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## **THE NEW LEFT IN GOVERNMENT: FROM PROTEST TO POLICY-MAKING**

### **(Executive Summary)**

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the American people witnessed the growth and decline of a movement known as the New Left. Those who gave impetus to the New Left were often the offspring of Old Left activists, including members of the Communist Party, U.S.A., one of the principal Old Left Communist organizations. While there were major differences between the two broad movements, particularly as to ideological and organizational discipline, they also managed to coalesce around the great radical organizing causes of the period, including especially the Vietnam war; and, though often wracked by sectarian and tactical disputes, they were alike in their common rejection of traditional American society and institutions and in their general preference for radical Marxist (and, in many cases, Marxist-Leninist) alternatives. In organizing the massive anti-Vietnam war protests of the 1960s and early 1970s, moreover, activists from both the Old and New Left shared, as a general proposition, a marked preference for an American defeat and Communist victory in Southeast Asia.

Perhaps the best-known New Leftists of the 1960s were the "Chicago Seven," who were tried for conspiring to foment violence in the streets of Chicago, Illinois, during the August 1968 Democratic National Convention. Some of them have moved on to less radical pursuits; Rennie Davis is an insurance broker, while Jerry Rubin is busily promoting his new "Human Potential" movement. Others, however, have remained active radicals, although no longer outside the system they formerly opposed in the streets. Instead,

they are, in several instances, pursuing their goals from within the political and governmental processes. Tom Hayden, for example, is associated with California Governor Jerry Brown and has been invited to meet with President Carter in the White House, in addition to being actively involved in his Campaign for Economic Democracy, a movement with close ties to the far-left Institute for Policy Studies. Others of the Chicago Seven have been given positions in the government at the national level. Lee Weiner is a consultant to ACTION, and John Froines is director of the Office of Toxic Substances, which is part of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. It is with this aspect of the New Left -- the transformation of movement activists from outsiders into insiders within the policy-making process on a scale perhaps unprecedented in our history, at least since the era of the New Deal -- that the present study is concerned. Among those considered are the following:

- \* Sam Brown, Director, ACTION
- \* Mary King, Deputy Director, ACTION
- \* John Lewis, Associate Director, ACTION
- \* Ilona Hancock, Regional Director, ACTION
- \* Marge Tabankin, Deputy Associate Director, ACTION
- \* Peter Bourne, former Special Assistant to the President
- \* Bella Abzug, Co-Chair, National Advisory Committee for Women
- \* Hendrick Hertzberg, White House speechwriter
- \* W. Anthony Lake, Director, State Department Policy Planning Staff
- \* David Aaron, Deputy Assistant to the President, National Security Council
- \* Robert Pastor, National Security Council staff
- \* Stoney Cooks and Brady Tyson, U.S. Mission to the United Nations
- \* Andrew Young, U.S. Representative to the United Nations

Many of these New Left-era activists, along with others mentioned, have been associated with the Institute for Policy Studies, an organization whose leadership includes several admitted or otherwise known Communists and other revolutionaries. The pattern of affiliation with IPS, like the pattern of activity in pro-Hanoi segments of the "peace" movement of the 1960s, forms a noticeable common thread running through the various sections of the present study and, in view of the ties maintained by IPS and its subsidiaries with a wide variety of radical individuals and movements, both foreign and domestic, is of the greatest significance.

It is not the contention of this study that every government official with a New Left background is necessarily pro-Communist; in each case cited, the relevant data are enumerated and patterns of activity developed, and the information speaks for itself.

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### INTRODUCTION: OLD vs. NEW LEFT

To many Americans, and especially to those conversant with the more exotic forms of political protest in the United States, one of the preeminent developments of the 1960s was the growth of a phenomenon which came to be known as the "New Left." The distinction between the New Left and the traditional "Old Left" often seems a difficult one, involving what appear to be arcane sectarian differences and protracted disputes over tactical approaches to mass protest. However, though there were very real differences between them, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that they were able to cooperate to a significant degree in united front efforts built around specific issues. Many of the people who were responsible for the birth and growth of the New Left were themselves the offspring of Old Left radicals, including long-time members of the Communist Party, U.S.A., a fact which helps explain why both the Old Left and the New Left were reflective of a common rejection of traditional American society and institutions coupled with an often frenzied desire to overturn them in favor of a radical Marxist -- and, in many cases, even a Marxist-Leninist -- alternative.

Briefly, the Old Left is embodied in such organizations as the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), which adheres to the line and direction of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the largest and oldest exemplar of Trotskyite Communist doctrine in the United States. Both of these primary Communist groups on the Old Left are part of larger international movements. The devotion of the CPUSA to the orthodox Communism of the CPSU is undisguised, as even a casual perusal of basic CPUSA publications can attest, while the SWP is a constituent part of the Fourth International, a world-wide Trotskyite Communist apparatus some sections of which are known to engage in terrorist violence.

It is significant that, even though the CPUSA and SWP are historic enemies on matters of fundamental dogma, a fact which stems from the great rift in the world Communist movement created by the formal break between Josef Stalin and Leon Trotsky, both organizations managed to work together in creating and directing the most effective segments of the domestic anti-Vietnam war movement of the 1960s. As extensive research and investigation by both the House Committee on Internal Security and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee demonstrated, virtually every major anti-Vietnam war coalition, including those which initiated and carried out the massive protests in Washington, D.C., in 1967, 1969, 1970, and 1971, was either dominated or controlled by functionaries and concealed members of either the CPUSA or the SWP, very often working together toward their common goal of bringing about an American defeat and Communist victory in Southeast Asia. Other

While the leadership of the New Left, like that of the Old Left, was generally Marxist in outlook, it does not necessarily follow that everyone who was caught up in radical causes of the 1960s agreed in every particular with the leadership of the various organizations involved. Nevertheless, the patterns of association are there and are certainly valid as indicators of a person's basic orientation on the issues which often had revolutionary implications for American society.

Also, the present study does not purport to show the extent to which elements of the environmentalist or "public interest" advocacy movements have been absorbed into policy-making positions in government. There are those who tend to view these movements as being synonymous with the radical left in America; such a view is at best imprecise. It is true that certain elements of the New Left have tended to gravitate toward the more radical fringes of environmentalism, particularly toward civil disobedience-oriented anti-nuclear energy groups like the Clamshell Alliance; but it would be inaccurate to tax all adherents of the environmentalist movement with attachment to such avowedly radical enterprises, though it seems fair to contend that substantial numbers of them do adhere to what is often called a "no-growth" mentality in this area.

Communist groups, many of them created by former members of the CPUSA and SWP, also worked in this effort. To the extent that these other groups, including such avowedly Maoist organizations as the Progressive Labor Party and such other dissident Communist entities as the Workers World Party, are reflective of an openly Communist perspective on revolutionary change in our society, they should be considered inheritors of the Old Left tradition.

It is also true, of course, that the traditional left in America includes various democratic socialist groupings; but it is essential to observe that, especially in some of the more blatantly Communist-led operations mounted by the anti-Vietnam war movement, the socialists, particularly members and leaders of the Socialist Party, frequently refused to participate precisely because of the obvious desire on the part of Communist activists to bring about the ultimate victory of Communist aggression. It is a historic truism that to coalesce with Communists is not to work for the achievement of legitimate social or political ends; rather, it is, however unwittingly, to aid them in advancing the revolutionary cause of proletarian dictatorship as enshrined in the repressive system of the Soviet Union and similar states.

For purposes of convenience, then, and bearing in mind the democratic socialist distinction, one may assume that the Old Left is that portion of the radical spectrum that is characterized generally by adherence to traditional Marxism-Leninism. It is, by and large, specifically Communist in the popularly-understood sense and, while plagued by sectarian divisions and seemingly interminable tactical and personal disputes, has shown itself to be dedicated to the advancement of a coherent body of Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Further, the various organizations which comprise the Old Left are characterized by a remarkable degree of internal discipline. It is axiomatic, for example, that a rank-and-file member of either the CPUSA or the SWP must, as a condition of party membership, accept without question the dictates of those whose function it is to set party policy. Dissent is, as a practical matter, hardly tenable unless one is willing to run serious risk of disciplinary action, including expulsion.

Within the New Left of the 1960s, however, the situation was radically different. Ideological homogeneity was by no means the rule; and organizational discipline was generally by no means as strict, although it was certainly far from nonexistent. In general, the New Left may accurately be said to have been an outgrowth of the burgeoning student protests of the 1960s, protests which centered to a great extent around the Vietnam war and a multiplicity of issues which the New Left regarded as inseparably related to it, including alleged complicity

of certain university institutions with the so-called military-industrial complex -- or, as the New Left liked to style it, the "war machine." The New Left saw American universities, corporations, and other great institutions as integral parts of one vast system of oppression and dedicated itself to the destruction of that system by any means necessary, including mass protest, forcible disruption, and, eventually as in the case of the Weather Underground and similar groups, terrorist violence.

It is important to note at this juncture that adherence to overt terrorist violence should not necessarily be charged to the New Left as a whole. Students for a Democratic Society was, until the splintering of the organization in 1969, an avowedly radical organization which engaged in disruptive protest activity, the 1968 SDS occupation of Columbia University being perhaps the best-known example. In 1969, however, SDS became so riddled with factionalism that it simply fell apart as rival groups vied for final control. The result was the demise of the organization as it had originally been conceived and the emergence of the so-called Weatherman faction, named for a passage in a popular Bob Dylan song of the time. This group became what is currently known as the Weather Underground Organization (WUO), made up of hard-core advocates and practitioners of terrorist bombings and other violence.

Other groups which came to prominence during the period of New Left growth also, like SDS, became increasingly militant. Organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party assumed increasingly racist postures as such leaders as Stokely Carmichael of SNCC and Eldridge Cleaver of the BPP toured the United States and various foreign countries espousing the rhetoric of "black power" and support for such guerrilla movements as the Viet Cong. With regard to SNCC, it is instructive to note that as the organization's leadership became increasingly enamored with the rhetoric of violence, its support among certain white activists, many of whom had been among the group's founders, correspondingly diminished until SNCC became purely and simply a black revolutionary organization. It is also instructive to note that, as with the BPP, SNCC's white supporters were to a significant degree products of the Old Left and included people long associated with the CPUSA and with the CPUSA's extensive network of front organizations.

A similar situation arose among organizations active in the anti-Vietnam war agitation. Vietnam Veterans Against the War, for example, included movement activists who later progressed to involvement with such Maoist groups as the Venceremos Organization and such avowedly terrorist operations as the Symbionese Liberation Army, while some of those associated with the May Day

demonstrations in Washington, D.C., in 1971 were known to be planning for violence rather than for peaceful mass protest. The point is that the positions of a great many movement types during the period of New Left prominence tended to harden rather than to become more moderate.

Perhaps the epitome of mass violence in the New Left era of the 1960s was reached during the August 1968 demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention and during the October 1969 SDS "Days of Rage," both of which actions were executed in the streets of Chicago, Illinois. The August 1969 demonstrations were organized and carried out under the aegis of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, the nation's principal Communist-oriented anti-Vietnam war organizing focus at that point, and an allied movement known as the Youth International Party, popularly called the "Yippies." There can be no doubt that the purpose of this action was to provoke violent confrontation with the police, viewed by many of the demonstrators as the quintessential embodiment of America's political repressiveness; unfortunately, there can also be no doubt that the organizers of the demonstrations succeeded, although many competent observers remain convinced that the popular media-encouraged notion of the demonstrations as a "police riot" is at best an oversimplification and at worst a gross distortion of reality. While these riotous demonstrations involved a virtual cross-section of people from both the Old and New Left, the October 1969 "Days of Rage" were a purely SDS operation intended specifically as an exercise in violent protest. Again, those who organized for violence were resoundingly successful.

To reiterate an important point, one should not necessarily impute to all members of the New Left a common ideology or a uniform belief in mass or selective violence. Unlike Old Left groupings, those of the New Left were often, by comparison, woefully lacking in discipline and ideological consistency. Indeed, Clark Kissinger, an early leader in Students for a Democratic Society, was quoted in 1965 as saying, in trying to distinguish between the two movements, that "The old Marxist Left was intensely ideological. They could rattle off the cause of any war as capitalism, imperialism, fight for markets: one, two, three. We are characterized primarily by skepticism. Not having all the answers, we don't pretend we do /emphasis in original/." Having made this point, however, one should not make the mistake of thinking that the New Left was devoid of Communist influence or perspective. For example, while such New Left theoreticians as Kissinger tended in the earlier years to disavow the sort of identification with particular foreign Communist powers that has always been a hallmark of the CPUSA, it is clear that the movement as a whole tended toward extravagant admiration for the specifically Communist revolutionary model of

