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Martin Nicolaus

S.F. State: History takes a leap

No previous American university struggle has been as long, violent and bitter as the strike now being fought at San Francisco State College. None has sent shock waves through so much of the society, or created as deep a polarization. Only in American colonies and dependencies abroad, or in the history of American labour before the present generation of students was born, are there equals to this conflict. At S.F. State, history has not merely moved, it has leaped.

Although it is chronologically the successor to the great confrontation at Columbia in the spring of 1968, and to the smaller-scale crisis over Eldridge Cleaver at Berkeley in the fall of the same year, the S.F. State strike has few clear lines of continuity with the overt concerns of these or previous student movements of the 1960's. The 1964 Berkeley Free Speech Movement's preoccupations seem almost a gentlemen's disagreement in comparison; free speech and the right to organize have not been issues here, although they have been brutally denied in the process. Direct ties between the university and the

war corporations, the central overt issue at Columbia, are absent in significant proportions at State. The Cleaver crisis is a precendent only formally in that both he and George Murray at S.F. State are on the central committee of the Black Panther Party, and both were denied the right to teach. But Eldridge Cleaver was involved in teaching elite whites, whereas the struggle at State is about working class blacks. Except among white strike supporters, whose sense of political identity remains shadowy, there is little specific identification or sense of continuity, other than sympathy, with this history. Something different is happening here which requires some background by way of introduction.

Channelled Education

The so-called public higher education system in California is united only at the top in the state government. Below, it runs in three separate channels. Highest is the university system, which accepts the top-ranking 12 per cent of high school graduates, has sole power to grant PhD's and train for the professions, gives a more costly education, and costs more to attend. Berkeley is part of that system. Cheaper is the state college system, where the conflict is now. The colleges accept the top-ranked one-third of high school graduates, do not give higher than the M.A., spend less per student. The two-year junior colleges are the bottom track.

Half of the students in the university system come from homes where family income is over $12,000. In the college system, half come from over $10,000. That's only a $2,000 difference, but it divides, for example, the unionized worker in a skilled trade (and his son or daughter) from his shop supervisor. Added to the difference between what the state spends at each place for facilities, equipment and staff, plus the difference in prestige, it amounts to a different universe.

The university system prepares for careers, the college system trains for jobs. The university graduate may become a professor, an executive, an official, a specialist. State colleges turn out teachers, accountants, functionaries, technicians.

Many of the jobs the state college system trains for are unionized, or becoming organized. Although the statistics do not show a predominance of students from industrial working-class families at the college, labour's attitude toward the college system is more proprietary. These are the schools—not so much the upper-channel universities—where stable, unionized working families want to send their kids. And where they have a better—though still slim—chance of being admitted, and of being able to afford it.

Lack of Continuity

The difference between the channels of the system accounts for part of the lack of continuity between S.F. State issues and the issues of previous student movements. Most of these have been at upper-channel universities or at even more elite small private liberal arts colleges. The

different backgrounds, contexts and destinations of the students create a different political emphasis.

Free speech, for example, is a more primary concern for people from backgrounds, and headed for careers, in occupations where 'free' speaking, writing and thinking is essential to the job: college teaching, decision-making in industry or government, research, analysis and publication of various kinds. Especially at the upper levels. Most state college students, by contrast, are headed for jobs where their opinions may never be asked for, and where the ability to reach independent conclusions on the basis of a free exchange of ideas will get them fired. Free speech, in that sense, becomes almost a luxury. This reflects back into political concerns on campus.

Separation of the university from war corporations is not an issue. The corporations need to take over expensive and sophisticated laboratories, the most sifted selection of researchers. These exist in the upper-channel graduate schools, not in the state colleges. The most direct military link at S.F. State is Air Force ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps). State S.D.S. won a referendum to kick ROTC off campus in the spring, but the faculty refused to go along with this decision. Getting students to stop going in is another matter. AFROTC is a low-casualty easy cop-out from Vietnam duty. Not the same politics applies as in kicking IDA (Institute for Defense Analysis) out of Columbia or Stanford.

The channels make a difference also in protests about the whole range of educational-process issues clustered around the 'university as factory' analysis. Upper-channel universities tend to breed expectations based on the liberal arts college model. The introduction of industrial methods into education creates shock there. Much protest energy goes into retaining or resurrecting features of the pre-industrial model. This happened also at State, and created two oases, 'experimental college' and 'programs', from which much movement energy radiates. But the majority remain in the factory, know that it is a factory (even the trustees refer to it as 'plant') and have the factory mentality. Protesting against the industrial revolution in education is a different (and easier) kind of politics than relating to it, finding the contraditions in it, moving on them.

This is one set of reasons why the State strike is a political jump: different channels.

Non-White Leadership

Unprecedented also is the fact of non-white leadership, or rather, white non-leadership. Organized under the name Third World Liberation Front, a coalition of black, Chicano (Mexican-American), Latin-American, Filipino, Chinese and Japanese student groups has held unquestioned political, moral and tactical leadership throughout the long strike process. Initiated and dominated by the Black Students Union, the TWLF's total campus base is less than 10 per cent. Yet four thousand students (two-thirds of the full time student body) at one

point marched in support of the strike, and 80 per cent of students have honoured the strike by staying out of class. Blacks have led student movements at Negro colleges, blacks have led whites in black territory (SNCC in Mississippi), but never before have blacks and browns and yellows so definitely led whites on the whites' own turf.

Personal charisma does not account for much of this impact. Several of the leadership can employ some of the stock charismatic traits and mannerisms, and can be extremely articulate speakers, but spellbinding oratory has not played a great role in their self-presentation to whites. There is no one figure who stands out as guiding genius or star. Nor have charisma and flamboyance, even genuine, saved several other BSU-initiated strikes at other California state colleges from self-isolation and decline. Black magnetism played a role at State in BSU's earlier relations to the white movement, but retreated into the background as the strike progressed.

In the course of the struggle the leadership cut back on jiving until it operated actually below the average level of exaggeration in politics. This has paid off in the absence of a credibility gap. It also kept the fight off the rhetorical escalator. After a day of aggressive tactics, the leadership remained free to switch to peaceful picketing the next day without risking loss of its reputation fot militancy. This ability to change tactics has been one of the geniuses of the strike.

The TWLF also rotates its leaders, even when this means a slight loss in short-run effectiveness. No one man has been allowed to get functionally stereo-typed: for example, as a press spokesman, rally leader, white liaison, etc. TWLF will have to speak for itself whether this has been a matter of deliberate policy or whether it just 'worked out' that way. It has meant fewer leaders going on ego-trips of their own, developing private constituencies, getting cast as star by the media, etc. The media image, as a result, had been one of depth, unanimity and seriousness; even the TV people have learned to say 'a leader' instead of 'The Leader'. The on-campus effect has been to build more respect for the group as a whole, and to cut down on hero worship and all the infantilism that goes with it. One major benefit, in addition, has been the movement's political invulnerability to arrest. Several leaders have been busted two and three times, but the group as a whole never noticeably skipped a beat because of it.

The style, tactics and organization of the TWLF will have to be the new standard for the movement. These qualities however, will not be duplicatable if the politics out of which the style, tactics and organization grew are not also studied and applied. And these politics cannot be copied in every situation, as other BSU's have already found out.

In smaller cities, or in cities where job-racism is rock-hard, the black (and brown and yellow) communities have a sharply colonial social profile: a mass of shantytowns with a few palaces sticking out. The majority of the people live at a level equal to down-and-out whites, way below the average level of the white working class. A few entrepreneurs, professionals and stooges live high on the sweat of their own

people and/or on white favours. The narrow band of these 'black bourgeois' are the only ones who have a hope of sending their children to college. Once in college, these blacks (a) cannot raise demands relevant to their people, because the entire college context is absurdly out of reach to the masses; and (b) even if they raised the demands they couldn't mobilize the community muscle to back them up.

A city like San Francisco and the Bay Area, by contrast—because an expanding economy and slightly more enlightened unionism have softened job-racism relatively—has a black community with a less lop-sided profile. In between the down-and-out blacks who have a choice between temporary menial shiftwork, welfare and crime, at the bottom, and the relatively prosperous black professionals, businessmen, officials, etc., at the top, there is a layer of (again, relatively) stable, steady-working, unionized industrial and lower white collar workers. Neither the bottom, nor the middle, nor the top of this black community has parity or equality with its white counterparts. But the black middle segment (i.e. the black working class) is far enough advanced for a state college education for its children to have become more than an impossible dream. The black workers see no reason why, if their white union mates can put some of their kids into college, they cannot do the same. Consequently it not only makes sense to raise black demands in the college context, it also becomes possible to mobilize the community muscle to back them up. Since the black working class has not been exactly docile in recent years (the majority of Detroit 'rioters' were workers), it isn't necessary to talk quite so loud; the stick is big.

Demands

The 10 demands first raised by the BSU (five analogous demands were later added by the other groups in the TWLF to make up the 15 now being fought for) reflect the social and political structure of the black community in a highly strategic way. As a little analysis shows, they were definitely not pulled out of a hat or done in an afternoon's bull session. First, the defence of Black Panther Party member George Murray, the brother who was suspended for calling on black students to bring guns to campus to protect themselves against police attacks (there had been Tac Squad raids in which BSU people were viciously worked over on campus) speaks straight to the bottom layer of black people for whom the police are a daily menace, and where the Panthers until very recently concentrated most of their organizing work. Although the Panthers have not played a foreground role in the State strike, their support lies prominently in reserve and swings the young black militants.

Second, and more to the meat of the matter, the demand for admission of all minority students who apply to the college, regardless of their qualifications. On first sight this seems like an impossible and senseless demand stuck in as a deliberate provocation. Not so. The high schools, not to speak of the primary schools, where the majority of minority people get whatever preparation for college they're going to get are rotten. So rotten that when they graduate the college considers them unqualified. The condition of the high schools has long scandalized

black working-class community leadership, and the links between the high schools and the low rate of college admissions are clear. This demand speaks to that grievance. Maybe more than any of the other demands, it addresses itself to the solid core of the black community and its needs. Note that this is not a demand for admission of more blacks under existing standards of qualification; this would only open the door to more kids from affluent black families who could afford to send them to private schools, or who can afford to live in the better white districts. It is specifically a demand for the admission of non-affluent blacks: i.e. it has a class content in addition to a colour content.

Cultural Distinctness

Third (in this overview of the 15 demands), the demand for a separate *degree-granting* department of Black Studies speaks to the segment of the black upper levels—and other levels—who have made a break with the assimilationist and integrationist philosophy of the civil rights movement and moved toward cultural distinctness in one or another form. With this demand, the BSU are following in the footsteps of the asassinated Malcolm X. Integrationist Negro leaders have long supported black history and black culture *courses* (S.F. State has such courses already), hut elevation of these courses to departmental status with the B.A. at the end—thus assertion of black distinctiveness as a legitimate subject of educational specialization—is heresy to the integrationists. The NAACP has gone so far as to threaten to file suit against any attempt to set up such a programme.

With the exception of that venerable body, however, the remainder of the black community leadership all the way right to CORE and the Urban League has publicly backed the strike. After the second day of war under Hayakawa, a day remembered as Bloody Tuesday, more than a dozen of the black community's most prominent spokesmen appeared on the campus speaker's platform at the noon rally, to vow its support. There were individual defections suhsequently, but no open break. While the demanded B.A. in Black Studies may not please the integrationists, the demand for increased admissions compels their support. The older generation may not care for George Murray's style, but his support among the young compels that they follow. The BSU and TWLF's unshaken insistence that the demands are inseparable (not negotiable) welds the black community together as it tears the white power structure apart.

There has, in short, been very thorough political preparation in the formulation of these demands. They are, above all, not merely demands made by a club of students in the name of a group of students. With a campus base of less than 10 per cent, that would have been masturbation. As BSU and TWLF leaders have repeatedly said, 'the demands are a matter of survival *for our communities*.' (Not *for us*). And: 'We called the strike because of our needs as a *people*, not just our needs at the college.' The secret, if it is a secret, of the strike's success lies in this stance by the leadership: think as a people. The 'genius' of the strike flows from that principle. Style, tactics and organization were moulded to the political requirements of this specific struggle. Be-

cause it was clear about the tune it wanted to produce, the leadership has been able to do what Mao called 'playing the piano', i.e. to touch now one, now another key in the scale of tactics, instead of coming down with the elbows, or harping on one key all the time.

Faculty Strike

While the student leadership seems to have closed the gap that opened with the assassination of Malcolm X, the faculty strike has looked like a revival of the spirit of the labour movement of the Depression days.

There has, in effect, been a Great Depression in California higher education for the past decade. In anticipation of swelling college enrolments as the post-war baby boom advanced through high school, the legislature in 1960 adopted a Master Plan which established the three-channel higher education system that now exists. In addition to these qualitative aspects, the Master Plan contains a simple Malthusian solution to the quantitative problem of student numbers versus state funds. In order to prevent the supply of educated manpower rising too far above projected corporate requirements at the relevant levels of the occupation pyramid, the Plan called for a 25 per cent relative reduction in enrolment at four-year institutions by 1970. That is, there were to be no cutbacks in absolute numbers of college students, but a reduction in the percentage of college-eligible young people who were to be admitted to four-year institutions. This plan has been in the process of being accomplished. By raising entrance standards, fees and other hidden barriers, higher education has been elevated into a more distant privilege than was the case in the immediate postwar decade. No doubt one of the reasons for declining black admissions to the system lies in this general cutback; the principle of 'last hired, first fired' translates in education as 'last admitted, first expelled'.

The cutback has been accompanied by a general budget asphyxiation throughout the system, but particularly in the state college channel, where the greatest relative reduction in student enrolments was planned. Along with students, professors and teaching assistants have suffered the classic burdens of 'economy' squeezes and cost reduction drives in industry: job insecurity, lack of due process, stagnant pay levels, rising work loads, lagging fringe benefits. In the face of this creeping impoverishment, the AFT (American Federation of Teachers) local at S.F. State (the oldest in the system—organized the year of the Master Plan) has been talking statewide strike for more than a year. The issue on which the entire union was to go out at some time during 1969 was a demand for reduction of work load from twelve to nine teaching hours.

The outbreak of the student strike in November accelerated the faculty's political development. During president Robert Smith's tenure, which ended November 30, the faculty spent many days in continuous all-faculty meetings, looking for ways into or out of the crisis. In the process of these extraordinary sessions, many of the traditional divisions within the faculty (rank, departments, specialities, age, sex, etc.) which ordinarily help to keep the body as a whole too

internally ripped up to move, partially broke down under the influence of the formal one-to-one equality of parliamentary procedure. As students watched the proceedings on closed-circuit TV, many fine resolutions were passed, which revealed a rising level of political self-consciousness among many faculty. Being the expressions of a debating society, however, these remained entirely without political leverage. The experience of impotence drove many more faculty into recognition of the need for more drastic action, and wore down the antipathy which many had traditionally felt for the labour movement. Smith's successor Hayakawa drove others into opposition, both because of the total disregard of faculty legality involved in his appointment, and because of his military approach to university problems. On Bloody Tuesday, AFT membership having been on the rise, the local held a meeting and voted to request strike sanction from the city's AFL-CIO labour council. Later characterized by Hayakawa as an attempt to 'hitchhike' onto the momentum of the student strike, the move was more a desperate leap to keep from being run over by student power on the one hand and by Hayakawa's punitive machinery on the other.

Student-Faculty Alliance ?

Nevertheless, the faculty's moves have been open to ambiguous interpretation. During the Christmas recess, as San Francisco Mayor Alioto assembled flocks of mediators and arbitrators to try to cool the scene out, the AFT's position sprang two loopholes. They did make amnesty for students a precondition for negotiation of their own wages/hours/tenure demands, but only conditional amnesty (i.e. no arrests or suspensions) *during* the strike, saying nothing about amnesty afterwards. Secondly, they did make 'satisfaction of student demands' a further precondition, but did not define clearly who was to judge whether 'satisfaction' had been attained. These softnesses, and the inability of AFT spokesmen to state clearly what they would do if the trustees agreed to negotiate with the union before the TWLF had declared the student strike over, led to mistrust between the faculty and student strikers.

Contrary to informed expectation, the city labour council granted official sanction to the AFT strike on the Monday the campus re-opened, January 6, leading to a walkout by cafeteria, library and some maintenance workers. Trucks honoured AFT pickets. Thus the college reopened in a changed climate. On the one hand, the huge picket line that nearly ringed the campus the first few days enjoyed the relative protection of the umbrella of legitimate labour. This meant that police brutalized strikers mainly in paddy wagons instead of openly. On the other hand, the striking students now came in practice under AFT tactical leadership. Some AFT picket captains assisted police in enforcing standard picket discipline: five-foot spacing, no obstruction, no loud noise. Most important, the AFT was committed to perimeter picketing and to not challenging the police ban on on-campus rallies and demonstrations. The price paid for labour sanction was a restriction on tactics, and a potential split in the student movement (and in community support) between adherents of the black-brown-yellow leadership on the one hand, and followers of the AFT-AFL-CIO on the

other. Already visible on January 7 in tactical divergences, the split might have widened seriously had not the trustees obtained a court order restraining the AFT from picketing. This drove the faculty into the same illegitimacy in which students had operated all along. After an early-morning meeting to debate this legal move, which threatened them with arrest and contempt charges, more than 200 AFT'ers marched hacked to the picket line in defiance of the court order, singing 'Solidarity Forever!'

Before the AFT went out on strike, i.e. before the recess, class attendance had been reduced to between 20 and 30 per cent. Since the AFT strike, this figure has dropped another five to 10 per cent. The main impact of AFT entry has not been on the campus itself, but on other AFT'ers, other teachers in high schools, on labour, and on public attitude. Previously the strike had been a hot issue, a race issue; it has now also become a heavy issue, a class issue.

The White Students

By contrast to the blacks who had more than a decade of black struggle to draw on, and to the teachers, who resurrected a piece of Depression-style defiance, the white student movement on campus has had to feel its way forward in unfamiliar political territory and without a tradition to build on. Here alone, history has limped.

Before the strike, the campus SDS chapter had been in the downward part of a cycle. Still moving in the ideological wake of the movement at upper-channel universities, the chapter came down from its near-victory in getting AFROTC off campus in the spring into a condition of stagnation, as was the rest of the student movement. Research was done on business connections of trustees, a talented Agitprop developed, and disconnected smaller projects took place, but no major issues within the white segment seemed to be forthcoming.

Into this vacuum stepped the BSU with its attacks on institutional racism.

The quantitative aspects of racism at the college are clearly definable in terms of percentages and trends: non-whites are drastically under-represented, and their percentage on campus has actually declined sharply over the past 10 years. But the qualitative aspect has eluded such sharp definition. Relatively clear is the suppression and distortion of the role and condition of ethnic minorities throughout history in textbooks and courses. Not so clear is the question of what constitutes racism in attitudes and actions, particularly among white students or non-students who are themselves not exploiters or oppressors. BSU's earlier position that all whites were inherently racist had changed by fall to the position that political alliances with the white radical movement were desirable and necessary, but the definition of exactly what constituted racist behaviour still had large fringes of vagueness.

The energy with which the BSU pursued the attack on institutional racism had both an invigorating and an overwhelming impact on the

white movement. On the one hand, the discovery of racism in the institution gave the white movement an entire new area to pour energy into, and attracted new groups of people. On the other hand, the whites' insecurity as to the exact specifications of racism meant in practice that blacks had to be called in to do the defining at every critical point. First gradually, then rapidly as the strike action began, the white movement became the satellite of the non-white.

No White Demands

At the outset of the strike, the SDS and SDS/PL (Students for a Democratic Society/Progressive Labour) leadership won adoption of the position that white students would put forward no demands. This political line put the white non-leadership in the peculiar position not only of having no analysis to articulate, but of being committed to allowing none to be articulated.

The white role was defined as strike support. The political motivation for strike support was opposition to racism. What racism meant in the last analysis only the black and third world brothers could define. Hence at meetings of the white strike support committee the discussion was of three types. 1. Denunciations of racism on the part of the ruling class, the trustees, Hayakawa, the pigs, etc. Since there was no disagreement on these facts, this type of discussion tended to be repetitive and self-advertising. 2. Denunciations of racism implicit in the political line advocated by other speakers. In the early stages, students in or around SDS who were searching for ways to relate strike issues to white students who did not already have a conditioned reflex against 'racism' had to prove their innocence of this charge. Although some new kicks were taken at the dead campus autonomy horse and some other mistaken projects rightly rejected, much that would have been useful was also beaten down. These 'racism' debates did more to develop factions than to deepen the movement. Finally, there was 3. speculation on tomorrow's tactics. Having no demands, whites had no say in tactics. This did not prevent long discussions.

On several occasions the condition of the support committee became so non-directed or so close to factional explosion that BSU/TWLF spokesmen had to intervene directly to set people back on the track. The refusal in principle to raise white demands was, however, self-imposed. Before the AFT strike, BSU/TWLF leaders not only left the way open, but urged whites to get going in building a community-related movement around their own issues. This opportunity was certainly there as during the struggle the life situation of white students became thoroughly politicized. Not only every aspect of campus work, including all relations with authority, turned out to have a political aspect, but also the relationships between student and community came into the forefront as political issues. Rarely was the time more appropriate for whites to raise political demands about the political content and direction of the educational process, and the class privilege of access to it, than in the first two weeks of Hayakawa's régime before the AFT made its move.

Despite these political problems the white strike support committee turned out dozens of leaflets (some reiterating anti-racism, some containing last minute news reports, some protesting police brutality), made thousands of phone calls, and brought hundreds of students out on early-morning picket lines. White militants were in the forefront of every confrontation and supplied the mass of bodies in the struggle. At critical moments when no blacks were present, such as in the early morning terror of Bloody Tuesday, white speakers independently held a rally to inform the campus and to gather a sufficient crowd to deter further police raids. In every possible situation of campus warfare the white strike supporters proved able and fearless troops.

Student support, although of a more passive kind, also came from unexpected sources, the student government and the student daily paper. Both had been under attack, and their autonomy threatened, by trustee moves simultaneous with the strike. Having a common enemy with the blacks, they overcame past friction and swung into sympathy. The experience of widespread police brutality turned their sympathy into advocacy. Consequently, potential strike opposition among students found itself without a written organ; whereas strikers had the *Strike Daily* (a wall-newspaper put out by independents close to SDS) and *Open Process*, a student-run arts-poetry weekly close to radical faculty, which ran sharp background analysis. Together the strike support committee, the student paper and the strike papers constituted a persistent front of radical, moderate and liberal students against Hayakawa and the police. What will happen when these are replaced by new faces or withdrawn is another matter.

The problem of relating the strike to white people off-campus has been particularly complicated by the absence of some direct white working-class stake in the struggle. To working-class whites who are not already aware of and turned off to racism, the strike does not even offer a protection clause that white student enrolment will not be reduced as a result of increased black enrolment. How any kind of worker-student relationship can be built on this basis has been hard to see. Apart from 'fight racism', the only other slogan on the tens of thousands of leaflets which have been distributed to whites off campus by PL has been a subtle variant of the regressive campus autonomy issue: 'police off campus'. Thus the faculty, which has played the role of opponent and enemy of most of the previous activity of the student movement on campus, was at first the only link by which white students on campus directly relate to working-class whites off campus. A union strike, at least, is something white workers can relate to. An ism is not so effective.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Now into its fourth month, the strike at S.F. State grows on. It has incredibly survived a bust of historic proportions to finish the semester with a thousand-strong picket line. It has become the Mother of at least three other strikes in the educational system, and the Brother of an ongoing labour strike. It has resurrected parts of the mouldering body of Bay Area radical-liberal politics, given birth to a promising

student-teacher-labour-black-brown-yellow coalition, and made itself the focus of state politics. The off-campus power of the strike is several times and several kinds greater than a month ago, yet the powers upstairs, hoping for a slim inside straight in the face of diminishing odds, appear to have hardened their position.

On the campus itself, the major event has been a mass arrest on January 23rd. For more than two weeks after the campus reopened on January 6th student strikers led by the TWLF in the main accepted tactical ground rules laid down by the AFT. Deriving from years of AFL-CIO labour nonleadership, these rules are designed to be futile: picketing on the perimeter of the plant only, five foot spacing between pickets, no obstruction of scabs, no disruptive noises.

Despite grumbling within the ranks, TWLF accepted these tactics because they were working. Campus attendance stayed down near fifteen per cent, public attitudes were swinging toward the strike, the anarchist-terrorist image was fading. There was, initially, no need to escalate, and TWLF's tactical hand has been prudent throughout.

By the third week, however, numbers on the picket line were beginning to dwindle perceptibly. The white supporters, who supplied about two-thirds or more of picket manpower, were beginning to skip days and stay home or else join in struggles that were developing elsewhere. It was also partly due to plain old raw feet, partly heavy rains, partly boredom and political dry-rot. Absence of politics in the white strike support committee meetings contributed to lack of bodies on the line.

Sitting in his office window counting pickets, Hayakawa trumpeted to the media that the strike had collapsed. This, and approach of final exams, brought a small—but headline-grabbing—rise in attendance on campus, particularly visible in the library. At the same time the AFT headed into private exploratory talks with a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, refloating latent suspicions of an imminent AFT 'sellout'. Conditions were looking rosier for the AFT part of the strike, gloomier for the student part.

The time had come for TWLF to make a tactical break. They called an on-campus rally—a repeat of pre-Christmas tactics—for Thursday, January 23rd. Phone squads went into action and a thousand people manned the pickets that day.

The Big Bust

At noon, all but 200 (mostly AFT, though a few AFT went with the main body) left the perimeter and stepped onto the long-dead campus turf to assemble at the speaker's stand. The dispersal act came from loudspeakers atop the Administration Building—as a dozen times in the past—and hundreds of helmets appeared on the horizon—also routine. But this time, instead of sweeping the crowd off campus, the Tac Squad swooped in a wedge, divided the crowd in half and formed a ring surrounding the core.

Despite heroic diversionary attacks by those who escaped, (they stormed the library and drove a squad of police into retreat with picket sticks) the encirclement held. People outside the ring had to stand by impotently while police took their sweet time hooking 450 people on the spot, one by weary one. It was the biggest mass arrest in San Francisco history.

Arrestees, especially women, received extra-lousy treatment in jail, hut responded in kind. Jailers refused phone calls and delayed notifying people that they had been bailed out. Women had firehoses turned on them. But both raised so much bedlam that near the end a jailer was pleading with a cop not to bring that bunch back again.

The judge who will preside at the trial or trials will have cause to echo the sentiment. Having denied a defence motion requesting a mass trial, fearing that the Hall of Justice would be taken apart brick by brick, the court's docket will be tied up for months with individual and small-group jury trials. The bust is an expensive headache for the courts.

And for the movement. The existing bail resources were never designed for this scale of arrests. Bail for this one bust came to over $180,000. There will have to be dozens of benefit performances in front of audiences with money to get floating. The necessity of relating to these, primarily peacenik, constituencies, may, mean that the question of 'violence' (breaking windows, fighting back at cops) and its role in the strike (small in terms of incidents, large in terms of insight) will get soft-pedalled, leading to possible dampers on TWLF tactics in the future.

For many of the busted and their parents, this confrontation with courts and jails had meant a step forward in consciousness, revealing something of the class nature of the judicial system to them. But this step forward still leaves them a step behind the TWLF, and exposes the strike supporters to the often-noted conservative pressures of the legal-defence process.

Nevertheless strike supporters caught a second wind, and the 'semester' ended with a picket line so massive that no amount of semantics could reduce it to insignificance.

Dragon-Slaying AFT

Meanwhile the AFT has been winning battles of its own. Having ignored an earlier restraining order, it has gone on to ignore a subsequent injunction also. And by continuing the strike in defiance of a state law that automatically resigns a teacher who misses five days in a row, the AFT has slain the dragon that has intimidated so many other faculty initiatives.

Calling the law's bluff has paid off. Unable to get replacements for the strikers, and probably not strong enough to fire all 270 of them, the Trustees via Hayakawa have 'offered to reinstate' the teachers if they

go back to class for the spring semester. No concessions have been made, however, on the due-process/hours/wage/autonomy demands of the AFT, and the body seems solid for a lot more mileage. Nobody is starving or missing mortgage payments, partly thanks to financial support in modest amounts from other unions.

At a press conference to reaffirm their strike stand, AFT members backgrounded their spokesman's statement by humming, in eloquent unison, the melody of 'Solidarity Forever', and that's how it went out over the radio. Many members who were timid liberals up against a wall a month ago are showing they have a backbone.

Negotiations Fail

The AFT's stand has come despite persistant efforts by top city labour officials to engineer a unilateral deal. George Johns, head of the city's AFL-CIO Labour Council, manoeuvred for weeks to produce a formula which would get the AFT out of the strike. Johns' proposal called for the union to be 'recognized' as one of several campus groups authorized to present its views to the Trustees, for a federal 'recommendation' on the hours demand, sidestepping or revision of the five-day law, and for 'independent' (probably benevolent business) financing and staffing of the TWLF's Ethnic Studies School.

This toothless paper was not prepared in consultation with AFT membership, and indications are that Johns had no intention of letting it come to the rank and file for discussion in any case.

The deal fell through when the Trustees baulked at a provision which would allow faculty to appeal grievances over the head of the college president. Unable to salvage even this hollow show-point of achievement, Johns grew bitter and withdrew from the talks, blaming the Trustees and Reagan for what he sees as the destruction of the college.

Labour Lends a Hand

A smallish band of more militant trade union local leaders (Painters, Longshoremen and Hospital Workers, now joined by the Teamsters whose motto seems to be 'opportunity forever') are finding the S.F. State strike an occasion to come together on a common project and build community alliances. On Sunday, February 2nd, a rally at the Labour Temple in S.F.'s Mission District (an international ghetto) pulled in 600 people of all generations to hear the area-wide united front organization to support the strike. Speakers from these union locals, from the black, Latino and Japanese communities, from the now reviving Peace and Freedom Party, from the AFT and the TWLF delivered a long chain of brief messages pounding home the theme of unity between all and sundry, especially AFT and TWLF.

The finale to the rally anchored the rhetoric in substance. Jake Jacobs, head of local 1561 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers at the vast Standard Oil refinery in Richmond (a half-hour freeway drive north of San Francisco in the East Bay) reported that the membership had voted

unanimously to support the AFT strike, and asked for student help in shutting Standard down.

Although merely a tactical alliance at this stage, with neither side very clear about the other's goals, the brief worker-student encounters which have taken place in the early dawn (lines went up at 5:30 a.m.) in Richmond the past two Mondays may turn out to be as fertile in producing new history as were the lunch-counter sit-ins fifteen years ago, if not more so.

Trucks were kept out, production halted and Standard got nasty about what these long-haired freaks with a reputation for throwing bombs and burning buildings might do to its hundred megaton oilmill. The effect on attitudes among students has been invigorating.

What is at Stake

Among the hundreds of students who made the line at Standard were a busload from the UC at Berkeley, who piled back aboard at 10 a.m. to start up their own picket line outside Sather Gate. Pulled together directly and indirectly by the success of TWLF at State, the long-divided minority student groups at this upper-channel university set up a TWLF of their own three weeks ago and called a strike to demand ethnic studies. And also triggered by the State strike, a strike has been flashing on and off at Mission High School in San Francisco.

At stake now is far more than the question whether x number of students will get fitting degrees. The issue broached, now, is whether or not the class of people which includes Standard Oil, Reagan, the Trustees, Alioto, Hayakawa, the School Board and the Tac Squad shall remain the masters of this patch of earth, or whether this land shall pass to the people.

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