

An American at Berkeley . . .

Four Berkeley Students (with Gerard Farrell, O.P.)

The following report is the result of interviews conducted at the University of California at Berkeley. The Berkeley Campus, as you may know, has been the scene of various disturbances and demonstrations since 1964. Since that time, many people in and around Berkeley have felt that the communications media have presented a false picture of what has occurred there. The media have "typified" the Berkeley student as an activist, when in our estimation, they could not be farther from the truth. A frightening apathy, however, among the students in face of the leftist provocateurs, remains to some extent. But these interviews as revealed to us indicate that a change is in the making.

Mike Hernandez, Criminology Major

Farrell: Have you been present at any of the recent riots at Berkeley?

Hernandez: Yes, those of this past June. However, I would prefer to refer to the riots as insurrections rather than riots. The purpose of the riots last June was supposedly to lend support to the French students, but I find that hard to believe. It seems to me that a confrontation with the police was the real intent. But some good came out of it in any case.

Farrell: What do you mean?

Hernandez: Well, the group known as *Campus Democracy Now*, which intends to foster a moderate approach toward the settling of student grievances, was formed in light of that insurrection. The group first met to probe the value of the demonstrations. We hope to make all the students aware of exactly what is going on on the campus, to particularly bring to their attention that the leftists do not have the solutions to the problems that they raise. We intend to act with a realistic purposefulness.

Farrell: Do you think that the demonstrations have had any effectiveness?

Hernandez: No. The demonstrations have hurt. Nothing can be gained by violent action which is truly effective. If their intention was to persuade, then they have failed miserably. One persuades by non-violent negation, not by violence.

Farrell: What about the more recent demonstrations? What have they accomplished, if anything?

Hernandez: Well, they have achieved a good amount of publicity. If that is what they intended, and I think it is, then they have been a success. There is a long range purpose, however, which was stated recently by an SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) member as being an attempt to close down the university, in fact, to do away with the university system.

Farrell: What about the campus race problem?

Hernandez: It is the activists that convince one that a problem does exist. The recent cry of racism is a result of the regents' decision to reverse their permission of allowing Eldridge Cleaver, the leader of the Black Panthers, to lecture on campus. They (the activists) fail to mention that Cleaver was then on trial on felony charges and was on parole; subsequent to that he was accused of parole violation. Moreover, the California public did not want him to lecture. The activists then declared that the real reason was that Cleaver was black. Fortunately, most of the students see the real issue here.

Farrell: Would you tell me some more about the activists and about the narcotics problem on campus?

Hernandez: Probably most of the activists you see on television live off campus; many aren't even connected with the university. They have about ten clubs on campus; many of the activists belong to all ten or so clubs. They involve approximately 3,000 students at the most, 1,000 at the least. This is out of an enrollment of 28,000 students. Drinking is not allowed on campus, but certainly does exist. There is some pot smoking, a bit of narcotics, but most have never tried it.

Farrell: How do you think the police acted during the recent riots?

Hernandez: First of all, I think that we ought to have more people involved in law enforcement. As for the students who claimed interference by the police, all I can say is that I observed at the June riots that the police warned the demonstrators that they were breaking the law and gave them sufficient time to clear the streets. Some obeyed, but the activists for the most part remained and continued to block traffic. The result was that the police came in and cleared the

roads, and some were actually shot at by the activists. They, of course, claimed police brutality.

Farrell: Do you think that the crowd was incited by the police?

Hernandez: Well, if they were, they expected a clash in any case. They came prepared wearing football helmets, tear gas masks, and carried assorted hand weapons. They knew what they wanted, viz., to create disorder, and they accomplished it.

**Ed Winn, Graduate Student in Education (political science),
head of "Campus Democracy Now"**

Farrell: What urged you to form CDN?

Winn: CDN began during the insurrection of last June when the activists attempted to establish "democracy" at the face of a gun if necessary. I was sitting in my dorm affected by the tear gas, tired of having normal life interrupted, and above all felt that something had to be done about these self-proclaimed liberators who were out to destroy everything of value and impose anarchy on the rest of us. I also felt that if a moderate approach to this situation was not initiated, the situation would produce a right wing reaction which would lead to dictatorship. Many who aren't involved would then lose their freedom as a result. Up until CDN was formed, there was no moderate opposition to speak of.

Farrell: How does the left operate?

Winn: They operate in the name of good, break the law, and then demand amnesty; they don't want to have to pay the price of their actions. The leader of the ASUC (Student Union) has gone on national television and mentioned that the Berkeley students back the SDS 100 percent, which is absurd. Furthermore, he was elected in an election which was the result of very strange happenings. He was elected by a coalition of six or seven far leftists organizations—groups which have on occasion used student funds to assist people like Mao, Castro, and the Viet Cong. There really wasn't a choice in the election, but the apathy among most of the students was the deciding factor. As it is now, both the senate and the newspaper are controlled by the leftists.

Farrell: What about the Eldridge Cleaver (Black Panther) question?

Winn: The original proposition was that ten lectures were to be given on the black man. The course was set up to communicate only Cleaver's viewpoint. Here we have an example of an attempt to impose

a one sided position, their view on the rest. This is a good example of how a handful can impose their beliefs on someone else. It was well played up in the press, and is hurting the university which is faced with shrinking budgets, and is losing good professors. Much of this is due to the television media which present the leftist views as typical of the Berkeley student. They are not only a disgrace to their profession, but are helping to destroy the university by giving the public an unbalanced view of the truth. Again the activists are attempting to reduce us to anarchy and are pushing on their revolution to establish the "perfect" state.

Farrell: You are the first person I've talked to who used the word revolution.

Winn: It only takes a handful of people to destroy the work of many. They see the university as the weakest target; its set-up is a sitting duck. What is injuring us tremendously is the apathy of the moderates. If they don't see the situation soon, it may just be too late. All will be done to them and for them.

Farrell: How big is the CDN now?

Winn: It only has about 75 members at present. It in no way purports to be a mass "movement," but wishes to have members who will act as rallying points in their respective sections, e.g., history, engineering, etc., for effective middle-of-the-road action. This is a method that the social revolutionaries have taught us. We hope to spread the CDN, as we already have in some instances, to campuses throughout the country.

Farrell: How do you see the riots at Berkeley as compared with those at Columbia?

Winn: They are both part of the same problem. In both cases the administration did not act quickly enough at the onset. Well, Berkeley has been the model for riots since 1964, and we hope that this year it will become a model of a creative approach toward resolving the problems of society.

Farrell: Where would you say the activists groups are getting their money?

Winn: Mostly from subversive groups, I would imagine, probably even from overseas. They apparently have no means of support, so it must come from somewhere. Many students in the SDS have their activities supported by student funds.

Farrell: What are your political leanings?

Winn: I consider myself a conservative in the line of Burke. I like to describe political leanings with this analogy: the radical wants to

cut down the tree, the liberal wants to put new limbs on it, and the conservative wants to give the tree a chance to grow; he fertilizes it, and will add limbs if necessary, but all within his desire to let it grow naturally. In other words, the conservative looks for liberal views within conservative means. I believe that the American democracy can contain all three viewpoints, even under adverse conditions, a miracle in the modern age.

Farrell: Do you think there is room for protest?

Winn: I consider "protest" and revolution as two sides of the same coin. If one intends to break the law in the name of a cause, then he must be willing to accept the consequences. The protestors of today are certainly aware of their rights, but they are often unaware of their responsibilities.

J. Murphy, Graduate Student in Comparative Literature

Farrell: What do you think of the violence here at Berkeley in recent months?

Murphy: Well, a constructive educational approach to solve the ills that have been the purpose of the demonstrations here recently would be most welcome. It must be kept in mind, however, that violence might have to be tolerated because of the injustices which exist. A debt is owed.

Farrell: What do you think of the draft?

Murphy: I favor the draft. The thought of a professional army terrifies me. To think that there would be a group whose "thing" was war is frightening.

Farrell: Do you think that the police department could be improved in light of the riots?

Murphy: Yes, I do. I think that the police ought to be made aware of their position vis-à-vis the issues which they will confront. They should have a knowledge of the agony which leads to violent situations.

J. Walton, Undergraduate Student at Berkeley

Farrell: Do you believe in conscientious objection in regard to the draft?

Walton: Yes, I do. There shouldn't be a draft, especially in regard to the war in Vietnam. I think that I would like to do something for the good of the country, but not war-wise.

Gerard Farrell

Farrell: What do you foresee in the future as you look at the riots?

Walton: I very much expect a revolution. It may be unbloody. Many believe that our structures have to change radically. And in this sense I do not foresee an end to demonstrations because they are necessary to bring this revolution to its fulfillment.

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