

LET THE DEAD BURY THE DEAD

And old Whiteman himself, the blighty blotchy, beyond the bays, hope of ostrogothich and otto-manic faith converters, despair of Pandemia's postwartem-plastic surgeons? But is was so long ago.

James Joyce speaking

Revolution begins in the guts not the frontal lobes. A theory that to some true understanding of our situation and hence to action is a mute configuration in the air if it fails to confront life as we experience it.

The cliched ideological axes of anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism, and anti-racialism are more figurative than real to us. As founding principles for a new revolutionary identity in society, we must criticize them on their own abstract level and demonstrate their distance from the real possibilities of action--a critique that is in fact simultaneous. Imperilism and racilaism pang the white white conscience, but they represent rather than stand central to our alienation.

The only 'advance' that capitalism has made is to devise new ways of disappropriating men from sight or control of their own experience. Hence the new, and essential, overdevelopment of consumer production and ideology, and the proliferation of the mas media. Both extend the rule of the commodity; both re-instate the definition of man as commodity. This is the stuff of aliention: the continuing and intensified pov erty or ~~everyday~~ life in a society with the productive means for its liberation. It is on the grounds of this alienation --the frustration, despair, andemptiness of our language and experience (of which the 'socialist' conference is a nauseous example)--that a new struggle that a new struggle against capitalism is already being waged.

For this reason these three dogmas and the posturing they involve provide no basis for our activity. They implicate us at once in political alliances and issues of an old order which we must utterly transcend. The barren terrain of our own programmed, image-bound lives is the first revolutionary territory, and necessarily the strating point of that revolution for us is the university.

We shall not get very far in analysing the student situation until we realize that the student class is a product of capitalism--as much a product as Grippernickers and the Olympic Games. Modern capitalism needs a new class of technocrats, managers, etc., and in moments of blind listless lucidity admits that university expansion is directly geared to this 'economic development.' (see the Robbins Reort)

Higher education hands you a diploma but leaves you a computer card; and yet it must still be justified in terms of the traditional ideology of 'liberal education'. The student is a product, but he must never be allowed to realize this: hence the massive organization of false consciousness within the university--psychiatric services, culture, 'humane values,' intellectual inquiry' etc.

Like every other sector of the post-war edonomy, the universities are prey to the new ideology of integration, and ideology which is the

mirror-image of the actual realities in the institution. The essential hierarchies remain; power still lies in the hands of an elite which is linked with the organs of capitalism at every point. Where there is student participation, it is merely an invitation to administer one's own alienation.

The student movement certainly is faced with problems of strategy and organization; not least the reformist character but revolutionary possibilities of 'student power.' But its strategy will only be articulated in particular, at first local, situations--and will only be uttered by a pre-established 'identification' with other forces in society.

In this light, we see this conference as a rear-guard action aimed at the re-creation and preservation of hierarchic power within student politics. Student 'leadership' disappears like a puff of smoke in actual situations of student revolt; but will preserve itself under the guise of 'the need for a theoretical model to underpin student politics'. What does this mean, in fact, besides the reinstatement of a Leninist inner group whose raison d'etre on an ideological level is the progressive appropriation of theoretical correctness, in whose hands theory becomes property, the essential property of the revolutionary movement -- and a property whose function is the same as any other property-ownership: the domination of the mass.

Or it will preserve itself in more overtly spectacular ways -- collusion with the media (Forward comrades, but not too fast lest you spoil my press coverage); leading directly to collusion with the police; and the creation of yet another semi-official, allowed form of 'Protest'.

With these considerations and doubts in mind, if we have a national revolutionary student movement (and we still want one -- we still believe it necessary for purposes of exchanging information, etc.) we would make the following minimum prohibitive demands :

1. No policy statements, judgements or pronouncements from a central bureau.
2. A journal -- but no editorial comment.
3. The movement should ~~XXX~~ see communication with the mass media as no part of its business.

Chris Canlett, Tim Clark, David Cooke, Brian Whalley,

Franz Baader

Essex University.

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