

SNCC and Black Panthers Merge

by JANE McMANUS,
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OAKLAND, Calif. — The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, two of the best known militant black groups in the United States, have merged into one organization.

The merger, of greater significance to the black freedom movement in the U.S., was announced at a public meeting here

late last month, called to celebrate the 26th birthday of Huey P. Newton, the Black Panther's "minister of defense."

Newton's peacock chair was center stage and empty. He sat in Oakland jail while 6,000 supporters packed Oakland auditorium, singing to him and shouting for his freedom.

Newton was shot in the stomach, an Oakland cop killed and a second wounded in an early morning encounter last October. He was summarily indicted for

murder, assault with a deadly weapon on a police officer, and kidnapping.

Today, Newton's case is where it's at — not only in California but among militant black radicals across the country who view it as symbolic of the white man's genocidal intent.

Some of them were present at the meeting: Stokely Carmichael and James Forman were swept to the platform in a deafening roar; moments later, a noisy ovation as H. Rap Brown — appearing unexpectedly — took one of the chairs on the platform's celebrity row. (Brown was jailed when he returned to New York Feb. 20 for alleged violation of bail, which prohibited the California visit.)

The audience — two-thirds black — evidenced no surprise when Eldridge Cleaver, Black Panther "minister of information" and the evening's M.C., casually announced:

"You've all heard bits and pieces about the merger of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Well, it's a fact."

The SNCC speakers talked briefly about the merged group's first political premise: that the white race is planning genocide against blacks.

STUDENTS PETITION VERSAFOODS

Versafood Services has been implicated in a petition circulated by members of Harrison House and their guests. The petition demands reimbursement from Versafood and blames the company for serving tainted or spoiled seafood at a special House banquet in McConnell Hall.

Almost all of the guests who sampled the featured lobster suffered diarrhea and stomach cramps.

The petition also suggests that the lobster dish used for the banquet was not fresh and may have been made with the same lobster served at the Founder's Day Banquet two days earlier.

Forman, introduced as international director of SNCC and minister of foreign affairs for the Black Panthers, argued for black brotherhood and intense organization to build "a mass political party that is not middle class but reaches down to all us field workers and across every ghetto." He also promised instant and specific retribution for assassination plots against black leaders: the destruction of war factories, police stations, power plants and protracted retribution on some governors, mayors and "these white piggish cops that occupy our communities." He placed himself as low man on a leadership totem pole that includes Carmichael, Rap Brown, Ron Karenga, Bobby Seale, and Newton.

Meanwhile, the Black Panther Party proposes running Huey Newton in the Seventh Congressional District of Alameda County as a Peace Freedom Party candidate. The proposal dramatically challenges the establishment and also the intent of the anti-estab-

lishment but basically white middle-class Peace and Freedom Party. Yet Cleaver's introduction to Peace and Freedom Party spokesman Bob Avakian, who strongly backed Newton's candidacy on a "Free Huey Newton" slogan, also reassured the audience that the Panthers "want freedom and we won't be taken over by anybody."

Brown was even clearer: "I believe the revolution in this country will be of the dispossessed," he said. "The blacks, the Mexicans, the Puerto Ricans, the Indians... the leadership of the revolution has to remain in the hands of the dispossessed... We have to organize the black community first, and then we will decide whether we will have alliances and with whom."

Carmichael, elected "Prime Minister" of the Black Panthers by acclamation (whites were requested not to vote) developed the premise of the party.

"Many of us feel the whites
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Students Worship Wrong Idols - John Howard Society

OTTAWA (CUP) — Today's college students are worshipping the wrong idol, according to the Quebec head of the John Howard Society.

"When I was on campus," Dr. Peter Roper told the Commons committee on justice and legal affairs Tuesday (Feb. 27) "The campus hero was cleanliness, masculine and muscular. Today, he is unkempt, feminine and frail. They're worshipping false idols."

He was replying to a question by Milton Klein, MP (L. Cartier) who asked if "swinging" professors were not encouraging students to experiment with marijuana. Roper said it wasn't swinging fellow students.

He said young people idolized the Beatles, who admit to taking LSD.

But he predicted more current information being distributed to the public on the dangers of LSD and marijuana are gradually

swinging public opinion against the drug.

Roper, a psychiatrist, told the committee it would make more sense to jail the parents of drug offenders than to jail young first-offenders who might have been conned into taking LSD. He said a night in jail "would show them we're not playing around."

The committee is presently studying legislation presented by Milton Klein which would allow treatment of drug addicts in hospitals without first requiring they be convicted of an offense under the Narcotics Control Act.

The same day a report on the same subject was presented to another legislative committee, the United States house of representatives commerce sub-committee.

Commissioner of Narcotics Henry L. Giordano said proposed penalties for possession of LSD are aimed at the pusher, not the user.

He said because LSD was known to be more potent and powerful than marijuana the stringent laws against marijuana "have been made to appear hypocritical."

"Many young people have a way of disregarding laws which they think are hypocritical, and so lack of sanctions governing drugs such as LSD has actually helped intensify problems with marijuana," he said.

There is no federal penalty against possession of LSD. Marijuana possession is punishable by two to ten years in prison.

Administration proposals currently being studied would make possession of LSD a misdemeanor punishable by one year in prison, and calls for stronger penalties for manufacturing, selling and distributing LSD.

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