

## The Poverty Program

# Stanford vs. Democratic Process

By Thomas Crissom

As all of you know, America is a democracy. Although there always have been notable disparities between our liberal rhetoric and political reality, we still find comfort in hearing our elected officials tell us how we are constantly moving toward a better form of democratic government. And of course, within this country the most democratic of all institutions, so we are told, is the American university.

On our campuses the men of intellect live and work, the same men who write high school civics textbooks and flaming accounts of American history. Men who band together for the preservation of academic freedom, "responsible" exercise of free speech, and the open hearing of all opinion. Men who believe that the orderly processes of a democracy are more efficacious than coercion or violence. And so it is a shock to learn that, last Friday, Stanford University was accused of ignoring the will of the people in East Palo Alto.

That afternoon some 80 Ravenswood High School students, their parents, members of the East Palo Alto Community Action Council, and a few Stanford students picketed the medical school and entered a meeting where plans were being made for an Upward Bound Program to be held at Stanford this summer. Though we were reminded that this was "a complex problem that could not be oversimpli-

## Experimental Work In East Palo Alto

This quarter I am initiating an experimental project in East Palo Alto (where I live), designed to involve high school students in the culture and politics of Black America. I am familiar with a group of about 35 students with whom I have worked previously, and have further contacts through teachers. The project involves an attempt to recruit students interested in reading, discussing, and reporting on The Autobiography of Malcolm X.

I have decided to give the books (\$1 each) free and to pay \$5 for the initial discussion session. I am not sure that this is the best way to approach a learning situation, but I would like somehow to insure that each student finishes the book, which is rather lengthy.

If sufficient contributions can be raised I am sure that several seminars can be arranged in a very short time. After initial discussion sessions, I will open the groups to interested members of The Experiment in an attempt to bring about a gut level interaction by engaging the various ideas and changes that Malcolm grappled with throughout his life.

Anyone interested in this project may call me at 325-2504. If you wish to donate money, please specify that it is for the Malcolm X project. Checks may be made in The Experiment.

--Marc Sapir

find," the demands we made were simple.

Since February, when a majority of last year's Stanford Upward Bound staff voted against continuation of the program and decided to work during the summer in a community day school, a group of faculty and students in the medical school under the leadership of Dean LeRoy Pesch has been trying to obtain a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity to finance an Upward Bound program this summer. This is a noble idea and probably altruistically motivated, except that the communities of East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park have been trying to tell Dean Pesch and his colleagues that they simply do not want an Upward Bound program as Stanford and Washington have conceived it.

In the last two months there has been an almost endless series of meetings between representatives of the medical school, the students in East Palo Alto, and the Community Action Council. Out of these meetings evolved a set of nine stipulations which the community felt had to be honored if the program were to be acceptable to them. Of these nine, Stanford would accept only six. And so, at two separate meetings of the Community Action Council, by a unanimous vote and a vote of 35-18, the residents of East Palo Alto, using the only grass-roots organ existing in the Poverty Program, said politely but with indignation, "no thank you." But within a week, Stanford was notified it had received a grant of some \$60,000.

Although the facts are rather obscure and no one seems to have a ready answer, my research reveals that of all the billions of dollars granted by the OEO, there are probably less than a dozen instances of grants being made over the recommendation of the Community Action Council. Most of these appear to be politically motivated since to decide against the will of the CAC is to undermine the rhetoric that "the Poverty Program belongs to the poor and should be run by them."

As we entered the Friday meeting at the medical school, however, there seemed to be no awareness of this problem since discussion of the planned program had already begun. It was also obvious that those at the meeting had not been in touch with Dr. Pesch since meetings with the community had begun. Attached to the confirmation-of-grant telegram was a letter from the OEO indicating that four of the nine stipulations were violations of federal guidelines and, thus, could not be honored. As for the other five, the letter expressed hope that Stanford and the community could reach agreement by June 1. The faculty present at the meeting never entertained the possibility that a clear indication of the Poverty Program's basic fraudulence was the government's interpretation of what a community deems to be necessary for an acceptable program as a violation of federal law.

This is not to say that our men of intellect are politically naive. They just failed to consider this possibility because, since February, they have

appeared to believe, through word and attitude, that the CAC was "loaded" in favor of dissidents who did not really represent the community. On Tuesday of last week, they were surprised to hear that Mrs. Syrtiller Kabat and Mr. Robert Hoover, one a former Upward Bound staff member and both leaders in the "dissident" movement, were elected to the Ravenswood Elementary School District board over two incumbents, one a white woman with 11 years on the board.

The procedure whereby Stanford accepts a federal grant apparently is not widely known, but it is obvious that the arbiters of this procedure are not well informed. Stanford has three alternatives from which to choose: 1) reject the grant outright; 2) meet the demands of the community and run the program in violation of the law; or 3) accept the grant and run the program in violation of the wishes of the community. Up to this point it appears the latter course of action has been taken and done so without even being able to verbalize the implications such action would have for the processes of representative democracy.

You know, the old, folksy kind of democracy that we all were taught in school. The kind of democracy that our faculty giants implore us to follow. For over an hour we met with those people and they did not mention it once.

There are many things we have learned about Stanford in the past two months. It does not seem to know where it is going. It apparently has no clear criteria for determining how it is going to get wherever it finally decides it wants to go. There still appears to be a great deal of noblesse oblige around here, which is constantly dramatized by the practice of the "carrot technique." But most appalling is the sham Stanford makes of the very ideals and principles which it claims are so necessary for its existence.

## Yossarian Would Fly at Stanford

By Milo Minderbinder

The students who sat in last year in President Sterling's office must be feeling that the world of Catch-22 is not merely comic exaggeration. They were protesting Stanford's involvement with the CIA through the classified contracts of Interim Judicial Board member William Rambo and with the selective service through the draft test and class rankings. Sentenced to one year of disciplinary probation by the Student Judiciary, they have not appealed their case to Professor Rambo.

Now, it turns out that Wallace Sterling has been for eight years a board member of the Asia Foundation, which is a CIA conduit. Thus, Sterling brought charges against the students for undermining the university he was undermining and violating the fundamental standard he was violating.

"Well," as one of the protesters stoically observed, "if the shoe fits, eat it."

# The Problems of Liberalism

By Marc Sapir

In the first issue of *Resistance*, I commented upon the need of the individual in our society to identify with fixed and stable institutions for a sure and dependable way of life. I would like to continue this discussion in greater detail focusing on contemporary liberalism, which I believe is a set of rationalizations posing as a well worked social and political ideology. I would again emphasize that what is said here is understood to be applicable in part to myself and I hope to each reader—I am not trying to write a polemic. I believe there is no such thing as a free agent within the given psychosocial setting of which we remain a part as well as a product. The insecurity, ambivalence, anxiety we feel are manifestations of that setting, and by their expression we as individuals tend to limit our rebellion, suppress, and redirect our frustrations and, "for the good of our futures," close down on our potentiality to grow. We adopt a posture of "reasonable" dissent.

## Institutional Liberalism

It has been said that the appointment of men such as Packer and Lyman to high administrative posts in the University is a danger to the academic community. The argument is based on an awareness that these men are "managerial experts" or institutionalized liberals. Their notion of progress allows them to accept the challenges of power within an ideological system that has specific and dehumanizing notions about the purposes and uses of power. From a basically academic point of view—which I suppose to be the stance of the early stage detached liberal—the idea of working your way up in such a system is logically unjustifiable. Yet, in refusing to make a rigorous academic analysis before becoming a managerial expert or technical specialist, the liberal mind works itself into the position of designing "model institutions," and techniques, and instrumentation as necessary for a pre-specified ideology. With an early decision to grow up and move up in the system, it becomes impossible for the institution-fast liberal to see that the most efficient model and the one that he builds for a society whose ideology cannot consider or meet the needs of its people, is by implication a fascist model: because this is the best way to turn conflict away from institutions and power and towards the individuals and groups most alienated and least able to fit the system (and our experts seek out the best way).

## Liberal Frame of Reference

Last time I pointed out that we can not accuse rich men of being evil. At the most, they are only men with bigger bags than most of us (needed to carry all that money). The same argument holds for the young liberal who does believe in equality and justice for all; in more and better education; in anti-poverty programs; and peace. But at best, these are only holdover scholastic stereotypes of what a "moral man" should be. Doing and being "good" and "moral" are in fact the abstractions which lead so many lib-

erals into fields like research and other areas where rewards are often abstract and may have little to do with social reality.

All social conflict—Vietnam, riots, or minor social evils—cause an unfortunate response by the liberal. With insults to his own humanity (he being a member of society), the liberal feels a twinge of guilt (his morality) and is impelled to effect some change on the system. Examples would be running for office, contributing money, or becoming involved in some reform movement. But he usually joins the system on its terms and may lose out anyway. Upon losing this type of game he neglects a rigorous analysis and never discovers that his actions have been largely irrelevant to the people of his community and the problems he has tried to cope with. His own analysis tells him only that to succeed at this business (or any other) you have to work harder and get deeper into the system (i.e., more influence, more precinct workers, more power or whatever). The result is that he is always ready to try again more and more on the terms of the institution as it exists. Change is seen in terms of accrual of power in the given context. It should be seen as an attempt to change the context. From start to finish symbolic or abstract moralism has been of no value in either understanding or affecting the political nature of social institutions and social organization.

(To how many people does socialism mean only something about guaranteed wages, education, medicine, and nothing about human relationships and human organization? Who ever bothers to think about racism, anti-communism, or chauvinism in other than abstract, psychological terms? These things, after all, are not primarily psychological phenomena but psychosocial phenomena—with etiology being much more easily understood in political, economic, and social terms.)

To borrow a phrase from the more radical members of the acid community, the "political power game" is a dead end. Not only doesn't it effect change; it sucks the actor deeper into the existing value system and thereby limits personal growth. "Political game" means specifically the act of viewing the problems of the world in global proportions, in external systems; for example, seeing change in terms of a proliferating number of petitions constantly being circulated at the Experiment building. All the "evil" social phenomena are externalized or on the other hand (hippies) said to be irrelevant to the community of love and just rejected. I believe that neither is a true appraisal. Cultural sickness is something that can be understood and potentially dealt with because it is not abstract or external. We can see it in our own behavior, and in the disfigured behavior of a supposedly free and open academic community.

Since his involvement in social problems began only on the level of moralism, it is not inconsistent for a liberal to attack radicalism and militancy as a threat to the society and the system that he is a part of. Who among us has never been frightened by the "potential chaos" we may be bringing to "our" society by

too much action and involvement.

Thus, so often, as in the Humphrey demonstrations, the most sincere liberals, such as Brown, Guerard, Mancall, etc., support the war in Vietnam (not in their terms, of course) by helping to maintain the stability of the government and the University as well as perpetuating the 1964 mentality of the community. The assumption the liberal is taught to make, and the one which is reinforced by his abstract and self-contradicting role in the society, is that feeling is the central issue in life; that action is either irrelevant or dangerous beyond the symbolic level—e.g., we wear white armbands or we fast to show our feelings and that is what counts.

But feeling can go only so far. For the liberal it is as much a dead end as action. It threatens to become an admission of guilt by association. How can the head of Lockheed afford to feel bad about the napalm his planes drop? How can the Stanford professor feel bad about the 20% of the University budget that goes to anti-personnel bombs and other military killing devices? By the time he is institutionalized, the liberal is a kept slave. And it makes no difference whether the institution is a nut house, a university, or an arms plant. In each case he believes what the institution tells him; he defines himself in terms of the institution and what he calls "its importance to society."

In conclusion, a discussion of how the liberal in each of us stays alive until we reach the institutional promised land is relevant. What are the defenses of liberalism? Broadly, I see two; one is that radicalism or any form of being on the outside of the society is ineffective, is not a viable alternative; the second is that living outside the pale takes too much sweat and energy. It is physically and emotionally exhausting, not a "reasonable" way to spend one's life. Indeed, neither of these is a defense of liberalism as a pure ideology but a defense of liberal status quoism (institutionalized liberalism). When the argument gets to this point we have come full circle, since the concept that the individual in our culture has to identify with fixed and stable institutions in order to survive, cannot break away into independent realms, is my basic premise. This is what is wrong with liberalism as an ideology.

It is really not necessary here to answer the criticism of radicalism. Nevertheless, I would point out what we all know, that there is a generation of people living outside the acceptable puristic culture of our society. In addition there is a new radicalism on and off the campuses which is speaking not of politics and political organizing but of communities of resistance made up of people ready to put themselves outside institutions and into actual life orientation with other people. Such groups and individuals offer no answers for others; they are only trying to live and to rid themselves of the concept of doublethink, which is an inherent part of building a system that you claim morally to deplore.