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SDS's Jeffersonian/Ultra-Jeffersonian New Left Movement in the North

Ren-Fuw Kuo*

This is the fifth of my series of essays on the relationships between the early American New Left and the American tradition of democracy. It is devoted to SDS's initial New Left movement in the North which derived from, paralleled and supported that of SNCC in the South. Following SNCC's steps, SDS's initial New Left movement took place in the real world, not in the academic world SDS originally expected. This, as pointed out in the first part of this essay, was due primitively to the ideas of SDS leaders themselves, but chiefly to SDS's understanding of the ultra-Jeffersonian "new insurgency"—the ultra-Jeffersonian civil-rights/New Left movement by Negroes in the South as well as in the North. That understanding combined with other secondary factors, as indicated in the second part of this essay, led directly to SDS's first, largest and most important project, ERAP. But the emphasis of that part is on SDS's ultra-Jeffersonian idea of organizing an interracial movement of the poor and the unemployed in Northern cities, an idea which originated in the successful organizing experience in Chester where the local SDS chapter spontaneously and independently organized the poor in the fall of 1963, and which some SDS leaders elaborated for the purpose of revivifying the ERAP which had not worked out at all the way it was supposed to during the first three months.

SDS's ERAP is analyzed, in the third part of this essay, as its attempt to test participatory democracy — its Jeffersonian/ultra-Jeffersonian challenge to non-Jeffersonian democracy in the North. The purpose of the analysis in that part is to find out the common patterns of the ten pro-

* Professor and Director, Graduate Program of Political Science, Soochow University.

jects of ERAP in the summer of 1964, which were designed to implement the basic goal of ERAP as an interracial movement of the poor. Those patterns are discerned by means of two different kinds of comparison: one is between the Jeffersonian operation of ERAP and the pseudo-Jeffersonian practice of President Johnson's "War on Poverty"; the other between the ultra-Jeffersonian JOIN and the Jeffersonian GROIN within ERAP. After winning the "JOIN v. GROIN" debate among ERAPers, the Jeffersonian GROIN became ERAP's unanimous approach. Though it had made considerable strides over the summer, those Jeffersonian achievements were not what ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP had set out grandiosely to do: the interracial movement of the poor never emerged.

The ERAP in the summer of 1965 was, however, ultra-Jeffersonian in practice. Influenced by SNCC, it had abandoned its national headquarters and abolished its national leaders in the name of participatory democracy. Individual projects went off without central direction or assistance of any kind. In the absence of such an organizational content they changed as quickly and as irresponsibly as the whims of the individual organizers themselves. The isolation of individual organizing projects also led to the erosion of ERAP's earlier Jeffersonian commitment to experimental and pragmatic organizing. In isolation, each project came to develop an exaggerated sense of its own importance. It was not surprising that this late ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP turned out to be a complete failure. In addition to indicating symptoms of the failure of the ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP such as these, the last part of this essay also inquires into the various causes of its doomed failure, among which the most important was the ultra-Jeffersonian interpretation and performance of participatory democracy within ERAP.

I. THE IMPACT OF SDS's UNDERSTANDING OF THE ULTRA-JEFFERSONIAN NEW INSURGENCY ON ITS LEAVING THE ACADEMIC WORLD FOR THE REAL WORLD

1. From Hayden's Proposal for University Reform to Potter's Proposal for Searching for a Revolutionary Model

As mentioned in my essay, "SDS's Heritage of the Jeffersonian Spirit of Democracy", SDS, in its founding document--the Port Huron Statement, considered the university to be the best starting point for a democratic movement for social change. (Kuo, 1989, p29) In accordance with this guideline, Tom Hayden, SDS's president of 1962-1963, made a proposal for university reform, which failed to arouse enough enthusiasm among students or adults to get a New Left movement (a democratic movement for social change) off the ground. (Bacciocco, 1974, p.133) In trying to arouse students around the issue of university reform, SDS held an important conference on the "Role of the student in Social Change" at Harvard University at the end of November 1962. There were a number of perceptive speeches,¹ but the most important was given by Paul Potter, a member of SDS National Council.

Universities, Potter maintained, are inextricably part of the world around them, and always have been, their job being to buttress "the vagaries of nationalistic concerns," perform "the truncated examination of the methods of manipulating existing institutions," engage in the "task of creating the men who will lead the existing systems," and so on. Those who can get to see this:

¹ For instance: Roger Hagan on the need for a "revolutionary consciousness" among students; Noel Day on racism; and Hayden, on the manipulative "post-ideological" society.

...stand in a fundamentally different tradition from the vast majority of students and professors in the country; we recognize that we cannot accept their terms of analysis, that we demand a more fundamental, systematic and humane approach to the problems of mankind. We recognize that the Universities are currently concerned with the development of none of these approaches and are in fact, because of their historic commitments to the nourishment of the existing system... in some sense in opposition to their development. And we recognize that the only course for us is to stand outside the existing traditions and on our own intellectual, economic, political and human resources develop alternatives to the system so compelling as to obtain basic concessions from it.

And the alternatives will have to be quite far removed from anything now being suggested. They will involve totally new models, totally new behavior:

We must...begin to search for a revolutionary model which is dynamic enough to extirpate us from the continually narrowing concentric circles which define the limits of change within the established political power structure.... In order to develop a revolutionary model, concerned faculty and students will for the most part have to move outside the University--defined spectrum of lectures, seminars and officially sanctioned research, and more importantly...they will have to move outside the societally defined spectrum of what is relevant since relevance is defined today as that which is directed at adjusting the current power structure. (Quoted from Sale, 1973, pp. 84-85)

Potter was, of course, not alone in feeling the need to leave the university which he began to see as a wrong place to start a democratic movement for social change. There was the growing realization that the university might not be the agency for change after all. By 1963 many SDS undergraduates had begun to feel the need to escape a university system which they saw ever more clearly as an unyielding and uncaring bureaucracy which turned them into holes on the edge of an IBM card, and which they came to realize was an interwinded and equally culpable

part of the national system. And those in graduate school² faced the equally bleak prospect of continuing on for degrees they came to regard as pointless union cards or getting compromising jobs in a "rat race" they saw as deadening and meaningless. "The university," as Todd Gitlin said, "begins to feel like a cage". (Sale, 1973, p.98) And certainly, as Kirkpatrick Sale emphasized, Potter's point was "profound" and had a far-reaching impact on SDS:

The point is profound: recognize that the universities are as corrupt as their settings--how could they be otherwise--and leave them before they corrupt you. What makes this so especially important is that it stands in polar opposition to the Port Huron Statement's idea of what universities and students can be and do--and the tension between these two impulses will continue throughout the decade to be faced by each wave of activist students: Is the university "a potential base and agency in a movement of social change" (the Port Huron Statement) or is it "ultimately committed to the nourishment of a national and international system..." (Potter)? Is the university the nest for those who can create real social change, or the hothouse for those who would resist it? Are students operating within the university truly agents of social change, or must they leave the campuses and operate in the "real" world outside? Are the universities bases from which assaults can effectively be made on the social system, or are they bastions of that system producing instead its minions? The former impulse leads to the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, to student power, to the explosive rebellions of the campuses; the latter leads to SDS's ghetto-organizing projects, to the "free universities," to the "dropout" culture of the youth ghettos, and more. (Sale, 1973, pp. 85-86)

2. SDS's Proposal for a Strategic Realignment

From my point of view, these two impulses represented two different branches of contemporary ultra-Jeffersonian challenge to non/anti-Jefferso-

² They included influential members of the SDS in-group as Robb Burlage, Rennie Davis, Richard Flacks, Todd Gitlin, Tom Hayden, Al Haber, Carol McEldowney, Paul Potter, Bob ross, and Richie Rothstein.

nian democracy in America. Here I confine myself only to the examination of the origins of the second impulse which took place in a large scale earlier than the first one. Potter's proposal for the search for a "revolutionary model" was only the primitive origin of the second impulse. As Bacciocco noted, "The search for a 'revolutionary model' anticipated the 'new insurgency tactic' expostulated by Richard Flacks in an SDS position paper, "America and the New Era," in 1963 and the parallel structure concept experimented with by SNCC." (Bacciocco, 1974, p.129) We have seen SNCC's conception of the parallel structure and its experiment with it in my essay, "SNCC's Jeffersonian/Ultra-Jeffersonian New Left Movement in the South" (Kuo, 1993, pp.53-78), and we are going to see Flacks' conception of the "new insurgency" as the intellectual basis of SDS's community organizing project pretty soon in this essay. Right now, we should take a quick look at SDS's proposal for "realignment," something standing between university reform and new insurgency, or, to put it in another way, one of three directions facing SDS at the crossroads in the year following the Port Huron Convention which we have described in detail in my essay, "SDS's Heritage of the Jeffersonian Spirit of Democracy." (Kuo, 1989 pp. 23-29)

The concept of "realignment" was a moderate, Jeffersonian democratic strategy for immediate but limited social change advocated by one faction in SDS leadership. According to Sale, it was to reorganize "the Democratic Party into a party of liberals, blacks, poor, and those in the churches, labor unions, media, and universities;" it "not only chose to work through conventional machinery (political parties) for immediate ends (electoral victories), but did so with a minimum of moralizing (willingness to compromise and work with imperfect others), a disdain of utopian theorizing." (Sale, 1973, p.44) The strategy of realignment was first used by some members of SDS's National Executive Committee (NEC), including Steve Max, James Brook, and Harlan Joys, all of whom came from SDS's New York Chap-

ter, to counter Hayden's "values" approach to the preparation of SDS's manifesto.³ Although Hayden, with the support of most of the NEC, managed to vote down the Max-Brook attack, yet, as Sale pointed out, "it was an important indication nonetheless of an incipient split in SDS's ranks. It was generally conceived as a right-left split as time went on, with the "realignment" people regarded as rightists and the "value" people thought to be on the left, but at this point it was really more a difference in styles, in strategies, in emphasis, and, though little love was lost between the two factions, the difference was livable with." (Sale, 1973, p.45) Indeed, the Port Huron Statement turned out to be broad enough to include both: while it placed an emphasis on ultra-Jeffersonian democratic values, it did not rule out the possibility to realize these values gradually rather than dramatically by Jeffersonian democratic means of realignment. In fact, SDS addressed itself to the problems of constructing a powerful liberal-labor coalition three months following the Port Huron Convention.

In September 1962, SDS published Students and Labor, a position paper by Al Haber, which speculated how a New Left might put together the coalition for radical reform originally discussed in the Port Huron Statement. For Haber and SDS, an alliance was absolutely essential for generating a viable strategy of opposition in American politics.⁴ To forge

³ At a meeting of the National Executive Committee (NEC) at Chapel Hill, North Carolina in May 1962, Hayden outlined his thinking about the SDS manifesto to date in some detail, and suddenly ran into fire from the New York "realignment" group. Disturbed by what he heard from Hayden about the manifesto, Max attacked Hayden's ideas for being insufficiently concrete, overly utopian, weak on practical politics, and impossibly full of mysterious talk about "relevance" and "values." He urged instead a document with a more political cast, related to practice, which would "advocate political realignment and orient SDS to bringing realignment about"--a document, by coincidence, which his friend Brook just happened to be in the process of writing. Hayden argued that a "political" analysis would produce too much of a "sectarian political line" for a broad-based group to follow, and smack too much of the discredited Old Left; and he added, SDS "should have no single strategy such as realignment", since that would keep it from being open-ended and "receptive to new ideas". (Sale, 1973, pp. 44-45)

this alliance, SDS appealed to sympathizers in the Democratic Party to erect a "liberal wing" under which members of a New Left could begin to design effective programs to achieve their objectives. SDS hoped that this "liberal wing" would devise an economic program to the left to the "conservative" economic policy of the Kennedy administration.⁵ The active participation of labor in a New Left coalition was indispensable. The question for Haber and SDS was whether labor could shed the role of a "reform club within the establishment" to support SDS, which required militant organizations that were willing to "move men into the street" or "march its forces to Washington as an ultimate demand for change." Haber admitted, however, that as of the fall of 1962, "students did not see in labor this kind of movement." (Bacciocco, 1974, p.130)

3. SDS's Conception of a "New Insurgency" in "America and the New Era"

Even though SDS had stressed the strategic necessity of forming a coalition with prominent elements of the liberal-labor nexus within the Democratic Party, the likelihood of such a coalition was questionable by the June 1963 SDS convention. A revised SDS outlook was expressed in an

⁴ In the words of Haber: "To speak of an alliance is to talk of a strategy for social change. In very broad terms, the strategy we see is realignment- the development of political organization on the local level representing the demands of labor, the Negro and other minorities, the city poor, the small farmer and businessman, the liberal intellectual; and the extension of that organization to the national level through the expulsion of the Dixiecrats and urban machines from dominance of the Democratic Party. In this we see university centers playing a crucial generating role for political ideas and programs and a crucial supporting role in strategically research or action moves". (Quoted from Bacciocco, 1974, pp. 129-30)

⁵ In general, the economic program that SDS envisaged would be centered in a national planning agency setting domestic priorities and geared to achieve the following goals: a program of full employment, a national unemployment compensation system, a program of job security, and end to discrimination, a program of community development to abolish poverty, and a reapportionment plan to decrease rural influence in state legislatures.

important position paper presented at the convention, entitled "America and the New Era." Written mainly by Richard Flacks,⁶ and known as "Son of Port Huron,"⁷ "America and the New Era" updated the Port Huron Statement but went considerably beyond the latter in analysis. In a significant shift from the Port Huron Statement, "America and the New Era" attacked all prominent elements of the Jeffersonian liberal-labor Nexus within the Democratic Party.

The first under attack was the Kennedy Administration's "New Frontier." Insofar as the racial problem was concerned,⁸ it was accused of producing an "aggressive tokenism" which blocked the road to complete racial equality including economic equality.⁹

Following the "establishment" centering around the Kennedy Administration,¹⁰ the major liberal organizations in the country were also attacked. "America and the New Era" blamed them for America's political stalemate. For they had abandoned "the populist and progressive strands" of the Jeffersonian tradition of American democracy and relied on non-Jeffersonian means in dealing with the non/anti-Jeffersonian Establishment. (SDS, 1969,

⁶ The main business of the SDS convention, held between 14 and 17 in June 1963 at Camp Gulliver--a summer camp near Pine Hill, New York--was to draft another statement of principles--in the early years. SDS conventions were supposed to set organizational principles and its quarterly National Councils were supposed to set specific programs--and for that Richard Flacks, a SDS leader, had prepared a paper over the spring (with considerable help from the theoretical apparatchik; Paul Booth, Al Habr, Tom Hayden, Bob Ross) called "America and the Ne Era".

⁷ When Flacks presented "America and the New Era" to the convention it quickly became known as "Son of Port Huron". Comparatively speaking, "America and the New Era" was less impressive than the "Port Huron Statement", in part because it came after, but also because of its narrow focus. The "Port Huron Statement" was more visionary, more philosophical, more theoretical; while "American policy and immediate ways to change it. The former surveyed a wide range of problems, while the latter concentrated its attention almost entirely on an analysis of broad contemporary economic and political problems of the United States.

⁸ For the accusation of the Kennedy Administration's "New Frontier" as the center of the "American Establishment," and as the engine of an undemocratic society in the United States, see SDS, 1969, pp.175-77.

p.180) As to the labor force, "America and the New Era" expressed SDS's disappointment at its decline because of its shifting composition.¹¹ How did "America and the New Era" respond to all of these phenomena? It advised that greater ultra-Jeffersonian militancy and forthright dissent within the Democratic party, aimed at urban political machine and southern conservatives, was necessary to swell union ranks with unorganized white-collar workers and unemployed whites and blacks. (Bacciocco, 1974, pp.131-132)

⁹ "The policies of this Administration can be characterized as 'aggressive tokenism.' and tokenism...is in its essence no more than measured adjustments by a faltering social system to radical demands from all sides. It is clear that...the New Frontier cannot solve the...most pressing needs of our time: ...abundance with social justice, and complete racial equality.... The tokenism of the Administration with respect to unemployment, automation, poverty, and social stagnation is clear. No program has been offered which can begin to cope with these problems. The New Frontier has failed to experiment in government programming to meet the radical changes in the condition of production and consumption in America. Corporate power and its 'ethic' have therefore grown, while the counter-vailing and creative possibilities of independent public intervention and development have been completely ignored.... Insofar as the Administration has moved in this area, it has been the direction of supporting elitist, private industry-wide 'planning' with government ratifying these plans as part of the corporate 'team.' There is a different road--toward bold new advances in democratic and responsible planning which makes production available...equally to all Americans. It is this road which the New Frontier seeks to close off. Tokenism cannot bring racial equality to a society which is racially segregated, nor can it meet the increasing demands of the Negro freedom movement." SDS, 1969, pp.177-78.

¹⁰ By the "Establishment" the author of "America and the New Era" meant "those men who have direct influence over the formulation of national domestic and foreign policies." "These include the President and his advisors, and major officials of the executive branch of the government," he continued to point out its elements, "but the Establishment extends into private centers of powers as well--many corporate leaders, foundation officials, some labor leaders, and some leaders of the Republican party are decisive figures in the formulation of one or another aspect of policy." SDS, 1969, p.175.

¹¹ "The effects of technological and industrial changes, so strikingly expressed in the shifting composition of the labor force, presents organized labor with one of its greatest immediate problems.... In the late fifties for the first time, white collar jobs exceeded in absolute numbers blue collar industrial jobs. The traditional base of labor's power and social influence--the production line worker--is vanishing. Labor, however, has failed to achieve the kind of organizing successes with white collar workers that it did wit industrial workers. Combined with imminent as well as actual automation of these job categories, the percent of unionized workers in the work force is decreasing." (SDS, 1969, pp. 179-80)

But it had become increasingly clear to SDS--especially in view of the difficulties SNCC had encountered in the South--that something more than moral persuasion was necessary to push labor and liberal groups into ultra-Jeffersonian militant action. Concluding that direct appeals to the labor movement hierarchy and to the liberal leadership in Congress, the universities and elsewhere were insufficient, "America and the New Era" addressed itself to the people represented by these labor and liberal leaders, who in turn could compel the "establishment" to act in their behalf: "As new constituencies are brought into political motion, as new voices are heard in the arena, as new centers of power are generated, existing institutions will begin to feel the pressures of change, and a new dynamic in national social and political life could come into being." (Quoted, Bacciocco, 1974, p.132)

"America and the New Era" saw the "new constituencies," the "new voices," or the "new centers of power" as becoming "The New Insurgency"¹² "In a growing number of localities a new discontent, a new anger is groping towards a politics of insurgent protest." (SDS, 1969, p.180) Who were the new insurgents? The document gave the answers as follows:

At present, the major resource for these efforts is a number of individuals who are thinking and acting in radical ways as a result of a variety of recent political events and experiences.

Chief among these are the activists in the civil rights movement. Discovering that mass protest is more effective than patient suffering, the Negro community finds that its efforts to achieve equality are bound in complex ways to more general economic problems of employment and economic growth. Behind local segregation there lies a far more pervasive pattern of national political, economic, and social oppression; slowly, the civil rights movement is learning that the demand for freedom is a demand for a new society....

¹² "The New Insurgency" is the subtitle of one section of "America and the New Era."

Students in the great centers of higher learning have learned, though still in inchoate ways, that higher learning divorced from high purpose reflects a society in which initiative is seen as an administrative problem: and as the universities begin to approach the model of other institutions of the society—in their organization as well as their tasks—the problem of university reform takes on many of the same burdens as more general social reform.

Intellectuals, in and out of universities, have found that too often their skills are merely used, not cherished, their rewards are merely sops, not signs of esteem, their work is merely apology, not expression of an inner human reality.

Many liberals and radicals have discovered that the complacency, the cynicism, and the loss of political will which permeated the traditional liberal reform and radical movements and organizations are neither the price of victory nor the symptom of the end of ideology, but rather are the effects of bureaucratic perspectives.... Consequently it is becoming evident that the hope for real reform lies not in alliances with established power, but with the re-creation of a popular left opposition—an opposition that expresses anger when it is called for, not mild disagreement.

Some trade unionists have found that union reform depends on having an economic program which meets the demands of union membership. Thus, political pressures within union impel many of them to positions far more forthright than was ordinary in the fifties.

Thus, there seems to be emerging a collection of people who in thought and action are increasingly being radicalized as they experience the events of the new era. Moreover, the radical consciousness of these individuals is certainly representative of wider currents of urgency and disaffection which exist in the communities from which they come. The militant resolve of Negroes North and South...the deepening anxiety of industrial workers, the spreading alienation of college students—this kind of motion and discontent in the population has given new stimulation to the development of radical thought and is leading to a search for new forms of insurgent politics. (SDS, 1969, pp.180-181)

The new forms of insurgent politics, according to "America and the New Era," had already found expression in a wide variety of local insurgent actions:

The new insurgents are active generators of a wide variety of political activities in the neighborhoods and communities where they are located. Local insurgent actions include: mass direct action and voter registration campaigns among Negroes, political reform movements directed against entrenched Democratic machine...tutorials and other community-based attempts to reach underprivileged youth, discussion groups, periodicals and research aimed at analysis and exposure of local political and economic conditions. Barely begun are efforts to initiate organized protest in depressed areas and urban slums, to organize nonunion workers, to focus reform political clubs and candidacies on issues and programs directly relevant to urban poor and to involve slum-dwellers directly in political efforts. (SDS, 1969, p.181)

"American and the New Era" formulated the idea of "the new insurgency" not only as a description but as a prescription as well. As a prescription it could, the document anticipated, contribute to participatory democracy as SDS's ideal end of democracy:

The outcome of these efforts at creating insurgent politics could be the organization of constituencies expressing, for the first time in this generation, the needs of ordinary men for a decent life.... The political insurgency, the rebirth of a populist liberalism, would upset existing American priorities and could rewrite the nation's agenda.... A concerted effort to abolish poverty, unemployment, and radical inequality will be a prelude to the effort to bring into being a participatory democracy. (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p.98)

4. The Factor and Impact of SDS's Understanding of the New Insurgency

In the view of George Vickers, there was a significant difference between "America and the New Era" and the Port Huron Statement:

In a significant shift from the PHS, the new document proposed a strategy of radical activity within existing "insurgent" movements, rather than solely at the university.... Thus, even though the attempt to build a New

Left based on students had barely begun, the leadership of SDS was moving away from a view of students as the vanguard in search of a broader base for political opposition. "America and the New Era" offers a view of a New Left in which students play a key role because of the skills they have developed, but not as a student movement oriented toward changing the university system... The analysis in the ANE document seemed to require an emphasis on involving students in off-campus participation in various movements, rather than solely on the radical education of students. (Vickers, 1975, p.81)

Why was there a difference between the two documents? According to Vickers, in the year following the Port Huron Convention, SDS leaders deepened their political analysis; and as SDS deepened its ties to the civil rights movement during 1963, the leaders began to develop a sharper analysis of how a democratic movement for social change might come. (Vickers, 1975, p.80) Indeed, a sharper analysis was developing among SDS's leaders because SDS deepened its ties to the civil rights movement climaxing in the student sit-in movement in the South. Deeper ties, of course, led to a deeper understanding. That understanding was another factor for SDS's tendency to leave the university and for the real world outside, a factor that seemed to be more important than the one Paul Potter indicated above. What was that understanding? Let "America and the New Era" state what it was:

The most direct visible and powerful challenge to the status quo and established power in America now comes from the upsurge of Negroes. The general setting of this upsurge is the frustration of economic opportunity for both middle and working class Negroes--for the former, the professional opportunities which exist are few and low paying; for the latter unemployment has reached unprecedented proportions. A further enabling condition of the Negro movement has been the migration of Negroes into cities North and South, either to escape the terror and isolation of rural living, or because of the relative availability of work in the cities as compared with the rapid decline in agricultural employment.... Frustrated

by the hypocrisy and tokenism of established political leadership, a sense of initiative and an impulse to direct action became widespread in the late fifties, climaxing in the student sit-in movement.

The student movement in the South has become more radical and impatient through its experience. From a direct action attack on segregated lunch counters the goals of the student movement have grown to include economic equality and a more direct assault on the white power structure of southern communities. Moreover, the Southern movement now involves increased participation by Negro masses, including lower-class, unemployed and unskilled workers....

The inspiring and increasingly successful Southern revolution has converged with the increasing frustration and despair of Northern Negroes, to produce a vast upsurge of action in Northern cities. In the North, Negroes are confronted not with a system of legal segregation, but rather with a surface promise of equality which makes unemployment, squalid ghettos, "urban renewal," de facto schools segregation, police brutality and a thousand other indignities. These conditions belie the liberal sentiments expressed by Northern politicians, and the outcome of a long history of patience, trust and hope has been a steady worsening of the lot of the Northern Negro. (SDS, 1969, p.179)

This new understanding of the upsurge of Negroes in the South and the North as a starting point of the new insurgency for the sake of extending Jeffersonian legal equality to ultra-Jeffersonian economic and political equality had a tremendous impact on SDS. Edward Bacciocco pointed out the ultra-Jeffersonian impact on SDS as follows:

Like SNCE, SDS had a political objective in mind--namely, the acquisition of power--convinced, as it was, that poverty continued because of the powerlessness of the poor. The objective was to redistribute political power, starting at the neighborhood level, by giving people on welfare more control over social policy and welfare programs. Having constructed local and neighborhood organizations in predetermined areas, the pattern would be repeated across the country until a national movement evolved. Ultimately, the creation of insurgent political power would be sufficient to challenge the consensus, and, either alone or in concert with a liberal wing of the Democratic party, accomplish the objectives set out in the principal

SDS position papers. (Bacciocco, 1974, p.135)

To attain political equality was, for SDS, not to acquire political power but to redistribute it. While Bacciocco did not notice such a distinction between them, Vickers did: SDS's political objective was "something other than a seizure of state power and the direction of that power on behalf of the 'powerless.'" On the contrary, Vickers emphasized, "the objective was the break-up and decentralization of state power to involve more and more people in the decision affecting their lives." (Vickers, 1975, p.87) This was participatory democracy towards not only political, but social and economic equality as well. And it was SDS's attempt to test participatory democracy as its ultra-Jeffersonian challenge to non-Jeffersonian democracy in the North, just as SNCC's was testing it as its ultra-Jeffersonian challenge to anti-Jeffersonian democracy in the South, that led to its first, largest and most important project, the Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP).

In a sense, "America and the New Era" was a turning point in the history of SDS. It turned SDS from theory to action and from campuses to local communities. By the time it was presented as an SDS position paper, there had been wide dissatisfaction with the limitations of SDS throughout the organization. SDS had succeeded in establishing for itself a solid reputation as the most intellectual student group around the place, where the leaders and ideologies of other organizations went from time to time to, as Kirkpatrick Sale said, "forge their separate swords in the fires of debate and intellectuality." (Sale, 1973, p.97) By the end of the 1962-63 school year it had a literature list of nearly twenty papers that were popular on campuses with the types who read.¹³ But it was not known for doing anything on its own, either as a national group or (with few exceptions) in

¹³ Among them were Hayden on the role of students in universities, Burlage on the South, Haber on labor, Booth on electoral politics, and the "Port Huron Statement."

its chapters. That, combined with the organizational limitations of the National office (NO), chafed increasingly on a number of the SDS in-group, and they began searching for new drives and programs that would energize the membership and circumvent the NO. "America and the New Era," as Sale pointed out, "encapsulated this growing impulse into the phrase, as much prescriptive as descriptive at that point, 'the new insurgency.'" (Sale, 1973, p.97) According to Richard Rothstein, an SDS member who participated in formulating plans for the ERAP community projects, ERAP was originally based on the hypothesis of "new insurgencies" set out in "America and the New Era," a document adopted as policy by the 1963 SDS national convention. (Rothstein, 1969, p.275)

II. SDS's ULTRA-JEFFERSONIAN IDEA OF ORGANIZING AN INTERRACIAL MOVEMENT OF THE POOR

1. Factors Stimulating SDS's Idea of Organizing an Interracial Movement of the poor in the North

Tom Hayden was among the first SDS leaders to feel the emergence of the new insurgencies and the need to organize them with SNCC's ultra-Jeffersonian means of democracy. In a "President's Report," he expressed such a feeling:

The people working in liberal causes at the grass roots...are distinguished from the Establishment--by at least their discontent, albeit their political outlook is still maturing. Perhaps these nearly invisible actors, existing in every community, are the points of energy to which we should look--rather than to Geneva negotiators, or the heads of the labor movement, or the other entrenched liberal organizations.

What we may need is a way to transform these invisible rebellions into a politics of responsible insurgence rooted in community after community, speaking in comprehensible terms to their felt needs.... Can the

methods of SNCC be applied to the North?... Can we spread out organizational power as far as our ideological influence, or are we inevitably assigned to a vague educational role in a society that increasingly is built deaf to the sounds of protest? (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p.97)

Hayden was not alone in feeling the need for the call to some kind of "responsible insurgencies" that SNCC had shown. In their search for some way to live which would not violate the way they believed, most of SDSers looked to SNCC's civil rights/New Left movement. That movement was a group of students or ex-students, acting on their principles, not sitting on them, taking part in "the real world" outside of the classroom, helping to shake the nation awake. That movement, as Sale indicated, had shown as nothing had before that "the poor and the downtrodden were remarkably savvy people withal, generous beyond understanding, shrewd in a most basic sense, forgiving, tough, decisive, committed, friendly: all of which ran counter to the myths the middle class had absorbed." It had also shown, Sale continued, that "the way to work with such people was not with top-down liberal paternalism but bottom-up identification and the sort of self-effacing nonideological, with-the-people, leaderless, and non-manipulative organization SNCC had developed." (Sale, 1973, pp.98-99)

So SDS leaders understood the radical potential of SNCC's civil rights/New left struggle and hoped, by mobilizing the poor in the North, to establish a movement that could eventually coupled with SNCC's organizing drive in the South. Moderate and radical blacks alike encouraged such a project; young black activists in the South, especially, resented attempts by northern white radicals to direct them and urged white activists to remain in the North and take care of their own people. (Bacciocco, 1974, pp. 134-135) SDS leaders also felt that unless an alliance between Northern poor whites and the Southern civil rights/New Left movement was forged around economic issues, racial violence would erupt following a white backlash to growing black claims for jobs and equal opportunity.

SDS had concluded that the job of white radicals was to provide the civil-rights movement with white allies who would positively reinforce the power of Negro demands. And what better allies are there than those organized around their own needs and demands, a functional and not merely charitable alliance? The dream of a new interracial Populism was hard to resist...an inter-racial movement of the poor, in which whites too were demanding decent homes and incomes, could not help but demonstrate that civil rights acts which merely outlawed segregation of accommodation facilities missed the essential point. (SDS, 1968, p.22)

Finally, some SDS activists hoped that a successful movement to organize the white poor in the North would enable white students to act as a catalyst in expanding the operational center of the New Left above the Mason-Dixon line. (SDS, 1968, p.22)

Still another important stimulus for an SDS-sponsored Northern community organizing project came from a sweeping economic analysis that gave intellectual justification for a concern with the poor and hence found a willing audience among SDSers. It held basically that the United States headed for an economic recession of major proportions and that there would soon be an army of discontented unemployed, as automation destroyed jobs, the postwar economy shrank, international economic competition grew stronger, and military-defense expenditures decreased.¹⁴ Although this analysis of growing unemployment turned out to be incorrect in fact,¹⁵ yet it had considerable influence on SDSers at the time. They were es-

¹⁴ This kind of economic analysis was developed by sophisticated and capable people of many political views, and help to by such distinguished men as W. H. Ferry, Michael Harrington, Gunnar Myrdal, Robert Theobald, Linus Pauling, Robert Heilbroner, and Ben B. Seligman, all of whom were signers of a document, embodying this analysis called "The Triple Revolution," which was published in Liberation (April 1964).

¹⁵ Kirkpatrick Sale attributed the incorrect prediction in that economic analysis to the following factors: "With the system's vast ingenuity a whole new series of economic and military props (Vietnam, the moon) becomes created in the second half of the sixties to forest all economic crisis and keep people occupied, and with its vast capacity for self-deceit means are developed to ignore those who are not so kept." Sale, 1973, p.100.

pecially impressed with Ray Brown's "Our Crisis Economy: The End of the Boom."¹⁶ It emphasized: "the labor force will expand by a million and a half each year in the coming decade. Add to this demand for jobs the number of jobs destroyed each year by automation (estimates range from one to one-and-a-half million), and the problem takes on monumental proportions.... The result is [by 1970] 11 million unemployed." (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p.99) And that did not even count the part-time and marginally employed nor the millions who never made it into official job statistics. What more natural, then, than to make this enormous reservoir of human beings into an agency to change the system that had treated them so cruelly? For SDSers, it was obvious that the working classes cared nothing for serious changes in the system that had brought them off with such apparent success, and no one could ever count on the middle classes for such a fight; only the poor had the numbers, the geographical distribution, the anger, and the will to press, along with the students, for radical change. (Sale, 1973, pp.99-100) As Todd Gitlin, the president of SDS in 1963-1964, said "The poor know they are poor and don't like it; hence they can be organized so as to demand an end to poverty and the construction of a decent social order." (Gitlin, 1966, p.120)

Other reasons for SDS to move among the poor seemed equally compelling. As Sale indicated, "America was swinging to a rightward racism--witness the rise of Goldwater and the John Birch Society--and if this was to be prevented, it would only be by awakening poor whites, the common fodder of such a swing, to their own subjugated position and their ultimate shared economic identity with the blacks." (Sale, 1973, p.100) The "Other America," which Michael Harrington had portrayed so moving-

¹⁶ One of the earliest formulations of that kind of economic analysis came at a conference in Myack, New York, in June 1963. At the conference, attended by many SDSers, the most influential paper was presented by Ray Brown, then working for the Federal Reserved System, Called "our Crisis Economy: The End of the Boom."

ly,¹⁷ was becoming less invisible, and the time seemed ripe to uplift the poor, now that they had been seen. Then, Sale pointed, "since it was obvious that corporate liberalism had failed, the alternative, following on from the Port Huron Statement's call for 'truly democratic alternatives to the present,' was the creation of 'counter-communities,' anarchistic units where participatory democracy could be tried out first hand." (Sale, 1973, p.100)

All these were what Sale saw as "several strands" combined in the idea of "the new insurgency." (Sale, 1973, p.98) Certainly, the last was the most important, at least for my purpose. From my point of view, the test of participatory democracy first hand, as both end and means of ultra-Jeffersonian democracy, was the central purpose of SDS's attempt to organize the new insurgencies whose chief elements were the poor and the unemployed, white as well as black, in Northern cities. As emphasized by C. George Benello,

The belief in participatory democracy led SDS in its early days to organize communities of the poor along participatory principles, seeking to create the needed changes in American society from this base. Hayden, Potter, and other SDS leaders spoke of the development of counter-communities and counter-organizations to be used as vehicles to challenge existing structures by withdrawing support and becoming independently legitimate. (Benello, 1969, p.404)

¹⁷ Michael Harrington's book, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*, had generated interest in the poor and made an indelible impression on a number of SDS activists. Using an annual income scale of from \$3,000 to \$3,500 per year, Harrington estimated that 40 to 50 million people would be classified as "poor" in the United States. According to Harrington, the poor were either on welfare or held low-paying jobs; they did not belong to unions and had either never possessed appropriate skills or had lost them as the economy had advanced to more sophisticated levels of technology. Harrington called for a "crusade against poverty," appealing to the conscience of young activists with the accusation that the poor existed because society lacked the compassion to help. See Harrington, 1964.

2. Haber and Chabot's Primitive ERAP (Economic Research and Action Project) in Poor Shape

"By the summer of 1963," Sale thus stressed, "the cause therefore seemed clear: organizing the poor and the unemployed. The means seemed to have been given: a SNCC-inspired movement. The agents were to hand: the dissatisfied students of the university." (Sale, 1973, p.101) Even the money was available: early in August 1963 the United Automobile Workers (UAW) gave SDS \$5000 for an education and action program around economic issues.¹⁸ All that was still needed was a mechanism, and it was to this that SDSers now bent themselves.

In the fall of 1963, SDS's National Council decided to send Joe Chabot, a young white University of Michigan sophomore, to organize the unemployed white youths of Chicago, instead of adopting Hayden's original idea to organize the unemployed youths, both white and black, which was resisted by some SNCC workers who insisted that SDS's target should be unemployed white youths only.¹⁹ It also decided to establish a central office

¹⁸ As early as March 1963, having been told that the United Automobile Workers (UAW) was a likely source of money for student work around economic issues, Tom Hayden wrote to Walter Reuther asking in general terms if maybe there was not something SDS could do that would qualify and hinting at something in the neighborhood of \$7500. No promises were made, but UAW expressed interest. Now that UAW gave SDS \$5000, Hayden wrote to Gitlin: "It is time to rejoice. We have the \$5000--more than that.... Maybe we're beginning to move." (Sale, 1973, 96, 102)

¹⁹ Hayden's first notion was that the best way for SDS to make itself felt was by aligning with what was statistically the most deprived and at the same time what seemed the most militant and approachable segment of the poor: unemployed black and white youths.. After knocking the idea around with Gitlin and Booth in July and then testing it out with some people in New York who had slum-organizing experience, Hayden was ready to propose it formally to the Supreme National Council meeting that was to be held after the National Student Association (NSA) convention that year in Bloomington, Indian. But one thing intervened: several SNCC workers at that NSA, including Stokely Carmichael, were beginning to develop the rudiments of a black-power ideology, and were pushing the idea that the blacks could do the job in the south and that what young whites ought to be doing was organizing whites. SDS's target, obviously, should then be unemployed

in Ann Arbor, Michigan, away from the ghettos themselves, and to be run by some scholarly, dedicated soul like Haber so that the program would not go too far away from SDS's intellectual tradition. In addition, it gave the program a name that had something to do simultaneously with the economy, to please UAW, with education, so as to continue the SDS tradition, and with organizing, to suggest the new thrust: The Economic Research and Action Project, conveniently acronymed to ERA. (Sale, 1973, p.102)

ERAP officially began in September, 1963. But something was wrong with it during the first three months. It did not work out at all the way it was supposed to. Haber seemed to be spending a lot of money in Ann Arbor, but nothing much seemed to be coming out of it other than a family printed brochure designed to raise money from rich liberals and a few pamphlets on economic matters written by SDS academics. (Sale, 1973, p.103) NOR was Chabot's work in the real world any more promising. He spent the fall on the near northwest side of Chicago, a white working-class area fast decaying into a slum, trying to talk with the teenagers hanging around the street corners. But it turned out that he had no alternatives to offer the street youths, who never could figure out just what he was after, and he had no organizational support within the community, not even a storefront to work from.²⁰

3. Wittman's Description and Review of a Local SDS's Successful Experience in Community Organizing in Chester

Ironically, it was not in Chicago or in Ann Arbor that the ERAP idea bore fruit, but in Chester, Pennsylvania (an economic and political sinkhole of some 63,000 people, 40 percent of them black, controlled by a Republican machine) where the local SDS chapter in Swartmore College led by Carl Wittman spontaneously and independently organized the poor in

the fall of 1963. The successful organizing experience in Chester was described and reviewed in a SDS working paper named "Students and Economic Action" written by Wittman.

In this paper Wittman first pointed out the limitation of the previous role the white students in the North played in the Negro movement: "even though our Southern counterparts were beginning the Negro revolution, the most we could do would be to perform the 'cheerleading' role: fund raising, moral support, and perhaps congressional pressure," except that only a few could go south to take an active part in the Negro movement. (Wittman, 1966, pp.170-171) Then Wittman saw the possibility of lifting the limitation and changing their role from that of supporting the Negro movement in the South to that of stimulating the interracial movement of the poor in the North. That possibility was not based on imagination, but on what Wittman had observed as two major changes:

The first is that the Negro movement is no longer a Southern movement, for it is beginning to realize that access to "civil rights" gets the Negro in the South no more than a Harlem. It is therefore possible for students on Northern campuses to participate in the Negro movement without migrating

²⁰ Early in November 1963, Chabot sent the following gloomy report back to the National Office of SDS: "I have had little experience on the street with the unemployed fellows around 19. I tried to enter into associations with these fellows by way of the settlements as they were my best source of introduction to the community, but I have not been accepted by any group of older teenagers of this neighborhood. They don't understand me. They are suspicious of me as well as everyone else who tries to have anything to do with them.... Communication is very difficult on every level--almost impossible when I try to ask direct questions of how a fellow thinks about anything in particular. Just to understand the slang would be matter of probably six months. If I try to be accepted by some gang, it would probably be a process involving at least a year, and needless to say, I don't have time for any such luxuries.... It is glum if it sounds this way. There is nothing to make them think socially at this time and nothing to give them confidence that in action their lives can improve. The kids feel totally at sea when an idea of joining together to press your demands is raised. They accept their state although dissatisfied and in revolt at the moment they have no leaders and no program. And at this point it is disenchanting to know that I've not met one fellow in the age group I would like to work in who is thinking socially." Quoted, Sale, 1973, p.103.

south. Most of the east coast colleges and many of the midwestern and western colleges are located in urban or suburban areas near Negro ghettos, which are increasingly becoming the homes of the Negro movement. (Wittman, 1966, p.171)

The second major change was that "the economy is stagnating and automation is increasing unemployment;" and that "although the Negro still shoulders a good part of unemployment, cybernation and automation is color blind, and a ten percent minority can only absorb a limited amount of unemployment." As a result of such an "unhealthy economy," "the problems of the American Negro are not essentially racial, but are problems of poverty focused on a racial minority." Hence, "the northern movement... is really a movement of poor people, the Negro being the sole major element at this time--with assistance from intellectuals who see the need for economic change, and from humanitarians, who refuse to concede the necessity of poverty in twentieth century America." (Wittman, 1966, p.171) Just as the first change would have the effect of lifting the limitation of the role played by the white students in the Negro movement in the South, the second one would have the effect of changing their role in interracial movement of the poor in the North:

Until now, race has been a major drawback for college participation in the movement--most students are white, and have felt that they are in some way intruding, or at least tagging along, on what has been a Negro movement. But the shift of the movement away from an explicitly racial basis enhances the possibilities for the white student. The possibility of working in areas of high white unemployment makes the white student not secondary or supportive, but the catalyst of the movement. (Wittman, 1966, p.172)

In the remainder of the paper Wittman described and reviewed what he saw as a successful experience in community organizing in Chester: turning a possibility into a fact. The local SDS chapter at Swarthmore be-

gan its community organizing in Chester in September 1963. In organizing the poor in Chester it faced, at the beginning, the problem facing most Northern campus activists: how to get into the community. Its solution was to "invade" it. The SDSers at Swarthmore decided that in lieu of more provocative projects, they would begin a survey on the political, social, and economic conditions in Chester. They "initiated such a survey to canvass the southern end of the town, visiting every fourth house, asking questions about occupational status, income, housing, schooling, politics, religion, and attitudes toward the movement." The "major value" of that program was to gain "a certain familiarity with the problems of Chester," and to make themselves "known in the community." (Wittman, 1966, p.173)

The "real turning point" came a month later, however, when a group of SDSers visited the NAACP executive secretary. From that meeting followed "the Franklin school boycott, the subsequent demonstrations, and the arrest of 200 Chester Negroes and 50 Swarthmore students, the formation of the executive committee of the local movement by 15 adults of Chester, and the drafting of the 37-demand platform (which included demands for fair and full employment, new housing, new schools, adequate medical treatment, and fair police practices)." (Wittman, 1966, p.173)

The most significant event, one which would not have been possible without the demonstrations, etc., is the formation of the neighborhood organizations. Over Thanksgiving three neighborhoods of approximately 400 families were pamphleted on our initiative, and groups of 10-20 in each neighborhood met to launch block organizations. Since then attendance has gone up to as high as 40 at the weekly meetings, and the organizations are planning to combat housing conditions. They have begun to draw up lists of housing complaints and are contacting the housing authorities and slumlords. More radical action is being considered including a city-wide rent strike. We assume that the Negro movement in Chester, although most concerned about employment, will be most active in those areas where local changes can bring about improvement, i.e., public services, housing, and schools. (Wittman, 1966, p.174)

In reviewing the above activities in Chester, Wittman prided himself on "certain short and medium range benefits which alone are enough to make such a project worthwhile as the major activity of a local SDS chapter." (Wittman, 1966, p.174) He divided those benefits into two categories: the chapter and the community.

For the chapter, the benefits are obvious. The interdependence of issues about which we speak so much is amply demonstrated, and the large number of students who are attracted to the project for the first time are forced to face up to the realities of the problems facing America. The same students who came skeptically to the weekly seminars which discussed the Negro and the economy became less skeptically and more committed. The intellectual process of radicalization was speeded up for a large number of students. On an emotional level, too, the jail experience, the visiting of tenements, and long discussions at neighborhood meetings made students more concerned with social issues. (Wittman, 1966, p.174)

The benefits of the Chester Project for the chapter was thus that it had a radicalizing and sobering effect on the students involved. What about, then, the benefits of the project for the community? According to Wittman, they included the development of Negroes' confidence in and practice of participatory democracy, as ultra-Jeffersonian challenge to non/anti-Jeffersonian democracy, and their understanding of poverty rather than color as their basic problem, both of which took place in Chester for the first time.

They [the Negroes in Chester] too are beginning to face the realities of their situation: who is with them? And who is their enemy? These lessons are slowly and painfully, but they are being learned for the first time in Chester. As never before, people on street corners and at meetings speak out against the Republican county machine, which they identify as the center of their problems. The defiance of police, the jail experience, and the neighborhood and mass meetings have made them confident of the possibility of change, confident that they have some control over the

decisions which affect their lives....

...we have been taking the greatest pains to develop grass roots leadership in the neighborhood organizations. Democracy does not come easily to people who have never worked with it and who do not believe in it; and when they accept it, they accept it in form only, and not in content. But slowly, people in the neighborhood organizations are rising, and displaying their potential. One neighborhood group decided to remove an "Uncle Tom" from a position of responsibility, a big move for a people who have lived so long with so many "Uncle Toms." In the same group, two men have spent hours of discussion with the student in the area about where the group can go, and they seem to have a grasp of its directions and a belief in the people they are working with which surpasses that of the leaders of the Chester movement. In another slum area, one woman canvassed her block and has gone on to another one, recruiting volunteers for the housing survey, and talking up the movement. For whatever the direction the movement takes, the leadership and organization which has until now been missing and which inevitably is so necessary is beginning to develop.

Another change is the increasing realization of what the basic problems of their lives are, and what they can expect from life. It is a prerequisite for change that people believe things can be different, and that they have a right to a better deal. Until this fall, the Negro community in Chester did not believe these things. The demoralization from years of poverty and actual economic degeneration, the years of suppression, of broken strikes, sold-out leadership, "Uncle Tom" NAACP's, and an old time political machine, has begun to be broken. The victory at the Franklin School was the first time anything had ever been tried, no less won, outside the channels of the machine for as long as anyone could remember. Another major attack on this demoralization has been the sustained presence of college students. We believe it would be difficult for the local Negroes to accept us college students, most of us white, educated, and middle-class. We expected the bitter racism.... Actually the contrary is strikingly true: Our acceptance has been remarkable, and more remarkable has been the absolute lack of any trace of racism in the whole movement in Chester. This is perhaps due to the presence of white students throughout, but it is also due to the non-race-oriented demands of the movement. It is clear to most people that poverty, not color, is the basic problem, and that to wage a race war would leave no one better off.... (Wittman, 1966, pp. 175-177)

Not all in the Chester movement, of course, was successful. Wittman saw one major failure of the movement. It was the neglect of poor whites in Chester (who were 10 to 20 percent of the total population and were supposed to be approached as the allies of Negroes who were 40 percent, but were, in fact, hostile to Negroes): "There is a natural antipathy toward whites among those of us who have spent time in the Negro movement, and there is a disinclination to work with this group. These whites are most open in their racist feelings, most likely to beat one up in a demonstration. And it takes a good deal of courage and initiative to launch into this area in which none of us has experience or confidence." (Wittman, 1966, pp.178-179)

For Wittman, even the success of the Chester movement was only the beginning, not the end. He insisted that this kind of SDS local movement must be expanded into SDS national movement of the same kind:

It is...the responsibility of the more farseeing of us to project the movement on a national scale.... This must be done and it must be done soon, or much of the work which is being done in communities like Chester will be lost. It is this tie between the local movement and the national movement, paralleling the local chapter and the national organization of SDS, which provides the rationale for a national organization at all: Not only to cross-pollinate local groups and permit our experiences to be of some assistance elsewhere, but to take the lead in the formation of and execution of plans for a national movement and national solution which local movements, partially the product of campus programming, can relate to. (Wittman, 1966, pp. 179-180)

4. Hayden and Wittman's Idea of a New ERAP in "An Interracial Movement of the Poor"

The successful organizing experience in Chester did go beyond its locality. The SDS National Office worked with Wittman during much of the Chester movement; and Lee Webb, SDS national secretary, spent several

days a week in Chester throughout the fall, seeing firsthand what a community-organizing project actually might look like and feeding this sense back to others in the organization. Finally, Wittman and Webb went out to Ann Arbor to talk to Hayden and for the first time since the summer. Webb remembered, Hayden "really got interested"; before their weekend was over they had hammered out a whole new idea for a revived ERAP and determined to make the upcoming December National Council the battleground for its adoption. (Sale, 1973, p.105) The new idea was embodied in a paper called "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?" (Wittman and Hayden, 1966, pp.180-219) that Hayden and Wittman wrote in the next few months to sell the membership on the new ERAP idea.

In "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?" Hayden and Wittman surveyed the civil rights movement's lack of substantial achievement and the backlash mood developing in the white community. They categorized four types of the current civil rights demands: "demands to eliminate discrimination or de facto segregation"; "demands which symbolically assert Negro dignity but neither achieve change nor alienate whites very much"; "demands which are specifically radical, do not achieve very much, and potentially alienated large numbers of whites"; and finally, "demands for political and economic changes of substantial benefit to black and white poor." (Wittman and Hayden, 1966, pp.185-191) Hayden and Wittman clearly favored the fourth type, and argued for the organization of poor whites as well as blacks to make such demands:

The alternative to an interracial movement is more likely to be fascism than freedom. We are not convinced that violent conflict between Negroes and lower-class whites will force the American establishment to even make significant concessions, much less dissolve itself. The establishment might merely ignore the trouble and leave it to the local police, or it might use troops to enforce order. In either case, poor Negroes and poor whites will continue to struggle against each other instead of against the power struc-

ture that properly deserves their malice. (Wittman and Hayden, 1966, p. 209)

The feared violence was not, of course, the then unpredicted mass violence of the black community against ghetto institutions, but rather the then common violence of working class whites against Negroes moving into new communities or attending previously all-white schools. The mass organization of whites around issues of their own oppression, Hayden and Wittman's new ERAP hoped, would help blunt that violence. (Rothstein, 1969, p.281) According to Richard Rothstein, the new ERAP also hoped to influence the program of the activists civil rights movement:

It was also hoped that ERAP's organization of poor whites would influence the program of the activist civil rights movement (partially SNCC...). It seemed clear to SDS that the civil rights movement was erring in not focusing on economic issues. The March on Washington for jobs and Freedom made the connection between racial oppression and national economic crisis explicit. But the targets of SNCC, for example, still remained primarily symbolic: the integration of lunch counter, movie theaters, and so on.

ERAP hoped to urge its radical economic analysis of American problems on the civil rights movement in two forms: first, by focusing attention on economic targets and by organizing the poor around economic issues: unemployment, housing, welfare, poverty. But secondly, it was felt that the organization of the white poor would of itself be a step forward in the movement's radical consciousness: an interracial movement of the poor, in which whites too were demanding decent homes and incomes, could not help but demonstrate that civil rights acts which merely outlawed segregated accommodations missed the essential point. Rent strikers' demands could not be met by non-economic integrationst concessions. (Rothstein, 1969, p.281)

Returning to "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?" we find Kirkpatrick Sale having a comment on it: "Long, discursive, and well-nigh unreadable, it nonetheless had an impact on many in SDS circles." (Sale,

1973, p.105) As emphasized by Paul Potter, 1954-61 president and activist, later, in Cleveland ERAP, "By far the most important piece of thinking that influenced ERAP's development was a document called 'The Interracial Movement of the Poor?' Although a lot of people had reservations about the paper, it did summarize and clarify better than anything else the political ideas that ERAP grew out of." (Potter, 1971, p.142) Potter summarized the lengthy paper in the points:

First, it argued that besides black people, there were lots of other kinds of poor people in the United States, all of whom had substantial grievances which potentially they could be organized around. Second, it tried to prove that their ranks were about to be greatly increased as a result of widespread automation, creating an economic crisis of a traditional sort (mass unemployment) which traditional methods would not be able to resolve. Third, it concluded that these factors opened the way for building an interracial movement of the poor around economic issues. Implicit in the third point is a critique of NCC and the civil rights movement for organizing around the divisive issue of race that separated potential white allies from the movement. However, the paper seemed to accept the challenge that it was up to us to demonstrate that whites could be organized, could make a coalition worthwhile to black people. (Potter, 1971, pp.142-143)

Certainly, the central argument of the paper, a product of Wittman's Chester experience, was that whites could work together with blacks to mobilize a community, and that the job of organizing ought to be directed toward all the poor, black and white, young and old, and around any issues that moves them, not simply the question of jobs. Organize, the authors say, around

...demands for political and economic changes of substantial benefit to the Negro and white poor. Examples of these include improved housing, lower rents, better schools, full employment, extension of welfare and Social Security assistance. They are not "Negro issues" per se; rather they are pre-

cisely those issues which should appeal to lower-class whites as well as to Negroes. (Wittman and Hayden, 1966, p.189)

And this organizing could not be done either with research centers or street-corner strangers. It would need SDSers willing to test SDS ideology of participatory democracy by living among the people:

...in trying to build a broad, open, and democratic movement it will be quite difficult to maintain a radical ideology. We want to stress, in a thorough way, the need for democratic participation in a society with a publicly-controlled and planned economy, which guarantees political freedom, economic and physical security, abundant education, and incentives for wide cultural variety....

We are people and we work with people. Only if conscious cooperative practice is our main style will our ideology take on the right details; only then will it be tested and retested, changed, and finally shared with others.... Clearly it is not an ideology that will give us a legitimate and radical place; rather, it is the role we play in the community, as aides in developing a voice and a power among the poor. The manner of this work will be basic to any change in the direction of a new society. The meaningful participation in politics, the moral reconstruction that comes from cooperation in positive work, and the forms which evolve in this struggle may be the main social basic for a democratic America. (Wittman and Hayden, 1966, pp.216-217, 218-219)

5. SDS's Plan of a New ERAP as a Result of the Hayden-Haber Debate

At the December 1963 National Council (NC) some seventy people—the largest number so far at an NC—met in New York with a sense that big things were going happen. The biggest thing that did happen in the meetings was the long-remembered "Hayden-Haber Debate," at which SDS as an organization took a decisive turn. Haber opened by presenting a report on the first three months of ERAP under his aegis and urging its continuation on the same essentially academic lines. ERAP, he held, should be a place

for research and writing about the problems of the poor, an "independent center of radical thinking," formulating the programs around which other people organized for themselves. Students should concern themselves as students, avoid the "cult of the ghetto," and use their own problems and talents to organize around, on the campus. If SDS spread itself from campus to ghetto, it would be spreading itself too thin. On the other side, Hayden responded by insisting that SDS has to be relevant, has to leave all the academic crap behind it, has to break out of intellectuality into contact with the grass roots of the nation. ERAP, he held, by getting off the campuses and into ghettos, would get to the grass roots, get to where the people are. There SDSers can listen to them, learn from them, organize them to give voice to their legitimate complaints, mobilize them to demand from the society the decent life that is rightfully theirs. ERAP can be the insurgent action that would truly propel SDS on a "revolutionary trajectory" as America and the New Era had it. Here at last was something for SDS to do. (Sale, 1973, p.107)

The vote when it came was lopsided: the Hayden position won twenty to six. There were still to be campus programs of research and education around poverty and civil rights; there was still to be work in peace, disarmament, educational reform and electoral politics; but the main energies of SDS would now go into the new ERAP. (Sale, 1973, p.107) To put the new ERAP into effect, the NC picked Rennie Davis²¹ to replace Haber in the ERAP headquarters, and elected an ERAP committee to oversee the regular staff in Ann Arbor to ensure the formulation of a program in harmony with the objectives enumerated in "America and the New Era."

²¹ Rennie Davis was a serious, dedicated, indefatigable, ingrown person who had been born in Michigan in 1940, grew up in Virginia in a small rural town, and had gone on to Oberlin, where he was a political science major and a co-founder of the campus political party there; he had transferred to the University of Michigan for more studies, and he was now eager to push into something more tangible and by all odds more exiting.

More importantly, it decided to increase the number of projects after the first of the new year and arrange to have students participate in a summer project organizing Northern poor to parallel the 1964 COFO program in Mississippi. (Bacciocco, 1974, p.136)

According to Lee Webb, the national secretary of SDS, Davis was "a great organizer" in the spring of 1964: "He was able to exact people, get people going, handle organizational things--and be confident. He's never received his proper recognition: he was one of the very important people in SDS." (Quoted from Sale, 1973, p.108) Davis and Webb did most of the new ERAP planning that spring. The phrase they used at the time was "organize with mirrors"--give people the illusion that ERAP was a real thing before it was. "The whole thing," Webb recalled, was to translate SDS very quickly from an intellectual research center to an aggressive expanding political organization." They formulated the notion of having projects of ten to twenty students in a dozen cities during the summer vacation which, if successful, might be counted in the fall. "We bought the census tracts, got a book about cities from the library," Webb said, "and we sat down and wrote the proposals for all the different cities." (Quoted from Sale, 1973, p. 108) They picked Chicago, Newark, Hazard, Kentucky, Cleveland, and so on.²² Then in a series of preparatory conferences at Hazard, Ann Arbor, and Urbana they spread the word, enlisted recruits, talked over the problems, hammered out their idea.

By April 1964 a staff of over one hundred community workers had been consolidated within ERAP. The ERAP April conference adopted the title "Interracial Movement of the Poor" and finalized plans to train and accommodate students enlisting for two-months' duty in Northern cities that

²² Davis and Webb picked Chicago, because Chadot was already working there; Newark, because Aronowitz's Full Employment committee was interested in help; Hazard, Kentucky, because a Committee of Miners was already at work there; Cleveland, because a friend of Wittman's named Ollie Fein wanted to start one there; and so on.

summer. (Bacciocco, 1974, p.137) So the ERAPers, strengthened by a six-day training institute earlier in June and then by the to-each-his-own convention, set out to build an interracial movement of the poor. As the summer began there were ten projects: Baltimore, Boston, Chester, Chicago, Cleveland, Hazard (Kentucky), Louisville, Newark, Philadelphia, and Trenton.²³ It is almost impossible to describe all of them in a uniform way. As Sale rightly indicated, "ERAP was many things. When it began, during the summer of 1964, it was already varied, but as it grew it sent out tendrils, gathered new ideas, tried different tactics, and by the end, in late 1965, it was absolutely protean. Describing it is difficult." (Sale, 1973, p.133) Certainly I do not intend to describe each of the ten projects in all its aspects. What I am going to do next is to try to find out their common

²³ (1) Baltimore: a project called (like Chicago's) JOIN, working to reorganize the unemployed in two communities, one of poor whites, one of poor blacks; ERAPers included Peter Dawidowicz and former NECer Kimberly Moody. (2) Boston: organizing among suburban whites (chiefly in Bedford, Massachusetts) whose defense industry jobs would, it was held, soon be eliminated as the nation's economy went through a "convention" from military to peace-oriented interests; Chuck Levenstein, a Tuffs SDSer, was important here. (3) Chester: a continuation of the SPAC work in the black community; Grizzard was head of the ten-person project. (4) Chicago: an extension of the JOIN Project which Chabot and Dan Max had started, working among the white unemployed; the fourteen-member staff included such heavies Gitlin, Ross, and Webb. (5) Cleveland: a multi-issued project in a largely poor white community, planning actions around housing, rents, and welfare; ERAPers included Bryn Mawr SDSer Katherine Boudin, Ollie Fein and his wife, Charlotte, Michigan students Nanci Hollander and Dick Magidoff, Sharon Jeffrey, and Paul Potter. (6) Hazard, Kentucky: a joint project with the year-old Committee for Miners and Aronowitz's Full Employment Committee, chiefly organizing unemployment whites laid off from the mines; Steven Max jointed it in the summer. (7) Louisville: a somewhat hazy venture instigated by local peace activists, designed to work almost exclusively with other local groups, chiefly in civil rights; Jim Williams led this project. (8) Newark: another multi-issued project, aimed for a racially mixed community and working with an existing neighborhood-improvement group; Hayden and Wittman were both here, with Swarthmorean Larry Gordon, Barry Kalish, and two invaluable Michigan SDSers, Jill Hamberg and Michael Zweig, among others. (9) Philadelphia: another JOIN project working among the unemployed in a mixed black-and-white area; the ten ERAPers were led by Nick Egleson. (10) Trenton: a multi-issued project directed toward high-school tutorials, urban renewal, and housing, chiefly among blacks; Swarthmorean Walton proper was its director.

patterns in respect of participatory democracy as a means to implement the basic goal of ERAP as an interracial movement of the poor. Their common patterns in this respect may be discerned by means of two different kinds of comparison: one between them and outsiders and the other among themselves.

III. SDS'S JEFFERSONIAN PRACTICE OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY: THE PATTERNS OF THE OPERATION OF THE ERAP

1. President Johnson's "Army Approach to Poverty" versus SDS's "Strategy of Insurgent Response"

Rennie Davis, the director of ERAP, distinguished SDS's ERAP from President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" and the latter's predecessors.²⁴ He characterized Johnson's War on Poverty, and its predecessors as "The Army Approach to Poverty."²⁵ The approach required "professional planning and supervision for execution"; were, "like any army...apt to overpower the 'enemy' while trampling the people"; and increased "the dependency and

²⁴ "Whenever SDS supports field organizers in poor communities, there is a local government making preparations for a war on poverty. None of these preparations shape up to be very big or show evidence that they could have any significant relation to the people with whom we work. However, each is potentially a copy of the dozen or so community action projects already in existence through which private and public agencies are implementing multi-purpose, heavily financed programs of social, legal, educational, and economic aid to poor people. Community action empires exist or are in advanced stages of planning in Boston, Charleston, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Lane County (Oregon), New Haven, Providence, Minneapolis, New York, North Carolina, Oakland, St. Louis, Syracuse, and Washington, D.C. If we are able to take the Washington officials at their word, it is these million dollar empires that are to be duplicated in the more advanced stages of the Johnson War on Poverty. They are the concrete examples behind the catchy war imagery of the new poverty outfit." Davis, 1966, p.155.

²⁵ Davis used "The Army Approach to Poverty" as the title of one section of his article, "The War on Poverty: Notes On Insurgent Response."

powerlessness of the poor." (Davis, 1966, pp.155, 156) The assumption of the army approach to poverty was that "the solution to poverty is to help the poor secure more money without otherwise changing power relationships." (Davis, 1966, p.156) On the basis of "an 'objective' measure of common needs," the "strategy" of the army approach to poverty was "to blanket a 'belighted' area, as efficiently as possible, with those services and improvements needed to fill individual and community deficiencies (training, slum clearance, clean-up, jobs, community centers, and so on)." (Davis, 1966, 1956) "The army approach recognized that the miseries of forgotten people are the consequences of interrelated complex problems which require comprehensive rather than single-pronged solutions. But overall solutions and programs to implement them come from above, rather than below. Civilian acquiescence to a 'need' poverty program is demand; citizen planning and initiative are not. Wars are fought by trained professionals for the citizenry." (Davis, 1966, p.156)

Central to the army approach is the mobilization of community power and expertise into a single, overall campaign. "Effectiveness" against poverty requires a coordination of established service agencies and the people who "can get things done": the available experience, knowledge, and resources of the non-poor community are brought together for an efficient and rational program of aid.

The consequence of federating existing community powers into the War on Poverty is to guarantee a program and a strategy which discourages local initiative and protest and opposes fundamental community change. With welfare and school boards, the mayor businessmen, church, union, and charitable organizations contributing to the benevolent community drive, valuable services—some greatly needed—may be given away, but by the agencies and individuals from whom the poor should be free. In no case will the army approach encourage powerful initiative by the poor in their own behalf. (Davis, 1966, p.156)

In Davis' view, the army approach could further be "used as a weapon to

combat local protest movements."²⁶

Unlike the army approach to poverty, according to Davis, ERAP was "A Strategy of Insurgent Response" to that approach.²⁷ He based this insurgent response on two assumptions:

- (1) Poverty in America can be eradicated, but not without a new political basis for public planning, guaranteed levels of human decency, and massive public programs to allow people to work at urgently needed social tasks.
- (2) The seeds for a real war on poverty lie in the powerful Negro movement and the significant stirrings of poor whites now converging around the common problems of poverty. (Davis, 1966, p.157)

It was on these two assumptions that ERAPers worked. They were "anxious that Johnson's army approach to poverty not destroy a young movement only slightly aware of its own potential" and wanted "to help find means for the poor to assume the initiative and control in any war on poverty." (Davis, 1966, p.157)

²⁶ "The 'best' community action organizations may stimulate indigenous community groups 'to keep the city honest' or accept limited militant actions like rent strikes or civil rights demonstrations as 'necessary.' But none which are rooted in existing community power and dependent on large budgets and a good image for longevity will tolerate serious civilian uprisings as a consequence of their war on poverty. The local community group that wants a welfare program fairly administered, or wants rats out of living quarters or wants a politician on city council who will represent the needs of the forgotten people may not 'fit in' with the strategy of the army approach. An independent organization of poor people can deeply irritate a powerful welfare agency or slumlord or councilman--all of whom may be major backers to the local War on Poverty. They can be a powerful source of criticism and protest and agitation which can only impair the 'overall' program. If possible, ways will be found to stop an indigenous, dissident group--by buying of its leadership with jobs and status in the official programs; by discrediting the organization of the community with smears of communist control; by cutting members off welfare. Experience has shown that the army approach to poverty can be used as a weapon to combat local protest movements." Davis, 1966, pp.156-67.

²⁷ Davis used "A Strategy of Insurgent Response" as the title of one section of his article, "The War on Poverty: Notes on Insurgent Response."

A "strategy of insurgent response" begins by asking what is most worthwhile about Johnson's War on Poverty and in what ways we can encourage its better tendencies: The War on Poverty will dramatize for all the slums and shacks and prisons of poverty; it will provoke new consciousness among many deprived and alone people to see poverty in social rather than individual terms; it may legitimize the fight against poverty in the way churches made civil rights acceptable; and, in many instances, as local officials are being compelled to travel into poor lands to make new promises they cannot deliver, the basis will be laid for neighborhood struggles and new political action.

Our response to Johnson's War on Poverty should be to help it do all of these things better: by challenging the top-down approach of the city poverty warriors; by dramatizing the deeper nature of the economic crisis in our inner cities and rural "pockets"; by turning government services into the just victories of organized people rather than hand-outs to the weak and dependent; by converting the rhetoric of the official campaign into greater consciousness and articulate demands from the forgotten poor man.

Specific means for accomplishing these objectives will be called "insurgent response." It is not a phrase signifying fundamental opposition to the War on Poverty. Insurgency is conceived as a way to challenge the donor-donee relationship built into the army method of dispensing aid and as a set of tactics which help visibly to construct the magnitude of poverty-related problems against Johnson's taken poverty program. (Davis, 1966, p.158)

2. ERAP's Challenge to Johnson's War on Poverty in Respect of Means

So, in Davis' interpretation, ERAP was not to displace the objectives of Johnson's War on Poverty, but to challenge its means so that the objectives could be better attained. If, in this interpretation, both appeared to be Jeffersonian in terms of objectives, then, in terms of means, while one seemed to be genuinely Jeffersonian, the other, pseudo-Jeffersonian. This can be seen in the ways in which Davis saw ERAP challenging Johnson's War on Poverty in respect of means. According to Davis, first, ERAP challenged the unrepresentative nature of the "Poverty Corporation":

Sec. 202 of the Poverty Act provides for "maximum feasible participation" of the poor in developing, conducting, and administering the poverty program. Yet, in most cities, the mayor has already joined representatives of business, welfare, and school institutions into a Poverty Board or Corporation in which the poor hold no stock. Poverty Boards, meeting typically in secret sessions, have completed several hundred program prospectuses for consideration by the Office of Economic Opportunity. In all but one city where SDS has organizing projects, circulated copies of the draft program have been exceedingly scarce. Requests from indigenous organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Poverty Board have been denied. Not even the major civil rights, trade union, charitable, church, and other 'substantial' liberal organizations have generally had a say in the city's plan or had access to draft copies of the anti-poverty plan. While Johnson's program explicitly calls for representation of the poor, few cities or counties have made even token gestures in this direction. (Davis, 1966, p.161)

In Davis' opinion, "challenges issued directly from the indigenous community groups to the elite Poverty Board may be a more effective and appropriate means of spotlighting an unrepresentative poverty army corps and will run fewer risks of co-option than would working through an essentially non-poor committee of liberals and radicals. Also, preparing for a grassroots challenge will be more consonant with organizational work in the community union than coalition building among in all parts of the city." (Davis, 1966, p.163)

Second, ERAP challenged the local leadership of the War on Poverty:

...all have shown how a few plain people can directly and dramatically expose the inadequacies and phoniness of plans designed by local politicians for poor people. While realizing a strategy of insurgent response may result in smears of an indigenous group of pressures on leadership to join the official force, a well-organized, politically sophisticated community union should eventually carry its counter-attack right into the power structure behind the war on poverty, getting to the heart of the matter. Tactics like local tax strikes are means of demonstrating to local politicians the power of forgotten people and the needs they have. Such methods are

more "militant" in the sense that they will force the poverty warriors to retreat with their program or defend it openly. There is no easy middle ground.... (Davis, 1966, p.165)

This second challenge included, according to Davis, "(a) Organize the community to flood taken public service with large numbers of applicants"²⁸ "(b) Demand full control over a program operated in the local community";²⁹ and "(c) Establish a symbolic radical alternative program which competes with the city's plan."³⁰

²⁸ "The shortages of public services and programs to improve living conditions and job opportunities for the poor may be readily apparent in the city ghetto or the rural farm or a mining community, but rarely are comprehended by the affluent 'outsider.' It is commonly accepted that more poverty programs are not needed because existing ones are not used. The fact is that people who need them, for a variety of good reasons, stay out: They get 'rough treatment' from the bureaucrats; they 'never get accepted;' they don't know of their existence, etc. The politicians' myth that we are doing all that we should' should be met head on--...by jamming an existing service or training program with applicants, crippling the capacity of the poverty officers to extend the service intended. In organized areas, long lines could be extended around a recruitment office--lines which would convert to pickets and sit-ins as legitimate candidates for the program were denied access to the program being tested. Demands for improvement in the public service should include establishment of a community grievance committee to hear cases of improper procedures or mishandling of any applicant by a deputy or bureaucrat in the program's administration." Davis, 1966, p.166.

²⁹ "The War on Poverty...provides for 'local participation' in decision-making, though the local power structure, unless it is powerfully confronted, manages to control things. Under Title II, many community 'action' programs will locate offices in depressed neighborhoods to 'coordinate' the different local programs or provide places for people to meet and 'work on their problems.' The professional staffs charged with running these offices will bring in community people as a nominal gesture to local citizen participation and as a way to create 'better communication links' between the community and themselves. To spotlight the fundamental issue of control by professionals rather than organized poor in the war on poverty, a community union could demand total supervisory authority over the professional staff working in the neighborhood. Mass pickets would demand the rights to hire and fire the professional staff and the right to set program priorities in the area. If demonstrations were held at the neighborhood office, an enormous turnout could be expected, giving visible evidence of the generally unrecognized commitment to the principle of democratic control in matters of relief and services to poor people." Davis, 1966, pp. 166-67.

3. ERAPers' Jeffersonian Practice of Participatory Democracy in Organizing Poor Communities

Davis' conclusion about ERAP as a strategy of insurgent response to Johnson's War on Poverty was that it "is essentially a fight by poor people for control over the existing poverty money and for federal support to a real war on poverty." (Davis, 1966, p.169) For ERAPers, as Davis concluded,

...that fight begins at the neighborhood level, where block groups write their own plans and send them downtown. Eventually poor people must get together and make demands on the whole national system. But the beginnings for a more shared abundance and democratic participation are found at the neighborhood level where ordinary people are talking to each other about how to change the ghetto and the outside country. (Davis, 1966, p.169)

This kind of "democratic participation" at the neighborhood level was, certainly, Jeffersonian participatory democracy, as will be defined in my next

³⁰ "An anti-poverty measure in many cities and towns will be the Job Corps in Title I. The local poverty officers will launch a recruitment campaign of some color and appeal for unemployed people to join countryside camps to get 'work experience.' A community union could dramatize the absurdity of the local program by actually creating a competing operation for the city's unemployed--one which puts people to work at rehabilitating the neighborhood. Street corner recruitment stands would be placed adjacent to the official placement center, drawing people out of the country and back into the city. The public challenge would be one that would go the core of the poverty program's mission--determining whether it is to give training and experience to fill nonexistent jobs, or whether it is to create new employment. How would the competing work program be paid for? For a short period, rent strikes could provide the funds for employing the jobless at fixing tenements. The expenses for improving the inferior public facilities of the city could be dramatically turned over to the major or the Poverty Board. The community would undertake its own fund raising drive to support much of the work. And, shortages of funds would be a justification for mass demonstrations, petitions, and public appeals for people across the city and country to support a movement to put the unemployed to work at meaningful tasks--creating decency out of the make-believe conditions of the Job Corps." Davis, 1966, p.167.

essay. How did ERAPers conduct "democratic participation" for "a more shared abundance" at the neighborhood level? Davis' own experience in community organizing in Chicago provided with a typical answer.

Chicago JOIN [Jobs or Income Now] has taken the war on poverty into unorganized blocks, employing teams of student volunteers and JOIN members to canvass new areas of Chicago's northside, trying to get a better understanding of local grievances, telling people about JOIN and bringing in new members. One paper written by JOIN for new student canvassers says: "Introduce yourself in a manner similar to this: 'Hello, I'm from JOIN, an organization in this neighborhood which is concerned about housing, school, and employment problems. We understand that the federal government is about to put a lot of money into this area, but it has not consulted the people who live here about how the money should be used. We were wondering if you could give us a few minutes to tell us what you think the chief needs of this area are.'" If a good discussion comes out of these questions, the canvasser is instructed to try to get the person "to agree to interview some people for himself" if he can suggest that the person "have some of the other people on his block get together with him sometime in the near future to discuss their problems and what can be done about them."

Using the war on poverty as the door-opener in canvassing does allow the organizer to discuss casually a whole range of economic and political problems related to poverty. He can stimulate thinking and writing about community problems and solutions and get people involved in organization through interview work.... Generally, getting right down to the agency or slumlord as specific outside institutional structures on which the individual feels unfairly dependent is a better way to learn "what the people need" than asking someone what services he would like or how things should be done if ordinary people were running the show. But out of canvassing and informal talk about federal poverty plans, some people will want to demand that poverty money go to them and their neighbors rather than to the businessmen and patronage pockets downtown. Block groups may begin to formulate their own plans for helping the poor and push their community union to develop an area-wide proposal....

Form small meetings of unemployed can come a meaningful basis for community organizing, as people are ready to fight have poverty

money go into the community union instead of the big agencies and will challenge the decisions of the official poverty forces, which ignore the program agreed on by the block groups in the neighborhood. Eventually demands have to be made on the city for a real war on poverty. (Davis, 1966, pp. 163-65)

The Jeffersonian pattern, which was expected be conducted by ERAP in comparison with Johnson's War on Poverty, was summarized by Richard Flacks, the SDS leader who wrote "America and the New Era," in his article "On the Use of Participatory Democracy" as follows:

Just how is participatory democracy being applied to the organization of economically disadvantaged groups? It has influenced the analysis of the problem of poverty in an affluent society, by stressing lack of organization as a root cause of deprivation. This analysis leads to an emphasis on grass-roots political voicelessness and organization and mobilization of the poor as the main way of ending poverty. Since the people involved lack political skill, organization requires a full-time staff, initially composed of students and ex-students, but soon involving "indigenous" leadership. This staff has the problem of allaying the fear, suspicion, and sense of inadequacy of the community—hence there has been a strong emphasis on building a sense of community between staff and rank-and-file, and of finding techniques which will facilitate self-expression, enable new leadership to emerge, enable people to gain dignity by participation, and the organization to become self-sustaining. Such techniques include: rotation of leadership, eschewing by staff of opportunities to "speak for" the organization, the use of "consensus" to foster expression by the less-articulate.

More important than such procedural techniques has been the attempt to generate institutions which help to bind people to the organization, to see immediate benefits from participation.... Although these new institutions are sometimes viewed as alternatives to participation in "organized society", in practice, they are a very important way of sustaining a developing organization. They enable people to participate in an organization in a continuing fashion, help develop organizational resources, train people for leadership, and give people a sense of the possibilities for social change....

The emphasis on participatory democracy has helped these developing grass-roots organizations formulate and articulate issues and programs. Al-

though the constituencies of these organizations include the most impoverished sectors of society, it is remarkable that the main activity of these organizations has not been focused on economic issues. They have, rather, been struggling over issues of control, self-determination and independence: Shall the poor have a voice in the allocation of War on Poverty funds? Shall urban renewal be shaped by the people whose neighborhood is being renewed? Who is to decide the dispensation of welfare payments? Who makes the rules in the welfare bureaucracies? Who controls the ghetto? (Flacks, 1971, pp. 28-29)

No one put participatory democracy as the general pattern of ERAP in shorter words than Paul Potter, the president of SDS in 1964-1965, did: "Although the projects varied from place to place, the general pattern was that people pooled their resources, lived cooperatively, and approached the problem of how to move in the community collectively." (Potter, 1971, p.137) No doubt, participatory democracy was at the heart of ERAP whose objective was, as Potter emphasized, "to build a base of mass radical insurgency." (Potter, 1971, p.138) Nonetheless, economic issues were still the main issues around which ERAP's participatory democracy was conducted for its purpose. So Potter indicated that its "job, roughly defined and most simply stated, was to move into poor neighborhoods and begin to organize people around economic grievances." (Potter, 1971, p. 137)

Here the central question about ERAP arose: "Why organize"? This was asked by Todd Gitlin, the president of SDS in 1963-64, in an article titled "The Radical Potential of the Poor." (Gitlin, 1969, pp. 136-49) The following was his initial but "basic" answer.

At first, as SDS people.... moved into poor communities in 1964, the main ideas were there: In a system that satisfies many needs for most Americans, the poor are still demonstrably in need—and know it. They are also less tied to the dominant values, just as—and partly because—they are less central to the economy that creates and expressed those values. They have a certain permanence necessary for a sustained movement. Though a

minority they are a substantial minority. They exhibit a potential for movement--for understanding their situation, breaking loose, and committing themselves to a radical alternative. (Gitlin, 1969, p.137)

Gitlin listed, then, more precisely the purpose of the radical on going projects as follows:

First, to enable the most powerless people to get a handle on the decisions and non-decisions, now made for them, that debase and deform their lives. Second, to help the poor get more of the material goods and services prerequisite to a decent life. Third, to undergird serious proposals for the humane extension of the welfare state, and keep them responsive to the needs of those "for whom" they are proposed and granted. Fourth, to help maintain momentum for a Negro movement in need of reliable allies.

Fifth, to raise, insistently, in poor communities and at every level outside, these issues, among many: Who run the society, and in whose interest? Who is competent to make which decisions for the poor, or for anyone? Who is "for" the poor? What do the poor "need"? How tolerant is America? How in America do people get what they want? How do they want what they "want"? What happens when people govern themselves? What institutional changes would make a difference? Sixth, to strengthen the poor as a source and reservoir of opposition to the final rationalization of the American system: to keep the country open to authentically different values and styles.

Seventh, to galvanize students, professionals, and others into durable confrontations with the ethos and structure of the society; and to lend urgency and values to parallel movements. Eighth, to amass pressure for public, domestic spending...

And ninth, to plant seeds that might grow into core of a mass radical movement sufficiently large and serious and conscious and strategically placed to transform American institutions. (Gitlin, 1969, p. 137)

4. The Final Triumph of the Jeffersonian GROIN over the Ultra-Jeffersonian JOIN within ERAP

These purposes were both concerned with "economic issues" and "is-

sues of control, self-determination and independence”, though, as Flacks emphasized above, the latter had a heavier weight than the former. The problem were, as Gitlin put it, “How are these objectives practical, and how are they compatible?” He suggested that “provisional answers might be found in the experience of two ‘community unions’ seeded by by SDS-JOIN in a mostly Southern-white neighborhood of Chicago, and the Newark Community Union Project (NCUP) in a black ghetto”. (Gitlin, 1969, p. 137) These were, in fact, two different kinds of experience, representing two different patterns of community organizing within ERAP. As Bacciocco discernes:

Two approaches to community organizing were discernible by spring 1964. Project in Chicago and Baltimore called JOIN (Jobs or Income Now) stressed obtaining jobs for the young and unemployed. Taking a different approach, organizers in Newark and Cleveland felt they should react to any problem important to the community, even the issue of garbage removal. Projects adopting the latter approach described themselves as community unions—initially, ERAP projects like the one in Newark were called GRION (Garbage Removal or Income Now). (Bacciocco, 1974, p. 137)

Before the second approach prevailed over the first, there had been the “JOIN versus GROIN” debate among ERAPers, a debate between, from my point of view, ultra-Jeffersonian and Jerrersonian ERAPers. The origin and the content of the debate was summarized by Gitlin:

When the SDS first sent students into poor communities in 1963-64 there was a strong feeling that the issue of jobs or income might be a single decisive lever of change, a feeling based on some naive expectations about the pace and effect of automation. JOIN, the first organizing venture, stood for “Jobs or income Now”. During the course of the summer of 1964, some organizers argued that white unemployment was far too little and diffused to be the basis for organization; moreover, that jobs or income were too remote as early demands. They proposed instead an emphasis on smaller, neighborhood demands more easily won. The debate

was jocularly summarized as one between "JOIN" AND "GROIN" ("Gabbage Removal or Income Now"). GROIN prevailed. (Gitlin 1969, p. 138)

Potter pointed out the significance of the result of this debate as follows:

People who took the JOIN position said we had to stick by our analysis no matter how difficult the organizational job, and make the basic demand, the Achilles' heel of the society, visible and militant. GROIN people, who were insulted by tone of the acronym, defended themselves on the "practical" basis that jobs just weren't the issue to move people on, and counterattacked against JOIN people for still not providing a scheme for organizing around jobs.

In the end, of course, GROIN "won," but was a sad kind of victory. For the tone of the debate had been to characterize the JOIN people as the hard-nose, hard-core, principled ideologies and the GROIN folks as somewhat softer, humanistic, pragmatist revisionists. Not only was the political idea JOIN stood for weakened, but the whole efficacy of conscious ideological thinking suffered as well. More than before, people began to think of their work as a pragmatic experiment divorced from any clear ideological propositions. This tendency, which to a certain extent had existed all along, was to grow stronger the longer the ERAP projects existed....

Essentially the new "pragmatic" idea that replaced "The Interracial Movement of the Poor" was that you find out what people's troubles are and you organize them around that. The new slogans were "no rent for rats," "adequate welfare now," end police brutality," and above all, "let the people decide." We were more comfortable with the new ideas, not only because in some ways they were closer to our own, more intuitively comprehended ideas. "Let the people decide" is about democracy and people controlling their own lives, and that after all was a cornerstone of our intuitive politics. But the trouble was that we had reduced a complicated political idea to a slogan, and the slogan was inadequate; it left us rudderless since we were trying to figure out its meaning for other people, instead of ourselves. (Potter, 1971, pp. 145-47)

We shall return, near the end of this essay, to Potter's sadness about the victory of the "pragmatic" GROIN over the "ideological" JOIN, or,

from my point of view, the triumph of the Jeffersonian GROIN over the ultra-Jeffersonian JOIN. Here we should pay more attention to the cause and the victory. The cause was simple: the economy was not collapsing the way SDS had predicted it would; no depression was throwing people out of work to join an angry army of the urban unemployed." Just as we got to Chicago, "Lee Webb remembered, "lines at the unemployment compensation center started to get shorter". (Quoted from Sale, 1973, p.134) An economic boom period was beginning, to be accelerated by Vietnam expenditures, and Jobs or Income Now was just not the issue around which people could be organized. All of the unemployment-directed JOIN projects (Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia) faltered, while the two projects (Newark and Cleveland) that tried to operate on any enunciated grievances of the community, from garbage collection to schools (that is, the multi-issue approach that Hayden and Wittman had put forth in "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?"), fared far better. For a while during the summer a running argument went on between the two approaches, but by the fall of 1964 it was clear that JOIN would have to be altered, and all the projects that continued to the GROIN approach. (Sale, 1973, p.134) Consequently, as Richard Rothstein pointed out, "By the end of 1964, the GROIN approach was unanimous." (Rothstein, 1969, pp. 278-79) But the term "Community Union" displaced GROIN as a designation for this approach.³¹ And the issues shifted from national full employment to more local issues: welfare administration, housing conditions, local city housekeeping issues. (Rothstein, 1969, p.279)

With problems tensions, frustrations such as these, ERAP had to retrench. By the end of the 1964 summer Trenton, Louisville, and Hazard were dropped; Boston was given over to PEWP³², and Philadelphia and

³¹ Even the Chicago project changed its name from J.O.I.N. to "JOIN-- Community Union" and moved its office from next to the Unemployment Center to the poorest of the Chicago North Side neighborhoods.

Chester were allowed to wither and drift into extinction by themselves. Baltimore and Chicago switched their emphasis to community unions, and with Cleveland and Newark became the kernel of the ERAP operation as it headed into the new school year. Despite setbacks, the ERAPers felt they had made considerable strides over the summer.

As Sale figured out:

Much had been learned: how to approach a strange neighborhood, how to live on forty-two cents a day, how to run meetings so that ordinary people are not bewildered, how to get people in a community to think about the community for a change. Much had been accomplished: lines were opened to people in the bureaucracy (unemployment compensation offices, welfare bureaus, city housing officials) who had never listened much to the poor before, small battles were won against red tape, landlords, police. In Cleveland, ERAPers were able to organize a group of poor white into a Citizens United for Adequate Welfare, which in turn got through a free lunch program for poor children in the city schools; In Newark, NCUP managed to generate enough pressure to get a play street established, improve garbage collection somewhat, and force housing improvements out of landlords; In Baltimore, small victories were against the Department of Public Welfare; In Chicago, like victories against the unemployment offices. (Sale, 1973, p. 135)

IV. THE FAILURE OF SDS'S ULTRA-JEFFERSONIAN ERAP IN BOTH END AND MEANS

1. ERAPers' Explanations for the Failure of ERAP in End and Their Doubt about the Adequacy of ERAP in Means

These were not, of course, what ERAP had set out so grandiosely to do, and as Rennie Davis confessed at the end of the summer "No project

³² PREP was the abbreviation of SDS's another project, i.e., Peace Research and Education Project.

succeeded in giving life to our slogan, 'an interracial movement of the poor,' and certainly none 'organized a community.'" (Sale, 1973, p. 135) The principal cause for ERAP's failure to do so was its inability to persuade the white poor to join an interracial movement for radical change.³³ ERAP workers attributed the comparatively affirmative response of Negroes to a wider range of grievances and a more pervasive feeling of being left out. (Bacciocco, 1974, p.141) Another explanation for the disinterest among poor whites was their conviction that there was room for them to advance by their own bootstraps, or by aid and opportunities provided by federal agencies, rather than by relying on abstract advice offered by students from another social class. (Bacciocco, 1974, p. 141) Their third reason for the unresponsiveness of the white poor was a fervent moral zeal of the ERAP organizers. A commendable characteristic generally, it proved disadvantageous in working with white poor seeking welfare benefits. The students' fear of personal "corruption" caused them to oppose any form of bureaucratization, however beneficial, in leadership or organizational structure. This apprehension of using others for one's own ends was so deep-seated among the ERAP organizers that its manifestation tended to weaken the interracial movement. (Bacciocco, 1974. p. 141)

The ERAP meeting early in January 1965 was an agonizing period of self-questioning stretched over eight days and nights. They all conceded that no interracial movement of the poor was going to emerge in any foreseeable future, it proving hard enough to arrange even a uniraical Tuesday night meeting, and as for the notion of radicalizing the poor and launching them on a "revolutionary" trajectory, the was hardly spoken of at all. The failure of ends cause EARPerS to concentrate on the inadequa-

³³ For examples: The ERAP organizers tried but failed to persuade white workers in defense plants in Boston to become a pivotal group for social reform; and the ERAP staff in Newark also recognized that its efforts were more successful among Negro poor than among their white counterparts.

cies of their means, and whole days of the EARP conference were given over worried questioning:

Do we have to have leaders at all? Don't leaders, by definition, manipulate, and aren't we fundamentally against manipulation? But aren't we all manipulating, just by beginning in the projects? Suppose you convince a man to come to a meeting—isn't that manipulating him? Isn't ghetto organizing an expression of snobbery, of paternalism? Would we be in the ghetto at all if we didn't think we had some superior wisdom which we needed to give to these people? Is't that simply trying to coopt these people into our way of doing things, our kind of movement? (Sale, 1973, pp. 136-37)

There was no escape from the net of these questions, and the more the ERAPers struggled the more they became entangled. They young organizers were trying to find some way to build up the movement that would not violate its principles at the same time, but nothing in their summer's experience had really proved successful in that. Ultimately the ERAP organizers came to decide that they should just continue doing what they were doing for its own sake, unencumbered by theory or explanation or questioning. "we can't second-guess the future, let us go on doing what we know we should do ." (Sale, 1973, p.137) This conclusion was, by no coincidence, the same kind of thing the SNCC organizers had also decided, and it was pressed upon the meeting by SNCC leader Ivanhoe Donaldson and a number of other SNCC people in attendance. One report afterward said:

SNCC organizers were present at the staff meeting and they managed to impress ERAP with the image of an organizer who never organized, who by his simple presence was the mystical medium for the spontaneous expression of the "people." The staff meeting ended in exhaustion, with a faith that the spirit would decide that an invisible hand would enable all to be resolved if honesty prevailed. (Quoted from Sale, 1973, p. 137)

Or, as they sang it around SNCC, "Do What the Spirit Say Do"—all

very well for the psyche, but not much help in the organizing. (Quoted from Sale, 1973, pp. 137, 138)

2. The Isolation, Decrease and Frustration of ERAP's Individual Projects

The isolation of the projects grew as the ERAPers themselves grew inward. ERAP, in fact, soon came to regard itself as separate from SDS, its planners feeling their primary responsibility not to the campus constituency but to the individual communities. This divarication was intensified by the decision of the January ERAP conference to abandon the national headquarters and to abolish leaders like Rennie Davis who were regarded as superfluous in a movement that sought none at all. (Sale, 1973, p. 138) In March ERAP was officially abandoned as a national organization, and henceforth individual projects went off without central direction or assistance of any kind. As Rothstein pointed out, "This situation was so demoralizing that no two ERAP organizing staffs sat down to evaluate and discuss their work after March, 1965." (Rothstein, 1969, p.284) Far worse than this, Rothstein continued:

.... in the absence of such an organizational context political programs could change as quickly and as irresponsibly as the whims of the organizers. And since the success of any program takes longer than the development of an organizer's frustration, often no program was given a chance to succeed.

The isolation of individual organizing projects also led to the erosion of ERAP's earlier commitment to experimental organizing and the pragmatic development of theory. In isolation, each project came to develop an exaggerated sense of its own importance. Not feeling itself to be part of an experimental tactically variegated movement, each project acted as though it bore the burden of history on its shoulders alone In the absence of any multi-project structure, a division of political labor was inconceivable. Any project had to sacrifice its ongoing activities to whatever seemed the highest priority of the moment.

How could a project experiment with factory organizing, or consumer organizing... or even with a leadership training in such a context?... In the absence of a broader structure, with the burden of movement building borne subjectively by each project, experiments could not be risked. Each organizer judged his own worth and value by the extent to which he built a section of that movement In the absence of a mandate from a larger group, political experiments are much too risky--not only to the future of the movement but to the organizers' self-esteem. (Rothstein, 1969, pp. 285-86)

At any rate, new ERAPs were started all over for the summer of 1965: in Hoboken, New Haven, New Brunswick, Oakland, San Francisco, Roxbury (Massachusetts), Champaign and Cairo (Illinois). But now there was no central direction--each project was started on local impetus, organized where it wanted to, picked up the cause it found best. The new ERAP organizers would simply go into a poor area and listen for a while, seek out the grievances and try to organize around them: no more prefabricated theories, or hunches masquerading as analysis, as Sale put it. (Sale, 1973, . 139) There times as many people worked in projects this summer as the summer before, more than four hundred in all, but not for the same cause.³⁴ Their life styles were somewhat different from those of the previous summer. But the 1965 ERAPers found the same problem their predecessors--the thirteen projects at the start of the summer decreased into nine, then seven, and by the late fall only five (Baltimore, Cleveland, Chicago, Newark, and Oakland) were left. Some of the would-be organizers

³⁴ One hundred twenty-five students assisted ERAP in the North during the summer of 1964. The majority of students willing to community organizing that summer were more interested in the rural black districts in the South and migrated to the COFO program in Mississippi. The anti-war march of Washington in the spring of 1965, though it drew its crews from the campus, served to revivify ERAP for the summer of that year. New personnel heard about the organization and wanted to do something about it over the summer; students who felt the war was the all-important thought that ERAP was a way to get ghetto people marching against it; a number of previously quiescent students, now suddenly angry over Vietnam wanted of something to do other than the usual summer job.

left in frustraion, some had turned instead to Vietnam activity and the majority soon decided to return to school: even that seemed better and less frustrating, than trying to organize the ghettos. (Sale, 1973, p. 140)

By the end of summer of 1965, ERAP had proven itself to be a failure. ERAPers found "the people" harder to organize than they had imagined, and they tended to feel that some kind of increased militancy and direct confrontation would be necessary to effect real change. Of the five projects left at the end of 1965. Oakland soon disappeared, and Cleveland and Baltimore quietly withered in the following year. Chicago and Newark lasted into 1967, but their permutations took them almost totally away from SDS and into the engulfing life of the community, and only a few of the original students organizers stuck it out.³⁵ With the exception of a few local attempts,³⁶ ERAP ceased to have any major effect on SDS after 1965.

3. Factors for the Failure of SDS's Ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP in Both End and Means

Kirkpatrick Sale rightly attributed ERAP's failure to the following three reasons:

First, ERAP was never able to shake off the middle-class beliefs and exceptions it started with. The ERAPs' post-scarcity consciousness ran smack up against the scarcity reality, and the collision was painful. The students expected the poor to be natively intelligent, informed, angry at the circumstances of their lives, prepared to unite against a common enemy-- "they sometimes expect the poor to act out the moral values of the

³⁵ Hayden, Wittman, Steve Block, and two vital women, Corinna Fales and Carol Glassman, held on in Newark; Davis, Rothstein, Gitlin, Mike James, Casey Hayden, and one or two others in Chicago.

³⁶ For examples: A Minneapolis Community Union Project in 1966 and the Bellefonte Project in 1967; even these were abandoned after the summer of 1967.

middle-class radical who has come to the slum".... --and instead they found the poor (...) ignorant, passive, atomized and fragmented, and with a whole set of quite different values. Moreover, the students expected the idea of community organizations to be a great deal more powerful and attractive than it was Then, too, organizers brought a good deal of middle-class guilt with them into ghetto, not simply from having privileged positions, or money, or an education, but from running away from their own real and palpable grievances...

Second, ERAP never resolved the contradiction between wanting fundamentally to change the nature of the state and building its projects around all the shoddy instruments of that state. Whether JOIN or GROIN, the projects sought to improve the governmental services of their neighborhoods, break the red tape at the unemployment center, force the traffic department to put up a light, see to it that welfare checks arrived when they should--and then the organizers would go home at night and talk about "transforming the system," "building alternative institutions" and "revolutionary potential." ERAP, for all the talk, did not build parallel structures out of its projects, it build parasite structures, which had to live off the crumbs of the Establishment and soon determined their failure or success according to how many crumbs they got.... In spite of themselves, ERAPers were manipulated and handled by the state they had set out to change.

Third ERAP was never able to escaped the fact that the poor are not "the agents of change" in American society, whether there be massive unemployment or not. The poor, as the ERAPers found out to their sorrow, want leaders, they do not want to lead; the poor are myth-ridden, enervated, cynical, and historically the least likely to rebel; the poor are powerless, without even that small threat of being able to withdraw their bodies that workingmen and labor unions have, and at best they can only embarrass or discomform, or threaten, the powers that be.... (Sale, 1973, pp. 142-44)

The correctness of some of the above three reasons for the failure of SDS's ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP was confirmed by SDS leaders themselves. "ERAP," Todd Gitlin wrote, "was built on guilt.... Guilt and its counterpart, shame, are healthy and necessary antidotes to privilege, but the antidote taken in large doses becomes poisonous." (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p. 143) And

it was caught in the very machinery that Richard Flacks had warned about in "America and the New Era": "a politics of adjustment" whose "principle function is a mediating, rationalizing and managerial one" so as "to manipulate and control conflict" and "prevent popular upsurge." (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p. 144) Finally, after more than a year in the Newark ghetto Tom Hayden came to acknowledge this:

Poor people know they are victimized from every direction. The facts of life always break through to expose the distance between American ideals and personal realities. This kind of knowledge, however, is kept underdeveloped and unused because of another knowledge imposed on the poor, a keen sense of dependence on the oppressor. This is the source of that universal fear which leads poor people to act and even to think subserviently. Seeing themselves to blame for their situation, they rule out the possibility that they might be qualified to govern themselves and their own organizations. Besides fear, it is their sense of inadequacy and embarrassment which destroys the possibility of revolt. (Quoted, Sale, 1973, p. 144)

As important as, and even more important than (at least for our purpose), the above three factors for the failure of the ultra-Jeffersonian ERAP were, as pointed out by Bacciocco, the organizational errors of the SDS leadership and the ultra-Jeffersonian interpretation and performance of participatory democracy within ERAP:

By allowing ERAP to develop separately from SDS-based campus units, the SDS hierarchy was faced with a situation in which non-students (those who had graduated or dropped out of school) were organizing non-members while the regular membership of SDS remained full-time students. The inability of top SDS officers to counter the near-anarchistic interpretation of participatory democracy likewise contributed to the eventual isolation of community organizing projects. SDS took no countermeasures, for instance, when the office of director in most individual projects was abolished in the wake of organizers' demands for collective decision making. Next, some community workers balked in the name of participa-

tory democracy at receiving guidelines from the ERAP director and the SDS-elected ERAP committee in Ann Arbor.

Succumbing to the cry of participatory democracy, the Ann Arbor ERAP staff abandoned its central administrative positions and melted into the sundry projects. (This interpretation of participatory democracy caused some organizers to refuse to provide even minimal guidance to the poor the projects tried to reach, fearful that their conduct would be branded antidemocratic and middle-class.)" (Bassiocco, 1974, pp. 143-44)

The effect of this ultra-Jeffersonian interpretation of participatory democracy on some of the individual projects was exemplified by Newark projects: "The problems of operating a staff of 45 in a democratic manner are much greater than anybody seemed to realize at first. Although many of us regard voting as undemocratic, there is a real question about whether we can afford to take eight hours to attain a consensus on every issue." (Quoted, Bacciocco, 1974, p. 144) This was, of course, ultra-Jeffersonian participatory democracy deriving from SNCC's fervent belief in participatory democracy. For SNCC remained the archetype for Northern community organizing and was very influential in this regard in 1964. The fervent belief in participatory democracy, even when carried to extremes, emanated from SNCC. Led by Robert Moses, SNCC intended to "transfer decision-making so far as possible to grass roots leaders outside the SNCC structure." (Lynd, 1970, p. 7)

4. ERAP's Reduction of SDS's Broad (Cultural, Political and Economic) Ideology to a Narrow (Economic) Ideology

Was SDS's own conception of participatory democracy, which was originally stated in the Port Huron Statement, lost in the community organizing for an interracial movement of the poor? According to Paul Potter, it was so. He was sad about this loss of SDS's original "ideology" which was displaced by ERAP's embodied in "The Interracial Movement of the

Poor” analysis. For Potterr, “It is important to stress that ERAP’s problems were ideological as opposed to practical or even analytical”: (Potter, 1971, p. 138)

For me, the major shortcoming of “The Interracial Movement of the Poor” analysis was that it was not our analysis. It was not what we believed. It did not represent our political vocabulary or our political understanding of the world. It had very little to do with them. In the first place, virtually no one in SDS knew anything about automation. Second, we knew even less about poverty. Our only contact with poverty was through Michael Harrington (*The Other America*) or in some cases through the poor kid and his family we accidentally got to know in high school. Some of us had contact with black people through the movement, but we had been so caught up in responding to race that we had yet to take deep notice of the other issues in their lives....

I want to stress again that the major weakness of “The Interracial Movement of the Poor” idea was not its inadequacies and inaccuracies analytically. Its major weakness was that it did not deal with the ideological problem of the people, the ERAP staff, who “subscribed” to it and lived under it. It did not expose or explore out received social ideology. Rather, it deflected us from that exploration by focusing our attention on the “poor.” It did not make new ideological space for us. It was not an ideology we could live under, witness the fact that it almost completely washed away with the first rain. It was not an ideology that we could internalize, because it was not about our insides.... (Potter, 1971, pp. 143-44, 147)

In Potter’s mind SDS’s own “ideology” was primitively embodied in the Port Huron Statement and the “America and the New Era” document, both of which were far broader than the “Interracial Movement of the Poor” document:

The “Interracial Movement of the Poor” document did not really fill a vacuum; rather it succumbed to a psychology that people had been resisting when they wrote the “Port Huron Statement” and the “America and the New Era” document. Both of these were good beginning attempts

to define who we were and what we were angry about. They were broad cultural, political and economic documents. In contrast, the ERAP doctrine was a narrow economic analysis. It talked about one "class," a funny class at that, called "the Poor." And it failed to talk about even that class in a dynamic way; it communicated no sense of the involvement of the poor with groups or institutions in the society or with the society as a whole. As a static analysis, it could offer no projection about how the conflict between poor people and the institutions that oppressed them might develop over time. In short, ERAP substituted a kind of closed, vulgar Marxism for the more hopeful tnetativeness of earlier SDS proclamations. And it was clear that many people in ERAP felt that the two sets of ideas could not coexist....

The way in which the interracial movement of the poor idea closed and narrowed our thinking had a number of destructive effects. The only real political role it created was that of the cattalyst/organizer of the poor; if you couldn't make that, then you just couldn't make it. It segmented the movement more internally, and in general, increased the feeling of isolation of the Left, particulary within ERAP. It reduced a broad cultural, political and economic analysis to narrow economic analysis that few people could authentically identify with. It reduced the capacity of ERAP staff for making political judgments by making them auxiliary and ancillary to another group....

In contrast.... I feel that the more honest (self-aware), deliberate vagueness of an earlier New Left analysis would have been a sounder ideolocial insight to depart from. Suppose for a moment that the people and energy that went into ERAP had been devoted to a more general project to deepen, expand, develop and refine the political ideas of the "Port Huron Statement" and "America and the New Era." Not only do I feel that would have been a more genuine expenditure of ourselves, but (in retrospect) it seems clear that it was then kind of project that was needed. Thousands of people were beginning to flow into the movement, many to them initially attracted by the promise of the radical analysis SDS had done.... (Potter, 1971, pp. 148-49, 1511-52)

XX

Relatively speaking, "America and the New Era" was narrower in scope and less profound in depth than "The Port Huron Statement," which contained the common "ideology" of the early New Left in America. From my point of view, SDS's own conception of participatory democracy was, insofar as it was contained in the New Left ideal of democracy as stated in the statement, no less ultra-Jeffersonian than SNCC's belief in participatory democracy. I have examined a part of that Statement in my essay, "SDS" Heritage of the Jeffersonian Spirit of Democracy" (Kuo, 1989, pp. 27-29) without touching on SDS's New Left Ideal democracy embodied in it. Now it seems to be time for me to turn to that ideal. But more urgent than this is a discussion of Jefferson's democratic ideal of means which is, up to this point, long overdue. It must, moreover, precede SDS's New Left ideal of democracy in review so that the former can be regarded as the criterion to judge the character of the latter. For SDS's New Left ideal of democracy, unlike its New Left practice of democracy greatly influenced by SNS's democratic experience, derived from its own democratic ideal of traditional America. The American tradition of ideal democracy originated, of course, in Jefferson's conception of ideal democracy. So far we have seen Jefferson's ideal democracy as an end far more than as a means. To keep the balance even, we should pay more attention to his ideal democracy as a means in the remainder of this series of essays on the relationships between the early American New Left and the American tradition of democracy.

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「學生民主會」在美國北方的 傑佛遜／極端傑佛遜式新左派運動

郭 仁 孚

本文為關於早期美國新左派與美國民主傳統之間關係的一系列論文之第五篇。本篇所討論者全為「學生民主會」在美國北方初期的新左派運動。相對於第四篇所討論之「學生非暴力協調委員會」在美國南方的新左派運動，前者既淵源於後者，又平行支援後者。

「學生民主會」初期的新左派運動，非如其預期一樣發生在學界內部，而是追隨「學生非暴力協調委員會」之腳步，發生在學界以外之社會中。正如本文第一部份所指，剛開始時，這雖是出自學生領袖們自己的意見。但後來主要還是因為他們對黑人在南方推動極端傑佛遜民權／新左派運動所表現的“新叛亂”有所了解所致。又如本文第二部份所示，此種了解加上其他次要因素，直接產生了該會第一項，最大規模及最重要之方案，即「經濟研究與行動方案」——以下簡稱「經研行案」。該部份所討論的重點為「學生民主會」在北方城市組織窮人及失業者的跨種族運動之觀念。此種觀念起源於該會在蔡士特分會於一九六三年秋季自動及獨立組織窮人的成功經驗，並經該會領袖精心思索以使「經研行案」在最初三個月運作走樣後得以重生。

本文第三部份將「學生民主會」之「經研行案」視為其挑戰北方非傑佛遜式民主之傑佛遜／極端傑佛遜式參與民主之試驗而加以分析。分析之目的在於發現：旨在實現作為跨種族窮人運動之「經研行案」之基本目的而於一九六四年夏季推行之十方案之共同模式。那些模式是靠兩種相同的比較而發現：其一是比較：「經研行案」之傑佛遜式運作和詹森總統的「對貧窮宣戰」之假傑佛遜式實踐，另一是比較「經研行案」內部之極端傑佛遜式「現在就獲得工作或收入」案和傑佛遜式「現在就清除垃圾或得到收入」案。「經研

行案」內部在經過兩案支持者之間辯論後，「現在就清除垃圾或得到收入」案獲勝。雖然該年夏季見到不少傑佛遜式的成就，但這畢竟不是極端傑佛遜式「經研行案」所欲達到的目的：跨種族的窮人運動終未見實現。

不過「經研行案」在一九六五年夏季之實踐則是極端傑佛遜式，因受到「學生非暴力協調委員會」之影響，它在實踐參與性民主之名義下，廢除了全國性總部及全國性的領袖，所剩下的各個別方案在沒有中央指導或任何協助下各自為政。在無統一組織狀態之下，一切全隨個別組織者自己喜好而定，不負責的說變就變、個別方案之孤立也導至「經研行案」早期所信守傑佛遜式實用性組織實踐之漸被拋棄。各個別方案在孤立中發展出過份跨張之自主意識。末期「經研行案」之極端傑佛遜式實踐，最後證明為完全的失敗實不足為奇。本文最後部份除指出極端傑佛遜式「經研行案」之各種失敗癥兆外，並進而探討注定其失敗命運之各種因素。發現其中最重要者是其內部對參與性民主之極端傑佛遜式詮釋及實踐。