REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN SDS

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In its early years, SDS was organized and joined by young people whose experience with the American electoral process, the Communist Party, and the American trade unions led them to be deeply mistrustful of bureaucratic structures and of representative democratic forms. SDS was initially organized with a traditional representative structure. As members became aware of the broad range of individual participations which a representative structure allowed, they blamed the structure itself for this lack of pure (participatory) democracy. Beginning in 1963, under the banner of "democratic" reform, the representative structure of SDS was dismantled. As each representative institution in the organization was destroyed, the organization became, in fact, less democratic. This increasing lack of democracy was seen by SDS members as further evidence of the failure of representative structures, and fueled the flames of new "democratic" reform movements to destroy the remaining representative institutions within the organization. Thus, destruction of democratic forms led to less democracy, and less democracy led to the destruction of democratic forms. Today, the movement is still retarded by an erroneous interpretation of SDS' history. Attempts to form new national or local organizations with a representative democratic structure are frustrated in part by the charge that "tyranny in SDS proves that representative structures are undemocratic." Since few of those who today must deal with these charges were members of SDS in the relevant years, it is hoped that this historical essay will illustrate that the opposite of popular belief is true: that it was the destruction of representative democracy in SDS which helped make SDS tyrannical.

SDS was organized as the Student Department of the League for Industrial Democracy. Its initial leaders were young intellectuals--graduate students and scholarly undergrads--whose main formative experience was the "Silent 50s." They were faced with a student constituency whose problem was not so much wrong political ideas as no political ideas. The standard description of the student population from which we came (a description we shared) was APATHY.

SDS initially shared a number of the assumptions of this country's liberal elite, particularly assumptions regarding the failure of past movements. The Port Huron Statement, drafted by Tom Hayden, stated that "the Communist Party (S. U.) has equated falsely the triumph of true socialism with centralized bureaucracy." The failure of trade unions in this country to mount an adequate reform movement was primarily ascribed to the elitism of trade union bureaucrats who were unresponsive to membership.[1]

It was common among us to see the U. S. and the U. S. S. R. as basically equivalent evils and the common denominator factor was the centralized bureaucratization of both societies where politics took place without "publics," without responsibility. We laughed, of course, at the anti-communist peace movement's pressure on SDS to balance all criticisms of U. S. policy with criticism of the U. S. S. R. ("No Tests, East Or West"), but laughed not at the politics

[1] In the Port Huron Statement, charges of elitism and bureaucratization of the old Left (Stalinism) and the American union movement were toned down below the actual intensity of feeling on the subject by SDS people: for opposite reasons this was necessary to pacify the L. I. D. sponsors. L. I. D. had an uncritical admiration for LABOR and an uncritical anti-communist hatred of the U. S. S. R. The Port Huron Statement's moderate criticisms of both bureaucracies were statements of limited political independence from the L. I. D.

of the pressure but at the compulsive need to prove anti-communism by saying the "obvious" all the time. The similarity of the "end of ideology," no public politics, assumptions of the U. S. and U. S. S. R. elites was one of the chief themes of a very important influence on the pre-PHS SDS: C. Wright Mills' "Letter to the New Left."

Finally, the influence of Michels' Political Parties was strong in the thinking of early SDS. Michels, together with Mills, was most quoted in 1962, and his description of inevitable bureaucratization in traditional organizations provided the chief framework for analysis of both the domestic trade union movement and the old Left communist party, both here and in the U. S. S. R.

The Port Huron Statement articulated the notion of "participatory democracy" as a society where the individual "share[s] in those social deci- sions determining the quality and direction of his life; [and] society [is] organized to en- courage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation." The remainder of the founding SDS' articulation of participatory democracy was largely generaliza- tions adding up to socialism without the word: "economic democracy," "bringing people out of isolation and into community," etc.

SDS was established after the Port Huron con- vention with a traditional bourgeois, political party structure: the convention elected an un- paid President, Vice President and National Executive Committee; the NEC was instructed to hire a full time staff; between conventions, interim policy decisions were to be made by a National Council composed of the NEC and chapter representatives.

This organizational table was formally demo- cratic; it was also precisely the organizational form through which trade union elitism emerged and about which Michels warned. Today, it is fashionable in the movement to assert that this organizational form was largely responsible for much of the recent unpleasantness and in- effectiveness of SDS. The words "pyramidal," "hierarchical," "elitist" appear frequently as self-explanatory descriptions of this traditional representative form; and much organizing in the movement today is as heavily inspired by a negative sanction--to avoid this traditional form --as it is by any positive vision of an alternative. Thus, in the Autumn 1970 Libera- tion exchange about the Seattle Liberation Front,

one of the defenders of the SLF states that the" "SLF coordinating structure was loose to allow for broad participation, unlike the elitist and rigid old SDS form."

The reaction in the movement to the "elitist and rigid old SDS form" is, at first, a reaction to these problems: male chauvinism in the move- ment, and particularly the deep personal chau- vinism of many well known movement (and former SDS) leaders; the existence of debates in national SDS which had little relation to the actual work and problems of local chapters; the creation of national programs for the movement by national movement leaders while it was im- possible for ordinary movement activists to have any control or decision making about those pro- grams--e. g. , the Democratic Convention demon- strations, recent Weather programs, the 1965 SDS "Build not Burn" program; the alienation of movement life in a period when the movement seems to make no political progress--national meetings and impersonal organizations become even more alienating when what is perceived to be necessary is face-to-face comradeship and intensive study to attempt to figure out what to' do, not "mindless activism, announced at the top.

It is my belief, that these movement problems' are not really a function of the "elitist and rigid old SDS form;" that many of these problems were created, or intensified, not by the old SDS form, but rather by its abandonment; but that while some of these problems could have been alleviated by an attempt to consciously perfect the old form rather than abandoning it, these problems are political problems which do not have formal solutions.

For these purposes I want only to illustrate how the abandonment of the "pyramidal," "hierar- chical," and "elitist" structure of SDS actually intensified or created the problems of movement elitism and authoritarianism which it is now common to blame on that structure. The suc- cessive leaders and activists of SDS who dis- mantled that structure did so for the same mo- tives that representative democratic structures are now being attacked in the movement--a be- lief that these structures caused the absence of full democratic participation in SDS--but in doing so, those SDS leaders and activists in-

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Chauvinistic and Irrelevant Leadership

tensified the very problems they had set out to remedy. At the very minimum, I think it can be shown that the increase of elitism and unrepresentative manipulation by SDS leaders from 1963-1969 was proportional to the progressive dismantling of SDS' original formally democratic structure.

As was implied above, the original SDS leaders were very ambivalent about the original SDS structure, and were very conscious of the need to differ from the way those structures resulted in present union and CP bureaucratization. "Participatory democracy" became the watchword of early SDS; "Robert's Rules of Order" were castigated and "abandoned"--but the adapted Robert's Rules were initially not much different from the "bourgeois" version, since the early SDS leaders were very skilled in the use of large meeting procedures, having apprenticed for SDS in the National Student Association.

Rotation of Office

One of the first conclusions reached by the early leadership was that a regular rotation of high office was a necessary antidote to bureaucracy. It was widely assumed that re-election to any

post in the organization was to be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Hayden served a term as SDS National President from June 1962 to June 1963 (he had been field secretary of the provisional organization in the period immediately prior to the Port Huron Convention) but in June 1963 it was widely assumed that he must "retire," despite the unavailability of other leaders who could have taken his place. This resulted in the election of Todd Gitlin as president, who, while politically talented and experienced, was young, relatively new to SDS, and without any history of SDS organization leadership before his election. The consequence was that Hayden continued to provide ideological and programmatic leadership (together with Rennie Davis and Paul Potter) while Gitlin was largely a figurehead. Rotation in office did not eliminate Hayden's ideological clarity, his programmatic vision' or his organizational skills. Rotation did make this leadership less publicly accessible to the SDS membership, oess responsible to the organization and required the establishment of the fiction of Gitlin's powers to disguise the hidden manipulation of the actual leadership which was being exercised.

The principle of rotation was unquestioned and extended to all levels of the organization. Members of the NEC ceased running for re-election. Staff organizers were discouraged from continuing leading roles. In late 1964 and 1965, a political debate was waged in SDS which polarized the organization into two factions: one arguing for building bridges to liberal and labor groups to combat Goldwater-type fascism; the other arguing for the creation of grass roots community organizations independent of the liberal establishment. Dick Flacks circulated an influential memo to protest the extremity of polarization on these issues which concluded with the following paragraph:

> Finally, I'm upset that a lot of polarization has occurred around the figures of Steve Max and Tom Hayden. These guys should be reminded that they at least implicityly promised to withdraw from top staff or leadership positions in the organization in an effort to encourage the development of a new generation of leaders. I think they are not keeping their promise, and everyone would find things a lot happier if they stepped away a little.

However, the inability of the SDS membership and leadership to deal adequately with the complexity of the political issues was not helped by having the most articulate spokesmen for the

two opposing positions "step away." They did, however, step away. One of then, at least, has continued to exercise movement leadership without even the minimal checks which SDS National Committee meetings and program votes provided. In place of that original leadership, SDS saw a succession of rapid-rising leaders, none of whom stayed around long enough to allow the membership to either ratify or reject the long-run implications of their initiatives; nor did the successors stay around long enough to learn any lessons from their initial errors of leadership. As those errors became more serious as the political situation became more intense, a "clean sweep" came more and more frequently to be seen as the solution to unpopular political initiatives of the leadership. These sweeps were accompanied by an absolutist moralism about the personalities involved (replace the bad guys with good guys--and they always were guys, because guys are not only accustomed to being on top but are also most accustomed to scrambling to get up on top in situations where any regular accession to leadership is seen as "hierarchical"), and without any admission of the importance of developing skills and mechanisms for more democratically instructing the leaders we've got.

When Hayden was SDS president, political iniative in the organization rested with him, the elected part-time organizational official. He was elected because of his articulated ideology and program, an ideology and program to which the organization wanted its staff to be held responsible. And it was: how many remember Jim Monsonis, SDS National Secretary under Hayden in 1962-63? One consequence, however, of the rigid rotation of political leadership which began in 1963 and the lack of organizational continuity which that implied, was increasing de facto power resting with the national staff. Succeeding national secretaries became more and more politically powerful in the organization (Lee Webb, Clark Kissinger, Paul Booth, Greg Calvert) and succeeding presidents became more and more figureheads (Todd Gitlin, Paul Potter, Carl Oglesby--elected president with three months of organizational experience--and Nick Egleson).

After four years, the charade became too embarrassing to be defended, but this embarrassment did not stimulate thought in SDS about how to revive the office of president or the political powers of the Executive Committee or National Council which at one time provided a minimal democratic control over the functions of the

office and staff. The increasing failure of debate in the NEC or the NC to have relevance to the day to day program being implemented by the office was not seen as a problem which could be remedied by strengthening the NEC or NC or by accentuating the political seriousness and representativeness with which delegates to these bodies were chosen. Rather, "participatory democracy" was turned to for a justification of staff hegemony. That "people should control the decisions which affect their lives" was interpreted in the organization as a justification for the trend which was developing-- for whose lives did staff decisions affect more than the lives of the staff themselves? At times, even "workers' control" arguments were used, not only to resist notions of formal responsibility of the national secretary to the organization as a whole, but to argue for the abolition of the national secretary and the creation of a national office workers' collective. In any event, the solution for the powerlessness of the presidency, for the increasing control of the organization by its secretariat, was seen in SDS as the ratification of that trend. In 1967 the Presidency and Vice Presidency of SDS were abolished and the National Secretariat became the de jure political leadership of the organization as well. At a very minimum, one of the results of this move was to restrict national political leadership in SDS to those who could move to Chicago and work full time in the national office.

Three National Secretaries

This participatory democracy energy carried itself further than merely substituting an elected national secretary for an elected president. The office itself was "democratized" in 1967 by having the National Committee elect three secretaries to work together in the national office. The National Secretary, the Inter-Organizational Secretary and the Internal Education Secretary were all to be elected by the NC. It occured to very few of those who participated in this decision that a triple election could result in much less democracy for SDS than a single election. For in a single election the organization would have to make a choice between competing political perspectives and programs; and then hold the winner accountable to the platform on which he or she was elected. The triple election formula allowed a situation to develop in which the politics and program of the national secretary, the inter-organizational secretary and the inter-

nal education secretary were vastly different.[2]

In an organization with a traditional structure, such dissension within the national office of SDS could have been dealt with by an executive committee, rather small in number, meeting in emergency session if necessary, and meeting frequently enough to be in touch with the details of the internecine battles of the office. But by 1968-69 this alternative was no longer available to SDS. The executive committee had been functionally abandoned, in the spirit of anti-hierarchialism and anti-elitism, in 1963. As soon as the National Council, in late 1963, became a functioning body, NEC members saw their role as only that of at-large members of the NC. Ashamed by the anti-representative spirit of SDS to admit the leadership responsibilities for which it had been elected, the NEC was ignored and atrophied for so long that in 1967 a new group of at-large leaders was instituted, called the NIC (National Interim Committee) whose function and structure was identical to that of the NEC which had never been formally abolished.[3] The NIC functioned for a short time in a supervisory relation to the national office, but it too was soon seen as too hierarchical and "bourgeois." Within a few months it was functionally replaced by the notion that the national staff should be responsible only to a "national collective" appointed and organized by the staff itself. The deeply anti-democratic nature of this shift was disguised by the use

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[2]This need not have been the case if national politics in SDS had been developed to the point of sophistication where the three officers would be elected as a slate; but that sophistication had not developed--neither in the membership electorate nor in the candidates themselves.

The result was that no coherent mandate could be carried out and that the chief political battles of the organization were fought out within the national office. Fighting out political battles within a national office is far less democratic than having those battles fought in a general election campaign for control of the office. Yet the troika model was adopted under the "democratic" banner.

[3]The creation of the NIC was not really an exception to the anti-leadership mystique I am describing. The creation of the NIC was part of a package adopted in 1967 which included the abolition of the SDS presidency and vice-presidency. The NIC was seen as the decentralization of the two previously elected SDS officers.

of the word "collective," for this word carried the moral sanction of the anti-structural forces in the organization.

This is not to say that the continued functioning of an executive committee from 1963 to 1969 could have removed the later political battles in the office to the membership at large: if the NEC had been elected with as little political self-consciousness as the national staff, the NEC might have been as deadlocked as the office itself. However, an NEC elected nationally on a political basis would at least have had a chance to bring those office debates to a more democratic membership forum, suppressing their continued expression in office struggle. The result of the "anti-hierarchialism" of eliminating the NEC was to make the national office staff less subject to democratic control.

The National Council (chapter delegates plus the at-large members of the NEC) stood even less chance of holding the national office accountable in any way. Not only was its membership very unstable in a rapidly growing and transient student organization, but National Council members were in no regular touch with the national office. The NC had no mechanisms for exercising ongoing supervisory authority but could only take votes at its quarterly meetings.

Moreover, the "ultra-democratic" mystique extended to a refusal to define National Council membership in any way. In its early years (1963-65) SDS encouraged all members to attend NC meetings in order to observe and become familiar with the organization. After a while, though, it was seen as oppressive and in violation of "participatory democracy" to prevent from speaking anyone in the room who might have something to say. In due time this was carried further and it was felt to be embarrassingly "bourgeois" to ask for voting credentials--anyone who showed up at NC could vote. By 1967, random members who showed up outvoted chapter delegates at NCs. This made it possible for non-chapter members to relate to SDS only at the top--i.e., the NC; the chapter was destroyed as the essential constitutive unit of the organization; there was soon little pressure to have national program which was relevant either to chapter needs or campus constituencies.
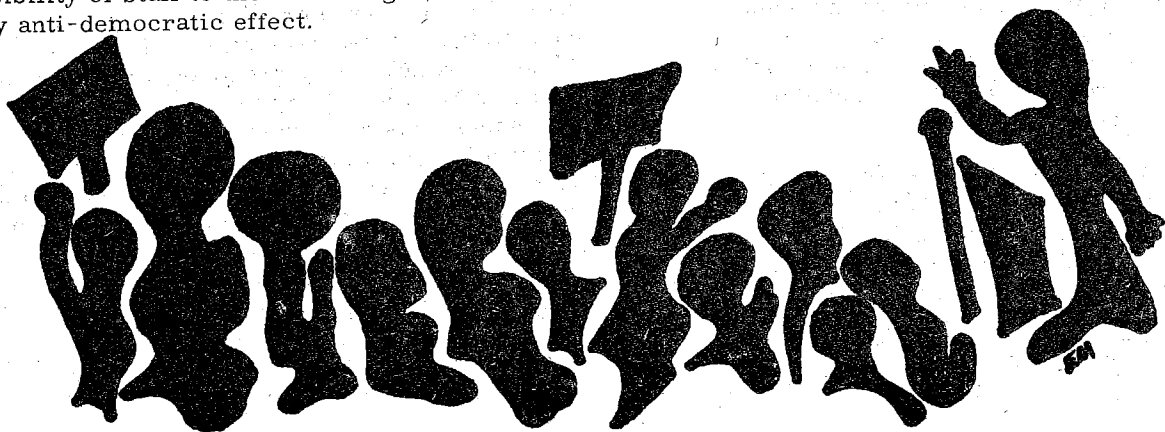
Regional Power

Parallel errors were repeated with respect to SDS' regional organization. In 1962 SDS had

one campus organizer--Steve Max. Max was responsible to the national secretary, the NEC, the NC, and the Convention--in that order. As SDS grew, however, more campus organizers were required, and it seemed reasonable to restrict the travels of particular campus organizers to particular regions. This, in turn, raised the rather difficult problem of deciding to whom the regional staffs and offices were to be responsible. The anti-hierarchical, participatory democracy, and decentralist instincts seemed to suggest that regional staffs should be as close to "the people" as possible, i. e., responsible to chapters in their regions; rather than being responsible to the distant and hierarchical national office. Had the SDS regions been strong enough and well enough organized to actually hold local staffs responsible, it might have made sense to have the staffs report in part at least to regional chapter councils. (Only in part, because so long as the national SDS organization continued to exist, it should have been able to implement national program e even in minority regions). However, the decentralist argument went on at a time (i. e., 1965) when there were few local chapters strong enough to decentralize power to. The result was a series of virtually self-appointed regional staffs in a number of SDS regions. As the politics of SDS became "heavier" some of these staffs set about to organize political power bases in "their" regions--local chapters became, in effect, responsible to their regional staff and not vice-versa. Thus, for example, the "Weatherman" faction was able to exercise extraordinary power in the national organization in the months preceding the 1969 Convention, operating out of the Michigan-Ohio region where the regional staff had created chapters with its political perspective. Power in SDS came to rest much less on success in fighting for political perspectives in the organization as a whole. Again, a seemingly "decentralist" reform--responsibility of staff to their own regions--had a deeply anti-democratic effect.

It is not the case that there was no opposition in SDS to the series of anti-representative and anti-centralist changes described. But opponents of these trends were easily intimidated by their own acceptance of the moral categories in which the debate was couched. What now, in retrospect, seems to have been truly democratic instincts were branded as "bourgeois," and bureaucratic. The last SDS leader who was fully unashamed to admit the exercise of responsible leadership was Clark Kissinger, National Secretary from the winter of 1964 to June 1965. Kissinger's chief accomplishment was the organization of the April 1965 March on Washington, an initiative which took tremendous courage and foresight (it was proposed before the intensive bombing of North Vietnam began in the winter of 1965). At every step of this process, he scrupulously submitted initiatives to the NC for debate; despite derision from the "participatory" democrats, he made a point of describing his activities at every step as the "carrying out of NC orders;" and he maintained a bureaucratic enough office to insure that there was constant information going out to the SDS membership.

But even Kissinger felt it necessary to retire as National Secretary after one full year; the NC then took nearly four months to choose a new national secretary. In the meantime, the national office staff developed much more energetic notions of "anti-hierarchy and workers' control;" never again did adherents to forms of representative democracy and bureaucratic accountability have much self-confidence. Regardless of what the actual tallies would have been had any of these issues come to a vote, it was clear that the anti-hierarchical and anti-leadership forces had overwhelming moral hegemony. In December 1965, a national SDS conference was held in which these issues of

democratic structure were a chief subject of discussion. Significantly, the only paper circulated at the December Conference which was critical of the prevailing anti-structure sentiment originated in SNCC and was anonymous.

The fact that so much of the anti-structure sentiment came to SDS by way of SNCC accounts in part for the extreme moral prestige which this position held. Abhorrence of representative democratic forms, accountability, and bureaucratic efficiency was even more intense in SNCC than in SDS--and at this time (1964-65) there was considerable movement back and forth between SDS and SNCC. The anonymous paper mentioned above (titled "Mississippi's Metaphysical Mystics") described SNCC as a place where

> the most final and cutting statement of rejection is "that's the way the society does things;" the implication being that anything done by the society must be benearth us, and our responsibility as the radical innovators is to discover new and fresh ways to do anything. . . The real danger is to allow ourselves to do anything the way the society does. "The society keeps books and records. so SNCC should not." "The society uses flush toilets so we should not," and so on.

ERAP Autonomy

The most direct representative of this mystique in SDS was the community organizing projects (ERAP) which most closely shared with SNCC a romanticism about society's outcasts, leading to a rejection of anything (e. g. , representative democracy) which could be tagged "middle class." In many respects, "ultra-democratic reforms" within ERAP preceded and stimulated such movements in SDS generally.

The chief incident in this pattern was the abolition of the national ERAP (economic research and action project) office in March, 1965. Directed by Rennie Davis, the ERAP office had raised tens of thousands of dollars, established from 10 to 15 community organizing projects in poor white and poor black urban ghettos, and recruited over 100 students to work as community organizers in these projects. The ERAP office was fromally responsible to SDS--there was an "ERAP Committee" elected by the SDS NC which was to oversee the ERAP office and its implementation of a community organizing program consistent with the "American and the New Era" statement of the 1963 SDS convention. However, as the community organi-

zing projects grew, the legitimacy of the ERAP committee decreased. First, project directors were added to the ERAP committee; since these project directors, however, were appointed by the ERAP director, a project director dominated ERAP committee was unlikely to exercise any real supervision of the ERAP office. Next, inspired by the idea of "participatory democracy," most of the project director positions were abolished in favor of leaving direction of projects to their staffs as a whole, (from 5-15 organizers per project) ERAP Committee meetings became virtually synonnymous with national meetings of all community project staff members. Finally, the "hierarchical" nature of having an ERAP director and ERAP staff making decisions which affected the lives of project staff was attacked. Having no answers to these democratic arguments, the ERAP national staff decided to disband and join local projects as organizers.

These decisions had a number of little understood consequences:

First, ERAP project directors were all males, and all were much more experienced and politically sophisticated than most of the community organizers on local project staffs. The ERAP project directors, too, had little sense of how to train staff members in the political skills necessary to participate in genuine decision making. The abolition of the job of project director in favor of the "participatory democracy" of the project staff as a whole, did not alleviate these problems but accentuated them. As the most experienced, articulate and forceful members of the project, these directors (myself included) continued to exercise disproportionate power within the project, but the democratic ethos of the projects required that this power be hidden and disguised. Thus, leadership was transformed into manipulation; in addition, it is always harder to hold informal leadership accountable for mistakes than it is to hold formal leadership accountable--especially if the prevailing ethos requires a denial that any leadership exists at all.

Secondly, the control of ERAP as a whole by those it "affects" (first project director and then all community staff members) rather than those who empowered it (SDS), created an autonomous organization over which SDS had no control. SDS benefitted from political lessons learned in ERAP projects only to the extent that ERAP staff members moved out of local projects and back onto campuses (this

was considerable). ERAP's autonomy also tended to isolate its community organizers whose own political development was narrower as a result of their decreased participation in SDS. In any event, whatever democratic benefits may have accrued to ERAP from its own self determination, this democracy conflicted with SDS' democratic right to control its own project. A political principle deeper than "participatory democracy" was necessary to resolve this problem.

Third, the dismantling of the national ERAP office resulted, within a few months, in the disintegration of all but the strongest ERAP projects. The financial assistance, staff recruitment and morale building which the national ERAP office had provided was essential to the weaker projects, but not to the stronger. In effect, the ERAP office was acting as the indispensable organizer of the weaker community organizing projects. Eliminating the national ERAP office on grounds of opposition to "hierarchy" did not speak to the essential political functions that office was performing. And not only the weak projects suffered. Within a few months of the national office's closing, the three remaining projects (Newark, Cleveland and Chicago) had nearly ceased communicating, since the regular channels for such communication had been abolished.

Fourth, the same democratic rhetoric which led to the abolition of project directors and national ERAP office was soon quite logically applied to the communities in which the organizing was being done. If the ERAP office's attempt to organize the organizers was hierarchical and elitist, wasn't also the organizers' attempts to organize the community? This is much too complicated an issue to be dealt with briefly here, but the same instincts which led to the denial of project directorship, led organizers to attempt to deny their role as well. This resulted in a similar substitution of manipulation for self conscious organizing and the eventual destruction of even the strong projects was at least in part influenced by the inability of ERAP organizers to develop a sophisticated notion of the role of an organizer which went beyond simple democratic slogans. "Let the people decide" was a powerful mass slogan,

a weapon against the War on Poverty, urban renewal and the like. Mass slogans, however, are not always adequate tools for understanding political practice; in this case it led organizers to pretend (at times even to themselves) that "the people" were deciding issues that only organizers knew about, let alone understood.

The foregoing does not argue that SDS' problems would have been entirely avoided had it maintained a formally representative structure, complete with president, v. p. , NEC, NC, ERAP committee, single national secretary, appointed staff, etc. SDS had many serious problems of ideology and practice, let alone its problems with democracy. This is not even an argument that SDS would have been a democratic organization had its formally representative structure been maintained. Male chauvinism in the organization, as well as political inarticulateness would have interfered with democracy even within a representative structure--as was noted above, the election of three staff members need not result in office warfare if the membership is sophisticated enough to elect the three from the same slate. Democracy can never be more than empty formalism if the base of an organization is not highly conscious and active in its own behalf. Fully participatory democratic organizations were probably impossible in the politically naive days of the early New Left; but formally democratic organizations would have been a good place to start.

But this paper does argue that the opposite assertions are false. Lack of democracy in SDS was not caused, not even related to its hierarchical, pyramidal and representative form. The attack in SDS on representative institutions in the name of democracy intensified SDS' lack of democracy.

We are now entering a period where activists are again thinking of building organizations-- national organizations, like NUC, local organizations, sectoral organizations, women's organizations. In a period of much higher consciousness than the middle sixties, these organizations probably have a decent chance of success. But the organizers of these new efforts should beware the pitfalls of the sixties; they could do worse than to imitate the "rigid old SDS form."