

A MANIFESTO FOR EDUCATED LABOR

The following tract was written by the Coordinating Committee of the Contesting Cadres (known as the "C.4"), an organization of radical executives and engineers. 1500 of these cadres met at the Sorbonne on the night of May 20 and declared themselves ready and willing to:

- Join the strikes which have been or can be started in their firms
- Participate in the struggle and develop all the forms thereof
- Commit themselves to give one day of pay per week of strike
- Join the strike committees or the action committee in their neighborhood.

This unprecedented support for worker and student struggles had deep causes, articulated in the tract below.

Entitled Manifesto, it is a protest against the specific forms of alienation experienced by managerial personnel in modern capitalist society. Their objective is to create a new society in which man would be more than "consumer" and economic life would be democratized.

The tract exists in at least two different forms. The text translated here is that issued by the Worker-Student Action Committee of the Sorbonne which claims to have rewritten it from a draft submitted by the executives. The resulting tract was presumably more radical than the original draft. 2500 copies are said to have been printed on May 24.¹

The other version is a printed one issued by the Coordinating Committee of Contesting Cadres on May 20. This version differs only slightly but in one respect significantly: the "C.4" condemn consumer society in America and Russia side by side.²

There is clearly a problem of dates here which I cannot solve. It seems likely, however, that the C.A.R.S, made an error in dating its version and that the true history of the tract is as they describe it, with the "C.4" version being a final rewrite by the cadres themselves. The C.A.R.S. says that in the original draft, the cadres "had not gone so far as to challenge the purpose of the deepest structures of the capitalist economy". The rewritten tract certainly does challenge it. If our hypothesis is correct, then the "C.4" would have appreciated the radicalization of their own tract and preferred it to the original, adding, however, a disclaimer as far as the Soviet Union is concerned.

¹ Cf. The fascicule of the Revolutionary Action Committee of the Sorbonne, p. 52.

² Cf. Journal de la commune etudiante, p. 384.

DOCUMENT

MANIFESTO

The student movement has given rise, among a large number of cadres, to a new analysis both of their mission in the company and of the goals of the consumer society which they, consciously or not, help to build.

For these cadres, the student movement represents a fundamental contestation of the nature of our society. The verbal excesses to which this contestation may have led only express the amplitude of the problem posed. The cadres believe that they have an important role to play in formulating the bases and structures of a Society which would make of man something other than a simple consumer.

Such a revolution requires:

a) The elaboration of an original society, going beyond those that are generally proposed: this society will have as its fundamental characteristic that of being built for and by the wage-earners who are its driving elements.

b) The elaboration of concrete solutions for the democratization of management and of the general economic decision making process. The goal of fulfillment of the personality, in work as well as in leisure, must be substituted for the usual goals of profitability and expansion.

As a short-term objective one must call into question (just as one must for society as a whole) the unions and political organizations traditionally charged with defending and expressing the aspirations of the salaried world.

Conscious of the fact that the struggle begun at the University cannot be waged successfully without the movement spreading to all economic sectors, the "Committee" proposes:

- To participate with the students in changing educational methods and structures.
- To introduce theory and action into the professional milieu.

WORKER STUDENT ACTION COMMITTEE