians had realized with a start how dull and mediocre their existence had been under the Kirk Administration.

But what really changed my mind about the sit-ins was my own observation of two of the “communes” as the occupied buildings were ringingly called: Mathematics Hall, which I was let into—after a vote, everything was put to a vote in the communes—on Friday and Fayerweather Hall, into which I was allowed to climb—all access was by window—on the Monday afternoon before the Tuesday morning police raid. Mathematics was the Smolny Institute of the revolution, the ultra-Left SDS stronghold (said to have been liberated by a task force led by Tom Hayden in person) while Fayerweather was the Menshevik centre—the “Fayerweather Formula” was an attempt on Monday to reach a compromise with the Administration, but Dr. Kirk was as firmly opposed to it, doubtless on principle, as was Mark Rudd of the SDS. The two communes, nevertheless, seemed to me very much alike in their temper and their domestic arrangements. Rather to my surprise (as a reader of *The New York Times*), the atmosphere in both was calm, resolute, serious, and orderly; I saw no signs of vandalism, many efforts to keep the place clean and the communal life disciplined. I sat in on a meeting at Mathematics—the communes were forever having meetings, must have become as deadly as a non-stop political caucus, but at least it was, or seemed to be, participatory democracy—which discussed the tactics to be used if the jocks tried to put them out as against those

suitable for resisting the police. Everybody had his say as far as I could tell—had same impression at the Hamilton Hall sit-in before the second police raid—and the conclusion arrived at was sensible: resist the jocks because their armament was muscular only, hence the fighting would be on equal terms; don't resist the police because they had superior force—clubs, guns, tear gas—and also were trained in violence (this proved a true prophecy). One communard added that fighting was not the only possible strategy with the jocks; they could also be talked to, perhaps even persuaded because, unlike the cops, "they're like us"; I thought this a shrewd point. In general, what struck me about the two communes I visited was the resourcefulness and energy with which the students were meeting problems they had never had to think about before, such as getting in and distributing food supplies, arranging for medical first aid, drawing up rules for living together in an isolated society (for, as it turned out, six days) with some decorum and harmony, electing leaders, working out a line in democratic discussion that had to keep changing to meet the latest development in the complicated interaction between the white communards, the blacks in Hamilton Hall, the sympathisers and the opponents of the strike on the campus, the Administration, the Trustees, and the various faculty groups, plus the "community" in Harlem and in the immediate neighbourhood. My impression is that the communards met these problems rather well, showing that intellectuals can be practical when they have to be. Also that they got a lot of education, not paid for by their parents, out of those six days, and that so did the thousands of students who milled around on the campus arguing tirelessly the questions raised in the first place by the SDS zealots. I'm told that one of the jocks admitted, under pressure of debate, that while he still didn't think a Tiny Minority had any Right, etc., he had learned more in those six weeks than in four years of classes.

(*New York Review of Books*, 11.7.68.)

In British universities

LSE

IN BRITAIN THE FIRST STRAIGHT-UP FIGHT between the university authorities and the students came at the London School of Economics in March 1967. The sparking off issue was the suspension of two students for defying a ban on a meeting to protest at the appointment of a new Director, Dr. Walter Adams. It was followed by a sit-in strike for five days, a 'free university' and ultimate victory for the students. The story of the LSE struggle and its background and significance is excellently told in the pamphlet *LSE: What it is and how we fought it* (obtainable for 1s. 6d. from Alan Fowler, 42a Manor Road, London, N.16) but it

is worth quoting some comments by Ruth Cohen in *Student Resurgence* (2s. from 94 Priory Road, London, N.W.6), who asks, "How far did we achieve our objects—did we even know what our objects were—did we achieve anything? On the face of it we got the two suspended students off their suspensions and this would not have happened if we had not caused such a furore and if the threat of a resumed sit-in had not been hanging over the Court of Governors—whether the legal case had anything to do with it is unknown—I don't know how much the governors were even aware of it. Immediately after the decision of the Court we thought we had gained quite a lot—we thought we had shown that decisions could be questioned, authority could be made to change its mind. We thought that our experience would serve as a lesson especially to other colleges and that similar occurrences would not happen again. But it is incredible how wrong we were and how all colleges everywhere in this country are continuing their autocratic rule of master and servant and not acknowledging the rights of students to have a say in the ordering of their own lives. This is so at LSE as elsewhere, recent 'concessions' to student participation in college government are infinitesimal compared to what is needed—a real say and substantial representation rather than the odd one or two students slotted into inconsequential committees. What we achieved is what we ourselves learnt in those days—to question authority, to respect ourselves as intelligent thinking beings, not to accept all that comes our way with intense gratitude but rather to examine it and change it to be something worthwhile having, to alter the course of things for those following us so that all can reap the benefits which were once the lot of a tiny select band of students. This applies to far more than student life and everyone who was in any way connected with the events at LSE last year is a richer person for the experience and has enriched the community by it."

ESSEX

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX (to use Richard Boston's account of "The Essex Affair" in *New Society*), "On May 7th a lecture was to be given by Dr. Inch from Porton Down where chemical and biological weapons are manufactured. The lecture was interrupted by demonstrators and at one point Inch had a tin of mustard powder emptied over him with an accompanying cry of 'mustard gas'. Inch was unable to give his lecture and the disturbance reached such a point that the police were called in. To the protesting students the undoubted immorality of germ warfare probably seemed immeasurably worse than the immorality of preventing Inch from giving his lecture." After the suspension of three students without their having had an opportunity to put their case, make any kind of defence or call witnesses on their behalf, "what had started as an issue of the immorality of germ warfare, and had turned into an issue of free speech, now became an issue of natural justice. The students almost unanimously, with a large proportion of

the staff supporting them, took direct action; the normal functioning of the university quickly came to a halt, with mass meetings, boycott of lectures by staff and students, and the setting up of a free university. Thereby arose yet another issue, and one that quickly increased in importance—the structure of the university.

"Some members of staff and some students have been to the Anti-University of London and its ideas are clearly familiar at Essex, if yet only to a small minority. The victory of students and staff over Vice-Chancellor and Senate last week—they got their committees of enquiry and *de facto* reinstatement of the three students—is not just a step towards increased democratic participation in the running of the university. . . . In the last couple of weeks the whole university has put itself through a complete education in political theory and action. In the dialogue that developed in the huge general meetings and in private conversations at all levels and between every viewpoint, everyone—from the Vice-Chancellor down—learnt a great deal. There was a considerable air of *intellectual* excitement around the place and if the university can come out of this episode without bitterness it will have gained immeasurably. As Professor Peter Townsend commented, 'The last ten days have been the most rewarding of my whole university career.'"

SUSSEX STUDENTS AND US MILITARY RESEARCH

BOB OVERY DISCUSSED in *Peace News* (31.5.68) the document issued by Sussex students on US military research in their university:

Arising out of the incidents at the University of Sussex last February when red paint was thrown over a representative of the US embassy and two students were rusticated, the February 21 Committee of students at Sussex has produced what they call "A Fact Sheet On The Connections Between The University Of Sussex And The US And British Military-Industrial Complex".

Despite Marxist jargon and liberal quotations from Chairman Mao on Education, it is an impressive document. Lord Shawcross, Chancellor of the University, is shown by the Committee to be "a walking incarnation of the international military-industrial complex". His directorships of Shell (major interests in Indonesia) and AEI (contracts with US Defence Dept.); his chairmanship of the Friends of Atlantic Union; and his capacity as Special Adviser to the Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. of New York (which has interests in US Steel, DuPont, and General Motors) are listed.

The Morgan Group, together with the Rockefeller Group, is termed "the core of the US military-industrial complex" by the students. The University's top academic staff were entertained by the Rockefeller Foundation in Switzerland this March when they engaged in planning the University's long-term future. "The Rockefeller Foundation invests in English universities so that university vice-chancellors will make their universities in the image of the corporation," say the students.

"The rustication of two students for their opposition to the war in Vietnam was only a minor example of the objective influence of monopoly capital and imperialism at the University," states the February 21 Committee, which goes on to list the major companies working on defence contracts which have recruited at Sussex (Elliott-Automation, Decca Navigator Co. Ltd., Rolls Royce, AEI, and so on); the research contracts with the US military; and the low wages paid to university porters, cleaners and canteen-workers.

"The University is not, as they would like you to believe, an apolitical institution devoted to the pursuit of knowledge and truth for its own sake," they state:

"In 1967 the US army and air force purchased at least \$579,000 worth of research from British universities. The University of Sussex is one of 26 British universities involved in US Department of Defence research projects.

"In 1967 the US air force gave two new grants to the University worth £18,000. In 1967 the US army gave two grants to the University worth £5,000.

"In the past the University has conducted research to perfect the metal used in Polaris missiles. At present the University gets grants from the US military for research in pattern recognition which is of use in spying by computer—for example, in U2 planes and in spy ships like the *Pueblo*."

In conclusion, the Committee demands that "no university official be allowed to serve as the director of a corporation", that the university "sever immediately all its connections with the US military—this means cancelling all contracts and withdrawing from all grants", and that they sever connections with foundations like Ford and Rockefeller "which are endowed by the military-industrial complex". In addition, they demand that recruitment on campus be forbidden to companies which work with the US military or South Africa, and that the wages of manual workers in the university be raised "to lessen the gap between the wages paid manual and intellectual workers".

HULL AND ELSEWHERE

AFTER A SIT-IN by 300 students on May 30th at Hull University, demands were put to the Senate, supported by 23 members of staff from 10 departments, and when the students' time limit expired a five-day sit-in was staged in the administration block. Describing the lessons of the experience in *Tribune*, David Rubinstein writes, "The sit-in was marked by two critical meetings, the first as depressing as the second was exhilarating. On June 11th the Vice-Chancellor, Sir Brynmor Jones, met about 350 members of the lecturing and administrative staff. Professors, who are members of Senate, were excluded. Even without them, however, the lecturers demonstrated that—while they have a number of demands of their own—they were in strong opposition to the demands of the students. The handful of staff who declared their

support for the students were virtually howled down, and support for the Vice-Chancellor verged on sycophancy. The exhilarating occasion followed the next day, when the students' union met again. In sharp contrast to staff meetings it was orderly and tolerant of diverging opinions. The Vice-Chancellor was allowed to speak, and was then questioned. His replies differed significantly in their emphasis from what he had told the staff the previous night, and it seemed clear that he was driven to make concessions greater than he had intended. . . .

"Those who have witnessed or taken part in the Hull revolt have learned a great deal. We have been privileged to see mass meetings and continual discussion of the form and content of university education, and of the nature of democracy itself. . . . Many of us have complained that students seemed concerned only with a degree and a job; that university life as such has little hold on their imagination. This generation of Hull students has had the opportunity to take part in events which may well be the most valuable part of their university lives."

On June 17th Hull University Senate accepted the recommendation from the senate-students' committee and is setting up a series of staff-student committees at departmental, faculty and senate levels.

At Bristol University, following the initiation of a 'free university' and the occupation of the students' union (which was normally closed down at 10.30 each night, and had a secretary appointed by the university) motions were approved demanding student control of the union; participation in the running of the university; and the sharing of the university buildings with the rest of Bristol. "The university has made this building into an élite place for students, but we want everybody to be able to use it," said one student, and another said that they wanted to break down the present hierarchy in the city between university, art college and technical college. "Demands have also been received from aircraft workers and dockers for the students to run a session in the evening. We feel that it is important that education should be open to everyone."

At the University of Kent students threatened to strike over the withholding of degrees for non-academic reasons. An emergency meeting of the Senate made a conciliatory offer and the students' union hailed this as a victory and started drawing up proposals for more wide-reaching reforms.

About 300 Leeds University students staged a sit-in on June 25th in protest at inquiries made by the university's security staff into political affiliations of members following the incident involving a visit from a Conservative M.P.

The registrar's building at Keele University was taken over by about 100 students on June 18th as the first step in their direct action campaign to gain a bigger say in university affairs. The Keele University Lecturers Association resolved that the student body should be represented on the Senate and on university committees.

At a teach-in on "militancy or negotiation" at Newcastle University on June 20th, Dr. Henry Miller, dean of medicine and Vice-Chancellor-elect, declared that militancy was justified in that it got things done. "It is natural for students to be concerned about Vietnam and biological warfare which I think is a very dubious employment for medical personnel, but the two strands of militancy—internal and external—should be untangled." He said he would be glad to see examinations disappear altogether from medical degree courses.

Even at Oxbridge there were stirrings. At Oxford on June 3rd members of the Committee of 90 occupied the archway of the Clarendon Building until the proctors agreed to withdraw two regulations restricting the distribution of leaflets, and subsequent meetings planned a cam-

Keble College, Oxford, were "head of the river" once again in Eights Week this year, and, naturally, this achievement was celebrated with a magnificent "bump supper". A notice duly appeared in a dark corner of the notice board, asking all those who did not wish to "host the boat club" (that is, join in, and pay for the feast) to sign their names. To the Keble boat club's astonishment more than 150 people (that is half the college) "signed out".

Nevertheless the supper, attended mostly by freshmen who may not have known what they were in for, went ahead. A great deal of alcohol was consumed in the build-up to the high spot of the evening—the burning of the boat. The boat which is burned is a fine piece of craftsmanship, valued at £600. And the blaze is, by all accounts, much bigger and better if the fuel is supplemented by chairs, tables, notice-boards, lavatory-seats (of course), draining boards, and any odd articles of clothing or (especially) books found "lying around". To this end the gay young boatmen of Keble set out on a hectic hunt of college rooms, from which they seized and burnt anything inflammable which came to hand. By curious coincidence not one of the rooms broken into belonged to a bump supperer. The hunt was on, as one young blade asserted, for "long-haired poofies and lefty weirdies" and in the course of it several injuries including a broken nose and several facial burns were sustained by sundry pinkoes.

The bill for damages is estimated as the same as last year—£1,000—which will be shared by those who attended the supper. The £600 for the burnt boat, however, will be paid for by the entire college.

This nasty episode of student violence was not, surprise surprise, reported in the public prints.

—*Private Eye*, 21.6.68

paign of attack on authoritarian discipline and lack of student participation in deciding what they should learn and who should teach them. *The Guardian* reported that "After more than a decade of fruitless struggle, student militancy achieved its first breakthrough when the university announced a 'thorough and wide ranging' investigation into staff-student relations. . . . For Oxford, with its tradition of benevolent paternalism, to reopen these issues in the face of student pressure is unprecedented. Even more remarkably, it was stimulated not by protest marches, sit-ins or riots but by the drafting of a legal document—the petition to the Privy Council—which may now be shelved until the petitioners see how much of a revolution their quietness has achieved." You don't have to be very cynical to see it as simply a stalling operation.

At Cambridge, where the installation of the Chancellor on June 6th was interrupted by shouts of "Let students elect the Chancellor. Let's have real democracy," Sir Eric Ashby, the Vice-Chancellor announced the formation of a consultative committee of dons and undergraduates saying, "There is at present no pressure from students for participation in the university's affairs so we are getting in first." A statement greeted with derision by undergraduates citing the ways in which this pressure has been resisted. An organisation called "The Free University" which is "an amalgamation of a large number of groups who are coming together because they feel they have a great deal in common, extending from anarchists to communists with everything in between" presented nine demands to the Vice-Chancellor on June 8th for "the complete democratisation of the university".

Students confer

THE VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY of student militants from other countries, and their meeting at the London School of Economics on May 13th was followed by the foundation meeting of the Revolutionary Socialist Students' Federation, also at LSE, on May 14th and 15th. The following account of these conferences from an anarchist point of view was written by "Digger" for FREEDOM (22 and 29.6.68).

LESSONS FROM ABROAD

It seemed to me the British students did not understand and draw lessons from the experiences and ideas put across to them. In contrast to the sophisticated level of arguments put across by the German SDS, the French 22nd March and Italian student movement groups, the British students' reactions seemed factional and naive. However, this is probably unjust, because people speaking were obviously theoreticians of fairly high standing within their own movements.

The foreign students attempted not only to give an account of what has occurred in their own movements, but also to create an idea of

the way they thought student movements in particular and revolutionary movements generally should carry out activities.

Perhaps the most explicit of these was Krippendorf of the German SDS who emphasised certain problems existing in all revolutionary organisations which had to a large degree been ignored by the British student movement. The two main dangers, as far as he could see, were the personalisation of conflicts and the bourgeois attempt to fit their ideas of argument on you, i.e. the question of violence, blueprints for Utopia, etc.

The first question could only be dealt with by regular rotation of leadership. This served two functions, as well as avoiding the build-up of personality. It avoided the problem created by people being in the midst of activity continuously, having no time to stop and think and analyse the direction which their activity is taking. Secondly, the rotation of leadership destroys the myth that only personalities are involved and demonstrates fundamentally the broad base of the movement.

Lewis Cole, from the Columbia SDS (New York), made some very important points about the nature of activities and the selection of specific points of agitation or direct action which illustrate in microcosm the nature of society in general. He was referring to the recent revolt at Columbia University over the University's attempt to build on parkland in Harlem. This issue, because of the fantastically large-scale nature of Columbia University (they own large chunks of property all over New York), was seized upon and aroused the active interest not only of groups such as Black Power, but also the liberal elements in the University, and later the City itself.

The problem of violence and having no defined attitude to what happens when a University is occupied, was dealt with by Cohn-Bendit. He pointed out the dangers implicit in continuous street-fighting which sometimes cannot be avoided; the violence became a reason in itself and assumed paramount importance in the struggle. He doubted that given the peculiar conditions of France, and particularly of the Sorbonne, the attitude of the Paris students could have been anything other than it was; but this is not to say that other student movements could not learn from these dangers.

These points were brought out by the Italian comrades as well. One had the uncomfortable impression that the students from Czechoslovakia had either one eye over their shoulder or one eye on the main chance. It was interesting in a way that these students (who had in fact revolted in the most difficult circumstances of all) were the most interested in affecting the attitude of a party. In the case of the Yugoslav girl, it seemed that Tito could do no wrong; a disappointing analysis from somebody representing the Yugoslav movement, but then, of course, we cannot determine how these students were picked.

During the discussion, some of the external students, taking their final sociology examination, came to appeal for support on the issue of the re-sitting of the examinations (University authorities alleged an examination paper leak, and ordered a re-sitting). The foreign students

quite rightly did not want to comment on this, as it was an internal British matter; however, Krippendorf was prevailed upon to give an opinion. It was interesting to see reactions to what he said. He thought it highly irresponsible for someone to come into a hall with no planned action and only a vague assessment of the situation, and ask for mass action from a meeting of 800.

The difference in methods between the Continental students and the British was very apparent; although the British students supported in theory Krippendorf's ideas that small planning groups should come out with a concrete plan and present it basically for modification, they simply did not appear to carry it out.

However, it did seem in the two days following, that the lesson (although not acted upon) was beginning to be learned, and the methods of discussion, it was realised, would have to be radically changed if the revolutionary student movement was to become a reality and not a paper organisation.

It was a unique occasion and like many anarchists, I was grateful to be there. However, it was not a case of listening to a rally or a political platform, but in a real sense the meeting was a dialogue which the whole libertarian movement must not only listen to but act upon.

Our movement is now wielding an influence out of proportion to its size, within the student movement; that is not surprising, as we have a valid contribution to make to it. But I feel that if the libertarian students take the ideas so clearly expressed at this meeting and act upon them, encouraging others to do the same, the result will create a really healthy student movement devoid of factionalism.

ANARCHISTS AND THE RSSF

FOR A LONG TIME within the libertarian movements there has been a tendency to simplify the ideas that we project, such as workers' control and federalism. This was natural as mostly our role has been to be active in the movements of protest and direct action such as CND and C of 100.

We evolved, together with other groups during that period, a method and critique of direct action and of protest in relation to government, bureaucracy and capitalism that was general and related to the social structure of Britain as a whole. Events have now taken us well beyond this point. The active occupation of the universities and art colleges has produced another problem of altogether different though related dimensions.

At the LSE on Friday and Saturday, May 14th and 15th, there was a founding conference of the Revolutionary Social Students' Fédération. The conference was well attended by many universities and political factions within those universities. However reluctantly, they came together because of the pressing need to exchange experiences and ideas on a level that has never occurred before within the British university system.

The demand of the students was two-fold. They were as deter-

mined as the Continental students that their struggle should take place in the broader issues of society as well as within their own universities and they were worried about their own and the traditional Left's inability to answer the problems of organisation within the revolutionary movement. We must not think that we can absolve ourselves with a smile on the comment "traditional left". We may have answers and points that can assist the students in their struggle against authority but we will be no better than any others, if we do not participate in that struggle and show what we mean through struggle and by assistance, than any party who condemns them or cannot understand them.

The second day's discussion on the political programme and the organisation of the RSSF was very interesting, although somewhat disappointing. The four political points were accepted with reservations by most of the people. They were related to the advocacy of student power and workers' power and the fight against the forms of society that exist today. The third point about the support of National Liberation movements was not really accepted by the bulk of anarchists present but they felt that the wording was such that it did not commit them to unequivocal support of the NLF or any such body so, rather than leave an organisation that was fundamentally about their own fight and ideas within the university, they would stay inside the organisation and continue to express their view.

There were a number of points about the methods of organisation adopted that will, however, continue to bug the RSSF unless it sorts the problem out in its October conference. Although it created a single membership organisation, it created a totally federal and local system of delegates and although it conceived of itself as an agitational group, its organisation was based on institutions and isolated areas which often have little contact with each other. This is not to say that these aims are incompatible but they can cause a great deal of misunderstanding and trouble when the time comes for co-ordinating some activity or methods which one group basically will not want. The trouble lies, I think, in the emotive hangover for Bolshevik types of organisation amongst the Marxist and Libertarian Marxist Groups. A form of organisation which they reject in horror when they see it in front of their eyes as they do in the SLL and Healeyite YSL. The role of the anarchist and libertarian students is to point out this problem and draw the obvious general lessons from it. These lessons can be applied.

On the level of the actual conduct of each institution or university, the Leicester group threw up some very interesting ideas. They were very close to the idea of the discussion and agitation groups of the German SDS; however, they preferred to call them cadres with the somewhat authoritarian other-directed overtones which was in fact totally absent from their recommendations. They called for each group to set up agitational groups which not only extended their activities into other colleges but also into other day release courses and sixth form students. The main difference between their ideas and most other similar ideas was the manner in which they presented them and the close reasoning that showed they had taken their own advice to heart. The document

was presented by a composite group of Marxists and Anarchists.

Of course the whole conference wasn't all commonsense; there were a lot of people trying to push their own "line" and others still attempting to expose the Labour Party . . . an impossible feat to get any further with this one, unless they are suggesting public disembowelling of the Cabinet. The interesting thing was these speeches were listened to and dismissed in the minds of most people present without the usual hysterical faction fighting which often takes place in these circumstances. The mood was tolerant but they were not deceived—they knew who the enemy was and they weren't working within them.

This conference, more for its attitudes than its decision, was a great advance on any previous attempts at student unity. It had been a long time coming. I think that it is essential for any anarchist student to join it and work within it. There may be places where that will be impossible but I don't think that there will be many. The Marxists who are active and tend towards libertarian ideas can be even more affected if Anarchists and Libertarians work amongst them. But it is no use thinking that we have the answers because we do not have them any more than anyone else. The answers will come from out of the struggles.

The student situation is a complex and subtle one so we must take a few leaves from other books, from the SDS both in Germany and the US, and we have to understand this struggle not just in the isolated sector of education but in the larger scene of revolution. A revolutionary society will never be a monolithic one such as the Bolsheviks threw up, it will be pluralistic and decentralised. This is why we must work inside such organisations as they are based on the place of work and reflect the demand for such a society in their methods of organisation and the demands they make for their lives.

In the Art Colleges

THE HORNSEY COMMUNE

AT HORNSEY COLLEGE OF ART an ad hoc committee of about 50 students was formed on May 21st, and on May 28th 500 students took over the building, manning the telephone switchboard and the canteen and intending to sit in for 20 hours with a programme of seminars and discussions. The initial demand was for immediate control of their students' union and for control of its funds. One spokesman declared that night that "a state of anarchy exists until the governors have talks with us" and another pointed out that "we are the second largest art college in Britain and we must have the worst facilities of any college". (Hornsey's 900 students attend classes in five annexes scattered all over North London.) On May 29th Mr. Paul Hitchens, chairman of the Further Education Sub-Committee of Haringey Borough Council which controls Hornsey College, said, "We agree students have a case in

objecting. They have got a genuine grievance—there is no doubt of that." On the same day a statement read by the college Principal's secretary on his behalf maintained that he was still in control of the college, and that the demonstration had been taken in consultation with the local education authority and with the knowledge of the college administration. But a statement by the Student Action Committee declared that "It is not a question of improving communications within the existing system . . . it is a question of the structure itself". And they decided to continue their sit-in "until the educational system of the college is changed".

A number of members of the college staff declared their support for the students. "The frustration has been building up here for years," one of them said, and another declared, "A creative explosion is going on here. It's the greatest educational thing I've ever known. I have never worked so hard in my life. The staff here have received as much education as their students." Mr. Tom Nairn, who teaches sociology at the college, writing in the *New Statesman* (7.6.68) described how "Under the leadership of the Students' Action Committee, all of whose meetings are public and can be interrupted by anybody from the student body, these serious rebels have enjoyed a ten-day-long surge of creativity unheard of in the annals of higher education. . . . In the astonishing torrent of duplicated memoranda signalling each phase of the revolt, one stands out clearly. Called Document No. 11, it has no less than 31 clauses and three lengthy appendices. So much for the inarticulacy of artists. It calls for a radical revision of the entire structure of art education, and notably for: the abolition of the present entrance requirements; the abolition of the present exit requirements (i.e. the examination system); and student control of whatever takes their place.

"Why did this superb happening happen here? In general terms, the Hornsey rebels confronted until 10 days ago a situation in which a wretched and anachronistic curriculum was mechanically imposed on them from above, with total disregard of their participation and even of their consent. However, this might be said of almost any institution of the Higher Learning. What was peculiar to Hornsey, perhaps, was a severe aggravation of the usual contradictions. This was partly a matter of the chaotic conditions of art education, and partly derived from Hornsey's resistance to being conscripted into one of the government's new polytechnics. In the campaign against the polytechnic the students first realised that it was possible to do something collectively. By challenging the structure of their sector in this remarkable way, they are of course implicitly challenging the overall character of higher education. And who can fail to see that the presiding values of this system are by and large those of the society outside? A society gets the educational system it needs to keep it going. Examinations and the authoritarian teacher-pupil relationship are not some kind of accident. This is the real 'political' significance of the Hornsey occupation and other similar events." And he concluded that "the real—and quite indestructible—achievement of the Hornsey coup is precisely this: every-

one knows that the clock can never really be turned back, to the remote era of 10 days ago. Even if the old system was reinstalled, it would never work in the same old way, in the light of the new consciousness which has been created. In this sense all revolutions of this order are permanent. For 10 days, a college has been transformed into a living organism of work and education, a small embryo of our future condition."

At a meeting of the staff on June 5th, a motion passed by 68 votes to 11 with 27 abstentions said, "All committees, councils, sub-committees and other bodies constituted before the students began their actions should be deemed by this meeting to be defunct." The chairman of the meeting said that the motion included the governors. With two abstentions more than half of the 300 staff pledged themselves in another motion: "We will actively work with the students in the construction of a system of courses which gives the students more choice of activities and assures them of their education."

HOW THE STUDENTS SAW IT

THE ATMOSPHERE OF HORNSEY in its "state of anarchy" and the attitude of the students were perhaps best conveyed in some interviews made by Tony Gould of the BBC for the programme "Rebels or Pace-Setters?" broadcast on June 12th:

Gould: At Hornsey College of Art in North London we found student power in action. The students have taken over control of the buildings and they're still there—some two weeks later. It all started with certain demands made by the Students' Union. They wanted a sabbatical year for their President, which is already the practice in many universities—they wanted control of union funds and representation on the Board of Governors. But these demands were soon submerged in a larger debate, about art education in general. The Students' Action Committee was formed with, at the beginning, some 30 to 50 members.

Student: The Students' Action Committee had originally planned just a 20-hour sit-in. And once it was realised that the aims we were after weren't going to be realised within 20 hours, it was immediately obvious that we had to stay in the building longer. Now this brought about quite a lot of interesting problems, inasmuch as if we were to stay there for a long time, we had to set up a bureaucracy to replace the bureaucracy that we'd already destroyed. And this was done very well—it was done purely spontaneously. We learned lessons gradually. On the first day we found that members of the press came in, walked round, and even though we were in control of the building, took pictures wherever they wanted. And this you know, distorted the facts, distorted our aims. The papers went out and thousands of people read them and they saw the wrong side, entirely the wrong side of what was going on in the college. So first of all it was necessary to set up a press department. This was set up and now everybody that comes into the building, who's a member of the press, has to be escorted. He's given

the leaflets, given all the documents, all the information, and then he's shown round by somebody who can tell him exactly what our aims are—what are our major difficulties. What could have been one of our major difficulties was the canteen. Since last Tuesday we've been working in the canteen more or less 24 hours a day, and this has been done purely spontaneously. I'd like to point out also that it's made a profit for one of the first times in a number of years. We send somebody—or we don't *send* somebody, sorry, somebody *goes*—this is one of the points I'd like to put across—that nobody really, ever since Tuesday, has been *told* to do anything, but they've done these things, because it's obviously been necessary. People go down, about four or five in the morning, to Covent Garden, buy the food that's necessary, and come back and then it's ready for the morning. But we've had a very good menu indeed over the last few days—much better than we ever had under the old administration. This is only a simple point, I know, but it just shows that if you have student participation in anything where the students are involved—you see, this is it. That a man who comes in to work at nine o'clock and goes home at six isn't really interested—isn't at all interested in the other people he's dealing with. It's not a personal problem, it's a job. Whereas when you have students participating in running a canteen, they know what the students want, they know what they want to give the students, and so everybody's a lot happier. I mean, this can go much further as far as representation goes generally on different boards within the college.

Gould: The Hornsey students are not so much protesting against their system as actively trying to present an alternative. But they do have several particular grievances. They're protesting against the authorities' policy of keeping different departments separate. They're protesting, not against specialisation as such, but against specialisation as the only available choice—they want a more flexible system. So far what have they achieved?

Student: We're trying to achieve and to formulate much more positive aims than any of the universities, as far as I can see, in this country, who have participated in this sort of action. For instance LSE had a three-day sit-in, or four-day sit-in, which got them absolutely nowhere—in fact they went on from a worse position than the one they were originally at, because they ended up fighting for the reinstatement of certain people in the college, and also fighting for the reinstatement of their grants. Now this was because they didn't go about it in a reasonable and logical and educational way. We have sat here since Tuesday and we have talked and discussed, and we've been intelligent. We've been reasonable, we've been logical, and we're coming up with definite conclusions, rather than just adopting a situation in which a power confrontation must come. We're trying to put off a power confrontation, we're trying to push this slowly into the background, so that we can pursue our educational aims.

Student: We're trying to do it so far—we've only gone ten days—with a series of study papers. The one we've got out so far concerns the GCE. We decided in a seminar, which lasted about 38 hours with

fluctuating numbers of people, that the GCE was useless. The sort of GCEs which are required to enter into an Art College for courses were irrelevant. Now it's all very well to say that, and say we're formulating our aims, but the important thing is that one has to follow this up with statistics and facts, and the first study paper which we got out is full of appendices of statistics and facts. I think this is very important—that we're not sitting around stating aims—we're actually doing study papers, which can be considered very seriously like the Summerson Council and Coldstream, to use for reformulating what they think entrance to our colleges should be.

Student: This is one of the troubles we've had right from the beginning—since Tuesday. That generally public opinion and opinion from the press has been that we're rebellious rather than constructive. We've taken over the building. This is terrible, they say, this is anti-establishment—it's something terrible you know—this isn't the sort of thing that young people should do. But what we're trying to say is that we're intelligent young people, not just young people and therefore there to be taught. The sooner the general public and the ratepayers realise that their money's being spent in the wrong manner, then they'll see that what we're doing is a good thing, and not a bad thing.

Student: Right from the word "go" we have said that this is not a party political movement in any way at all, and any representative from various political party bodies has been very politely told this, and told that if they're interested they may come and have a look and see what's going on, but they cannot expect us to have them use us as a platform, or that we'll in any way ally ourselves to them. Our interests are not party political in any way at all.

Student: It's just a question of re-structuring the whole of the administrative idea that forms an institution of this sort. You can't reform it—you can't make it work—it's just that the old system has got to be broken and thrown away completely before you can do it.

Gould: In a sense, what's happened at Hornsey is the Leicester situation in reverse. In Leicester, the Students' Union dominated the situation and was responsible for the agreement to end the sit-in. At Hornsey the Students' Union was disbanded soon after the sit-in began and the Students' Action Committee has been in control ever since. They claim the support, not only of the student body, but also of the majority of the staff. The question remains: How long can this abnormal situation last?

Student: I think, as we have formulated a lot of our aims, I think they will begin to be put into practice, and I think the whole power confrontation subject will change completely over the next few weeks. I don't think we'll be sitting in absolute control of this building in another year or six months. I don't think this is the question. I think the question is whether or not we can put about what we've decided in a reasonable manner, and get it to work within the college.

Student: And what is necessary if we are to have negotiations with the administration, is that they should actually come here and see this happening, which at the moment they're not doing.

OTHER ART COLLEGES JOIN

AT GUILDFORD COLLEGE OF ART, in Surrey, nearly 200 students out of a total of 270 voted on June 5th to disband their Student Union and reconstitute it as a Student Action Committee. They occupied the college refectory in a continuous discussion of the defects of their education. The Board of Governors issued an ultimatum and cut off the electricity and water supplies. When they threatened to close the college a Parents' Action Committee was formed in support of the students. The local authority installed security men employed by a firm called Interstate Security Services, but the security guards fraternised with the students and became converted to their point of view. On June 27th the security guards joined the sit-in. The Parents' Committee sought an injunction to prevent the governors from closing the school, and the governors then agreed to meet the students, but the school was declared to be closed on June 27th. By July 7th it was reported that "More than 30 members of staff signed a 'pact of solidarity' yesterday in support of nine of their colleagues who have been threatened with prosecution for trespassing on the school premises. The nine were served with High Court writs and were shown affidavits which said that they had been observed on the premises since the school was closed. Students had planned to leave the school last night if the governors agreed to reopen it on Monday morning and to hold talks with the National Union of Students under the arbitration of an official from the Department of Education and Science. But the unsuccessful attempt to evict the students on July 5th ended these hopes of a settlement." In the following days students were expecting the governors to begin legal action against them for trespass. This was promised in a letter to them also threatening that rebels would be barred readmittance when the school reopens, and reported to the education authority sponsoring them.

At Brighton College of Art on June 12th students put before the principal a demand for equal representation on the board of governors and on all boards of study. They asked that the structure of all courses be reconsidered by the new board and declared that the college should become a cultural centre, open to the public. The existing type of visual education, they said, is not relevant to the present requirements of society. On June 21st the students and staff were locked out of the college on instructions from the director of education, but it was reopened on June 25th after the governors had declared themselves in sympathy with the students' wish for effective representation and had agreed to begin discussions.

At Birmingham College of Art students held an all-night sit-in on June 11th and decided to boycott an internal history of art examination. Of 120 first-year students who should have sat for the exam on June 12th only 13 did, and of 110 second-year students only 15 sat for the exam.

At Croydon College of Art a six-day sit-in was held to discuss grievances. "Earlier about 350 students (from a college of 368 full-time

students) held a meeting which split almost half and half when asked to vote on whether to pursue the righting of purely domestic wrongs, or whether to concentrate on questions of 'national' art college reform."

At Liverpool College of Art, following the "open forums" of students and staff, it was announced on July 5th that changes which would form a permanent feature of college policy included the right of three students to sit as voters on the board of governors, the abolition of written examinations in liberal studies and the freedom of students to study whatever course they like in that particular curriculum.

On June 12th a meeting was called at the Royal College of Art (the aristocrat of art colleges, consisting of post-graduate students) and was attended by students of 14 colleges to call for a national conference on art education. A further meeting there on June 19th, attended by representatives from 33 colleges, set up a national staff-student Movement for Rethinking Art and Design Education. This new organisation with "no particular political affiliation" wants to democratise art education and end departmental divisions and hierarchical attitudes in the colleges; re-examine the function and practice of art and design education, and so on. On July 9th the National Conference for Rethinking Art and Design Education began at the Round House, Chalk Farm.

On July 4th security guards with dogs arrived at Hornsey College accompanied by the chairman of Haringey Education Committee who posted a notice to the effect that the college was closed and that "any persons remaining in or entering upon any of the buildings and premises of the college without the authority of the education committee or the governing body or of persons acting on their behalf will be trespassers and as such will be liable to proceedings". This move came when the students were due to discuss an 11-point "peace plan" drawn up by a steering committee and at which they were to have declared themselves

Suddenly, Authority is impressed with the need for changes in the teaching programmes of Britain's art colleges.

It is admitted that the system needs a jolt. The Education Ministry are sympathetic. At Hornsey College of Art a commission are to examine the whole set-up, administrative and academic.

Would the students and the staff at Hornsey have made their point, for themselves and everyone else, if they had respectfully presented a reasoned case?

Would they have made the impact that they have if they had not disrespectfully occupied the college for six weeks?

The honest answer is almost certainly No.

Once again it has been demonstrated that the way to get results is to be an infernal nuisance.

—The Sun, 10.7.68

prepared to concede everything they had won in the five-week sit-in in return for a promise that the Commission on Art Education would meet over the holiday. The Commission, comprising eight students, eight staff, two governors and two outside designers, was set up to find ways of improving art education.

The guards and their dogs made no attempt to stop people from entering the college, but electricity and water supplies were cut off. Members of staff who went to see the chief education officer to enquire the legal basis for the closure of the college were told that it had not been closed: it was merely that the end of term had been brought forward!

On the following day an exhibition opened at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, with the title "Hornsey Strikes Again" in which the students put their case visually against departmentalism and the examination system. At Hornsey the Council had called off its guard dogs, and on Monday, July 8th, six weeks after the sit-in had begun, the students withdrew from the college. The concessions granted by the authorities include setting up a commission of enquiry, the right of students to be present at governors' meetings, longer canteen hours, more equipment, and financial help. Thirty of the Hornsey students moved on to Guildford where the sit-in was still going on, declaring that "We are going to Guildford to support the students there as we feel we have not achieved what we set out to do".

ATTITUDES TO HORNSEY

THE GENERAL ATTITUDE of the Hornsey that emerges from Tony Gould's interviews is regarded by some as their strength, making their "revolution" more positive and constructive than any of the protest movements in the British universities. Other observers, however, see it as a weakness. The Hornsey students, for example, sent a letter asking for support to the students of the Carlisle College of Art and Design, but the union secretary there declared that "The students here wanted to know what the Hornsey people want. As soon as they found out that they have only brought up national issues to gain support for what is basically a domestic matter, they decided to have nothing to do with Hornsey."

Another kind of criticism of the Hornsey attitude was reported in *The Black Dwarf* in its account of the meeting on June 14th-15th at the London School of Economics, when the Revolutionary Socialist Student Federation was founded: "A remark by one speaker on Friday evening that student power was a bourgeois demand and devoid of revolutionary content evoked enthusiastic applause from a section of the audience. Speakers in this vein frequently took time off to discuss the 'tragedy of Hornsey', to criticise the Hornsey students for concentrating on purely internal demands and issues without broadening their resistance into one of general hostility to the capitalist system." The paper's own comment on this is "The tragedy of Hornsey, if there was one, was that

the model of seizure and defiance they exemplify did not spread to all the other six hundred higher education institutions in the country."

For as Keith Grant, a teacher at Hornsey put it, early in the rebellion, "The action of students and staff at Hornsey College of Art is appearing to me as a microcosm of the sort of action which could ensure in the future a total revolution in our society. As a member of staff more than sympathetic to the students' original cause I recognise that the events of the past 12 days have made the original demands trivial. Through systematic analysis and exhaustive seminars there is gradually emerging a vision of a structure of art education which will remain the inspiration and the goal of all fortunate enough to have been involved in the Hornsey experience. It is being openly questioned if Hornsey College of Art will ever be the same again. Certainly many of us wonder if the old administration could ever function normally in this newly created situation of promise and awareness. We fail to understand why any member of this college should have all through this time remained aloof from the most original mass dialogue on concepts of education and art education in particular ever to have occurred in an English further education establishment."

A MICROCOSM OF ANARCHY

THE STUDENTS' REVOLT has been a microcosm of anarchism in action: spontaneous, self-directed activity replacing the hierarchy of authority by a society of autonomous groups and individuals. Time and again the participants have declared that it has been the most important experience of their lives and that neither they nor their institutions will ever be the same again. This is the sense of liberation that comes from taking your own decisions and assuming your own responsibilities. It is an experience that we need to carry far beyond the privileged world of higher education, into the factory, the neighbourhood, the daily lives of ordinary people everywhere. This is what anarchism is about.

In my youth I toyed with anarchism and I understand very well the prevailing heady and contemptuous rejection of adult philosophies and compromises. But anarchism (i.e. total absence of government at the centre) presupposes human perfection: government is not needed because everyone is so well motivated that a harmonious society is involuntarily created. We are a long way from that happy state.

L. A. JACKSON (letter in *The Guardian*, 21.6.68)

Mr. Jackson suggests, in a thoughtful letter, that anarchism presupposes human perfection. This is not so. Anarchists are under no delusions about human nature. Indeed, it is because of the imperfection of man that they reject government. No man is perfect; no man is, therefore, fit to rule.

REV. ANDREW KING (letter in *The Guardian*, 27.6.68)

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