

Notes on the International Centre

The I Centre is a University Institution dealing directly with foreign students. This is an informational leaflet on the International Centre (I C), the organisation responsible to the university for handling foreign students.

What is the function of the Bechtel International Centre at a university like Stanford? An official of the I Centre said in his welcoming speech last week that "we hope to prepare you well for the leadership of the '70s." Since the I C is a part, an organ of the university, this statement can be understood only as part of the general policy of Stanford in ~~the~~ international affairs: It can be understood only in connexion with ~~a~~ a trustee of Stanford being Deputy Secretary of Defense (D. Packard), with Chemical & Biological Warfare research carried on at SRI, electronic warfare at Applied Electronics Lab., with Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), with Stanford-managed business school in Peru. It can be understood only with the fact that the founder of the I Centre, Stephen Bechtel, a trustee of Stanford, owns the largest construction company in the Middle East -- hence with vital stakes in the presence of the US 6th Fleet and of reactionary governments in that area, "America's friends"; the same man has large investments in South Africa -- hence is dependent on the survival of the revolting racist government of Apartheid.

The leadership foreign students are expected to take is in the management of US\$ interests abroad, as subordinate managers for international ~~US~~ corporations, as teachers in schools to propagate the importance of the Free World, i.e., to justify the Vietnam war; as government officials to encourage "national development" through private, US enterprises, etc... Foreign students are expected to cooperate in the evils perpetrated by US imperialism in all corners of the globe, S.E. Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Indonesia, etc...

The I Centre is designed specifically to encourage foreign students to feel "part of the group" of the privileged US ruling class. They are told that they are "future leaders"; they are given every sort of material privileges, from the incredible I C lounge (\$ 5000 in redecoration alone), free beer, to special access to rental housing -- in a town where people's homes are being bulldozed by City government. The social situation of the majority of Americans is hidden from them through carefully chosen homestays in homes rotten with luxury, patrolled by the police every night (to make sure that the wealthy are not bothered by the poor); This is said to be "the American Way of Life" when millions of Americans coloured people live in rat infested houses and have to take drugs to forget their environment. The foreign student is also urged to restrict his mind to his studies. All these are attempts to bribe and corrupt foreign students, to make them acquire habits of life and thought that inevitably require cooperation with capitalist exploitation.

The I Centre is described by the officials as "a meeting place for foreign students": This is an attempt to hide the real and constant supervision of all I C activities by the administration. In the same attempt, student organisations are set up, for "student participation or control". The staff has no qualms about interfering in the elections for the International Association. The Int. Association is nothing but a rubber stamp for the Administrators when they feel they need it. In the same way, the Pre-Registration Committee was handpicked by the administration, hence unable to have an independent program. These organisations are only masks of democracy for carrying out the fundamentally corrupt, racist, imperialistic principles on which this university and all its subagencies are based.

The Third World Students Union will work toward the elimination of the International Centre as it stands today for ~~xxx~~ that bureaucracy is basically aimed at corrupting foreigners. We welcome all foreign students who are willing to work against any institution of capitalism and imperialism.

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NOTES ON : THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE #2

Unable or unwilling to meet openly our analysis of the I Centre presented in a leaflet (Notes on the I Centre) distributed during registration, the officials of the I Centre have tried intimidation. After reading the leaflet, the director of the I Centre, Kenneth Cooper, called in one of the staff members who agreed with our position. The theme of their two and a half-hour conversation was, "If you disagree with what the I Centre is doing, what do you keep working here?" -- a veiled request for a resignation.

Why is the I Centre forced to take this antagonistic position? In the past, other people have made these same criticisms privately and in a friendly way to I Centre officials. At that time, another staff member was called in and told, "A minimum of loyalty ~~and~~ and unity is expected from the staff." The administrators are antagonistic because they have no alternative: Since they will not and cannot correct these fundamental wrongs and "shortcomings", they react in the only way they can, by private (secret) threats, by punishing whoever is in their reach. They will not and cannot confront these accusations with facts.

The fact is that our analysis is completely confirmed: The I Centre is completely in line with University principles and practices. The attempt to purge critical and vocal staff members is no different from President Lyman calling in the police to put away or intimidate students who are critical of the university. This same identity is confirmed by what happened to the I Centre only five months ago.

Some of you will remember the arrest and beating of Bijay Sharma, an Indian student, in the lobby of the Undergrad. Library. That night, the only two persons beaten up by the police were dark-skinned Bijay and an American black student, Burnell Mack. The I Centre was struck with sudden paralysis; It did absolutely nothing to help this student. It took 24 hrs and the sole efforts of foreign students (not of the I Centre or university officials) to bail Bijay out of jail. Furthermore, foreign students had to demand that the framed up charges against him be dropped. The I Centre was "unconsciously neutral" when faced with police racism, a student acting according to his conscience, and the University defending ROTC with police troops. These show:

1. Foreign students must not expect the privileged treatment that the I Centre gives them. When faced with the real, outside, world (e.g., policemen) they are victims of the rampant US racism that the IC hides from them.
2. Foreign students who resemble too closely the "dangerous elements" of US society, i.e., black, brown, yellow people, and "white radicals" will be picked out for special polite attention and University and I Centre neglect.

The fact that the I Centre will not respond to friendly criticism, and that it would rather purge itself (perhaps to death if necessary) confirms our conclusion that the I Centre will not change on its own, and must be forced ^{to change} or eliminated.

We call not only on foreign students, but on all students to join our effort to resist this attempt at intimidation. We call especially on those black, yellow, brown minority students who are basically in the same situation as ourselves: The University, through separate sub-~~xxx~~ agencies, is trying to alienate us from the oppressed majority by giving us privileged treatment.

We urge you to gather more information and plan action at a meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 6th, at the International Centre. 8 p.m.

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