

independent socialist

The Anti-War Movement
Inside the Army 4
Hubert Kennedy
And Bobby's Haircut . 2
Memphis, Murder and
Meanyism 3
Third Camp Shakes
Europe East & West . .8

No. 5

June - July 1968

10 cents

France: Revolution from Below - Parliamentary Sellout from Above

What is going on in France is a revolution - without a revolutionary leadership.

Therefore the prospects for successful revolution in France are dim. But "nothing will ever be exactly the same" (to quote Premier Pompidou). And now there is the first possibility since the end of World War II for the rise of a new leadership on the left that might replace the discredited social-democrats and Communists.

General strike of 10 million workers - entrance into the mass struggle of poor peasant and farm-laborer strikers - red flags flying above occupied plants and factories: after a couple of decades of defeat and cynicism, the French working class re-emerges as an independent, aggressive force capable of bringing every institution in the country to its knees, as soon as it flexes its muscles.

We should like to hear now from all those pundits (old-liberal and new-left) who wrote off the working class as a social force echoing Herbert Marcuse - in particular, from the numerous French theoreticians of the new "managerial" and "technocratic" class that was going to make the revolution. . . No doubt they are now busy telling the working class to stop fighting.

FUSE AND POWDER

In the now classic pattern (France is the land of classic revolutionary patterns) the fuse is the struggle of the student movement. ("They are the fuse, we are the powder," said a French striker.) At first it was like the student demonstrations going on in half a dozen other European countries at the same time, directed against the same targets as at Berkeley or Columbia: authoritarian bureaucrats at the head of the university, negligent teachers, irrelevant courses, etc.. A vanguard takes action, the administration calls the cops (who act with the same brutality in international solidarity), masses of students join in, the goals escalate from university reform to societal reform.

"The university is a factory for turning out lackeys," cried the students at the University of Nanterre, following Daniel Cohn-Bendit - just as if they had gotten the mot d'ordre from Berkeley's FSM. (Probably not; these truths get reinvented as necessary.) After months of struggle, including against the Vietnam war, by a broad-based student movement (the "22nd of March" organization), the university is closed; the students, freed from studies, move on the Sorbonne, which next goes up in smoke. Street fighting - the brutality of the flics gains the students the sympathy even of sections of the middle class (90% of the students come from the middle class anyway). The Gaullist "lackey" in charge of the cops, Fouchet, got his training as Minister of Algerian Affairs, in-between he was Minister of Education. The picture is symmetrical.

Even though Pompidou promises all kinds of goodies to quiet the students, it is too little and too late: the working

class, much slower than students to take the flame but made of oak rather than tinder, now burst into the picture. The dream of students on six continents turns into a reality: the three trade-union federations call a one-day general strike in support of the student struggle. (Only the social-democrat-led Force Ouvriere refuses to support the demonstrations.)

The most massive demonstrations since the war take place in every big city. The students chant "Rome - Berlin - Warsaw - Paris" in international solidarity. In the next two days universities all over France are taken over; also high schools by high school students. At the Sorbonne, under banners like "It is forbidden to forbid!" the students discuss whether to reach the working class through the Communist-led CGT apparatus or by going directly to the rank and file - "even if we risk getting our heads cracked open by (Communist) party goons." On Wednesday, May 17, the first student-worker action committee goes into operation up north in Nantes.

The alliance of workers and students developed not only because the latter had fought - that was the fuse - but because, down below in the working class where the molecular movement takes place that is never reported by the press and always denied by the academic cretins, the workers were ready for a fight too: a fight to which their own leaders would never have led them. Wages are terrible. One quarter of the working class makes only \$120 a month; a half million are unemployed; housing is

(Continued on page 7)



THE LAST SUMMIT

The Hubert McKennedy Bag, Or: Why Bobby Took a Haircut

Advertising men long ago discovered that the way to sell competing products which were essentially identical was to emphasize minute and non-functional differences such as packaging. It is little wonder that techniques worked out by soap and deodorant hucksters would come to be essential weapons for America's political pitchmen. This is especially the case in the present contest for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. For the present at least, Johnson's withdrawal and the beginning of Vietnam negotiations have permitted basic issues which were beginning to be raised even in liberal circles to be blurred over by the candidates. Most important, many of the anti-war elements who were about to abandon the Democratic ship have decided to stay aboard, at least until after the conventions, and have given up demanding of the candidates that they stand for anything other than their own sweet or charming selves. In short, the center of the stage has been taken once again — hopefully temporarily — by the characteristic American liberal's quest for a Hero to save the country and its institutions.

THREE — IN — ONE IMAGE

With the pressure from the anti-war movement diminished, it is very easy indeed to understand why the three major contenders for the Democratic nomination are hard pressed to differentiate themselves. It is a simple fact that following Johnson's withdrawal and the beginning of the Paris talks, the so-called peace candidates McCarthy and Kennedy found themselves talking more and more like Johnson and his heir-designate Hubert Humphrey. With only marginal political differences between them, even the most sycophantic supporters of Hubert McKennedy find it impossible to delineate their particular hero's positions on the crucial issues of peace and black liberation.

The aspirants do have positions on the political issues of course and it is worth while noting them, for aside from their similarity to each other, they are all noteworthy for their conservatism even in the context of standard liberal politics. However, for each of them, in different ways, this conservatism is covered over by a generous helping of left-liberal rhetoric. Each calls for law and order, denounces riots and rioters while calling vaguely for justice and economic opportunity. All basically defend the structure and aims of American imperialism, but are lavish in their praise of Peace.

McCarthy's pose, directed to the students and liberal intellectuals, rather than to the "less educated and less intelligent" whose votes he enviously accuses Kennedy of appealing to, is that of a reincarnated Adlai Stevenson. Stevenson, a wind-bag whose vacuous rhetoric endeared

him to academicians and other liberals for whom the Word is all and the Deed merely an inconvenience dreamed up by the New Left, successfully covered over his rather conservative views from his admirers. Thus it didn't bother him or them that his 1952 running-mate was the racist Senator John Sparkman, or that Stevenson, as his latest admiring biographer admits, had little understanding or sympathy for the struggle against racism. No more, that is, that it disturbed most of McCarthy's admirers to have him play up to racist voters in Wisconsin. If it is true that McCarthy has made some caustic comments on Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam war — in contrast to Kennedy — it is also true that McCarthy has been careful to balance it out by calling for the strengthening of NATO. His recent indication that he would support Humphrey (quickly denied when his supporters panicked) gives an indication of the price McCarthy is asking for his honesty and integrity.

Kennedy's campaign is by far the most interesting and probably most important. Literally the day after Johnson dropped out, Kennedy moved visibly to the right, to occupy the ground vacated by Johnson's consensus strategy... especially to try to prevent Hubert Humphrey from claiming it entirely for his own. He cut his hair, dropped all references to the conduct of the Vietnamese war, to the negotiations, and the continued bombing — and became, or attempted to, the Responsible candidate. Shrewdly combining New Left phrases with right-wing programs, Kennedy now pronounces for "local" (i.e., mostly business) control over government programs. And lest he be accused of favoring Big Government, Kennedy offers a program for poverty, housing, health and welfare which would turn them over to private business with profits to be guaranteed by the Federal government. Ronald Reagan was quite right to complain that it sounded at times as if he, Reagan, were writing Kennedy's speeches.

PLASTIC MAN

The candidate with the biggest Image problem — but also with what appears to be the greatest organized support — is Hubert Humphrey. What differentiates Humphrey from McCarthy-Stevenson is that everyone, including Humphrey, KNOWS that he's a windbag. This weakness in Image is, however, compensated for by a highly developed talent for opportunism. As the Plastic Man of American liberalism he is busy playing the same game as his opponents: operating on both sides of the street — defending the KennedyJohnsonHumphrey record while discreetly trying to get away from its more unpleasant associations. With the support of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, of big business, and the racist Southern Democrats, Humphrey appears to have the best chance of getting the nomination.

In short, the old record is being played all over again — but with a difference. Large numbers of liberals have been jarred loose from the Democratic Party, and the Black Liberation movement cannot be detained within its confines. All three candidates have made it crystal clear that they are trying to recreate the phony consensus that once made up the Democratic Party, and to recapture the hundreds of thousands of anti-war and anti-racist Americans who threaten to break from the two-party system in disgust. To make sure they don't succeed, the case for independent politics, for uncompromising opposition to the Democratic Party, must be pressed again and again by those who would see a really new turn in American society. Today, there are organized efforts for building the Peace and Freedom Party in California, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, and in several other states: hopefully in the next few months these movements will succeed in creating a radical alternative in November.

independent socialist

Published by the Independent Socialist Clubs of America.

Editor: Kit Lyons. Editorial Board: Charles Capper, Hal Draper, Joel Geier, Joanne Landy, Arthur Lipow. Design: Lisa Lyons.

Box 910, Berkeley, California 94701. Subscriptions: \$1 a year for 10 issues, \$10 a year for bundles of 10 copies of each issue. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of Independent Socialist, which are expressed in editorials.



LABOR FROM THE BOTTOM UP

MEMPHIS, MURDER AND MEANYISM

The murder of Martin Luther King Jr. and the ignition of the largest wave of civil disorder in the history of the United States could have taken place in any one of a hundred American cities. History chose Memphis principally because 1,300 of its black citizens wanted to form a union and did not receive the necessary support from either of organized labor's two camps, its officialdom or its ranks.

Over four years ago the garbage men of Memphis began to organize Local 1733 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO. The city refused to deal with the new local; less than 2% of the city's garbage workers are white, and the racist and anti-union city establishment knew the swiftness with which basic change will come to the entire south if unionism is grasped as a weapon by black workers.

But the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council of Memphis, white dominated, did not come to the aid of the garbage men at all. And the AFSCME nationally, relatively new, small and poor, treated the crisis like any other routinely difficult organizing problem. A black organizer was sent in, and when his efforts reached a dead end, he was pulled out and sent to another area that might yield easier success. Nevertheless, the garbage men remained loyal to the union.

On February 12, they went on strike after all other efforts had failed. The garbage workers demanded a contract with a formalized grievance procedure, promotion by seniority rather than race, dues checkoff and an increase in their \$1.80 per hour wage. After 11 days on the picket line they held a mass protest march on city hall; police broke up the march with clubs and mace. The entire black community of Memphis united behind the garbage workers.

But not after open threats to the freedom and life of black workers and a black community, not after it was clear that the very existence of free unionism was being challenged, only after a crisis that their negligence had helped to create became a causal factor in King's death did George Meany's national AFL-CIO forces assert themselves. They obtained the services of Bayard Rustin, who organized the impressive march of 40,000 in Memphis four days after the assassination. The strike was at last won in the following 48 hours. A contract was signed four days later, and all four demands were met.

IT CAN BE DONE

The failure of American organized labor in Memphis hangs heavier at this point than its success. George Meany and his supporters do not understand that organized labor's long-run survival, not to mention its success, depends upon an alliance with the nation's black community. They do not understand that friendly relations with the leaders of Negro middle class organizations do not constitute an alliance with the black community. For too long the conservative labor bureaucracy has claimed that their support of civil rights struggles is fettered by the prejudices of the white members in the ranks. This at best is no more than a confession, of their aspirations to simply stay in office, of their inability to provide the labor movement with real leadership.

Would their positions in fact be challenged by the ranks if the labor officials joined the war against racism on the side of the Afro-Americans? UAW President Reuther was the only leader of a major union to march with the 40,000 in Memphis. He gave the garbage men \$50,000 from the auto workers' treasury and publicly condemned the racist mayor of Memphis. Yet there are as many southern whites in the ranks of the UAW as in any other union. The Retail Workers in New York, the United Packinghouse Workers, the American Federation of Teachers at the University of California, and

various maritime and stevedoring unions were some of a number of unions that called work stoppages of various lengths in protest of King's assassination. In Detroit, General Motors, Ford and Chrysler had to shut down production because large numbers of black workers walked off — joined in many instances by whites.

Most white workers are racists. But in a significant number of cases, they have been able to subordinate and sometimes overcome their racism whenever it has been made clear that united action with blacks is the key to winning desired goals. The tragedy is that examples of black-white working class solidarity, too rare to begin with, seldom get the opportunity to develop fully because they seldom obtain an organizational vehicle for expression. The ranks of labor do not often get the chance to utilize the machinery of their unions. And when solidarity does develop, it has to take on major proportions before the press will report it. In July, 1967, 20,000 black and white workers struck the Newport-News Ship and Drydock Company in Virginia. The strike began as a wildcat by black workers in the transportation department against compulsory overtime; black and white together fought the cops and stopped scab attempts by white workers who did not share the grievance. But the labor press did not report the strike.

Past experience has shown that U.S. workers, white and black, white collar and blue collar, employed and unemployed, organized and unorganized, would support a bold campaign to organize the south. A transformation of the depressed wages and inhuman working conditions of southern workers would force an improvement in the lives of workers in the north and west as well.

The organization of the south would be a first real step toward the revitalization of the whole trade union movement, which has known little but set-backs and stagnation for over twenty years. An attack on racism in the unions could pave the way for a widespread translation of black militancy into trade union forms, a major advance for the struggle for black liberation as well as for the labor movement. On February 15, the garbage men of Jackson, Mississippi walked off their jobs. There are 40 of them there and organized labor needs every one. The costly mistakes of Memphis must never be repeated.

CLEOPHUS PIERCE

Read About Independent Socialism

PAMPHLETS 25¢ each—20¢ in bundles of 5 or more.

INDEPENDENT SOCIALISM: A Perspective for the Left—by Hal Draper.

THE THIRD CAMP: The Independent Socialist View of War and Peace—by Julius Jacobson and Hal Draper.

THE TWO SOULS OF SOCIALISM (revised edition)—Hal Draper.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PARTY: A Polish Revolutionary Socialist Manifesto (75¢)—by Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski.

TOWARD THE WORKING CLASS: A Position Paper for the New Left—by Kim Moody.

A NEW ERA OF LABOR REVOLT: On The Job vs. Official Unions—by Stanley Weir.

CLIPPINGBOOKS

INTRODUCTION TO INDEPENDENT SOCIALISM. Selected articles from the issues of Labor Action. \$4.75.

INDEPENDENT SOCIALISM AND WAR. Selected articles from the independent socialist press. \$4.00.

ZIONISM, ISRAEL AND THE ARABS. Selected articles from the independent socialist press. \$3.00.

All Orders Sent To:

ISCA, Room 504, 874 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003

G.I. PROTEST IS NOT OFF LIMITS

The Anti-War Movement Inside the Armed Forces

If you are losing your 2-S, with an induction notice lurking in your daily horoscope, the alternatives are few. Skipping to Canada is a personal drag — to many, a cop-out of responsibility to see the struggle through. And without putting down draft refusal, it is clear that this is not everyone's cup of tea. Within the last year a third choice has developed: accepting induction and spending your tour of duty doing anti-war organizing within the army itself.

At present anti-war activity within the armed forces falls into two broad categories. The first, individual acts of resistance, has been going on for years, and is as much created by the quaint military environment as by the Vietnam war. While a few cases, such as Captain Levy or the "Fort Hood Three," become movement "causes," the vast majority occur without the participation or even the knowledge of the peace movement.

There are roughly fifty anti-war GIs serving big time at Fort Leavenworth today, and hundreds more in stockades and briggs in each branch of the service. In the stockade at Fort Jackson (Columbia, S.C.) there is a five-foot square steel box which bakes under the hot sun. Its occupant is a GI resister, whose identity is a question even to anti-war soldiers at the base. Almost always very personal and spontaneous, acts of resistance (refusal to obey orders for Vietnam, desertion-AWOL, refusal to work or wear a uniform, etc.) are a rapidly growing movement.

PRAYER AND PROTEST

Even more dangerous to the Order of Things is a newer phenomenon: the formation of anti-war groups within the ranks of the military itself. While the typical group is still very small — generally between 10 and 30 members — they are unmistakable signs of things to come. "Soldiers Against War" at Fort Ord, the American Servicemen's Union at Fort Sill, and unnamed organizations at Fort Jackson, Fort Benning, Fort Gordon and Fort Knox are just the more widely known GI groups.

The basic activity of every GI group is to stay alive, to survive the pressures and harassments thrown against it by the base command. It's obvious that the very presence of such a GI organization is a small victory against the war. Generally a wide variety of literature is passed around or quietly posted on bulletin boards. Some groups even print up their own leaflets for distribution outside the base on weekends. Rapping with guys on your barracks floor is a constant activity.

A few groups, notably at Fort Ord and Fort Jackson,

have already had action projects. As a start, the GI group at Fort Jackson, a large basic training center, leafleted the local induction station, publicly attacking the war as servicemen on active duty. To say the least, this blew people's minds. Their most publicized project was a "meditation hour" at the Protestant chapel on base, expressing "doubts" about the war. Thirty GIs showed up, and were turned away by MPs ringing the chapel. Two were arrested for praying on the lawn in violation of orders. But the authorities were unable to think of what charge to press and had to drop the thing, thereby confirming the idea that this was one form of group activity the army couldn't court-martial you for.

It should be carefully noted that nothing in the military is painless. GIs in the group have suffered much harassment; several have been shipped overseas. But if the war drags on, GI anti-war groups will spread to new bases, increasing both in size and activity.

COFFEESHOP TRIPS

Movement activity around the military can be divided into three types:

(1) A number of left-wing organizations have been keeping track of their members who enter the service and undertake organized activities there. More on this aspect in a subsequent article.

(2) The "coffee shop" projects. There are Movement coffee shops in Kileen, Tex. (Fort Hood), Waynesville, Mo. (Fort Leonard Wood), and Columbia, S.C. (Fort Jackson). Other shops are planned in Washington, D.C., Chicago, New Orleans and Tacoma, Wash. The basic idea is a Model-T, no less effective for being very simple.

Base towns are built around the "Strip," a collection of bars, gyp-joints (loan shops, used furniture stores, etc.), greasy-spoons and more bars. The Strip exists as a vulgar parasite on the thousands of young GIs on base. Weekend recreation for those without nearby families (almost everybody) is heavily oriented toward getting plastered, with dashes of drunken arguments, the brawl, and loud country music to spice things up. It's the only game in town and a traditional part of army life.

The coffee shop offers a relief from the grinding uniformity and pressure of base life. Soldiers can play records from the shop collection on the hi-fi; sit and talk for hours; read a book; or just be alone and enjoy some quiet. And in states with a 21-year drinking age limit, young trainees have a place to go. The shops have been a smash success, packed on weekends.

Without any hard-sell, without pushing peace literature — in fact, without any initiative taken by the shop people — the shops have become a focusing agent, bringing together GIs from the base who've had it with the military and are willing to do something. The "meditation hour" and other GI activities at Fort Jackson grew directly out of the U.F.O., the Columbia, S.C. coffee shop.

The future of these coffee shops is still unclear. They are the foundation for "Summer of Support," a national project for the coming six months. Under the direction of Rennie Davis, a former SDS leader, new coffee shops will be opened up, and traveling groups of folksingers, veterans, anti-war leaders and others will put on meetings and performances in every major base town. Obviously the shops could be closed overnight if the army posted them off-limits. So far the Pentagon has been reluctant to create a public controversy by doing this, although increasing pressure is being exerted on GIs to stay away from the shops.

THE NEW I.S.

With this issue, the Independent Socialist goes monthly, as an eight-pager selling for a thin dime. We think this is going to open new horizons for circulation, but YOU will have to prove it.

Subscription price for a ten-issue year is \$1.00, but we have another proposition: take ten copies of EACH issue at \$1 the batch, then get your money back by selling them. You can put this on a regular basis with a TEN-PACK SUBSCRIPTION (10 copies of each of 10 issues) for \$10.00.

(3) Direct leafleting of servicemen. This is kind of agitprop stuff, but is really effective. Anti-war groups of all kinds — SDS chapters, Resistance, anti-draft unions, ad-hoc local groups — are starting to look for soldiers and sailors to rap with. For many student activists, this is the first time they have had to leave (briefly) the foam-rubber mini-world of the Movement and try to reach working-class men of their age.

This is going on at bus stations, at airports, outside bases, and in the "hippy neighborhoods" where many GIs go looking for action (which can mean anything from grass, to the mythical easy lay, to a fight). Whether you use your own leaflet or one of the anti-war newspapers directed at GIs, almost everybody reports surprising success. This is not so much due to the movement (which carries this out sloppily as usual), but happens because there is one hell of a lot of young uptight GIs who are doing a sudden powerhouse of thinking about the war.

ALICE IN ARMYLAND

Without doing a "Pocket Guide to Army Life," here are some points important to anyone thinking of going into the army.

(1) Doing anti-war work in the army (or, even more so, in the Marines, as some 5000 draftees will find out this summer) is not a bed of roses. While draft refusal is a tough bit that many are just plain unsuited for, the same holds for organizing in the army (as opposed to accepting induction and just quietly serving your two years). Men should not be pushed to feel that this is their "duty," revolutionary or otherwise, if they are unfit for it.

(2) There is no point to going in with the idea of refusing direct orders. That is just a waste of everyone's time, since the same result (prison) can be attained more easily by draft resistance.

(3) Anyone who fights the army will go through many hassles. A few GIs have been able to keep their cool, minutely following orders and endlessly frustrating the brass. But most get caught up (or framed) somewhere along the line. Serving 30-180 days in the stockade is a normal by-product of anti-war work in the army and can be expected.

(4) One can never be certain how the brass will respond. The army is a vast, super-organized chaos, abounding in incredibly stupid decisions and off-the-cuff absurdities. A commanding officer may sometimes conclude that you are a dangerous trouble-maker and that the easiest thing to do is give you a discharge. (Beautiful!) Or you could get punitive orders to Vietnam or Korea. In the army almost anything can happen, and does.

(5) Military society is a whole new set of rules, and learning the rules will help survival. If your record is "red-flagged," for example, you cannot be transferred to any other command (e.g., Vietnam) until your case is cleared up. In many commands a hopeless case of maladjustment (known technically as a fuck-up) can usually get a "212" discharge. In many commands a guy who can pull three successive AWOLs, and serve the time, may be given a bad-conduct discharge. One might thumb through the UCMJ (Universal Code of Military Justice), although military law is mostly a series of customs and prejudices. The book states, for instance, that no enlisted man is obliged to give "personal service" to an officer (carry groceries, wash his car, etc.) but the GI who refuses is inviting trouble.

(6) Your organizing will begin once you finish basic. (During basic you will be too exhausted for any extra-curricular activity.) Since a base is literally a small city of tens of thousands, the usual procedure is to start with your "primary peer group" (as Karl Liebknecht never called it). These are the GIs you work with, and the 20-30 men on your barracks floor.

Your aim, rapping on guys and passing around literature, is to convince a few GIs that the war is no damn good (easy) and that they should join you in doing something about it (hard). At this point your sergeant, your company commander, and certainly the base C.I.D. (fuzz) will start thinking about you. It is impossible to rap on other men without word reaching the higher-

ups. All one can do is plow on ahead; no use sweating it.

Outside of surviving, any anti-war group of GIs has many jobs: using army political education sessions to rebut their propaganda; organizing group refusal to buy savings bonds (an important part of war financing) or mass bond cash-ins; convincing GIs not to sign up for Airborne or other "elite" training which also entails signing up for another year; passing around anti-war literature. As with all organizing, local and specific issues pop up which should not be neglected.

(7) The army, like other institutions of this society, is class-divided. I am not referring to the obvious inequality of officers and enlisted men (i.e., feudal lords and serfs). In general trend, it is the middle-class GIs, who have some junior college or better, that have the easiest time avoiding combat and pulling soft duty. Middle-class and working-class GIs tend to have separate social groupings and activities. It is important to break through this class barrier. To be practical about it, anyone who does not reach GIs from the ghetto and the rural South is not going to affect the flow of GIs into the elite units, who do most of the actual heavy combat.

Taking on the army is a heavy job. But one should keep in mind that the crisis opening up in our society naturally affects the military as well. According to those active in this work, roughly half of all enlisted men are opposed to the Vietnam war, with only about 20 percent definitely pro-administration.

The complete failure of Johnson's war policy is so evident that all services are having a minor crisis: a number of career officers are resigning or retiring rather than risk serving in Southeast Asia. All this is linked to other struggles going on. Black riots, unreported by the press, have occurred on army bases — not only in cities. Many GIs are shaken up by their new role as "super-cops" at home.

Although the work is hard and dangerous, it is a proven fact that GIs can be reached and organized. One can look forward to a time when massive resistance in the military will cripple the vengeful power of American imperialism.

JOHN SMITH

Support Your Local ISC

The Independent Socialist Clubs of America are a national federation of clubs and organizing committees.

We stand for socialism: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy, established by a revolutionary transformation from below and aimed toward the building of a new society.

We stand for a socialist policy which is completely independent of and opposed to both of the reactionary systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and bureaucratic Communism.

If you would like more information on our ideas or activities, please write:

New York: 874 Broadway, Room 504, New York, N.Y. 10003, or phone 674-9590.

Philadelphia: c/o Weiner, 558 S. 48th St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19143.

Pittsburgh: c/o Josephson, 81 Mayfair Drive, Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania 15228.

Washington: Box 152, Falls Church, Virginia 22046.

Baltimore: c/o Harding, 2627 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland 21218.

Madison: c/o Greene, 9 So. Bassett, Madison, Wisconsin.

San Francisco: c/o Magezis, 2022 Fell St., San Francisco, or phone 922-9481.

Berkeley: Box 910, Berkeley, California 94701, or phone 652-3751.

Bay Area Community and Trade Union Branch: Box 910, Berkeley, California, or phone 549-1466.

Los Angeles: c/o Weinberg, 1139 1/2 4th Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90019, or phone 735-4597.

For information on other areas or clubs, write: ISCA, 874 Broadway, Room 504, New York, N.Y. 10003

Confessions of The Riot Commission

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
ON CIVIL DISORDERS

Bantam Books, 608 pp., \$1.25

If "shoot 'em down" Mayor Daley or racist ex-Governor Wallace had put together the Riot Commission Report, we would be reading a much different document. No mention would be made of white responsibility for ghetto problems or the need for a thorough reassessment of current public policies. The Kerner Report's relatively honest statement of the problem, compared to what we might have gotten, probably explains why liberals are so thankful and why they believe that the Kerner Report itself represents a first major step. But as Kenneth Clark, a witness before the Commission, pointed out, the causes of earlier riots, like that in Chicago in 1919, were often identified before, and still inaction always followed. One can imagine that these same liberals were even then singing "A new day's a-coming" merely because some official body acknowledged that a problem existed.

There is something terribly wrong with liberal intuition. Liberals do not understand that social issues remain unresolved and are made worse by members of the establishment who do, in fact, recognize the problems. Liberals fail to understand that influential public and private citizens do not simply respond to their own consciousness, but are more often propelled by objective external forces, namely corporate institutions which have their own ax to grind. And what better evidence can we draw upon to show how "lip" and "deed," consciousness and action, diverge than the public records of those men responsible for the Kerner report.

For example, New York's Mayor Lindsay of Kerner Report fame is opposed to racism, ghettos and police brutality. Yet his response to student protests over Columbia University's racism in Harlem and participation in war research graduates him into Mayor Daley's All-American league. He decried the actions of the students as illegal and irresponsible but had no unkind words for the policies of the institution which gave rise to their protests. Mr. Lindsay doesn't object to self expression, but political action is another matter. One thousand of New York's finest descended upon the University to crush demands for justice to the black community and an end to University complicity with the war machine.

TWO-HEADED LIBERALS

Though Citizen Lindsay says many good things, he acts otherwise. His citizen's commitment to low cost housing is reflected in the Kerner Report. But, as Mayor, he has supported numerous urban renewal programs which displace the poor from their relatively low rent apartments, and thus increase their poverty. While citizens are reading the Kerner Report's recommendations for low cost housing, the Lindsay establishment is reducing their supply in New York City. Mr. Lindsay has a formula that wins. He charms the liberal and simultaneously rewards the real estate industry.

Similar criticisms could be made of the other members of the Riot Commission. Between writing reports on the cures for our social problems, they go about their day-to-day business causing them. The chairman of the commission, Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, has not troubled to cool off Chicago's Mayor Daley. Another commissioner, Charles B. Thornton, heads Litton Industries, which is a firm that has been economically coddling the Greek military dictatorship. Yet, as a contributor to the Kerner Report, he probably made his humanistic recommendations for dealing with social unrest without batting an eyelash.

What I have described is embarrassingly simple. What really matters is what men do, not what they say. To liberals who too often are sold on a phrase, the thick riot report compendium must be very convincing. But in their daily lives as men of influence and power, the commissioners represent established interest. I cannot think of a better reason for calling them members of the establishment. They arrived at their present position by making deals, which were certainly not with the poor. They have mingled and connived with the right people. And the right people, of course, are those who exercise power, public and private. There is no indication that any of the commissioners are changing their company, no matter what they say.

It may seem ironic that the Riot Commission report has been written by members of the establishment who actively participate in perpetuating the problems they expose. In truth, they have written a confession. But, being members of the establishment, they have been praised for their honesty rather than indicted for their crimes. Their report is not, as many liberals believe, a first step toward social change, but rather a most recent exercise in vulgarity.

HARRY BRILL

U.S. Government Reveals: How to Make a Revolution

I have just read a book distributed by the U.S. Government on how to make a revolution. It should be authoritative, having been prepared at great expense by American University's SORO under contract with the Army. Published in 1963, it is now declassified; anyone thinking of making a revolution can get hold of it.

Don't bother. Somehow the authors of "Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary and Resistance Warfare" have put together 358 large pages without getting around to more than a few lines on the one thing that gives appeal and dynamic power to the operations of anti-imperialist movements around the world: viz. their social program for land reform and modernization, against landlordism and imperialism — their "secret weapon," political warfare.

The SORO task force researched this mysterious phenomenon and filled the book with fourth-rate details. What remains an enigma is: how do these revolutionaries manage to get the support of the people?

Their approach is very American, very end-of-ideological, very socio-popological. In one of the few passages where they treat "The Propaganda Message" at all, they disclose only that the message should address particular "audiences," "exploit existing attitudes," be believable, and promote "the individual's own well being." Obviously these formulas, well known to Madison Avenue, mean that SORO would be very successful at selling Wheaties and living bras in the Mekong hamlets.

SILVER LININGS

Agrarian reform gets mentioned as a pseudonym for "the triumph of communism." On Communist "psychological warfare" we get this penetrating analysis: "... agents are sent to penetrate unions and student groups. These agents... foment strikes and riots" etc. (I am not making this up.)

There are silver linings to this cloud. (1) A government which pays hard currency for this bilge is not capable of learning how to put down anti-imperialist insurgents. (2) The war-budget money which paid SORO was, at least, not available to stock napalm for Vietnam villages.

A note in the book invites readers to send comments to the "Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations... Attn: OPS SW." It is a comfort to find out that the mastermind behind all this is OPS SW, rather than SMERSH.

H.D.

France: Revolution from Below-----

(Continued from page 1)

a scandal. There is also a common enemy: the same state that strangles the universities in a bureaucratic grip is also the owner or controller of a quarter of industry. (The state-owned Renault plants provide the shock troops of worker militants in the struggle, because nationalization without workers' control is a fraud.) State policy puts a straightjacket on wage raises. Its "welfare state" cut the working-class standard of living last year by increasing workers' contributions to social security and cutting benefits.

The basis for the worker-student alliance also existed because the students had shown they could and would stand up to the government and its brutal cops; and although the student tactics turned off professors, liberals, and old ladies of all sexes, it won the respect of the workers. When Pompidou began to vacillate and promise, this also showed one could WIN.

The sit-in strike movement — the one which was NOT called by the trade-union federations — began on May 17 in Nantes, at Sud-Aviation where a strike had been going on. A student committee took over the University of Nantes. The workers' committee at Sud-Aviation took over the plant, imprisoning the executives inside, with the students providing outside support. The next day, the

AS WE GO TO PRESS: De Gaulle's announcement of new elections and massive threats may make it possible for the CP-SP-union bureaucrats to end the general strike and divert the struggle into their parliamentary channels. But the back-to-work movement predicted by the press has not yet materialized, and over nine million are still out. Meanwhile, first reports are coming in about efforts looking toward the creation of a new revolutionary organization. Nous verrons ce que nous verrons.

workers took over four Renault plants. Other cities followed suit. In Marseilles a workers' organized soviet controlled the port. (Note: no soviets exist in Soviet Russia today even theoretically.)

What can happen now? Regardless of what the situation may be when you read this, the following has ALREADY happened: new revolutionary elements have been drawn into grass-roots leadership. And that may be the greatest hope for the future.

As in every great social upheaval, the organized core of the working class has set into motion other layers — unorganized workers, white-collar workers, government employees, lastly farm workers, etc.. Union officials have said that women workers seem even more eager for action than the men. Young workers, previously unorganized and uninterested in the unions, are the driving forces in many sit-ins. Thousands of new applications have poured into the unions, and the average age of the new members is 19!

In this and other ways, the general strike is beginning to revolutionize first the working class itself. It breaks down the boundaries, created by capitalism, between workers of different regions, industries, ages, sexes, and previous experience. New militant leaders emerge locally, in the course of continuous political meetings. Local action committees develop which may impel new militant groupings in or out of the unions. It is in these factory developments that a potential exists for the emergence of a new revolutionary leadership.

PCF: Parti Communiste de Finks

The Communist Party of France is the largest organization with a working-class following, and controls the largest trade-union federation, the CGT. It has little significant competition on the left, the French social-democracy being as rotten as most in Europe. It is experienced in breaking revolutionary upsurges of the workers, having performed this chore on a big scale right after the 1945 liberation.

When the student struggle began, the CP denounced it all: the demonstrators were left-adventurers, "fils de papa," children of the middle class; it tried to set "class against class" in reverse. But as workers' sympathy for the students grew, the CP saw its perennial nightmare: to be outflanked on the left. Its response was standard: get at the head of the movement to moderate it. But this time the CP attempt to "embrace" the students with a net failed. The students still chanted "Rome, Berlin, WARSAW, Paris." When the students pressed for militant action and the Communist leaders announced that the demonstration was over, Daniel Cohn-Bendit denounced them as "Stalinist creeps."

When the sit-in general-strike movement developed, from Nantes to Paris, the CP warned against "adventurers causing trouble" to head off the confrontation. Its CGT leadership refused to issue orders for the general strike, but allowed workers to participate in strikes where they occurred. (In other words, it did not issue orders to scab — big thing.) The orders for the sit-in general-strike had been issued by the working class, over the head of the CP.

The CP line has been to break militancy (stop demonstrating, release executives from sit-in imprisonment) and reduce the struggle to lower levels (limit demands).

The Communist Party is proving one thing: there will be no socialist revolution in France as long as it is the big force in the working class. Its efforts to regain control over the workers have had the collaboration of the De Gaulle regime, which widely broadcasts all its messages of caution and restraint. Its chief fan in the U.S. seems to be the N.Y. Times, which broadly hints that it is the last defense of French capitalism. But of course the CP's present course goes only as long as French capitalism is a "friend of the Soviet Union." Let this change and the CP may well dust off its militant "revolutionary" mask.

POPULAR FRONT FAKERY

As this is being written, the union leaderships are dickering with De Gaulle over the price of selling the revolutionary upsurge down the river. All the immediate demands they may secure will be long overdue, to be sure: it often takes revolutionary action just to win reforms. The left politicians of all stripes have their tongues hanging out for a "Popular Front government" which will put them back in office (as the "Workers' Representatives," of course); and they will get it if the French bourgeoisie decides that only "Popular Front" fakery can placate the working class and its student allies long enough to put the harness on again.

It is this political pas de deux which will fill the columns of the newspapers of France, but the real story will be buried underground. It is: to whatever extent the CP and the CGT retain their control over the workers in the short run, what will be happening DOWN BELOW with regard to the constitution of independent cadres of militants (new leaders), who offer hope for the constitution of a new revolutionary leadership, one that can first compete with, and then sweep away, the social-democratic and Communist finks?

In this the student militants too can make a contribution. Perhaps the biggest obstacle here will be the pervasive Marcuse ideology, which instills contempt in intellectuals for the struggles of ordinary people to find a better life. In our next issue we plan to deal with a number of questions not even mentioned here.

May 27, 1968

JOEL GEIER & H. SPECTOR

This Is What It Looks Like: 3rd Camp Shakes Europe East & West

Here is old Europe, divided as usual into the two camps, the capitalist camp and the Communist camp, "West" and "East" —

And there is the new European revolutionary upsurge, setting workers and students into motion from below, in country after country —

And everywhere this embryo European revolution comes into collision with BOTH camps, stretching out a hand across the so-called Iron Curtain to the fighters on BOTH sides.

This is what the upsurge of the Third Camp looks like in action.

First of all, the fight is going on, at various levels, in countries of both the Western and Eastern blocs simultaneously.

WEST: Besides France and Germany, where worker-student revolutionary alliances are shaking the powers that be, there are serious anti-governmental struggles going on in Belgium (the University of Brussels is in a state of siege), Italy, Sweden, Britain. These are still at the first stage: militant student movements in campus and street struggles. In Spain, the student offensive is giving signs of leading to the next stage, when the already existing unofficial workers' committees may move into mass action.

EAST: In Poland the recent demonstrations of students and intellectuals for basic democratic freedoms have been joined by workers in large numbers. In Czechoslovakia the "liberalizer" Dubcek (the Gomulka of this country) is hard pressed on the left by a de-facto worker-student alliance demanding the introduction of genuine institutions of socialist democracy and free political life.

BYSYMMETRICAL PICTURE

Secondly, in terms of the traditional leaderships of the working-class movements in Europe, the fight is rejecting BOTH the odorous Social-Democratic stooges of the West, and the Communist Party stooges of the East. In this respect too, there has never been a more bisymmetrical picture.

In the recent period alone, the leading Social-Democratic parties of Germany, Britain and Italy have been clobbered in elections which showed that their own followers are getting disgusted with them. The British Labor Party lost catastrophically in the municipal elections and bye-elections. The Italian SP of the reunited Nenni and Saragat lost about a quarter of its vote, mostly to the left-socialist party (PSIUP). The German Social-Democratic Party, fast reaching new depths of discredit as a result of its entrance into the government coalition, has lost ground in provincial elections recently. These are not the only three examples.

As for the Communist Party, it is the French branch specifically that is being exposed in great detail for what it has always been: an enemy of genuine revolutionary socialist struggle, and the instrument of its bureaucratic apparatus alone. Not that it will not make "militant" maneuvers in the next period: it is expert in running to the head of mass struggles in order to "discipline" them into its party line. But the accompanying article in this issue makes clear that it may be near to facing its moment of truth in France, as its leadership is openly repudiated by the masses it purports to lead.

This European Revolution is directed against the East as well as the West. This European Revolution, IF and insofar as it develops, is bound to break up the apparatus of the Social-Democracies and Communist parties.

THAT IS WHAT THE THIRD CAMP MEANS. To repeat the point made in the accompanying article on France: this puts on the agenda the development, out of the new leaders from below, of a **NEW REVOLUTIONARY LEFT**.

The internationalism of the new revolutionary left cuts across the rival imperialist camps. Besides the chant of the Paris demonstrators of the May 13 general strike, "Rome — Berlin — Warsaw — Paris," we see the German SDS demonstrating their solidarity with the revolutionary opposition in Poland under the slogan "Berlin — Fascist; Warsaw — Stalinist." Rudi Dutschke, the left-wing student leader in West Germany goes off to Prague to warn the students there not to be taken in by reforms which leave the bureaucratic apparatus intact, but rather to form independent self-governing councils. Students throughout Europe meet together to map out a common strategy and program against American imperialism in Vietnam, just as Danny Cohn-Bendit goes off to address a sit-in in Brussels or a demonstration in Amsterdam, and is aided by thousands of German students to re-enter France.

REVOLTS IN BOTH CAMPS

EYES WEST — GERMANY: It must be understood that the Sozialistische Deutsche Studenten (SDS) of Germany is not MERELY a student movement. The virtual official abandonment of a socialist program some years ago by the Social-Democratic Party, and then its entrance into the government, plus the fact that the Communist Party is such a discredited creature of the East that it cannot make a mass comeback even against one of the vilest social-democracies in Europe — all this has meant a vacuum on the left. The Social-Democrats not only originally expelled the SDS but also expel any adults who help it. Left-socialist groups of non-students have been crystallizing around it, so that the SDS half-plays the role not only of a student movement, but of a focus for a new revolutionary party. In the May struggles the SDS was able to call demonstrations and strikes against the government's anti-democratic Emergency Laws in alliance with militant trade unions.

EYES EAST — POLAND: As against the Gomulka regime (up to yesterday touted as the hope of "democratization-from-above" in the Communist world, as Dubcek is now), students and workers have been in rebellion against bureaucratic Communism, which unleashes the ancient tool of anti-Semitism, and have been fighting for workers' democracy. Indications are that prominent in the fight are the followers of Kuron and Modzelewski (who were rearrested), whom readers of our press will know as the initiators of the group in the Communist Party which came out for complete socialist democracy.

EYES WEST — SPAIN: Street clashes of students and police in Madrid. The Franco regime knows that if it yields to student demands for university reform, it will not be able to stem workers' demands for really independent trade unions. Reports indicate that for the first time since the Civil War, young workers are becoming active in unofficial labor movements.

EYES EAST — CZECHOSLOVAKIA: It must be understood that the "liberalizing" bureaucracy of Dubcek, which has conceded some new rights but ruled out the right to opposition, has an economic program to rationalize industry at the expense of increased exploitation of the workers (something like Wilson's Labor government in Britain). More on this in next month's issue.

The Third Camp is the camp of all those who are fighting by relying on the mass struggle from below, which means: against the strangling bureaucracies up above — of the bourgeois and Communist governments on the one hand, and of the Social-Democratic and Communist parties on the other. This is the force that Independent Socialists look to.

May 29, 1968

JOEL GEIER & H. SPECTOR