THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND:
A STUDY IN MOBILIZATION

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This thesis is dedicated to the Vietnamese people, and to Hoa Trung Tran and Ngoc-Hao Phung Tran. I trust their lives will never be subject to the sufferings their countrymen endured.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the birth, life, and death of the Weather Underground Organization, a revolutionary group active in the United States during the early 1970s. The roots of the WUO can be traced directly back to the 1940s, and special emphasis is placed on the evolution of this organization through the earlier years.

It is observed that a definite relationship exists between the strategies of such a group and the doctrine which the same group adheres to. For the organization to survive, strategy and doctrine must be in general agreement, or at least have the flexibility to adapt to changes in the other.

This study, in examining both the Weather Underground Organization and the American society it existed within, suggests that the importance of this social context cannot be overestimated. Indeed, the conclusion of the paper is that, given the socio-historical context, the doctrine of the Students for a Democratic Society - its parent organization, and the strategies and tactics of the WUO, the birth, life, and death of the Weather Underground Organization was not only likely, it was inevitable.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

As much as any other topic, the field of social movement suggests itself as a primary target of sociological study. Nowhere is there as great a spectacle as the thousands upon thousands of people locked in a life or death struggle. Nothing can be more specifically sociological than viewing the dynamics and causes of such group action. To be sure, other variables are involved in such an analysis - economic, political, historical, psychological - yet, no phenomenon can be accurately represented with anything less than a holistic approach. This is not to suggest that what follows is an in-depth examination into the causes of social unrest. Rather, what will follow is a look at the mobilization process as illustrated by one group: the Weather Underground Organization. This will be couched in the overall framework that Karl Mannheim constructed in his work Ideology and Utopia (Mannheim, 1936). Mannheim, a seminal figure in twentieth century sociology, is best known for this work, and, to a lesser extent, his work "Essay on the Problem of Generations". In Ideology and Utopia, Mannheim discusses the function of thought and perception in precipitating social movements. While the discussion of his

specific paradigm can wait until later, we should recognize here the hypothesis of this project: that understanding thought, and its originators and context, can help to understand the conditions conducive to the occurance of a social movement.

In an effort to understand this mobilization, we shall select as our dependent variable the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) of the United States. Several justifications exist for such a choice:

a) Such a study may help to identify variables associated with terrorism.

b) We may be able to extrapolate from our results to consider theoretical terrorism.

c) This group has not yet been subjected to the rigorous study other, more famous groups have.

What follows, then, is a testing of the Mannheimian paradigm by applying it to a concrete example of collective behavior: the birth and life of the Weather Underground Organization. But first, we will conduct a review of literature. Next, a Mannheimian paradigm will be constructed. In the succeeding chapters, each component of

it will be tested by a specific application to the WUO, and an evaluation of Mannheim's paradigm provided. Finally, a conclusion will be presented, with suggestions for both replication and further study.

CHAPTER ONE - REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The amount of material written about social movements is surpassed only by the number of people actually involved in the movements. Our selection of material is facilitated if we focus on the actual issue at stake: mobilization. As such, a veritable deluge of recent literature presents itself - most notably the work of people like Oberschall (1970), Gurr (1964), Tilly (1968), Davies (1964), Kornhauser (1958), Johnson (1969), etc.

The first source to be noted here is Anthony Oberschall's Social Conflict and Social Movements (Oberschall, 1970). In this work, Oberschall supplies us with a classification index for the various strategies employed at different times by conflict groups. Oberschall demonstrates how conditions often determine a particular strategy or tactic as much as the group's professed program. Accordingly, his work offers itself as useful for our purposes in two basic ways: First, in showing the role of each strategy, - and second, in delineating the particular social and group conditions conducive to mobilization, and ultimately, a social movement.

To a large extent, Oberschall's work exists in direct juxtaposition to that of Kornhauser's "Mass Society Theory," (Kornhauser, 1958). Here, Kornhauser argues that it is the socially atomized society which is most predisposed toward mobilization, arguing that when groups are cut off, mobilization is one of their most obvious options. By appealing to these atoms individually, mobilization can occur. Oberschall, while not dismissing the relevance of atomization and anomie, argues that - on the contrary - this situation usually inhibits mobilization. His argument states that it is by utilizing primary and secondary associations (bridge clubs, labor unions, etc.) that mobilization most readily and effectively occurs. The principal example used is that of Hitler's rise to power and his manipulation of various associations in doing so - including former army groups, ladies circles, beer drinking clubs, soccer teams, etc.

While Chalmers Johnson's Revolutionary Change (Johnson, 1969) does not deal specifically with the idea of mobilization, his equilibrium theory is worthy of mention here. There are four basic variables, Johnson argues, that can predict the relative likelihood of a revolutionary social movement. These are endogenous value change, exogenous value change, endogenous environmental change, and exogenous environmental change. Since Johnson assumes that society is naturally in a state of equilibrium, any change in any of these variables not accompanied by a corresponding

change in the others throws the society out of balance. Depending on the society's ability to adapt to change, it either corrects itself and goes on in equilibrium or continues unbalanced in an accelerating fashion - ultimately creating the chaotic situation presumably conducive to a social movement.

Johnson's chief liability lies with his beginning assumption - that society is naturally at peace and that conflict is abnormal. In addition to classic sociological theorists like Marx and Simmel, others - including Mills (Mills, 1949), Lenski (Lenski, 1956), van den Berghe (van den Berghe, 1960), Frank (Frank, 1960), Zeitling (Zeitling, 1962), Bottomore (Bottomore, 1965), etc. - have made that assumption questionable. Each theorist has posited an alternative to the "equilibrium theory" posited by Johnson. In their respective theories, society is envisioned as a dynamic process, with conflict - not equilibrium - as the norm. Nevertheless, it is likely that Johnson's belief that dramatic change is conducive to social unrest is valid (Although certainly no more than its inverse corollary - that social unrest is conducive to dramatic change).

Walter Laquer, in his work Terrorism (Laquer, 1975) comes closest to establishing a theory of terrorism. While it is questionable that the Weather Underground Organization could be classified as terrorist, his chapter "The Sociology of Terrorism," nevertheless offers several variables which

could be used in this work. These include organization, finance, intelligence, the arsenal, media support (or lack of), popular support (or lack of), and the effectiveness of counterterrorist tactics (Laquer, 1975, pp. v-vii). These variables are helpful in unraveling the "hows and whys" of the mobilization of the Weather Underground Organization.

Addressing the issue of mobilization is William Gamson, notably in two separate works: "Stable Unrepresentation in American Society" (Gamson, 1966), and "Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics" (Gamson, 1967). Unfortunately, his assertions seem most applicable at the micro or community level of studying power rather than any discussion of mobilization. He does edge toward our topic, however, when he discusses "rancorous conflict".

By rancorous conflict, Gamson means "conflict where feelings of 'dirty,' 'vicious,' etc. are present. . ." (ASR, February, 1966). By analyzing a total of eighteen different towns (which differ in the extent to which the towns undergoing shifts in political control and structural integration) he concludes that participative political structure is conducive to rancorous conflict (Gamson, 1966, p. 44).

More helpful than this however, is Gamson's The Strategy of Social Protest (Gamson, 1975). In this work, Chapters Four through Seven are particularly interesting, with Chapter Six - regarding violence - offering valuable

contributions to our understanding of the WUO's use of violence. Since many of this paper's conclusions are consistent with Gamson's ideas, Chapter Six will be discussed more fully in the Conclusion.

Another type of general theoretical source is what I have chosen to call the "pathological perspective", one characterized by Crane Brinton's The Anatomy of Revolution (1938) and Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian's Collective Behavior (1957). Whereas each have their own advantages, I have chosen not to utilize them because of their particular disadvantages. Whereas Brinton's model is static and Turner and Killian's dynamic, they both tend to view the social movement as somehow unnatural, objectionable, ultimately ineffective, and at least marginally pathological. Although this may be true, the concerns of this paper deal with mobilization and the relationship between doctrine, strategy, and tactics. So despite what advantages this perspective may bring to an understanding of social movements, it is not directly helpful to this inquiry.

In discussing the study topic itself, however, a somewhat larger number of works suggest themselves as being valuable. More than any other topical source, Susan Stern's With the Weathermen was used (Stern, 1974). An ex-Weatherwoman, this is Stern's personal journal of her involvement with the movement. Beginning with her Students for a Democratic Society - inspired radicalization, Stern

moves on to discuss her estrangement from her husband and the evolution of her own revolutionary mentality. Her forte is her psychoemotional insight written in an extremely personal manner. She is candid in virtually everything. She admits, for example, that at different points her association with the group was for different reasons: security, sex, drugs, etc. Accordingly, the Weather Underground Organization gave her what she needed when she needed it. The book is punctuated with references to fits of extreme depression, periods of intense doubt, and lapses into what she calls "bourgeois counterrevolutionary consciousness" (Stern, p. 81).

It is a diary, with an almost daily recounting of her thoughts and deeds. As such, it is an extremely personal recounting. While this honesty is its chief utility, it is also the book's greatest deficiency - the lack of any consistent theoretical line or objectivity. As such, it is difficult to separate events from emotions. Of particular interest are Stern's characterizations of the Weather Bureau (WUO leadership): Bernardine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, Bill Ayers, Jeff Jones, Cathy Wilkerson, Kathy Boudin, etc. According to Stern, they are all intelligent, likable people - with the notable exception of Rudd. Taken as a quasi-participant/observation analysis, With the Weatherman is invaluable.

Of significant value also is Weatherman, edited by Harold Jacobs (Jacobs, 1970). Strongly advocative, Weatherman stands as the bridge between the primary source and the Time - Newsweek commentaries and analyses. That is, Jacobs used both primary sources and pieces written about the WUO - even when negative. Its value lies in the presentation of documents that cannot be considered either primary or secondary sources - that is, letters, correspondence, poems, etc. written by Weatherpeople. Often, this correspondence was intended to be private and as such is remarkably candid and forthright. Consisting of fifty-six documents, Jacobs paints the picture of a humane, highly dedicated and motivated group of people. By using the documents selectively, we can complement our knowledge of the WUO.

SDS, by Alan Adelson provides the "opposition," in that it looks at the WUO from the Progressive Labor Party's (PL) point of view (Adelson, 1972). Beginning with the 1969 split, Adelson details PL's path for the next year. Mirroring the PL line, Adelson seems unduly concerned with establishing the group's respectability among the working class. The analysis offered is valuable in that it does very clearly point out the Weather Underground Organization's inadequacies; notably elitism and self-righteousness. It is just as advocative as Jacob's work however, so of limited value.

Cumulatively, primary sources offered a great deal of assistance. The various communiques, books, pamphlets, etc. were used whenever possible. Of particular importance is Prairie Fire, by the Weather Underground Organization (WUO, date unknown). Their manifesto, Prairie Fire, analyzes the world situation in Weather terms. It articulates the group's beliefs, attitudes, and strategies for ushering in the redemptive revolution so urgently sought by the WUO. While it is short and well-written, it is difficult reading, nonetheless, because of the group's excessive use of rhetoric. As a clear and accurate statement of the WUO's goals and strategies, it is unmatched.

In a more contemporary vein, issues of the Weather Underground's magazine/newspaper Osawatomie proved useful (WUO, 1973-1975). Here current events are analyzed via the "Weather line." Rather than merely being an analysis, however, it illustrates the salience of group goals and beliefs in the perception of their world, or, as Mannheim would say, their milieu.

For a discussion and historical accounting of SDS - the parent organization of the WUO - SDS by Kirkpatrick Sale is unsurpassed (Sale, 1973). In its six hundred and ninety-three pages, Sale takes us from the embryonic conception of SDS in 1960 to where it is currently - the Weather Underground Organization. Sale uses a cast of hundreds to show the evolution of one of the most prominent

radical organizations in American history from one of dedication to the goals of the Civil Rights Campaign to the obsession with a victory for the Viet Cong. It is a chronological accounting, listing particular events and their perpetrators. Sale gives us the conception and childhood of the Weather Underground Organization.

Quantitative research by its very nature makes it irrelevant and inapplicable to this study. The Weather Underground Organization is a clandestine, underground organization which does not lend itself very well to quantitative methods. Sampling, testing, representation, etc. are impossible - the Weather Underground would be most difficult to interview, deliver a questionnaire to, etc. Additionally, their record of cooperation with such endeavors is rather poor. There are very few interviews available, and these offer more rhetoric and philosophy than "objective" data. There are no participant-observation studies available.

CHAPTER TWO - A LOOK AT MANNHEIM

There are many things which render Karl Mannheim helpful to our analysis, the most pertinent of which is his seminal work Ideology and Utopia. Mannheim's value to us is that his approach not only allows for, but actually demands, a high level of objectivity in analysis. This viewpoint demands an objective formulation of subjective outlooks. While it is probably impossible to remain completely objective and detached, the greater the objective rendering, the greater the possibility of "real" accuracy. Intrinsic in Mannheim's approach is a recognition of the relevance of the socio-historical setting:

> The principal thesis of the sociology of knowledge is that there are modes of thought which cannot be adequately understood as long as their social origins are obscured. It is indeed true that only the individual is capable of thinking. There is no such metaphysical entity as a group mind which thinks over and above the heads of individuals, or whose ideas the individual merely reproduces. Nevertheless it would be false to deduce from this that all the ideas and sentiments which motivate an individual have their origins in him alone, and can be adequately explained solely on the basis of his own life experience . . . thought in the concrete setting of the historical-social situation . . . (Mannheim, 1936, p. 2).

This establishes the first major component in our Mannheimian paradigm: the necessity of viewing all other components in a socio-historical context. The need for this component is really quite apparent. The scholar always has the advantage of hindsight. To that end, it is very easy for him to term an incident, action or mode of thought "fanatical," whether or not there is any actual understanding or familiarity with the incident's, action's, or mode of thought's background.

The title of the work Ideology and Utopia provides us with our paradigm's second major component: the ideology/utopia dichotomy. These two terms will be used mainly to describe types of thought patterns. For the second of the two title concepts, Mannheim defines the utopian state of mind as follows:

> A state of mind is utopian when it is incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs. This incongruence is always evident in the fact that such a state of mind in experience, in thought, and in practice, is oriented toward objects which do not exist in the actual situation. However, we should not regard as utopian every state of mind which is incongruous with and transcends the immediate situation. Only those orientations transcending reality will be referred to us as utopian, which, when they pass over into conduct, tend to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time (Mannheim, 1936, p. 192).

In contrast, (particular) "ideology" is defined in the following way:

> Ideologies are regarded as more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation, the

> true recognition of which would not be in accord with his interests. These distortions range all the way from conscious lies to half-conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception (Mannheim, 1936, p. 114).

More often than not, an ideology and utopia are two distinctly opposite ways of viewing the same phenomenon. The utopian mode of thought is incongruous with the ideological mode of thought, for while the utopian approach demands a different reality (a "real" difference; a substantial change), the ideological approach attempts to justify the current state of affairs. It is essential not to confuse other terms with these two, particularly political ones. For example, a utopia is not necessarily "left," "liberal," or "progressive," and an ideology is not necessarily "right," "conservative," or "regressive." These terms themselves cannot acquire such near-universal meanings: they are dictated through the interplay of several variables, most notably the socio-historical context. That is, when and where a phenomenon occurs is essential to any characterization of it. Since there is no absolute definition of a utopia, it can be explained only in relative terms. Relative meanings of terms like "left," "liberal," etc. change according to location and the particular time of its expression.

The third component in our paradigm is what Mannheim terms "The Forms of the Utopian Mentality," of which there are four. "Orgiastic chiliasm" is the first. This is a

devoutly firm belief in the imminence of the utopia: "They [goals] were felt to be realizable - here and now - and infused social conduct with a singular zeal" (Mannheim, 1936, p. 222). It is to be understood as different from mere support of an idea or commitment to it. The utopia is now imminent - worthy of any and all sacrifices to usher it in - it is inevitable. It is devotion and dedication in the ultimate sense; examples include the Anabaptists (Mannheim's example), early Christians, Bolsheviks, Hitler's Schutzstaffel, etc.

The Liberal-Humanitarian Idea is the second form. The key to understanding this form is the word "idea." It is a blueprint, a plan, a standard by which reality is judged and evaluated. Also capable of inspiring a person to action, it does not require the degree of dedication and monasticism required by the first form (Mannheim, 1936, p. 240). Examples here may include the American Democratic Party under George McGovern, the Anglican utilitarians of Jeremy Bentham, etc.

The Conservative Idea is the third form. As such, it's utopia in the past: it looks backward. Examples might include Pietism (Mannheim's example), the American middle class, and pre-Luther Christians of the Holy Roman Empire.

The socialist-communist utopia is the fourth form. While this form tends to see society through almost strictly socio-economic terms, it rejects the haste of chiliasm,

sublimating ecstatic energies to cultural values (Mannheim, 1936, p. 245). Examples include the current left wing of the German Social Democratic Party, the American Socialist Worker's Party, etc. Generally, this form is identified fairly closely with the thought of Eduard Bernstein. As Mannheim says:

> The utopian element in socialism . . . represents not merely a compromise but also a new creation based upon an inner synthesis of the various forms of utopia which have arisen hitherto and which have struggled against one another in society (Mannheim, 1936, p. 240).

This is not to present these forms as being mutually exclusive categories: they are not. Rather, they are heuristic aides for studying any given utopian mentality. For example, it is possible to zealously work for socialism, rendering that individual marginal in Mannheim's typology between chiliasm and the socialist-communist utopia. Therefore, it is by combining various measures of each of these that a real understanding of any given utopia may be reached. As our inquiry progresses, each component will be expanded to include related considerations.

In summary then, four paradigm components present themselves as operational:

1) What was the socio-historical context in which the Weather Underground Organization evolved?

2) What ideas can be identified as ideological or utopian?

3) What kind(s) - if any - of the utopian mentality characterize the WUO?

4) How does the mobilization of the WUO reflect their utopia?

By answering each question in turn, a picture of the WUO will be painted - a picture that is cogent and understandable because it is couched in a consistent theoretical framework: Mannheim's. The measure of the proposed test will be how well Mannheim renders the WUO "understandable." With the paradigm constructed and these considerations in mind, let us now discuss the WUO's socio-historical context.

CHAPTER THREE - THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

January, 1942. World War II was in progress, and events happened rather quickly: Germany and Russia were "bleeding each other to death" in the snow of the steppes, Rommel was gearing up for another series of offensives in Tunisia, and Japan was evicting American occupants of Pacific atolls with increasing rapidity. At approximately the same time Reichsmarshall Hermann Goering was requesting Mussolini's help for a "final" push on Moscow, Bernard Ohrnstein was pacing in a maternity waiting room in a Chicago hospital. Minutes later, he was the fond father of Bernardine Rae Ohrnstein - later to be known as Bernardine Dohrn (WUO, 1971).

While the roots of the Weather Underground goes considerably further back - Bernardine Dohrn, their leader, go back only as far as January 12, 1942. As Mannheim would tell us, we must recognize the relevance of history in determining the milieu into which Dohrn was born. In 1942 and for the next several years, the world witnessed a "baby boom." It was a boom that produced the participants in the

struggles of the late sixties, including Bernardine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, Jeff Jones, Bill Ayers, Kathy Boudin, Cathy Wilkerson, etc. In 1950, when President Harry Truman was becoming increasingly worried about the cold war, on one hand, and Dwight Eisenhower, on the other, Bernard Dohrn (who changed his name from Bernard Ohrnstein to facilitate his career as a credit manager) was moving his family to Whitefish Bay, a suburb of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The following years were typical, as far as Bernardine was concerned: she received above-average grades; was active in literally dozens of high school activities, becoming editor of the high school paper; joining Future Nurses, etc.

While the 1950's are remembered in the United States by the activists of the 60's and 70's as the "Cold War Years" - years of stagnancy and quietude - there were socializing forces acting on the minds of Dohrn and her future colleagues. In the election of 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower became President of the United States running on a "peace" ticket. What followed were prosperous years - years in which the majority of Americans were more interested in preserving their economic gains than in adventuring toward new governmental programs. Hence, a period of "middle of the road" politics began, with Washington openly flaunting a "businessman's administration." With a continuing emphasis on a balanced budget, the Eisenhower administration and the country as a whole - were moving slowly but steadily toward

the right. Despite the continued power of right-wing members of Congress, Americans moved closer to increasing their own civil liberties - especially after the Korean armistice. The hunt for subversives in the government, however, was intensified early in the Eisenhower administration, largely because of the influence of Senator Joe McCarthy. Large numbers of employees resigned or were dismissed; the administration at one point gave their total as 2,200 (Caute, 1974, p. 212). Yet, most of the serious security risks had already been ousted in the Truman administration. A study of some four hundred of the Eisenhower administration cases by the Fund for the Republic of the Ford Foundation indicated that in a majority of them the charges had been insupportable, and often reinstatement ultimately followed (Caute, p. 231). In July, 1955, the Congress established a bipartisan Commission on Government Security to reevaluate the security program (Caute, p. 231).

Senator Joseph McCarthy himself plummeted from the national limelight to relative obscurity. His downfall followed his serious blunder in obliquely attacking President Eisenhower and directly assailing Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens. Before these attacks in January, 1954, the Gallup poll showed fifty percent of Americans began doubting McCarthy and only twenty-nine percent opposed him (Caute, p. 291). The attacks led to Congressional hearings, and even before they began, the Gallup polls showed

forty-six percent opposing him (Caute, p. 291). For the first few days the hearings were a great national spectacle viewed by millions over television. Many people for the first time saw McCarthy in action, as he bullied and harried Secretary Stevens for thirteen days, evading issues through irrelevant countercharges and insinuations, and interrupting to object at every point. As the public watched, McCarthy seemed to change from a national hero into something of a buffoon - soon many people began to laugh. Nothing could have more rapidly deflated his demagogic power. Within a few days a bored public turned to other diversions, and television stations reduced their coverage of the hearings. In December, 1954, the Senate voted to censure McCarthy, but his hold over the American public had already largely disintegrated. He died in May, 1957, a ruined man, symbolic of the degree to which the nation had left behind the era of McCarthyism (Caute, 420).

Shortly after, in October, 1957, the Soviet Union announced that they had launched the first successful satellite, sputnik. As much as McCarthyism, sputnik caused a stir in American life. The long-held national complacency, secure in the knowledge of American technological superiority, began to crumble. Congress suddenly began appropriating increasingly large sums of money for research and Eisenhower's balanced budget was doomed (Sale, 1973, p. 61).

Meanwhile, Bernardine Dohrn was studying geometry and attending Future Nurses of America meetings. There is no record of her association with any leftist group at this point - even of expressing leftist attitudes (Sale, p. 131). This is typical of her classmates (and future colleagues) at the time, as the following figures suggest (American Teenager Magazine, January, 1957, p. 18):

TEENAGE OPINIONS (1957)

Statement	Agree	Disagree	N/O
Newspapers should be allowed to print anything but military secrets.	45%	54%	1%
Police shouldn't need search warrants.	26%	52%	22%
Some groups shouldn't be allowed to hold public meetings.	25%	50%	25%
Police should be able to arrest people without charging them.	17%	63%	20%
The Fifth Amendment is wrong.	33%	32%	35%
Scientists are evil.	14%	79%	7%
Foreign immigration should be curtailed because it lowers standards.	37%	37%	26%
Foreign ideas and groups pose the greatest threat to America.	38%	24%	38%

These results show little support for traditional American civil liberties such as freedom from unreasonable search, freedom to hold public meetings, and freedom to know one's

accuser and alleged transgression. Yet, the results also imply a fear of foreign ideas, immigration, etc. These results, together with the semantics of the interview questions, suggest a willingness on the part of the teenagers to possibly overlook civil liberties in the interest of greater national security - traditionally conservative ideas in this nation.

In the same year - 1957 - the Student league for Industrial Democracy (SLID) formed a student party called SLATE at Berkeley (Sale, p. 133). This group, whose parent was the League for Industrial Democracy (LID), had roots which went back to 1905. SLIDs'longevity lent it a certain inherent respectability. LID history spanned the two high points of twentieth century radicalism of the 1910s and 1930s. It was basically a social-democratic holdover with valuable skills in pamphleteering, chapter building, and conference holding. In 1957, SLID led a three-thousand strong student power demonstration at Cornell, a ten-thousand strong march for school desegregation in Washington, founded the Student Peace Union (SPU), and published the first issue of Studies on the Left (Student Peace Union, "Studies on the Left," undated). Then, in an effort to react to a sensed campus mood change, SLID changed its name - apparently in an effort to disassociate itself from the "older" LID. On January 1, 1960, much to the chagrin of the old-liners, SLID became SDS - Students for a Democratic Society (Sale, p. 184).

CHAPTER FOUR - BEGINNINGS

The turbulent sixties began in earnest on November 8, 1960 - the day John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States. Having won with a minority of states and with a plurality of only 0.2 percent, Kennedy ushered in "The New Frontier." John F. Kennedy was inaugurated on January 20, 1961 - not long after Students for a Democratic Society (Student League for Industrial Democracy had become Students for a Democratic Society early in 1960, feeling "industrial democracy" was too narrow a focus for their aims) had received a grant of ten thousand dollars from Detroit's United Automobile Worker's Union (Sale, p. 61). Because of this grant, Students for a Democratic Society was able to hire a full time national officer with the responsibility of strengthening and energizing the organization. The position was called "Field Secretary" and the individual hired was (Robert) Al Haber.

The fall of 1961 saw, along with the construction of the Berlin Wall, the recognition of Students for a Democratic Society - the WUO's parent organization - as a force on

scattered college campuses. By mid-fall Students for a Democratic Society claimed a membership of 575 and twenty campus chapters (Sale, Appendix). Although the beginnings of the New Left were emerging at the time, they apparently left Bernardine Dohrn untouched. Having developed rheumatic fever, she transferred back (her parents had since returned) to the University of Chicago to be nearer home. At the end of 1961, while John Kennedy was putting the finishing touches on his Peace Corps - Students for a Democratic Society met in convention at Ann Arbor, Michigan. At the conclusion, Tom Hayden, a young yet precocious intellectual, was assigned the task of formulating an organizational blueprint, a manifesto. So was conceived the idea for a Port Huron Statement - Students for a Democratic Society's manifesto (SDS, 1961, p. 1). Those in attendance could not have known it, but the slightly sardonic words at the bottom of their conference schedule would prove to be prophetic: "January 1st - the new left goes forth."

The following months were spent touring and organizing by Students for a Democratic Society adherents - and researching and writing by Hayden. His efforts proved worthwhile when his draft was approved at the Students for a Democratic Society Spring Convention at Port Huron, Michigan (June 11-15, 1962). The document begins:

> We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.

> When we were kids, the United States was the wealthiest and strongest country in the world: the only one with the atom bomb, the least scarred by modern war, an initiator of the United Nations that we thought would distribute Western influence throughout the world. Freedom and equality for each individual, government of, by, and for the people - these American values we found good, principles by which we could live as men. Many of us began maturing in complacency.
>
> As we grew, however, our comforts was penetrated by events too troubling to dismiss. First, the permeating and victimizing fact of human degradation, symbolized by the Southern struggle against racial bigotry, compelled most of us from silence to activism. Second, the enclosing fact of the Cold War, symbolized by the presence of the bomb, brought awareness that we ourselves, and our friends, and millions of abstract "others" we knew more directly because of our common peril, might die at any time. We might deliberately ignore, or avoid, or fail to feel all other human problems, but not these two, for these were too immediate and crushing in their impact, too challenging in the demand that we as individuals take the responsibility for encounter and resolution (SDS, p. 2).

Heavily influenced by sociology and C. Wright Mills in particular, four main themes were stressed: humanism, individualism, community and participatory democracy (SDS, p. 3). It said universities - not factories or legislatures - should be the base for social change. This is a judgment which reflects the values and occupation of SDSs' founders - students and intellectuals. Accordingly, six precepts emerged (SDS, p.5):

1) A new left must largely be an intellectual left;

2) A new left must be distributed in significant social roles throughout the country;

3) A new left must be young; it must continually recruit the young;

4) A new left must include liberals for relevance and socialists for thoroughness;

5) A new left must be committed to discussion and controversy;

6) A new left must relieve anomie.

As a direct result, Students for a Democratic Society severed an umbilical cord with the League for Industrial Democracy by emphasizing the young and intellectuals and de-emphasizing the factory as a focus of social change. It also effectively alienated the "Old Left" - people like Michael Harrington - who were committed to legislative reform. Students for a Democratic Society was on its own.

While the summer that followed was in many ways uneventful for SDS, the autumn of 1962 witnessed the Cuban missile crisis. The national organization of Students for a Democratic Society was technically headquartered in New York City, but it was neither efficient nor centralized. Although a great deal of energy and activity were expended, there were very few tangible results to be seen. Students for a Democratic Society was not even organized enough to publish a position paper. Nevertheless, two benefits eventually emerged from their silence: first, Students for a Democratic Society recognized not only the desirability, but the absolute necessity, of a centrally effective organization; and second, their inactivity prevented the mistakes only activity could engender. Other campus organizations acted, but more often then not, their protests were misdirected, or their tactics inappropriate. That is,

while Students for a Democratic Society did nothing, many other organizations responded inappropriately and actually lost support.

All the while, Students for a Democratic Society was growing. In an almost endless display of energy, members and organizers traveled the country organizing campus chapters wherever possible. By the fall of 1963, Students for a Democratic Society had grown to 1500, doubling their membership three times in three years (Sale, 1973, p. 73). Yet, their actual impact on American life was negligible, for in spite of the proclamations put forth in the Port Huron Statement, Students for a Democratic Society was ineffective. While Students for a Democratic Society functions were often brilliant affairs - sponsoring the likes of Paul Goodman, Herbert Marcuse and Tom Hayden, Students for a Democratic Society in practice was innocuous.

The 1963-64 school year was to be one of changes for Bernardine Dohrn, Students for a Democratic Society and the United States. Dohrn was now a senior at the University of Chicago. She would graduate that year with a Bachelor of Arts in history and spend her last year as a student with embryonic interests in politics. Meanwhile, Students for a Democratic Society increased their activity. Thousands of students turned from theory to action, from classroom to slums, going south to register voters in impoverished black communities, organizing unemployed workers in the decaying

inner cities, running tutorial projects for black high school students throughout the North, even joining government - approved Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) projects, poverty planning centers and cooperatives, or simply "dropping out" to live and work among the people. Having received positive feedback from potential funding sources like Walter Reuther and the United Auto Workers (UAW), Students for a Democratic Society moved into the community. Whether they knew it or not, they were attempting - like the Russian Narodniki (A Russian revolutionary group which looked to the peasantry for the revolution) before them to force an alliance between the intelligentsia and the people. As spring arrived, so did the money. The United Auto Workers donated five thousand dollars, enough to begin the big summer push (Sale, p. 75). The effort was called ERAP - Economic Research Action Project. It was one of the Students for a Democratic Society's biggest disasters.

The Students for a Democratic Society learned a harsh lesson. Attempting to work with, and organize, the urban working classes, the students came face to face with the reality of social class. Suspicious of their efforts, residents refused to associate with the students. Because of their lack of street experience, the students became increasingly alienated and separated from the communities they were trying to help. As funding expired, so did the

Students for Democratic Society's belief in the worth of their project. In addition, John Kennedy was assassinated in November. He was followed into office by Lyndon Johnson. The aftermath of the Kennedy death produced a ream of different explanations for it, none of them terribly flattering to the establishment, and the most convincing of which (to radicals in general and the SDS in particular) suggested the complicity of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Dallas police force and Lyndon Johnson himself.

Meanwhile, in a conference from April 15-18, 1964, the Progressive Labor Movement officially formed itself into the Progressive Labor Party (Adelson, 1972, p. 4). It claimed a membership of six hundred or so, but the number was not important. The open, hard militancy of the group, their free acknowledgement that they were communists, their heavy influence on organizing the Black urban working class trips to Cuba in defiance of the government and their contempt toward the House Un-American Activities Committee, their analysis of the war in Vietnam as consistent with an American "imperialism" - made it noticed and attractive on the college campuses. With the exception of the Students for a Democratic Society itself, no other group was as instrumental in creating the Weather Underground Organization as Progressive Labor.

Faced with a choice between Lyndon Johnson and Barry Goldwater in the autumn of 1964, Bernardine Dohrn - as did

many of her colleagues - began to feel alienated. She was now attending graduate school at the University of Chicago trying to get a Master of Arts in history. Before this school year was out, students would be thrust on the consciousness of the country as never before. The Students for a Democratic Society began another project - PEP (Political Education Project). Intending to support Johnson only because Goldwater was considered dangerous, PEP developed into Students for a Democratic Society's first serious faction fight, with PEP and its adherents being decisively defeated by a stronger anti-political segment. Then Berkeley erupted into massive anti-administration demonstrations. The Free Speech Movement really began on the California campus on September 14, 1964. While Students for a Democratic Society did not involve itself, it was not long until the significance of the event was felt within the organization. In an attempt to anticipate the future and organize for it, Students for a Democratic Society proclaimed solidarity with the protesting Californians. Many campus students felt the impact of the event and Students for a Democratic Society gained from it. Even Bernardine Dohrn was touched: she quit graduate school to enroll in the University of Chicago Law School - planning a career as a liberal lawyer. To her, the liberal arts world seem increasingly remote.

Suddenly, a dramatic change occurred within Students for a Democratic Society. Up until then it was an organization without a formal purpose. While many members were motivated by the Civil Rights issue, the formal organization did little more than offer the generalities found in the Port Huron Statement. In February, however, the guerilla fighters of South Vietnam staged an attack against an outpost at a town called Plei Ku, and on February 7, 1965, Lyndon Johnson decreed that America bomb the North, and that Americans in Vietnam be increased 800 percent by the year's end (Westmoreland, 1978, p. 114). Shortly, places like Minnesota, Illinois, Baltimore and Boston awoke: Students for a Democratic Society's national office began receiving many phone calls, encouraging action and requesting direction. Students for a Democratic Society operated in top gear: Joan Baez gave it 10,000 dollars, ten new chapters were formed and membership increased to 2500 (Sale, 1973, p. 81).

Finally on April 17, 1965, Students for a Democratic Society sponsored its first peace march. Over 25,000 people marched, including Staughton Lynd, the entertainers Phil Ochs, Joan Baez, Judy Collins, and many other celebrities (Sale, p. 111). In a period of approximately six hours, Students for a Democratic Society was noticed. The same television set which brought Plei Ku into American homes now brought in Students for a Democratic Society as well. That

school year ended with 3000 Students for a Democratic Society (Sale, p. 140). It also ended with a change in direction for Students for a Democratic Society itself: no longer could the organization's approach be considered to be reform - it was now resistance to the war and, in a larger sense, the American government.

CHAPTER FIVE - THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

The Washington march of thousands (see Chapter Four) had changed SDS. Kirkpatrick Sale, author of the authoritative SDS, characterizes the "new breed":

> For the first time at an SDS meeting people smoked marijuana; Pancho Villa mustaches, those droopy Western-movie addenda that eventually became a New Left cliche, made their first appearance in quantity, blue workshirts, denim jackets, and boots were first worn by men and women. These were generally people raised outside of the East, many from the Midwest and Southwest, and their ruralistic dress reflected a different tradition, one more aligned to the frontier, more violent, more individualistic, more bare-knuckled and callus-handed, than that of the early SDS era. They were non-Jewish, nonintellectual, non-urban, from a non-professional class, and often without any family tradition of political involvement, much less radicalism (Sale, p. 423).

Not only that, but they were far from being intellectual leftists. Few had read Marx and/or Lenin, Weber, Luxembourg, Bernstein, or John Stuart Mill. Few had read C. Wright Mills, Paul Goodman, Frantz Fanon and Herbert Marcuse - they were not academicians. Their background was not in social theory, political science, or radical history. If they pursued their goals intellectually, it was probably reading contemporary, advocative material. The motivation

for joining SDS had changed: intellectual reason and critique were downplayed (Sale, p. 461). What had set in was a combination of contagion and "political thought" - Students for a Democratic Society and civil disobedience had caught on, suddenly they were chic. The snowball effect on some campuses made a student "weird" if he did not sympathize with SDS. The consciousness that this produced was what Mannheim would have termed "political." No longer did the students simply advocate their philosophy, it was now customarily accompanied by a beratement of any opposing point of view. Battle lines were being drawn and the nation was becoming increasingly polarized.

With the advent of national notoriety, SDS developed a consciousness of its identity, not only reinforcing their political thought, but further assisting in the formation of conflict groups. Once the pro and anti-war groups were formed, conflict became increasingly inevitable. In the summer of 1965, SDS met at their annual convention at Kewadin, Michigan. Most notably, they amended their constitution so as not to exclude communists from membership and full participation. At the same time, the Progressive Labor Party held its first convention. It decided to use the war in Vietnam as an organizing tool and named what it considered to be the enemy:

> We posed liberalism as the main ideological danger to the developing radical movements. . . We estimated that liberalism had received a crushing defeat and had lost a great deal of its potency (Adelson, p. 101).

Almost unknown to each other at this point, their (PL and SDS) coming association would be the Armageddon of American radical politics - that is, the cataclysmic end of this period of radical American politics. Never before, and not since, has the United States witnessed the raucous conflict that would soon come to be prevalent. The only point separating them now was SDS' ignorance of how to use the War in Vietnam as an organizing tool. While it had become the largest issue on the Left, seemingly only PL knew how to use it.

On Thursday, October 14, 1965, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, the syndicated columnists whose two most important outlets then were the Herald Tribune and the Washington Post, accused SDS of treason for issuing the following proposals (Evans and Nowak, Washington Post, October 14, 1965, p. 41):

> -- "Conscientious Objector" status was personal protest and hence, desirable;
> -- Campus recruiting and ROTC should be protested;
> -- Local draft boards should be demonstrated against.

Friday morning, October 15, 1965, SDS had taken two giant steps. First, it had finally issued concrete suggestions for using the War as an organizing tool; and second, much of the American public now viewed SDS as a radical juggernaut - a totally despicable organization. The next day U.S. Attorney Nicholas Katzenbach announced that the anti-draft movement was moving in the direction of treason, and hence subject to government surveillance (Associated Press, New York Times,

October 15, 1965, p. 39). Monday, October 18, 1965, SDS was famous. From this point on, SDS was truly autonomous - able to rely on its own income (from contributions) to support itself. It was an autonomy retained until the end.

Walter Laqueur, in Terrorism, presents finance as one of the most helpful variables in studying terrorism (Laquer, 1974, p. i). Groups like Irgun, the Irish Republican Army, and even the Molly Maguires at one point or another turned to robbery to finance their operations. This he argues, was another kind of "terrorism" - be it more subtle - for it was the middle class who usually suffered from this kind of "reappropriation." It is extremely important to point out here that SDS never stole anything - theft was something they avoided conspicuously, and the Weather Underground continued the tradition. In so far as at least one variable is concerned (finance), the WUO was not terrorist.

To add fuel to the flames, early in February, General Lewis B. Hershey, the director of the Selective Service System, announced that college students would be drafted for Vietnam (Associated Press, New York Times, February 11, 1966, p. 1). As SDS sprang into high gear, radical organizations throughout the United States came to recognize them as the Movement's vanguard. Even the Progressive Labor Party felt its goals could best be attained by working within SDS: Jeff Gordon, PL's president, applied for SDS membership on February 17, 1966.

Meanwhile, membership continued to grow. By spring there were 172 chapters serving 15,000 members (Sale, p.479). Still, Bernardine Dohrn was unaffiliated. Surely, her consciousness was developing: she became a volunteer in an unsuccessful congressional campaign, worked one summer in an anti-poverty program in New York, joined Martin Luther King's crusade to push open housing in the Chicago suburbs, and gave her legal services on behalf of rent strikers in Chicago ghettos. It was during this last adventure that she met many people associated with the various radical projects, making friends and allies who would continue with her for several years.

In the summer of 1966, SDS met in convention at Clear Lake, Iowa - the symbolism of which must have been viewed as delectable by the participants. This was not intellectual New York or radical San Francisco - it was Iowa: the backwater of American radical politics. And here was SDS - smoking marijuana, cursing Lyndon Johnson, and making love. The antiwar movement was now close to being considered a social movement. Here in Iowa it was evident that opposition to the war knew no single class, no single sex, or no single region. No longer was it confined within the cosmopolitan East or the cultural divergence of the Pacific West - now the rural Midwest was also in the "Movement's" camp. The new SDS adherents were not atomized individuals or groups as Kornhauser - who posited the Mass Society

Theory of Mobilization - suggests: these were people with a considerable stake in the current system. And as Oberschall - who debunked Kornhauser, pointing to the utility of organizations in mobilization - suggests, they were mobilized through at least one prominent, common association, they were for the most part students, often recruited as groups, not merely individuals. Group after group - Midwest Students Against the War, Out Now, etc., were submerging their identities to forge a larger, greater whole - Students for a Democratic Society. It was at this convention that SDS first appeared as a separate group within a larger SDS containing PL as well. Yet, since their numbers were small and their influence slight, they went almost unnoticed. Indeed, SDS was largely unnoticed the next year. While they were very much in evidence on the campus, their presence was colorless. As much a part of the university as the campus center or bookstore, SDS "faded into the limelight."

Then, the summer of 1967 arrived and the counterculture's popularization began. There was the emergence of the hippie movement into a powerful and pullulating force in America. Here were the runaways - thousands of teenagers forsaking their suburban homes and high schools in favor of communal living. They crammed bus stations and interstate diners, looking for transportation to their mecca. Here were the orgies and the arrival of genuine "free love." Now group sex and its counterparts attained political status, for it

was one more way to reject the values of their backgrounds. Underground newspapers such as The Seed, The Great Speckled Bird, etc. claimed readerships in the thousands (Learner, 1972, p. 90), all eagerly devouring the "us-against-them" harangues that in the publications abounded. LSD became still another symbol of rebellion, as people began looking inside themselves for answers. The result - a culture built around phosphorescent paints, posters, etc. Timothy Leary (an ex-psychology professor at Harvard) advised America to take acid (LSD) and drop out. And above and through it all were the LSD-inspired chords and lyrics of revolution, delivered most prominently by San Francisco based rock groups - most notably the Jefferson Airplane.

SDS had grown to 247 chapters and 30,000 members (Sale, p. 501). By now it was without question the largest, best-known, and most influential student political group in the country, easily more important and dynamic than such preadamites as the Young Democrats, Young Republicans, or Young Americans for Freedom - it was now the only large student group on the Left. While it was by no means intellectual, it was the most articulate. It was also in June that Bernardine Dohrn had given up the idea of becoming a lawyer and working within the courts, and opted instead for a full-time life within the movement. That fall she joined the National Lawyer's Guild. What the month meant to Bernardine Dohrn in Mannheimian terms was a shift from the

liberal-humanitarian idea to chiliasm. No longer did she patiently believe in planned, programmed social change. The feeling within her now emerged that since the "Movement's" success was inevitable, her input was necessary to expedite the triumph. As such, everything but political work was assigned a secondary role. Now she was a consumed woman, living for the movement. Totally consumed, all she lacked was a vessel for her chiliastic energies.

Autumn brought with it the developing PL-SDS conflict. Lines were beginning to form and sides were taken. In October, the politics of SDS moved from attempted reform of draft laws, welfare programs, student rights, etc. to that of resistance to the draft, the police - all vestiges of American authority. The University of Wisconsin - a school with a history of radicalism, witnessed the first encounter. Representatives from Dow Chemical were on campus to recruit employees, so SDS greeted them. A major manufacturer of the napalm used in Vietnam, the action assumed a symbolic dimension - it was suddenly a confrontation between SDS and the American military-industrial complex. Ultimately, the students were victorious and Dow was forced to leave the campus.

It was at this point that SDS began a major strategy shift. From its inception as SLID, SDS had employed an educational strategy. Sociologist Edwin Rhyne explains this as an approach designed to convince people logically and

diplomatically of the correctness and efficacy of their programme (Rhyne, unpublished lecture March 14, 1976). Since SDS was always composed primarily of students, such an approach seemed only natural. After years of frustration with the system and its seeming unresponsiveness to SDS' educational attempts, the students began - almost unnoticed - a shift in favor of a confrontational strategy. Gamson's (American Sociological Review, 1974) notion of conflict being likely in a pluralistic society, as well as Oberschall's idea of pluralism being conducive to mobilization when normal channels of redress are closed, gained more and more validity.

What confrontational strategy did was drive the wedge deeper between PL and SDS. While SDS concentrated on its policy of resistance, PL scorned it in favor of their "base-building." Citing classic Marxist literature, Progressive Labor feared that confrontational actions were alienating rather than attracting the much sought working class or "proletariat," whom they were desperately trying to use as a "base": something upon which to build a revolutionary movement. Hence, they suggested a more subdued approach (which they felt the working class would look favorably upon), aimed at attracting the working class and building for the revolution.

At this point SDS was not building for a revolution, they were responding to social and political inequities.

They were resisting - not revolting. While SDS was becoming increasingly wrapped up in the "Youth Culture" - donning dashikis, smoking grass, listening to Jimi Hendrix (a rock guitarist/vocalist), and making love - PL was cutting their hair, listening to Frank Sinatra (a musical favorite of the older generation), pronouncing against drugs and issuing proclamations against sex. Similarly, PL rejected alliances with proletarian-unpopular groups such as the Black Panthers, Brown Berets, the FALN (a Puerto Rican nationalist group), Gay Liberation, etc. for fear of alienating what they perceived to be an increasingly conservative working class. They also rejected the "fun" of SDS, as Stern, a former Weatherwoman, calls it:

> At the close of the sixties, SDS was like a big family spread across America. You could travel almost anywhere, and you would have an enclave of friends who would welcome you. You always had a place to crash, some food, some dope, and some sex. You visited your relatives, whom you might not have seen for a year, and exchanged all kinds of news; number of busts in your chapter or among your friends, best kind of acid, who fucked whom, growth of chapters, number of demonstrations, number of college dropouts. You got to know your family from coast to coast; you saw it grow by leaps and bounds. Your collection of buttons and banners grew with your war scars, and so did your stories. And so did your comrades. And so did your faith in the viability of the revolution. It was a time of hard work and growth, but one was rewarded by a sense of belonging. One knew one's place in life, whom to depend on, and no matter where you were, you would be taken care of (Stern, 1973, p. 94).

What was evolving was a different society - perhaps a sub-society with a counterculture. They had different

values from the society on the whole, perceived phenomenon differently, and most important of all, behaved differently. They reinforced each other - financially, psychologically, and sexually: a strong, durable chain was being forged. More importantly for our purposes, conflict group formation was almost complete. Any return to normal now meant more than a political defeat, it also would mean a dramatic change in lifestyle, something not easily changed.

On January 1, 1968, Bernardine Dohrn had a late breakfast, spent the afternoon walking through New York's Lower East Side, and then returned to her Greenwich Village apartment to prepare for a three week journey to Great Britain. By now she was a woman of undeniable attractiveness, of medium height, with long brown hair, vibrant brown eyes, sharp features, and an air of eclectic, no-nonsense energy about her. In March, she and Naomi Jaffe published a paper in New Left Notes (SDS' newspaper) which analyzed women's liberation in terms of imperialism and women's exploitation (New Left Notes, March, 1968). It was her formal introduction to SDS.

These six months - from January to June, 1968 - wrought a slow metamorphosis on SDS. Students began talking about giving the system "one last chance" and "went clean for Gene." Eugene McCarthy (an anti-war, student supported, liberal democrat who met with considerable electoral success in the primaries while running for President) inspired

thousands of disillusioned students to take up his cause. Robert Kennedy, the epitome of vibrant, liberal youth, and Martin Luther King, the pacifist standard-bearer of the Civil Rights Movement, were both assassinated in the spring, and the American judicial system seemed to be lagging in efforts to enforce integration legislation.

Although SDS' membership reached a new high of 100,000 students in 350 chapters (Sale, p. 540), the effects of the McCarthy campaign were manifesting themselves: students worked within the electoral process, forsaking, at least temporarily, the confrontation policies of SDS. Open conflict with the status quo was at least temporarily averted, and SDS was worried. It brought this fear into its 1968 June convention. On Wednesday night of convention week, open warfare broke out between Progressive Labor and the other factions within SDS: raucous conflict had arrived in earnest. In response, an alliance of disparate people - some actionists, some pro-working class, some campus-directed, but all disorganized and troubled by PL - was formed into a rival caucus. The caucus put forth a slate of their officers to be presented to the convention: for Inter-organizational Secretary it chose Bernardine Dohrn, for National Secretary, Mike Klonsky, and for Education Secretary, Fred Gordon. It was a position Dohrn was especially well suited for - her main duty would be to recruit and organize college campuses. On Friday night

Dohrn faced the plenary to answer questions about her background and beliefs, as did the other candidates. In one of those answers, with only six words, she presaged the new direction that SDS would take in the final period of its history.

"Do you consider yourself a socialist?" someone in the crowd asked.

"I consider myself," Bernardine Dohrn said, "a revolutionary communist." She was elected without opposition - and only at this point became a member of SDS.

The summer of 1968 brought the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. While only about five hundred SDS members were actually on hand, the youth of Chicago supplied the manpower for the much-advertised demonstration. What followed were the riots and the ensuing radicalization of American youth. How much the incidents on Michigan Avenue actually affected America can only be speculated upon - although sociologist Kenneth Keniston feels it cannot be overestimated (Kenniston, 1968, p. 5). The election of 1968 pitted Hubert Humphrey against Richard Nixon, and Nixon won. This was the final blow for thousands of youth who first eliminated Lyndon Johnson from the race and supported Eugene McCarthy. Time after time radical and disillusioned youth of America's campuses gave America "another chance," and every time their country seemingly came up short. The frustrations they were feeling were real - for other

conflict groups (their counterparts: pro-war or simply anti-insurgent) were employing their own strategy - a manipulational one (they were attempting to implement their programme by manipulating the people in power electorally or legislatively). As Doris Kearns, biographer of Lyndon Johnson, pointed out, "As the war continued, propelled by a political process seemingly oblivious to their marches and meetings, this sense of hopelessness spread" (Kearns, 1973, p. 200).

Moving into that fateful spring of 1969, SDS was riddled by factionalism. PL's support was growing continually, largely because their perspective was seemingly more far-sighted and revolutionary. In response to this challenge, SDS National Office leadership, including Mike Klonsky, Les Coleman, Don Hammerquist, Jim Mellen and Howie Machtinger, set to work to fashion an SDS alternative. The result - the Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM):

> In order for SDS to succeed at this task it will take tremendous self-consciousness and discipline from the membership. . . Through collective political experience and study, a cadre can be developed who can bring these things to SDS. . . The reactionary nature of pacifism, the need for armed struggle as the only road to revolution (are) essential truths which were not predominant in our movement in the past. . . We (must) recognize the urgency of fighting white supremacy by building the material strength of the white movement to be a conscious, organized, mobilized fighting force capable of giving real support to the black liberation struggle (Klonsky, Coleman, Hammerquist, Mellen, Machtinger, 1969).

The paper condoned violence and revolution, declared solidarity with black liberation, and called for tighter organization and discipline. SDS-RYM was now employing almost exclusively the confrontational strategy, at the expense of all others - most notably the educational. Attempting always to be "more militant than thou," the various factions of SDS - most notably RYM - was also severely limiting its future growth potential by not employing the educational strategy. The immediate effects of such a decision were not evident: these were left for the Weather Underground to discover. Weatherman was now just a step away.

CHAPTER SIX - THE SPLIT

This raucous conflict - the internal rivalry between Progressive Labor (PL) and the Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM) - was brought into the Summer of 1969, and tore SDS apart. As Stern says: "The growing dissension in the National Office, and in local chapters between PL and the rest of SDS had been building toward a confrontation. We expected a big fight at the June convention, we anticipated chaos (Stern, p. 55)." In addition to the PL-SDS hostility, eleven SDSers - Karen Ashley, John Jacobs, Jeff Jones, Mark Rudd, Steve Tappis, Bill Ayers, Jim Mellen, Terry Robbins, Bernardine Dohrn, Gerry Long, and Howie Machtinger - published a paper entitled "You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows (RYM, 1969)." In it, they pushed for a still more militant line than that articulated by RYM. The document's title, borrowed from a Bob Dylan song, was especially symbolic, since PL hated Dylan and rock music in general. As Kirkpatrick Sale points out, it was not a document without thesis:

> But the most significant ideological force within SDS was a group of eleven New York and Midwestern intellectuals who had drawn up an analytical and programmatic thesis called simply,

> "You Don't Need A Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows" (the title is from Dylan -- a characteristic weapon for that group to use against PL). "Weatherman" was a 16,000 word paper which made the first and crucial attempt at defining an ideology and a program for SDS as a movement of the most aggressive part of white radical youth. As a basic platform, it was the first major overhaul SDS has had since the "Port Huron Statement" and "America and the New Era", long ago (five years seems like a century) in the organization's post-liberal infancy and puberty (Sale, p. 602)."

SDS was behind it. PL was not. They (PL) "looked clean-shaven, neatly dressed, and grim. When they weren't sloganeering they and their supporters sat in well-manicured rows on their side of the room" (Stern, p. 61). The entire convention was marked by chaos - people were screaming at each other, fighting with each other, or stamping their feet in unison. Organizationally and doctrinally, PL and RYM were far apart. Although both nominally a part of SDS, their differences were emphasized by the proximity of the various members within the organization. This was the "intellectual left" that Tom Hayden spoke of nine years earlier?

The second night of the convention, a small group of Black Panthers came to speak. They began innocently enough:

> After long study and investigation of Students for a Democratic Society and the Progressive Labor Party in particular, we have come to the conclusion that the Progressive Labor Party has deviated from the Marxist-Leninist ideology on the National Question and the right of self-determination for all oppressed people.
>
> We demand that by the conclusion of the National Convention of Students for a Democratic Society that the Progressive Labor Party change

> its position on the right to self-determination and stand in concert with the oppressed peoples of the world and begin to follow a true Marxist-Leninist ideology. . .
>
> If the Progressive Labor Party continues its egocentric policies and revisionist behavior, they will be considered as counterrevolutionary traitors and SDS will be judged by the company they keep and the efficiency and effectiveness with which they deal with bourgeois factions within their organization," (Sale, p. 605).

Stern recounts what happened next:

> The Panther's speech, which had begun as an attack on PL had ended with an attack on Women's Liberation, included a remark about "pussy power". Their line was that women should fuck anyone if necessary for the revolution.
>
> The room erupted into a seething mass of women, embarrassed and defensive men, momentarily united against the Panthers in defense of Women's Liberation. I was angry along with all the other women. I moved closer to the stage, screaming "male chauvinism" without much heart, when suddenly the Panther speaker shouted into the mike, "Superman was a punk because he never tried to fuck Lois Lane."
>
> I saw red. The remark was stupid but infuriating. I stood under the stage screaming with hundreds of other women (Stern, p. 61).

What followed was absolute pandemonium. Alternately, PL members, SDS members, and RYM members seized the microphone to have their say. Order was non-existent; the Convention was governed by mob rule (a perfect illustration of Gamson's "raucous conflict") (Gamson, p. 24). Then Mark Rudd was on stage, and the clamor seemed to abate when he begged everyone to "cool it." Suddenly, Bernardine Dohrn wrenched herself free from Mike Klonsky (who had been trying to restrain her) and "marched to the rostrum, hair flying, jaw set" (Stern, p. 62). Although virtually no one was able to

understand her, she screamed, "We're going to have to decide if we can stay in the same organization as these people (PL). Anyone who wants to talk about that, follow me into the next room" (Stern, p. 62).

> There was a momentary hush. Falteringly, one by one, people around the room began to stand up, and slowly followed Bernardine into the next room. I watched in amazement for a few seconds, then ran downstairs, feeling something big had just happened. . .
>
> Everything was in a bad state of confusion. Someone ran up to me excitedly screaming, "We're leaving, we're walking out," and went careening off. . . Now that the split was upon us, nobody knew how to react (Stern, p. 62).

Once outside, the group voted to expel PL. Although the legitimacy of this act could certainly be questioned, SDS' sincerity could not. The "walk-out" leadership drew up a statement for PL, and then, in formation, the group walked out and seized the speaker's platform. Stern continues:

> Bernardine was at the rostrum, with Rudd to the right of her, and me, by chance, standing to the left of her, and all the rest of SDS lined up across the stage, covering it in straight rows, standing, alert and proud, scrutinizing the audience carefully for any would-be assassins or attackers.
>
> Bernardine was talking, waving her arms, pointing into the audience. Her eyes flashed as she traced the counterrevolutionary positions of PL. . . She finished it by saying, "SDS can no longer live with people who are objectively racist, anti-communist, and reactionary. PL members and all others who don't accept our principles are no longer members of SDS" (Stern, p. 62).

With that, SDS began to die. Although PL assumed the name "SDS," it very quickly became a title without an organization. Despite the election of Fred Grodon the next

year (a convert from RYM, and an SDS veteran), the new "SDS" began to die. Local chapters withered away, leaving New England as the only geographic area - Boston, specifically - where their influence was felt. In 1975, (PL) SDS, feeling the title "Students for a Democratic Society" outdated and confining, changed the organization's name to "The Revolutionary Student Brigade" and finally, to the "Attica Brigade." Outside of a 1976 incident at Harvard, when four members beat a faculty member in an elevator (accusing him of "racism"), nothing has been heard from the group since then.

RYM similarly tried to make it, but found themselves in a position of marginality between PL and Weatherman. Like "SDS," RYM suffered from a lack of centralization, causing local chapters to fade from a lack of direction. When Weatherman broke into PL's national headquarters and took all membership lists, contacts, files, etc. (1970), Mike Klonsky, Chairman of RYM, became so frustrated that he resigned and returned home to California. This killed what was left of RYM, and all further activity centered around two abortive attempts - in 1973 and 1977 - to revive New Left Notes, SDS' official newsletter. Of the three groups, only Weatherman retained any organization to speak of, although it was able only to retain a membership of 8,000 (Sale, p. 824). One of the largest radical organization in American history was no more.

At this point, the transition from an educational strategy to a confrontational one was nearly complete. From now on, even attempts at "education" were confrontational, in that Weatherman characteristically dared people to disagree with them, the threat of physical violence lending an element of realpolitik to the situation. What should also be evident at this point is that the WUO (at that time known as "Weatherman") was not simply born as the result of a series of coincidences, it did not happen solely as the result of a chaotic convention, it did not occur at the prodding of a singularly charismatic leader (Dohrn), and it was not born out of the state of absolute hopelessness as many - Doris Stearns, Sidney Hook, Michael Harrington, etc. - would have us believe. The Weatherpeople were anything but hopeless . . . They believed their success was inevitable. Rather, the WUO was the logical and natural culmination of a plethora of variables, many of which have been mentioned here. Rather, the WUO was a direct result of all these things and more, too numerous and subtle to mention. This is what Mannheim tells us: the WUO did not occur in a void. Indeed, given the milieu and the socializing influences acting upon both SDS as a group and the people individually, the birth of the Weather Underground Organization was not only possible - it was virtually inevitable.

In concluding our discussion of the split in SDS, at least passing attention should be paid to sociologist Chalmers Johnson's notion of "transfer cultures." According to Johnson, a "transfer culture" is the element of the ideology (in our sense, utopia) which tells the revolutionaries what is necessary to implement their vision (Johnson, 1967, p. 100). In this case, RYM and PL possessed mutually exclusive transfer cultures, mirroring the kinds of disagreement which characterized American society at that time. These differences centered upon the difference of opinion on the working class, a difference we have already emplored. Suffice it to say here that the WUO's vision was of a youth culture, embodying rock music, drugs, sex, and their romantic revolutionary heros. PL, being more sensitive to the values of the American working class, chose instead to emphasize their supposed similarity to the working class, effectively snubbing rock music, drugs, sex, and the romantic revolutionaries which alienated this working class.

CHAPTER SEVEN - SOC-HISTORIC BACKGROUND OF THE WEATHERMAN

Recounting the historical development of a radical undergound is not nearly as easy as a student organization. As such, it is nearly impossible to be exhaustive - virtually no one but a group member knows what really happened. Records are incomplete and often conflict with each other. With this in mind, it should be obvious to all that the author claims no responsibility for an exhaustive recounting of events. The Weather Underground Organization can probably be studied best by dividing their activities into three distinct periods: Period I (June, 1969 - May, 1970) is characterized by the chiliasm (in a Mannheimian sense, a single-minded, all-encompassing zeal toward a goal) of the WUO. Accordingly, America's demise was both imminent and inevitable. Their strategy also reflects this: attempts at recruiting high school students, ultra-militantism, direct confrontation with police, etc. Period II is characterized by a decline in chiliasm, and, as a result, a less militant posture. Rather than direct confrontation, their actions assumed more of a symbolic

purpose. It was during this period that the group went "underground." Finally, Period III is marked by a general decline in all activity, the split in the WUO, and most recently, the surrender of Rudd, Wilkerson, Ayers, Machtinger, Jaffee, and Dohrn.

Kirkpatrick Sale describes reactions to the SDS split:

> The rafters of the Chicago Coliseum had hardly ceased to reverberate with the chants of the rival factions, when the ghost of Karl Marx was being heaped with blame for the SDS debacle. "Alas," mourned Establishment pundits in ill-concealed triumph, "the New Left has finally gone the primrose way of the Old. Marxism has at last cursed it with factional wars and historical irrelevance. The apostles of ultra-democratic revolution and 'power to the people' (the most incendiary notion in the modern world) have shown themselves ready, if inept practicioners of the art of political manipulation. The idol-smashing revolutionary vanguard has again been revealed as a latter-day religious cult prostrating itself before patron saints and overseas meccas, while suppressing the heresy of thought with mind-gluing incantations (Sale, p. 640).

While there was a great deal of concern after the summer convention of 1969 for the future of SDS and American radical politics in general, Weatherman probably felt none of it, as Stern points out:

> On the night of the walkout, I didn't worry about this. After listening to Bernardine, I would have followed her into Dante's inferno. If it was energy and brillance that enraptured me, rather than reality, I didn't care. I believed in the revolution with every quivering bone in my body. I was prepared to take on America, to do no less than save the world. I felt that I was a warrior of the people, and that I was fighting for freedom, that I had no choice, no matter what the odds. It was far better, I reflected against

> the mutterings of impending doom, to lose than not to have fought at all. Nor did I question the automatic assumption of leadership by the Weatherman faction. If I had any doubts, I repressed them; mine was a single-minded devotion that left no room for doubts (Stern, p. 164).

Shortly after the split, the Weather Bureau met in Flint, Michigan for a "War Council". At this conference it was decided that the United States was ripe for a direct assult on the "State". The "Days of Rage" were approved for that October. The scenario sketched out was as follows:

> As approved by the last NIC meeting, the action will take place over a four-day period, October 8-11. The scenario as it now stands will look like this:
>
> The action will start on Wednesday night, October 8, with a memorial rally for Che Guevara, who was murdered by CIA pigs October 8, 1967, and Nguyen Van Troi, the Vietnamese hero murdered by the U.S. October 15, 1964 for attempting to kill McNamara. A rally for Che and Troi and all other revolutionaries who have died in the struggle.
>
> On Thursday, October 9, we will join with kids from high schools, community colleges, trade schools, etc. here in Chicago in an offensive against the schools. The action will be something around the idea of a "Jailbreak," and people in the Chicago region are already working with several high schools in the city to develop cadre who will help work out and co-ordinate this action. . .
>
> Either on Thursday or Friday there will be a woman's action, planned by women from functioning political collectives all over the country. Unlike other women's actions - which focused on the symbols of cultural oppression - this action will be an attack on the institutions of racism. . .
>
> Thursday night we'll have a youth-rock music rock festival. . . Fuck hippie capitalism. . . Build culture in struggle. . .
>
> Friday we go after the courts. . .
>
> And finally, on Saturday, October 11, we'll have the big march. We're starting to work on a

> route for the march, and will be seeking permits from the city. The permit however, even if we get it, will be no guarantee of safety. As on all the days, we must be prepared to defend ourselves in the event of any vicious attacks by the Chicago pigs. . . The plans for the four days are of course not finalized. Changes will undoubtedly take place. . . (Stern, p. 177)

Immediately, thousands of Weathermen began organizing for the event. Time was spent printing, speaking, leafletting, training in self-defense and counter-insurrectionary tactics - in everything but eating or sleeping. For two months they labored tirelessly, convinced eight thousand would gather for the action. It was rather disheartening then, when only about eight hundred eventually showed up. A cold, damp night, spirits plummeted as the realization crept upon the crowd. At that point, members of the Weather Bureau - especially Bernardine Dohrn - began speaking, attempting to improve morale. They succeeded.

The benefits of charismatic leadership are illustrated here. This is not to suggest that the authority of Dohrn and the others was legitimized solely by charisma. Rather, as several analysts have pointed out - including Weber, Brinton, and Gonzalez - certain types of leadership are better suited for different types of situations. In this case, no other types of leadership authority (legal-rational, traditional, etc.) could have sufficed nearly as well, for what was needed to reverse a disappointing turnout, foul weather, and the resulting poor

spirits was not order, transitional (of power) considerations or the like, but charisma. It was this personal quality of ingenue or charm of Bernardine Dohrn that got the organization Weatherman started: without her, the Days of Rage would not have happended.

The group left Lincoln Park and began moving south down Michigan Avenue - Chicago's Gold Coast. Here was the Drake Hotel, the Playboy Club, Gucci's and the Continental Plaza - all hated by Weatherman as symbols of cultural repression. Then they found the street blocked by the Chicago police:

> With a galvanizing thrill, we all began running directly at the pigs. That's the last I saw of Beam. Around me women were fighting with pigs; I could hear the clubs smashing down on them. . . As I turned, I saw a woman from my affinity group wedged up against a park grounds shack. Two pigs were working her over with their clubs as she lay there, her arms wrapped around her head. Something in me clicked at the sight, something stronger than all the danger around me.
>
> I galloped like one possessed right toward the pigs, who were smearing the woman with her own blood. One of them was bent over administering his pounding.
>
> I stood behind him for a split second, and then I carefully lifted my pipe and brought it down with all the strength I had at the base of his neck, right where it was exposed beneath his helmet. He fell forward. I turned to find another pig towering above me. He rammed me across the chest with his club, staring at me as I fell backward to the ground. Then he grabbed his club with both his hands, like a baseball bat, and he raised it as high as he could in the air, as I had just done, and he smiled, and I saw the scar on his nose wiggle - then he brought that club down on my face. My glasses shattered; then I was spun around as another pig kicked me hard in the shoulder (Stern, p. 180).

These "Days of Rage" actually consisted of a number of separate actions. Various "affinity groups" (sub-groups

within Weatherman organized around common points of reference: women, workers, students, Chicagoans, etc.) took their turn attacking "the State" as embodied in the Chicago Police Force. People would be members of different affinity groups, and, therefore, participate in more than one action. From all accounts, Dohrn participated in all actions until incarcerated. Coincidentally, she and Stern found themselves in the same cell. Stern makes the following observation of Dohrn:

> Bernardine had hurt her leg, and was limping slightly. Other than the limp, there was no discernible reminder than she had just been through a violent battle with Chicago's finest. She looked like a fashion model. Short black leather jacket, nice slacks, neat purple blouse, the boots - everything just so. She was reclining on an iron bench with one hand supporting her head, the other dangling to the floor, staring at the ceiling. Although she didn't move, didn't talk, hardly seemed aware of the other women in the room, everyone else was quite aware of her (Stern, p. 181).

By Sunday, the action was over. Estimates ranged at $670,000.00 worth of damage, 221 policemen injured, 60 hospitalized, and 280 Weathermen injured, 60 hospitalized, and 622 arrested (Chicago Tribune, October 15, 1969, pp. 1-2). Richard Elrod, one of Mayor Daley's chief counsels, was paralyzed from the neck down when he refused to let a group of Weathermen pass on the sidewalk. . . Yet:

> More than anything else, the Chicago street actions made Weatherman a reliable national force. The media created a Weather myth: Weatherman soon became known as the most militant and omnipresent of white revolutionaries. The Left, having experienced less

> aggressive but no less violent street demonstrations also gave Weatherman its grudging respect. But the "Days of Rage" were, by their nature, unrepeatable. . . They projected a commitment on the part of white revolutionaries to move into total opposition to the state, regardless of personal cost. Earlier and less one-sided confrontations had lacked such force. In this sense, Weatherman turned a possible debacle into a victory of sorts (Jacobs, 1970, p. 195).

Shortly after the Days of Rage Weatherman struck again: and again in Chicago. The Haymarket Square statue was perhaps the most famous police monument in the United States, and it was toppled from its base in an explosion that shattered hundreds of windows in the surrounding area. Police officers reacted angrily to the destruction. "An obvious declaration of war between the police and SDS and other anarchist groups," said Sergeant Richard M. Barrett, president of the Chicago Police Sergeants Association. "We now feel that it is kill or be killed, regardless of the Jay Millers, Daniel Walkers, and the so-called Civil Rights Act," he went on to say (Stern, p. 183).

In addition to the Days of Rage and other ancillary organizational activities, most of Weatherman's energy was spent trying to radicalize and recruit youth. Stern says:

> The McComb action, now known throughout the country, was an action taken by nine Motor City SDS women at a local community college. We gathered outside a sociology classroom of about 40 or 50 students who were taking a final exam. We entered a classroom chanting, and barricaded the door with a teacher's desk. One woman distributed leaflets while the rest of us lined up in the front of the classroom, and we stopped chanting as one woman began to address the class. She rapped about how American imperialism fucks over the people of the world, and about

> people's struggles for self-determination. Another woman spoke about how imperialism oppresses the black colony within America. When a third woman began to talk about the material oppression of women and the necessity to break out of subordinate roles and join the struggle, some men got uptight and tried to charge the door in order to get out and call the pigs. These pig agents were dealt with while a fourth woman continued to rap to the people and the necessity to take sides with the people of the world. Somehow a teacher managed to get out a back door, and the administration called the pigs. Because of an unclean getaway, we were busted as we left the school on charges of disorderly conduct and assault and battery (Stern, p. 107).

She goes on to say:

> Our high school attacks were largely unsuccessful as far as recruiting went. But the level of political consciousness was raised unbelievably among the kids. Wherever we went, we stimulated energy and emotions. Pushing them to the furthest extent, we confronted high school kids with their racism, the war, male chauvinism, and their ever-diminishing power in society. Angry and defensive, they would fight back bitterly and sometimes violently in response. We never got discouraged, no matter how poorly they responded. We knew it took time for people to admit their lives were fucked up (Stern, p. 109).

Superficially, it would appear that Weatherman was again employing an educational strategy. Education, however, usually occurs without coercion. These attempts at "education" by Weatherman were, as Stern suggests, largely unsuccessful as a mobilization strategy. Recruits were few indeed, and the level of struggle was not advanced.

Meanwhile, the organization was reorganizing itself socially into collectives. Virtually every major American city claimed at least one collective, with Chicago, New York, and Seattle being the most prominent. The emphasis

here was on communism - in everything. Bread, music, even sexual partners were shared. It was a political existence, destined to create the new revolutionary vanguard, and as Stern points out, there was little time for anything else:

> There was never any time to make a home out of what once had been a beautiful house. Extra leaflets were piled in heaps along with old Seattle Times, old New Left Notes, Guardians, Movements, and newer underground newspapers, since we felt it necessary to be on top of all the revolutionary news happening over the entire country. . . We had to know what we were talking about in order to explain it to other people. Behind the seemingly simplistic line was a complex series of political equations; each of us tried to understand them.
>
> During the month of September I averaged three hours sleep in twenty four. . . I was always exhausted, along with everyone else in the collective (Stern, p. 114).

Such was not without its sociological functions, as sociologist Charles Tilly points out when he says: "The most important element of organization, so far as impact on mobilization is concerned, is the group's inclusiveness of different aspects of social life. The creation of a moral community is therefore an extreme case of organization-building in general" (Tilly, 1972, p. 71). This "creation" is what Mannheim calls "chiliasm." This inclusiveness cannot be overemphasized in studying the WUO's mobilization and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

These were hard times. The orgiastic chiliasm of Weatherman demanded many things, especially money. As a result of the increased financial demand and decreased

income, the group was forced to make many concessions, as Stern points out:

> These missives from the Bureau would warn the collectives that we were on our own financially. As a result of Weatherman politics - more clearly revolutionary - the old, liberal sources were drying up. Parents, convinced that their children had gone insane, or at the least, unable to relate to them as criminals and violent revolutionaries, started to cut them off by the thousands. . . (Stern, p. 184)

Faced with a decision on where to cut back, Weatherman chose to retain their autonomy. What suffered was their educational strategy - it simply cost too much. What this did, in effect, was increase their isolation from the Left even further and American society in general.

In December of 1969 Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were slain by Chicago police under conditions Weatherman found questionable. To retaliate, six Chicago police cars were bombed (no injuries) that month (Stern, p. 186). The following months (until May, 1970) saw a gradual decline in Weatherman's militancy preferring instead an "educational" strategy again. Time was spent "electioneering" and especially in raising their own consciousnesses. It had to be a very sobering time for all concerned. If some white working class youth found Weatherman intriguing, it was more often because of sex, drugs, and violence than politics. As the last remnants of the campus-based SDS disintegrated, people were defecting from Weatherman in droves (Sale, p. 702).

On May 3, 1970, Richard Nixon went on national television to tell the American people he was broadening the scope of the Indochina War by sending American troops into Cambodia. Across the country, hundreds of thousands of people protested the unconstitutionality of Nixon's actions. As Chalmers Johnson would say, people were reacting to an exogenous environmental change (the move into Cambodia) and mobilizing (Johnson, p. 160). At Jackson State University and Kent State University, national guardsmen fired on students, killing several on each campus. To protest, Weatherman bombed National Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

In spite of their show of solidarity with youth, Weatherman was unable to recruit from their ranks. The reasons have been speculated upon for years now, with Weatherman's self-righteousness, chiliasm, institutionalized free sex, lack of an educational stategy, etc. all given as causal variables. While this is probably all true, it is probably also true that their failure was an incorrect beginning assumption: that the U.S. was revolutionarily ripe. This incorrect assumption can be easily understood by realizing that the milieu of the SDS tended to encourage optimism regarding the possibilities of imminent revolution. However, for whatever combinations chosen, May 21, 1970, began Period II. Again, the emphasis was on the confrontational strategy, but now from underground:

> Hello. This is Bernardine Dohrn.
> I'm going to read a declaration of a state of war.
> This is the first communique from the Weatherman
> Underground.
>
> All over the world, people fighting American imperialism look to America's youth to use our strategic position behind enemy lines to join forces in the destruction of the empire. . .
> Now we are adapting the classic guerilla strategy of the Viet Cong and the urban guerilla strategy of the Tupamaros to our situation here in the most technologically advanced country in the world. . .
> The parents of "privileged" kids have been saying for years that the revolution was just a game for us. But the war and the racism show that it too is fucked up. We will never live peacably under this system. . .
> This is the way we celebrate the example of Eldridge Cleaver and H. Rapp Brown and all black revolutionaries who first inspired us by their fight behind enemy lines for the liberation of their people.
> Never again will they fight alone (Dohrn, undated, untitled communique).

Dohrn - the perennial romanticist - misrepresented what Weatherman was going to do (Although probably not intentionally - she could not foresee the future). "Guerilla war" as a tactical component of the confrontational strategy is an approach which requires considerable support - something Weatherman did not have. As sociologist Ted Gurr points out, "The principal formal differences between turmoil and internal war are variations in their degree of organization and focus of violence; both tend to mobilize large numbers of people, both tend to persist over long periods, turmoil episodically, internal war systematically" (Gurr, 1969, p. 335). As we shall see,

Weatherman's actions were much more of an episodic than systematic nature.

Weatherman departed from previous Movement mass street actions by initiating attacks against perceived symbols of capitalist repression - the police and private property. This violence was not in retaliation for specific acts of police violence, but part of a publicly announced policy to "raise the level of struggle." This was based on a belief of the Weather Bureau that ". . . a few bombs, and a few of us who believe this, could stop a lot of institutions from functioning in this country" (Dohrn, communique). The following months saw literally hundreds of actions, the following being the most notable:

June, 1970 - New York City Police Headquarters bombed.

July, 1970 - Presidio Army Base and MP Station, San Francisco, bombed.

August, 1970 - Marin County Courthouse (California) bombed.

September, 1970 -"Liberation" of Timothy Leary from California Men's Colony, San Luis Obispo.

October, 1970 - Haymarket police statue, Chicago, bombed.
- Long Island City Courthouse, Queens, bombed.
- Harvard War Research Center, Cambridge, bombed.

March, 1971 - United States Capitol Building bombed.

August, 1971 - Department of Corrections, San Francisco, bombed.
- Office of California Prisons, Sacramento, bombed.

September, 1971 - Department of Corrections, San Francisco, bombed.

October, 1971 - MIT Research Center bombed.
- William Bundy's office bombed.

May, 1972 - The Pentagon bombed.

May, 1973 - New York City Police Precinct No. 103, bombed.

September, 1973 - International Telephone and Telegraph Latin American Headquarters, bombed.

March, 1974 - Office of Health, Education, and Welfare, San Francisco, bombed.

June, 1974 - Public release of Prairie Fire.

The explosions killed or injured no one. In every case, Weatherman called ahead to make sure no one was in danger. Indeed, only three people have ever died because of Weatherman: three of their own members. On March 6, 1970, Ted Gold, Diana Oughton, and Terry Robbins were accidentally killed in a Greenwich Village explosion. As Robbins and Oughton were busily at work making bombs, one of them accidentally completed a circuit - and rocked the entire block with the ensuing explosion. Five people (including Kathy Boudin and Cathy Wilkerson) stumbled out amid the flames to be helped by the wives of Dustin Hoffman and Henry Fonda (Time Magazine, March 23, 1970, p. 30). They were never seen again, immediately going underground. The event had its effect on Weatherman:

> . . . It has been nine months since the townhouse explosion. In that time, the future of our revolution has changed decisively . . . the townhouse forever destroyed our belief that armed struggle is the only real revolutionary struggle.
> . .
> It is time for the movement to go out into the air, to organize, to risk calling rallies and

> demonstrations, to convince . . . that mass actions do make a difference.
>
> This tendency to consider only bombings or picking up the gun as revolutionary, with the glorification of the heavier the better, we've called the military error. . .
>
> Because we are fugitives, we could not go near the movement . . . we can't wait to organize people until we get ourselves together any more than we can act without being together. They must go on at the same time. None of these changes that people are going through are rules and principles. We are in many different regions of the country and are building different kinds of organizations and leaders. It's not coming together into one organization, or paper structure of factions or coalitions. It's a New Nation that will grow out of the struggles of the next year (Dohrn, communique).

The movement never rematerialized as Dohrn had hoped. The last bombings by Weatherman (of Kennecott Corporation, in Salt Lake City, Utah on September 4, 1975) ushered in a new era for the organization, as symbolized by their name change which occurred at that point. Feeling that "Weatherman" was a sexist name, the organization officially changed it to the Weather Underground Organization (WUO).

Since that time, the WUO has occupied themselves almost exclusively with the educational strategy again, almost completely forsaking the confrontational. With the notable exception of their work during the Boston busing crisis, (the summer of 1976), they have relied upon media to carry their cause. In September, 1975, the group agreed to sit for a documentary by director/producer Emile de Antonio on them. Still in circulation, the film has net thousands of dollars, presumably channelled back into the coffers of

the WUO and other allied groups (REI Films, p. 2). Added publicity was achieved when the Los Angeles Federal Grand Jury investigated its production, sentencing several people to jail for not divulging incriminating information.

In the spring of 1975, they also began publication of Osawatomie. Published regularly through July of 1976, it has not been seen since. While the publication provided news of the organization and also a "Weather" interpretation of events, its chief utility was probably as an organizing tool. Through its above-ground support apparatus, the John Brown Book Club, and more recently, the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, the WUO has been able to not only print and distribute Osawatomie, but collect money and recruit people.

The following year saw a complete termination of organized WUO activity, and in July of 1977, two Weatherpeople - Larry Weiss and Peter Clapp - surrendered to authorities in Chicago. Later in the year Mark Rudd surrendered in New York, followed by Naomi Jaffe and Howie Machtinger. All have refused to turn state's evidence, all have pleaded "guilty" and all are paroled, organizing either in Berkeley or New York City. Rudd, for example, was seen leading at least two anti-apartheid demonstrations at Columbia University (Springfield Journal-Register, "Yesterday's Radicals," May 14, 1980, p. 31): while working full time as a construction worker and living with his

father. The group, moreover, was rocked by bitter quarrels over whether the fugitives should try to change U.S. society from above ground. The dispute was drawn along the lines of gender. Rudd, Clapp, Weiss, etc. felt that society can best be changed by organizing openly. The women, including Dohrn, Wilkerson, Boudin, seemed content with their underground approach.

In January, 1978, the WUO raised its head again. Five members, including Leslie Ann Mullin, Judith Emily Bissell, Clayton Van Lydegraff, Marc Curtis Perry, and Michael Justesen (Stern's ex-lover) were arrested in California by FBI infiltrators while attempting to develop an anti-Ku Klux Klan unit for the International Women's Convention. After admitting to "counterrevolutionary" charges in 1978 (Mother Jones Magazine, July, 1978, p. 14), Dohrn surrendered to a Federal magistrate in Chicago in December, 1980, in what may be the last major date in the history of the WUO. Accompanied by her attorney and sister, Dohrn said she "regretted nothing," and was immediately released on bond (Chicago Tribune, December 22, 1980, p. 1), pending trial.

CHAPTER EIGHT - THE UTOPIA

As complex and interrelated as the preceding story is, our analysis of the utopia of the Weather Underground Organization will attempt to link their thought to their deed. In looking at their actions and pronouncements, six main variables suggest themselves as being of particular import: chiliasm, violence, communism communality, (the distinction being that the former denotes a political/economic belief system, the latter a system of sharing everything between WUO members), anti-racism, and anti-sexism. Cognizant of Mannheim's "Forms of the Utopian Mentality," the WUO is characterizable as chiliastic primarily, with a subtle shift toward the socialist-communist utopia discernible toward the end. This chiliasm was first inspired by an anticipation of American defeat in Vietnam:

> As people who are located inside the monster, revolutionary Americans are in a position to do decisive damage to the U.S. ruling class' plans to continue and expand its world rule. The upcoming U.S. defeat in Vietnam will be a vital blow to those plans; we must aim to do everything we can to speed up that effect (Gold, 1969, p. 2).

Written by Ted Gold, he did not live to witness this armageddon. Yet, it would be incorrect to assume that Vietnam was the only reason to anticipate catastrophe. Rather, the WUO continued to see an impending doom for America, as recounted in Osawatomie:

> Sometimes, people get discouraged about the prospects for revolution in the U.S. After all, U.S. imperialism is so big and powerful. But the strength of imperialism--its tentacles reaching into far corners of the globe to grab up wealth and power--is really its strategic weakness. Each corner is another vulnerable point, each dominated people a potential Vietnam (WUO, 1975, p. 15).

From the same issue:

> Make no mistake about it: storm clouds are building up on the horizon. U.S. imperialism, substantially weakened by Vietnam and under attack around the world, has entered the stage of decline . . . Everyone is angry, and anger is moving people into strikes, protest, and action (WUO, 1975, p. 1).

Commanding a dedication to revolution with a singular zeal, the WUO took their revolution seriously. Accordingly, there was no time for anything but that revolution, which Mark Rudd told Susan Stern in 1969: "The revolution isn't fun. It's not supposed to be. We don't have time to play around. America is in her death throes . . . The way you are right now, Susan, you'd hold back the entire collective" (Stern, p. 66).

As discussed earlier, failures of the WUO to recruit and effectively build a base effected their strategies. It also effected their chiliasm, diluting it into what must be

called a "socialist-communist" utopia. Witness the changes that the introduction of Prairie Fire wrought:

> We are a guerilla organization. We are communist women and men, underground in the United States for more than four years . . . Our intention is to disrupt the empire . . . to engage the enemy . . . to encourage the people . . . to forge an underground . . . a clandestine political organization engaged in every form of struggle, protected from the eyes and weapons of the state, a base against repression, to accumulate lessons, experience and constant practice, a base from which to attack (WUO, 1975, p. 1).

Note the emphasis on preparing for the attack rather than actually attacking. Rather than admit to any trace of frustration or disillusionment over the failure of the Viet Cong's victory to produce an American revolution, the WUO established "periodic goals":

> This is a call to organize the people and to act. We must now apply our analysis to our particular situation, mobilize the masses and fight. Our goal for this period is to help build a mass anti-imperialist movement and to build the armed struggle, the guerilla forces. Legal and clandestine struggle are both necessary: agitation and attack, peaceful methods and violent methods, sometimes organizing the people step-by-step, and sometimes taking a leap through action to a new level. Mass work and armed struggle are united in revolution; each needs to support and affirm and complement the other. These are different fronts, interdependent and allied against the common enemy (WUO, 1979, p. 39).

Often vacillating between these two forms of the utopian mentality, the WUO can often be accused of inconsistency. Since 1975, the socialist-communist form is probably most characteristic, however.

Unlike the particular form of the WUO's utopian mentality, our remaining five variables are consistent virtually throughout the WUO's history. Of singular importance is violence, the WUO variety seemingly derived from Chernyshevsky, a Russian intellectual of the nineteenth century, (What is to Be Done?, Chernyshevsky, 1898). Accordingly, a "decent," "real," or "new" man finds his highest interest, the most satisfying sensual pleasure, in serving the interests of society. Ultimately, the theory becomes a rationalization of political violence and terrorism, as it becomes the "new" man's moral and ethical duty to enlighten the masses. Nowhere does there exist a better statement of WUO policy on this topic than in Politics in Command, a pamphlet written by Celia Sojourn and Billy Ayers:

> There are many on the left who self-righteously condemn all violence of revolutionaries. They are keeping their own hands clean by avoiding the full consequences of revolutionary ideas. For these people, the revolution will happen only some day and hopefully be made by someone else. But power concedes nothing without a demand. Armed struggle is an extension of political struggle, just as war is politics with bloodshed. Under certain historical conditions political struggle leads necessarily to armed conflict. When a small ruling class maintains itself in power by force and violence, when the masses of people are forced to live and work in brutalized and violent conditions, political struggle both peaceful and violent is the inevitable result (WUO, 1976, p. 1).

Rebuking Arendt, who, in On Violence, felt violence and politics to be mutually exclusive (Arendt, 1948), Ayers and

Sojourn were attempting to qualify the uses of violence, and also tone down the following, from Prairie Fire:

> Militancy stirs the imagination and raises the vision of victory . . . A movement has no reason to exist it it doesn't fight . . . fighting the enemy must be its reason for being. . . (WUO, 1975, p. 144).

More than any other thing about the WUO, their violent method has endeared them to many romantics. As Jefferson Airplane sings "Diana (Oughton) . . . Huntress of the moon and a Weatherwoman, Diana. . ." (Jefferson Airplane, "Diana" from Sunfighter, 1971).

The traditional counter-argument of other leftists to the WUO reasoning is that since the tools of violence are so overwhelmingly in the hands of the state, it is better to wait until an unquestionably more favorable opportunity. Perhaps taking heed of Bernadette Devlin's precept ("Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win") that a revolutionary group's greatest weakness is the belief in that weakness, the WUO responds:

> In order to stop the slaughter of the people, we must accelerate the slaughter of the pigs. Those who can't stand the sight of blood, especially their own, should stay home and pray for those who come outside to move, to do it, and pray for victory and not for an end to the slaughter. Pray for us to win, because if we win you will be safe. If we lose, then kiss the baby goodbye . . we argued that militarily there is not likely to be a massacre on the order of a hundred dead, but that if a few of us did get killed while fighting in solidarity with the VC in the stipulated context, it would not be a bad thing. . . (Jacobs, p. 244).

Sensing cowardice among members of the New Left toward confrontation, the WUO went further, trying all the while to glorify violence, presumably making it more palatable. From the Weather Songbook:

> LAY, ELROD, LAY
> (to the tune of "Lay, Lady, Lay")
>
> Lay Elrod Lay
> Lay in the street for awhile
> Stay Elrod stay
> Stay in your bed for awhile
>
> You thought you could stop the Weatherman
> But up-front people put you on your can
>
> Stay Elrod stay
> Stay in your iron lung
> Play Elrod play
> Play with your toes for awhile
>
> You thought the Weatherman was pretty green
> But we were the heaviest that you'd ever seen
> (WUO, Weather Songbook, undated)

And:

> FA LA LA LA LA
> (to the tune of "Deck the Halls With Boughs of Holly")
>
> Deck the pigs out on the pavement
> FA la la la la la la la la
> We are now a fighting movement
> FA la la la la la la la la
> Don we now our boots and helmets
> FA la la la la la la la la
> We used to talk but now we do it
> FA la la la la la la la la (WUO, Weather Songbook, undated)

To summarize, the WUO of late seemed to believe that violence is not always necessary, but when it is, not to be shirked. Becoming increasingly sophisticated, the WUO always

justified any individual act of violence. The following are parts of a poem by women in the WUO, justifying violence (or terror):

> They call it terror
> if you are few
> and have no B-52's
> if you are not a head of state
> terror is only if you are dispossessed
> and have only your own two hands.
>
> Sisters and brothers, think hard before your jump
> onto the bandwagon
> of condemning terrorism
> remember who is making the definitions
> remember not to strengthen the hand
> that will turn in an instant
> against every means of resistance to oppression
> That bandwagon rolls straight toward fascism
> do not forget the real terrorists
> that lurk behind the masks of heads of state
> do not be afraid to hold strong together
> with all who dare to struggle.
>
> Brothers and sisters, let us choose
> our weapons carefully and humanely
> let us use no torture
> or napalm
> or genocide
> but do not be fooled
> there is no weapon they will allow
> nothing that works will be called legitimate
> (WUO, Poems by Women in the Weather Underground, undated).

Lending itself to our characterization of it as being increasingly socialist-communist, is the third variable in the WUO's utopia - international communism.

Marxism-Leninism was the preferred belief of the WUO:

> Our goal is to build communist organization toward the stage where armed struggle becomes a mass phenomenon led by a Marxist-Leninist party: a revolutionary stage. Organization unites and builds, and means that each day's efforts add up. Organization is made up of individuals but

> is bigger and longer lasting than any one individual. Individuals are precious but organization is decisive. Only organization allows continuity of experience and leadership, and carries the deeds of the individual fighters beyond themselves into the future. Organization capable of waging full internal political struggle around direction, and capable of uniting in action directs people's energies like a spear. Only combative organization can resist infiltration and repression and combat the highly organized and trained forces of the state (WUO, 1975, p. 4).

At the basis of this communism was the ever present necessity of "class" as an independent variable:

> Class struggle, at times hidden and then more open, assumes a wide variety of forms. There is an immediate response to conditions of oppression: a gut hatred of "the rich" or a worker's refusal to be pushed into a blistering work pace. On a more organized level classes contend over the share and use of social wealth: workers strike for better wages, working class women demonstrate for child-care. As the struggle develops, bourgeois social power is challenged: workers occupy factories, a movement grows against the war in Vietnam.
>
> The bourgeois class for its part does everything in its power to disguise, mute, hold back and crush the development of class struggle. It cultivates and enforces false consciousness and division within the working class. It develops and uses white racism. Revolutionary leadership is needed to forge full class consciousness, organization and unity of purpose in the working class as a whole. Then class struggle becomes political struggle, ultimately the struggle for the ownership of the means of production and power over the direction of the whole society (WUO, Summer, 1975, p. 21).

While the "orthodox leftists" rejected the "tailist" (the seemingly non-original adoption of classical Marxism/Leninism) of the Weather Underground Organization, the group delved deeper and deeper into Marxism, focusing on increasingly obscure theories:

> There were many objections to studying Marxism-Leninism, as well as great suspicion. Some members argued that Marxism would push us to the right, that most Marxists in the U.S. ended up opportunist. Others felt it didn't apply to women. When the study finally started, we realized that most members had never studied Marxism-Leninism. And our study has liberated a new spirit in us, a hunger for knowledge and ideology. We have embraced a world view in which human beings are at the center of history, for it is the unique quality of people to reflect on their experience, to learn from the past and to project into the future. It is this consciousness and self-consciousness--this social and political responsibility--which gives to human beings the ability to change to world (WUO, Autumn, 1975, p. 4).

Perhaps the WUO was "tailist." The following from Prairie Fire would tend to substantiate such a charge:

> The quality of life of Chinese peasant is better than ours. The Chinese have free and adequate health care, a meaningful political education, productive work, a place to live, something to eat and each has a sense of her or himself as part of a whole people's shared historical purpose. We may eat more and have more access to gadgets, but we are constantly driven by competition, insecurity, uncertainty and fear. Work is wasteful and meaningless and other people are frightening and hateful. This is no way to live (WUO, Weather Songbook, undated).

While the Weather Underground was public in their admiration of China and Mao, two things make them and their utopia different from orthodox communism. First, the WUO put a very heavy emphasis on the revolutionary potential of the Third World.

> This is the era of socialist revolution in the world. In the socialist countries, there is no unemployment, no starvation. The entire capitalist world, however, is today shaken by a profound economic crisis, one which reveals all

> the irrationality and contradictions of capitalism. This is not just a "business cycle" crisis, it is a crisis of imperialism in decline. It is directly caused by the wrenching effect of waging and losing the war in Vietnam, and the challenges now being raised to imperialist domination of the world's resources and markets. It is the revelation of these defeats in the economies of the U.S. and the rest of the capitalist countries. Within the U.S., the crisis attacks the working class, with the blows falling heaviest on Black and Third World people (WUO, April-May, 1976, p. 4).

Indeed, it urged familiarity with Third World conditions and utopias:

> In order to develop this kind of class analysis revolutionaries must be willing to organize and investigate. People should study the class analysis of Puerto Rico done by the Puerto Rican Socialist Party as a model. Amilcar Cabral once worked as an agromonist in Guine-Bissau, walking every inch of his country taking the census as he developed a concrete class analysis of society. Besides organizing, revolutionaries should be talking to working people everywhere, checking out every picket line you pass, taking notes. This is not so complicated (WUO, Summer, 1975, p. 6).

While they probably would not have admitted it, in integrating the Third World into their version of Marxism, they necessarily recognized Trotsky's "Law of Uneven Development" at the expense of more traditional marxist interpretations. And although most Weatherpeople were Jewish, they seemed to owe more allegiance to this brand of international communism than Isreal:

> The United States General Assembly voted November 10, 1975, to declare Zionism "a form of racism and racial discrimination". The WUO supports this resolution, supports the right of the Palestinian people to self determination in their homeland, and condemns the colonial, racist

> and reactionary state of Isreal. Anti-Zionism does not equal anti-semitism, nor is Zionism in the true or lasting interests of Jewish people.
> Zionism is racist because it is colonial (WUO, June-July, 1976, p. 3).

Undoubtedly the most serious disagreement with classical Marxism was the WUO's image of the American proletariat. In fact, instead of an admiring deification - the kind espoused by PL - the WUO openly admonished the working class with obvious contempt:

> . . . we confront the fact that the white workers do not constitute the main or the most oppressed sections of the work force within the worldwide economy of U.S. imperialism: on the contrary, they form a tiny and the most privileged, sector of the proletariat. . .
> They also derive invidious sick satisfaction out of their feeling that they belong to the top nation in the whole world. . . And in the short run, as long as they remain a reliable mass base for imperialism, these material and spiritual privileges will be allowed by the ruling class. . . (Ono, 1969, p. 2)

As a result, labor unions were particularly despicable:

> Today, almost everyone in society works in a productive process involving a sophisticated division of labor. Further, the industrial workers in the U.S. have undergone a peculiar experience of relative success in organizing for and achieving higher wages and near failure in the development of the consciousness of a political role for the working class. The process by which the CIO was built and then emasculated and turned into an imperialist front should be the subject of great study by the left. . . (Jacobs, p. 44)

The Weather Underground Organization then, advanced their own version of Marxism-Leninism, more relevant and useful to them than the classical variety. But this international communism was about as programmatic as the

WUO ever got. In terms of how to make their communist revolution or what it will be like, they cited Mao: "If you want knowledge, you must take part in the process of changing reality. If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change that pear by eating it yourself. If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must take part in the revolution." (Jacobs, p. 456)

Directly related to their Marxism-Leninism was the WUO's unrelenting opposition to racism and sexism. In appreciation of their (SDS) roots as a civil rights organization, the WUO was militantly pro-non-white. This attitude found expression in their solidarity with members of the Third World, as well as their support for "political prisoners" like Angela Davis and Lolita Lebron. In speaking of endogenous American racism, most of their energies were directed against anti-blacks:

> The spirit of resistance inside the U.S. was rekindled by black people. The power and strategy of the civil rights movement, SNCC, Malcolm X, and the Black Panther Party affected all other rebellion. . . The police, the troops, the sheriffs, the mass arrests and assassinations were the official response. The Black movement was pushed forward into a revolutionary movement for political power, open rebellion and confrontation with the racism of white people and the racism of institutions (WUO, 1975, p. 6).

Beneath their solidarity with other races, however, was an almost self-conscious awareness of their own white skin. They openly characterized themselves as specifically "white revolutionaries," probably complementing other non-white revolutionary groups like the Black Panthers and the Brown

Berets. They were whites, waging war against whites: "Like Dr. Du Bois said, 'It's our view that white revolutionaries should look toward building principled alliances, coalitions, and working relationships with Third World People when possible'." (WUO, 1975, p. 6)

Coincidental with this variable of anti-sexism was their opposition to sexism, calling for a "new women's movement":

> We need a women's movement right now unlike anything we have built in the last ten years: a movement of millions of women organized . . . it could fall definitely to the elitist leadership of bourgeois women's leadership or be seized by revolutionary leadership and take root. . . (WUO, Winter 1975-1976, p. 2).

Therefore, the struggle began within the WUO itself:

> The struggle against male chauvinism and supremacy inside the Weather Machine was part of a larger process of personal transformation. . . Sex becomes entirely different without jealousy. . . Women who never saw themselves making it with women began digging each other sexually. People who live together and fight together fuck together. What Weatherman is doing is creating new standards for men and women to relate to. We are trying to make sex non-exploitative as we don't use our bodies to control the situation. . . (Jacobs, p. 325).

Sex and sexuality - largely in response to the dangers of sexism - became prominent issues within the WUO. Never, however, were the Weatherpeople casual enough to draw lines on the basis of sex: "Another wrong idea is that men are the enemies of women. This is not true. Capitalism is women's enemy. . . This is common sense. Women don't live in a vaccuum." (WUO, Winter, 1975-1976, p. 6). Because of the large percentage of women within the Weather Underground

Organization (my estimate ranges in excess of 60%), sex and sexism was destined to be an issue dealt with extensively and intensely.

For all the components or variables found within the utopia of the WUO, however, there was an ongoing emphasis on the interrelatedness of all of them. The WUO calls this attitude "anti-separatist":

> Weatherman is also anti-separatist. It believes a separate women's movement is likely to fail . . . the fight can best be waged by . . . struggling together. . . (Jacobs, p. 303).

The tendency then, was to see all components mentioned so far as being interrelated and connected. Hence, it is impossible to view women, blacks, or workers outside of their overarching emphasis on class analysis. It is manipulation and exploitation which keep the capitalist system functioning. Since the system is of unmitigated evil, the alternative must be of unparalleled good, while still creating and fermenting optimum revolutionary conditions. To achieve this alternative, the WUO adopted communality in everything. This is the sixth and final variable in their utopia.

Directives and discipline begin at the Weather Bureau; were passed on to the various regional offices; on to each collective (two to twenty people); and ultimately to the above-ground support apparatus (AGSA). The best example of the WUO's communality was found at the collective level.

Here, communism was the rule. Everything was shared - private property was non-existent. Food, automobiles, drugs, music, explosives, even sex, were shared communally:

> At the same time our monogamous relationships broke up because we simply didn't need them any more . . . We began . . . to become total human beings . . . our point of existence was the revolution; and the old way of life became intolerable to us (Jacobs, p. 324).

Sexual alternatives were not always welcomed, however:

> (to) replace the antiquated monogamous relationships were group gropes, homosexuality, autosexuality, or asexuality. . . Although the Bureau continued to send . . . instructions for us to smash our monogamy, little was done about it. . . (Stern, p. 115).

Living together, eating together, fighting together, sleeping together was supposed to weld a number of individuals into a collective fighting force. But even this was not adequate. All individual pursuits were to be subdued to further the revolution. To do this, self-criticism--one of the most hated parts of the Weather utopia (by the WUO) was introduced. The intellectual origins of this method can probably be traced back to Stalin. Under him, self-criticism was introduced not only into political practice, but also into political doctrine. Stalin defined the concept as a "Bolshevik" method of training the forces of the party and "an indispensable and permanent weapon in the arsenal of Bolshevism" (Stalin, 1921, p. 2). The objective of self-criticism was the elimination of certain mistakes and shortcomings in the

Party, in order "to promote the Party spirit" and "to consolidate the Soviet regime" (Stalin, p. 2). Stalin later added that without self-criticism "we cannot advance the cause of building socialism and of curbing the wrecking activities of the bourgeoisie" (Stalin, p. 3). Mao added, "Inner-Party criticism is a weapon for strengthening the Party organization and increasing its fighting capacity" (Quotations from Chairman Mao, p. 38). He also said, "Another point that should be mentioned in connection with inner-Party criticism is that some comrades ignore the major issues and confine their attention to minor, personal points when they make their criticism" (Mao, 1955, p. 121). Often, the WUO did not heed Mao's latter quote.

Criticism sessions in a collective would require the group to meet and begin criticizing themselves and their comrades, the purpose of which was to eliminate potentially counterrevolutionary attitudes from forming. Instead, it very often wrecked human beings:

> It was the loneliest, most morbid time of my life. I literally lost my will to live. Every day I was criticized for something, and I smiled vaguely and agreed. And believe me, I agreed. I had been convinced, over a period of a month, that I was the most racist anti-Communist, the worst sexual deviate, the most blighted egotistical wretch, the greatest anti-Women's Liberationist, the most exulting warmonger, and the weakest, most selfish, least desirable person that had ever lived. I was warped and unfit for Weatherman. I was dirty and like the rotten apple in the barrel, spoiled everyone I came in contact with. People were told, as we had just

> been told with Justesen, not to touch me, not to talk to me. I was in the caste of the untouchables, and no one recognized my existence, let alone my needs. I tottered on the edge of total despair and loaded myself with downers, until I couldn't walk, couldn't think. . . Then started my last criticism session, the worst I have ever been through. For these were the people who love' me most, and from their mouths poured all the venom I had heard so many times before. Humbled, and disgusted with myself, I could finally see how unready I was for Weatherman, how weak I was, how shallow, how defeated (Stern, p. 247).

More often than not, this criticism was divisive--splitting collectives amongst themselves. Mark Rudd was considered particularly adept at criticizing people - making him the only member of the Weather Bureau who has ever been widely hated by the WUO members at large (Stern, pp. 111-115). While self-criticism still existed - and in a more appropriate way - its divisiveness was perceived early in 1974 and revised:

> Weatherpeople learned, after much mental anguish and personal sacrifice, that turning yourself inside out is not the same thing as turning yourself into a revolutionary, that seeing the world with fresh eyes does not mean you are looking in the right direction. If it is true, as Marcuse has argued, that making a revolution requires the union of a "new sensibility with a new rationality," it is no less true that the struggle to become revolutionary must be limited by the exigencies of liberation. Marcuse's mistake is to stress the need to develop a new sensibility while ignoring the importance of overcoming the softness of the white left. Weatherman errs just as much in the opposite direction. Che, whose main concern was establishing the New Man in Cuba, posed the problem properly: "we must grow tough, but without ever losing our tenderness." In contrast, Weatherman's revolt against

> bourgeois values often resulted neither in their negation nor in Weatherman's incorporation of socialist values (Jacobs, p. 307).

These then are six distinct variables - chiliasm, violence, communism, communality, anti-racism and anti-sexism - elucidating the thought of the Weather Underground Organization. It is a thought which must be considered "utopian" because it is incongruous with the world around them. It certainly is not ideological, as it never attempts to justify the power structure: instead, it "explains" it - in WUO terms.

CONCLUSIONS

What has been illustrated throughout the course of this exercise is a kind of socio-historical determinism. As Mannheim tells us:

> . . . the sociology of knowledge seeks to comprehend thought in the concrete setting of an historical - social situation out of which individually differentiated thought only very gradually emerges . . . it does not sever the concretely existing modes of thought from the context of collective action. . . (Mannheim, p. 3)

While it is probably true that no one method of investigation will be meaningful to all (because of the varieties of individual experience - a Jamesian, and later, Mannheimian tenet), certain advantages can be pointed out in Mannheim's approach.

First, it assumes very little because of its historical nature. Strongly influenced by Hegel, Mannheim's method puts the problem of understanding into history. By understanding where an idea "began" as well as the variables which influenced it, a better understanding of the nature of the idea can be obtained. Second, Mannheim's method offers

a typology. Using this Weberian device, it is easier to discuss certain phenomena. This is grounded in the belief that any vocabulary must have commonality and universality to be utilized to any appreciable degree. By calling an idea "conservative" rather than "chiliastic," we develop a common ground of meaning. Third, and most importantly, Mannheim's method demands a certain degree of objectivity. For example, if the WUO would simply be considered "sick," what would be gained? "Sick" and "foolish" predispose the scholar away from determining why it may be "sick" or "foolish." In this way, sociology may someday be able to control - or at least explain - human interaction. While different beliefs of the WUO and various actions by the WUO have been observed and analyzed sociologically, the primary sociological lesson of this exercise has yet to be fully stated - that sociologically there is no such thing as "chance." Everything done and believed by the WUO had a cause and an effect.

For example, let us arbitrarily select an event - the bombing of the Pentagon. It did not just happen, and to assume it did would be ultimately anti-intellectual. Rather, many things contributed to the bombing - the WUO's utopia, the Cambodian incursion, the availability of the four Weatherpeople who did it, etc. And, these things, in turn, had their causes. It had its effects, if not necessarily those desired by the WUO. The event contributed

to the WUO's myth of invincibility - as well as its estrangement from the Left. It also heightened the awareness of the "status-quo," making them perhaps a bit more cautious - if only in their guarding of the Pentagon. To deductively prove causality is a different, more complex matter - well beyond the scope of this exercise.

Looking past the study of mobilization and its conclusions, the serious scholar will probably detect potential contradictions in Mannheim, and, therefore, this exercise. Mannheim realizes this:

> If there are contradictions and inconsistencies in my paper this is I think, not so much due to the fact that I overlooked them but because I make a point of developing a theme to its end even if it contradicts some other statements. I use this method because I think that in this marginal field of human knowledge we should not conceal our inconsistencies, so to speak covering up the wounds, but our duty is to show the sore spots in human thinking at its present stage . . . these inconsistencies are the thorn in the flesh from which we have to start (Coser, 1953, pp. 429-430).

That is true of this exercise as well. No attempt has been made to evaluate the Weather Underground, only to study them within some sociologically-defined categories. Facts considered to be salient by some have been omitted and facts considered by others to be irrelevent have been included. To those, I encourage a more probing investigation, or at least a replication of this study.

A final matter to be considered is the relationship between mobilization and changes in the utopian mentality. They are reflected by each other, and if the particular

movement is to survive, the utopian mentality and strategy/means of mobilization must be consistent with each other. For example, if a mentality is chiliastic, it is likely that the accompanying strategy would, therefore, have a sense of urgency about it. As the "critical moment" passes without the armageddon, and the chiliasm is diluted, it is likely that the strategy and/or mobilization would lose some urgency. As chiliasm lapses into, say, the liberal-democratic idea, the strategy would then also change to say, an educational one. It should be remembered, however, that this relationship between idea and strategy is just as solid when the variables are reversed. That is, when a change in strategy is forced, it is likely that this will also alter the basic idea. This can be seen readily in this study.

The Days of Rage over, the WUO came face to face with the fact that the Left was not about to follow them into street combat; hence, a strategy change was forced. The WUO then went underground, engaging in "symbolic bombings." This strategy change was accompanied by a change in the Weather Underground's utopian mentality from confrontational to educational. It was, as Dohrn called it, "the military error." This is but one example. Gamson (1975, pp. 87-88) pointed out that although violence is often an effective tool, it is effective only towards achieving limited, short

term goals. The WUO, with their goal being large-scale revolution, was not ultimately successful with their violence.

The Weather Underground Organization then, was the perfectly logical and rational culmination of the variables discussed. Its birth, life, and death were virtually inevitable. It was never irrational, pathological, or illogical.

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