

The Gateway Features

The first one will be the last

For the times they are a changin'

Bob Dylan

By JACK NEWFIELD

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A new generation of radicals has been born from the chrome womb of affluent America. Any lingering doubts about this evaporated last month when 20,000 of the new breed made a pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., demanding a negotiated peace in Vietnam.

They are the ones who freedom-rode to Jackson; who rioted against HUAC; who vigiled for Caryl Chessman; who picketed against the bomb; who invaded Mississippi last summer; and who turned Berkeley into an academic Selma.

The new generation of dissenters; they are not nourished by Marx, Trotsky, Stalin or Schachtman but by campus, Paul Goodman, Bob Dylan and SNCC—Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. And their revolt is not only against capitalism but against the value of middle-class America; the hypocrisy called Brotherhood Week; the assembly lines called universities; the conformity called status; the bad tasted called camp; and the quiet desperation called success.

They are veterans of the Berkeley free speech movement, freshmen from small Catholic colleges, clean-shaven intellectuals from Ann Arbor and Cambridge, fatigued shock troops of SNCC, Iowa farmers, impoverished urban Negroes organized by Students for a Democratic Society, beautiful high school girls without make-up, and adults, many of them faculty members.

They journeyed to Washington for a demonstration conceived and organized by students. During the rally they heard visionary voices of the new radicalism—Staughton Lynd a young professor at Yale, who explained why he wasn't paying his income tax this year; Paul Potter, the president of SDS, who told them to construct a social movement that will "change our condition"; Bob Parris, the poet-revolutionary of SNCC, who urged, "Don't use the south as a moral lightning rod; use it as a looking glass to see what it tells you about the whole country."

And there were Joan Baez and Judy Collins to sing poems of Bob Dylan.

They are literally a new left . . . in

style,

mystique, momentum, tactics and vision. As Potter said in Washington; "The reason there are 20,000 of us here today is that five years ago a social movement was begun by students in the south." The two other groups of the new left—SDS and the Northern Stu-

dent Movement, NSM,—have no roots in the organizations and dogmas of the 1930's.

The student groups affiliated with the old sects, Communist, Trotskyist and Socialist, remain small and isolated. They are seen by the new left as elitist, doctrinaire and manipulative. SNCC and SDS enthusiasts do not engage in sterile, neurotic debates over Kronstadt or pinpoints of Marxist doctrine. They are thoroughly indigenous radicals; tough, democratic, independent, creative, activist, and unsentimental.

Many of the new dissenters are philosophy students, like Bob Parris and Berkeley's Mario Savio, rather than economics and political science students. Their deepest concern seems to be human freedom and expression. Their favourite song is "Do When The Spirit Say Do," and their favourite slogan is "one man, one vote." Participatory democracy is a phrase they use a great deal and they sing a chorus of "Oh Freedom" which says, "no more leaders over me." At a SNCC-SDS organizer's institute before the Washington march, the young revolutionaries wrote poetry on the walls.

During the 1950's the beat orthodoxy of pot and passivity were the only symptoms of campus disquiet. The beats sensed something was wrong with America of brinkmanship, payola and green, but lacked the energy and the seriousness to do anything about it.

So they withdrew into their own antisocial, nonverbal subculture to read the "spontaneous bop prosody" of Jack Kerouac. Middle-brow and slick magazines of the late 1950s were glutted with sociological hand-wringing about campus catatonia and excessive student concern with home, job and marriage. This silent generation is a label that stuck.

Nobody signed petitions because "it might hurt you later on," explained students who had been weaned on McCarthyism. "The employers will love this generation; they are not going to press many grievances . . . They are going to be easy to handle. There aren't going to be any riots," wrote Clark Kerr with prophetic irony in 1959 when he was president of the University of California.

New radicals date their movement's birth from the first student lunch-counter sit-in at Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1, 1960. This pacifist tactic of non-violent direct action has become the hallmark of their rebellion and spread spontaneously through the middle south . . . to Nashville, to Raleigh, to Atlanta. During the 1960 Easter vacation 300 young negroes and a few whites founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee at Shaw University at Raleigh.

Roused by the first dramatic wave of sit-in demonstrations, students across the country turned to political action in the spring of 1960. Thousands marched on picket lines for the first time in their lives, in front of northern branches of Woolworth and Kress department stores.

Outside San Quentin, hundreds made vigil in a chill drizzle to protest the execution of Caryl Chessman. In San Francisco, thousands rioted against hearings conducted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. In New York city, several thousand high school and college students refused to take shelter during a mock city-wide air-raid drill.

What began as an ethical revolt against the immorality of segregation, war and the death penalty, grew and became political during the next few years. Spurred by Michael Harrington's "The Other America," the student movement began to

leave

the campus and to confront the economic roots of racism and poverty. Some went to

Hazard, Kentucky to work with striking coal miners, others abandoned graduate school and promising careers to join SNCC or work with SDS and NSM in organizing the black ghettos of the North.

Today SNCC stands as the first monument built by the new left. From its beginnings in a single room in Atlanta, SNCC has grown to have 260 full-time field secretaries in the south, working for subsistence wages.

SNCC has become a magnet, pulling the entire civil rights movement to the left, pushing the NAACP from the courtroom into the streets, and fortifying Martin Luther King's redemptive love with social vision. SNCC's first sit-ins compelled the Supreme Court to revolutionize its definition of private property. SNCC's fertile imagination generated the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. And SNCC's special quality of nobility tinged with madness cracked the tradition-laden surface of Mississippi making it a national disgrace.

It has also been the crucible of much of the evolving humanist-anarchist philosophy of the new radicals; the idea that people don't need leaders, grass-roots organiz-

ing among the very poor, and Quaker-like communitarian democracy.

Bob Parris is so much an exile from leadership that he dropped his well-publicized last name of Moses last February and left Mississippi where he was the first SNCC worker to go to Birmingham to "talk to my neighbor." He says, "The people on the bottom don't need leaders at all. What they need is the confidence in their own worth and identity to make decisions about their own lives."

In SNCC's April newsletter, Jimmy Garrett expanded on the theory of egalitarian leadership:

"We are taught that it takes qualifications like college education, or "proper English" or "proper dress" to

lead

people. These leaders can go before the press and project a "good image" to the nation and to the world. But after a while the leaders can only talk to the press and not with people.

Whyte's Program To Give

By JON WHYTE

First of all we've got to have our own goofy activity, something like piano smashing but different . . . but not too different. I suggest that we instigate the practice of making mountains from coke bottles. It's never been done and that's the important thing. Bring your empties to the next football game, and we'll build one during half time.

Then we have to have a fetish. Something close to camp, but a bit further out. A campout? No, it hasn't got that last frontier zing. Movies are always good for a blast as long as you've got a hero. I recommend Harold Lloyd taken very seriously. You know, the building climb as a parody of the Horatio Alger story. The seriouser the better.

And an opiate is requisite. The American kids have mary jane, heroin, reefers, lysurgic acid, goofballs, C2's, aspirins and coke, glue bottles, nicotine and alcohol all sewed up. We'll take our cue from the masterful socialist writers: Religion is the opiate. When all ten thousand of us show up at church it'll shock everyone. And

that's what we want, isn't it?

And clothing. Capes for the men and high riding boots. Perhaps a whip or two. For the girls? Picasso has had his chance. Ditto Mondrian. Jackson Pollack has never made it. So JP prints are going to come in big. With the Henry Moore distinctive gap at the midriff. Very sexy. Giacometti stockings and Wyndham Lewis gloves (shaped slightly like an Artzybasheff claw). Toss in a Modigliani brassiere and a Rubens girdle. Why, our women will be walking museums.

Literary figures for source books, too, are much the rage. Shakespeare's plays, according to an exclusive survey undertaken by me, are not being quoted on any American campus. He's all ours. I've even proceeded to get the idea copyrighted so we'd better act. But only the tragicomedies.

We've got to have a comic book hero, too. I'd like to bring Pogo back, but I realize he makes sense from time to time. And that would be beating my own paradiddles. Little Lulu, on the other hand, has never received the attention she deserves. Her sales are slipping

