

# THE BLOOD RUNS COLD

by Errol Selkirk

The formation of a Black Studies program at the University of California represents a mixed victory for the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), who were responsible for last year's bitter student strike. The creation of an independent college concerned with the problems of non-white peoples was a primary demand of the strikers. There is still nothing like this in Berkeley. Instead, a Black Studies Department is being formed which is neither independent nor sufficiently financed. Clearly, its acceptance by Third World people can only be conditional.

The Committee on Liberation or Death (COLD), one of the four organizations in the TWLF, attributes the failure of the strike to the inadequacy of white support to Third World demands. Two members of COLD, John Turner and Oliver Jones, black students at U.C., were interviewed on September 30th following a speech given by COLD spokesman Buddy Jackson at the radical Disorientation Forum in Pauley Ballroom.

John and Oliver provided some background to the positions taken in the interview. "Mojo chauvinism," the establishment sponsored policy of cultural nationalism in African dress and customs which the Panthers refer to disparagingly as "pork chop nationalism," was declared by COLD to be nothing more than a destructive tactic employed by the press against real black revolutionaries. COLD also said the Progressive Labor Party, a Marxist-Leninist movement which subordinates racial issues to class struggle, had made a "serious mistake" in opposing open enrollment of non-white students in the nation's colleges for which they'll be doomed to failure."

Oliver said that white groups must be prepared to "take a back-seat" in the movement, and to cooperate in the Third World struggle by doing some actual work, now that white paternalism is dead. He labelled middle class Negroes, the black bourgeoisie, "hollow shells," but minimized their influence and numbers.

COLD seeks to create new values, a new way to deal with living, out of the total struggle which they believe must be waged against the powers that control the lives of oppressed peoples in the Third World. The notion of material wealth amidst spiritual poverty will become a "travesty", they maintain, once the "omnipotence of death" and the rich possibilities for life are realized in the practice of revolution.

BARB: Last evening at the Pauley Ballroom on UC campus. Buddy Jackson of the Committee on Liberation or Death said that the major problem facing white people and black people was the problem of self determination. Speaking for yourself, John, do you consider this to be the major difficulty blacks face?

JOHN: Well, first of all, I'll say yes, but it's the prime problem for all people in the area who consider themselves to be revolutionaries. The position we take in COLD is that all the oppressed people of the earth — black, brown, yellow, and red — under the banner of the

Third World (TW), as well as their white allies — should realize the necessity of building a viable organization which would give each individual the right to self determination. The right not only to determine their direction and their goals, but also the policies which will effect their very lives.

In order to take this posture, though, I think one has to understand that one of the basic problems we're confronted with is the people who are actually willing to take that chance. I mean, actually to have enough love for themselves and their people to put their lives on the line.

In terms of the movement, we are faced with an ominous battle ahead of us, and that the only way we're going to succeed is to have enough political sense to realize that we can't have a hallucinogenic revolution.

Now, we're not a campus organization only. There are certain areas on the campus that we feel it is necessary for us to deal with, but primarily we are concerned with something that Malcolm (X) put forth. And that is, the way to liberation, especially for black people, is for black people to start thinking in terms of the international struggle.

This is where the TW politics comes in. One thing that the Man has been very successful in doing in terms of splitting black people off from black people is in throwing crumbs out to them and letting them squabble over the crumbs. Well, that brings divisiveness the ranks, you see.

BARB: A problem faced by white radicals is getting people to become aware of the ways by which they're oppressed. How does TWLF intend to turn people on to their oppression?

JOHN: Speaking for the Committee, I can say that we intend to educate people to the inherent contradictions in their life style and how it divides people and pits them against each other.

BARB: What do you mean by contradictions?

JOHN: Well, for instance, when you have a program and a certain amount of money that is not conducive for an over-all program effecting all TW people, then obviously people are going to be jockeying for the money and for positions.

We must make the oppressed people in each area realize that their oppression is part and parcel of the over-all oppression that's encompassing the world.

You see, it's all in terms of raising the level of consciousness. When you start thinking in terms of common oppression, and the police being in communities occupying them like foreign soil, then you realize the connection when you have Federal troops in Vietnam. In both cases there are foreign invaders occupying the soil of the people. You see, you have to tie the struggle together.

BARB: It seems clear that the level of militancy in the black sectors of the movement is several years ahead of anything comparable in the white community. How do you account for the relative sophistication of the black struggle?

JOHN: It's fairly obvious. You had the history of the Berkeley movement last night. There's one

thing you have to realize: when you have a movement in a white ghetto such as Berkeley you're going to have the cops chasing white students into buildings, but if it had been a place like North Carolina, you would have had the National Guard breaking down doors and firing machine guns into rooms.

White people have not reached that point yet, you see, and in terms of the Berkeley movement it's obvious what has to be done.

BARB: At the Disorientation Forum there was much talk of a radical spin-off from the campus creating new political consciousness in working people and working class movements. Do you think that there's a similar spin-off from TW liberation movements in this country, to people in the white sector who would like to effect revolutionary change?

JOHN: It becomes fairly obvious that the campus is not itself the solution to the revolution. The revolution is going to take place in the community if it is going to take place at all.

BARB: Buddy Jackson said that Stokeley Carmichael was right when he told white people that they'd better get hold of some White Power, some self-determination. Do you agree?

JOHN: If you take into consideration the validity of the student as a nigger, then you'll see essentially that white students or white people in general do not have the effective means of controlling their lives, because even though the population is white, I still think that the controlling factor is one-half of one percent.

BARB: Buddy said that whites go to college, and in the case of Berkeley, get politicized; blacks, on the other hand, must get politicized to get to college. Do you think this is true?

JOHN: In terms of black people getting politicized to get in, well, black people have to be politicized to even exist, even to live, to even survive. When all the institutions of society are pitted against you because you happen to wear a uniform, that is, the blackness of your skin, it becomes fairly obvious that when you confront racism, especially institutionalized racism, it is incumbent upon yourself to figure out detours. With this comes a knowledge of yourself and of your people.

BARB: Does COLD have any affiliations with other campus organizations?

OLIVER: COLD supports all revolutionary activities.

BARB: Would you like to specify which activities you consider to be revolutionary?

OLIVER: You know, the situation has to present itself for us to make a decision.

BARB: Among white radicals, there are many forms of Marxist-Leninist thought which have been employed to fashion their programs. Does COLD rely upon a Marxist-Leninist historical analysis?

JOHN: Not necessarily, because there is one thing you have to realize if you take a look at the situation that occurred in Chicago or Pittsburgh. OK, there are your workers in the streets. They aren't chanting the slogan "Down with Capitalism," what they're talking about is White Power. You dig it, white Racist power. So in terms of historical perspective, I would say there are some obvious flaws in that sort of orientation.

BARB: You say that there are flaws in a strictly Marxist orientation. Could you be more specific?

JOHN: I don't want to get into any semantical argument. What I'm saying is that you can't necessarily expect that each organization of revolutionary principles would identify, say, with the Marxist-Leninist line. Historical conditions aren't ripe or ready. You cannot deal with it in that perspective. You have to examine yourselves, you have to re-assess your values, you have to redirect your movement. What I can see as more valuable on a world-wide basis is the TW concept... because most of the people rising up against oppression are TW people. As it is now, I haven't seen too much shaping up in the white working class movement.

BARB: When was COLD formed?

JOHN: This summer. In June.

BARB: Could you describe the role TWLF played in the general TW strike of last winter?


OLIVER: TWLF created and ran it on U.C. TW was represented, all TW groups were represented. And decisions were reached on a dem-

ocratic level. As we all know, the strike in a large degree was ineffective, and we TW people are of the opinion that we failed to reach our objective because we never had white support. White people refused to support us. They felt that the dues were too high.

You know, like white people came out in large numbers, you know, like thousands upon thousands marching for People's Park, a plot of land. Yet they couldn't see the relevancy, they couldn't see, you know, that the lives and destinies of black people, and brown and red peoples were at stake in that strike. They couldn't see that, and if that's any indication where the people at Berkeley are at now, I think that

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the revolution's going to be a long time in coming.

BARB: Who controls the new TW Department on the U.C. campus?  
OLIVER: I can speak of the Black Studies Department. Black Studies isn't controlled by anyone. It's a department in which all groups, community, students, faculty, everyone participates. And we hope that we are creating a program which will relate to black people.

BARB: What kind of courses will be held at Black Studies?

OLIVER: I don't think we should address ourselves to that at this time. We haven't got approval for the courses. I wouldn't want to prejudice Heyns or anybody. A premature announcement of the courses just might do that.

BARB: What's the procedure for getting proposals passed through and put into effect?

OLIVER: After you write a proposal for a course you have to go through the Committee on Courses made up of faculty members from various departments. They approve the course description on the basis of whether they believe it has any academic merit. From there you have to go to the Chancellor's office to get the final ok. But the Committee on Courses, like all committee, is merely advisory in its function. It's the Chancellor who'll make the final decision. This university also insists on exerting some control over who is hired, what are the qualifications they deem necessary for a faculty member and this may cause some problems.

BARB: At the Disorientation Forum Buddy Jackson said there are three points behind the TW strike. The first, he said, is self-determina-

tion. The second is student/community participation in the educational process. The third -- and this is the one that I'm really interested in -- is a re-definition of the university role. He said that initially, universities were set up to help the people in general, and that they have failed in that role. How would you like to re-define what a university should be?

JOHN: Well, if you examine the major purpose of most universities throughout this country, and when I say judge them I mean to see how much they're getting for Federal research, this generally sets the tone of the type of education that one will receive there. Now obviously, if you only trained in terms of creating better ways to make nerve gas or trying to put together physical-mathematical problems to dictate better ways of making artifacts of death, this is making you more efficient in exploiting the material resources

of the world. All of these slots that the university offers are slots in which THEY have set up the guidelines. You see, they're slots which keep the machine running and keep it functioning. The types of education are not really set up to deal with the social, political, and economic ills of the oppressed people. When we say that the university has to re-define its role, essentially what we mean is that all of the bourgeoisie, all of the institutions, have to TAKE THEIR RESOURCES TO SCHOOL WITH THE PEOPLE: to turn these institutions into schools which will be sensitive enough to meet and direct all their efforts to the needs of the people. When we relate this to community control of education, essentially what we mean is that the university's vast amount of resources and technological know-how must be controlled in regard to the great needs of the community.

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