IDA: University-Sponsored Center Hit Hard by Assaults on Campus

Last summer, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), an amorphous alliance that functions as the shock troops and Jesuits of the radical left, looked for targets that might be successfully assaulted as evidence of institutional decadence in American society. With special attention to possibilities that could engage the sympathies of academe's politically indifferent masses, SDS selected the following: (i) university bookstores, and (ii) the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), a Washington-based nonprofit research organization whose principal customer is the Department of Defense (DOD). Headed by retired General Maxwell D. Taylor, who also serves as a special presidential assistant on Vietnam, IDA was particularly attractive to SDS because of its unusual corporate basis: legally, IDA is a creature of a consortium of 12 major universities.

With the bookstores and IDA as the designated targets, SDS fanned out. But as anyone more than superficially acquainted with university bookstores could have advised SDS, these enterprises are immune to assault, change, or reason, whether from the left, right, or middle. Whatever the reason, the SDS bookstore project was swiftly abandoned, undoubtedly to the detriment of the entire academic community. IDA, however, remained a duly certified target, to be assailed on the grounds not only that it was in support of a war deemed immoral by SDS but also that it exploited the good names of its university sponsors in pursuing that war. Furthermore, it was alleged that, while IDA benefited from its university sponsorship, it was not effectively under the control of its university-appointed trustees, since some of IDA's work was so highly classified that not even the trustees were cleared to review it (this is true, though only a small portion of IDA's research falls into such a supersecret category).

Advancing these arguments with leaflets, posters, and sit-ins at IDA's constituent campuses, SDS soon found IDA to be quite vulnerable—so vulnerable, in fact, that some persons close and friendly to IDA believe SDS may well have lacerated the guts of one of the Defense Establishment's most elite and intricately constructed institutions for bringing talent to bear on military problems.

This damage assessment is open to dispute, since IDA is still there and functioning in its ten-story headquarters near the Pentagon, handling hundreds of studies and analyses for DOD, plus an increasing volume of studies for civilian agencies—now about 10 percent of IDA's total workload. But there is no disputing the fact that, as a consequence of SDS's virulent attacks, IDA has been hurt and is trying to maneuver away from its tormentors. As part of this effort, an organizational change has been adopted that purportedly lengthens the distance between IDA and the 12 universities that, in effect, are its legal guardians. Previously, each of the 12 designated an officer, usually the university president, to serve on the IDA board of trustees as the representative of the university. Under the new arrangement, adopted at an IDA trustees' meeting in March, each university will continue to designate a trustee, but he will serve as an individual and not as the representative of the university. The change, of course, adds up to a distinction without a difference, since few, if any, of the players will be changed and IDA's great strength is personal relationships, not legal niceties. But the fact that IDA even bothered to compose this fiction is one measure of the effectiveness of the SDS attacks.

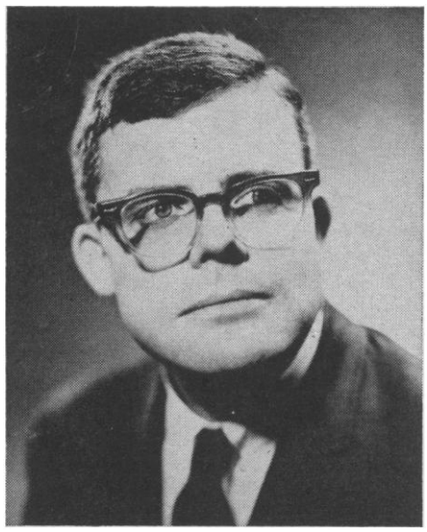
A more revealing measure is the fact that, while IDA strives to retain its university connections, several of the 12 sponsors are cutting their ties with the organization or are bound on a course toward that end. Thus, the Academic Council and the president of the University of Chicago have recommended to the university's trustees that Chicago sever all ties to IDA; though the legal details are yet to be completed, IDA has now written off Chicago. At Princeton (which, before the IDA controversy, was about as politically turbulent as West Point), the faculty has even rejected membership under the newly adopted corporate setup; the Princeton trustees must still act, but the future is not bright for Princeton's remaining an IDA sponsor. And, though the smoke is still too thick to permit assessment of what is happening on Morningside Heights, Columbia's IDA ties figure large in the ongoing chaos there, and since the University's administration seems to be tending toward a peace-at-any-price policy, the jettisoning of IDA would not be an unlikely event.

Finally, in assessing the effects of the assault on IDA, consideration must be given to IDA's full-time Washington-based staff, which numbers about 600, including some 300 professionals. Reports vary but there are those who maintain that the continual depiction of IDA as "unclean" has sent morale down to a deep subterranean level. At the same time, the anti-IDA campaign is said to have severely affected the close academic ties which IDA itself has in the past warmly praised as indispensable to its special style of "think-tank" operations.

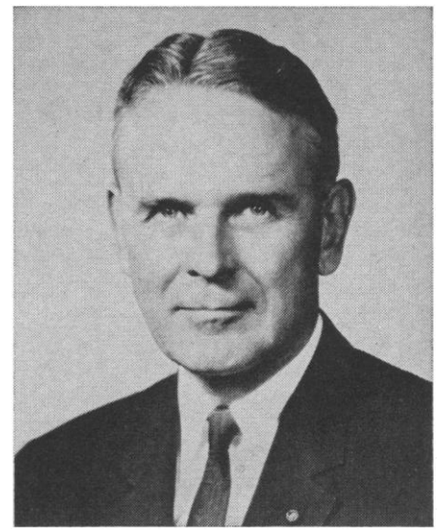
What Is IDA?

All of which brings up the question, What is IDA?

From any political perspective, it has to be acknowledged that IDA is a triumph of cold war mobilization. Seen through the often-feverish optics of the New Lift, it is a too-good-to-be-true symbol of the way in which the military has bought and seduced its way into the heart of the American academic community. For, though IDA shares many of the characteristics of other nonprofit, government-supported research organizations such as the RAND Corporation, it is not only a self-contained research center on the RAND pattern but also an intricate, nationwide mechanism for bringing outstanding academic scientists into the service of the Defense Department. Whereas RAND was created by and works almost exclusively for the Air Force, and has a board of directors who serve as individuals and not as representatives of other organizations, IDA was organized and functions quite differently. These differences go back to the rationale for its creation, which took place in 1956, when East-West tensions were flourishing and crash programs to



Gordon J. F. MacDonald



Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor

build a force of intercontinental missiles were under way. At that time, the story goes, Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson became concerned about the lack of high-level scientific competence in DOD's Weapons Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG), which was supposed to analyze the effectiveness of various weapons for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Since Secretary Wilson was never enamored of research, and once even remarked, "Basic research is when you don't know what you're doing," it is possible that his role in IDA's creation has been inflated. But, in any case, because of salary restrictions and scientists' preference to remain rooted in an academic setting, DOD had difficulty in obtaining the sort of talent it considered desirable for WSEG. To get around this, Wilson is said to have asked James R. Killian, Jr., then president of M.I.T., to have M.I.T. provide scientific support for WSEG. Killian at that time was deeply involved in various strategic and intelligence studies for the Eisenhower administration (shortly after Sputnik he became the first full-time White House science adviser), and he was not unsympathetic to WSEG's needs. But he thought it would be preferable to have the task taken on by an academic consortium rather than by a single institution, presumably because a broader institutional base would aid in recruiting talent. And that is how it was done. With the Ford Foundation providing $500,000 to meet expenses until DOD funds began to arrive, IDA came into being as a corporate entity under the trusteeship of officers representing five academic institutions: Caltech, Case, M.I.T., Stanford, and Tulane. Over the next half dozen years the number of sponsoring institutions rose to 12, with the addition of the University of California, Chicago, Columbia, the University of Illinois, the University of Michigan, Penn State, and Princeton. Killian became chairman of the board while an M.I.T. assistant of his, retired Air Force General James McCormack, Jr., served part-time as president of IDA. To provide scientific support for the Pentagon's WSEG, the new organization created WSED—the Weapons System Evaluation Division. In later years, other divisions were established. And, in confirmation of the expectation that a nonmilitary organization could pull in talent that was not attracted to direct employment by DOD, IDA readily attracted the services of a long succession of outstanding university scientists, among them Albert G. Hill, Charles H. Townes, Elliott W. Montroll, and Gordon J. F. MacDonald, who is nearing the end of a 2-year tour as executive vice president.

To the extent that IDA was a "think tank" supported by, but ostensibly independent of, DOD, it was no different from any one of a number of other organizations that served the military. IDA, however, could proudly claim some unique features, though their significance is a matter of contention. First of all, no other "think tank" enjoyed the insulation of having 12 high-level executives of prestigious universities situated between it and its customer. The effect of this, it was claimed, was to give IDA unmatched independence to analyze military matters without fear of displeasing what was virtually its sole source of support. Second, there was the Communications Research Division (CRD), a highly secret, highly skilled mathematics group based in a building on the Princeton University campus and assigned to work on "specialized problems of communications"—otherwise referred to as code-making, code-breaking, and related matters. (Though Princeton appears to be en route to pulling out of IDA's corporate structure, the SRD facility at Princeton is protected by a contract that gives IDA an option to keep CRD there until 1975.) Then there was the graduate school activity that IDA operated, the Defense Systems Analysis Program, under which students enrolled in the economics department of the University of Maryland could work with IDA to satisfy the requirements for a master's degree in the general area of systems analysis. The money for the program, some $300,000 a year, came from DOD, which looked to the IDA-Maryland relationship to meet a long-standing shortage of trained systems analysts. (The program, which has been operating for a few years, will be dropped by Maryland at the end of this school year—partly, at least, as a result of anti-IDA agitation on that campus. The University of Rochester has agreed to take it over, with IDA no longer involved—a cause of bitterness to some IDA staff members.)

Finally, also unique to IDA and a major source of pride, is the Jason division—a carefully worked out system for recruiting bright young stars of academic science to work part of each year on military problems. Named for Jason of Greek mythology (presumably for Jason in his resourceful period rather than after he had lost favor with the gods), the division was founded in 1958 at the suggestion of Charles Townes, who later became an IDA vice president and director of research. The rationale for Jason's creation, as stated in IDA's 10th-year report, was that, "unlike their counterparts of the World War II era, the generation of scientific leaders which has emerged since that time in the universities has not been forced into broad contact with long-range defense problems." To remedy the matter, IDA made it very attractive for these young leaders to develop an interest in such problems. For 6 or 7 weeks each summer, some 40 of them, accompanied full-time or part-time by elder scientists with experience dating back to World War II, would assemble at an attractive locale, such as Woods

Hole, Berkeley, or La Jolla, to think and talk about a variety of military matters. Several meetings of a few days each would also be held throughout the year. According to IDA's published reports, the subjects studied by Jason have included "theoretical analyses of knotty aspects of ballistic missile defense and exoatmospheric nuclear detonations." Though Jason is composed mainly of physicists, IDA notes that, in 1964, "increased Government attention to such problems as counterinsurgency, insurrection, and infiltration led to the suggestion that Jason members might be able to provide fresh insights into problems that are not entirely in the realm of physical science."

According to Norman L. Christeller, vice president and general manager of IDA, the recompense for these 6- or 7-week summer sessions is generally in the range of $125 to $150 per day, plus transportation expenses for the scientist and his family, plus a daily expense payment of approximately $20 per day. Christeller says the sums paid Jason members often are not quite competitive with the consulting fees that scientists of this caliber can command.

Leading Scientists

That Jason has been able to attract outstanding scientific talent is evident from an examination of the names of members who are listed in IDA's public reports. Among these are Eugene Wigner, Keith A. Brueckner, Gordon MacDonald, Nicholas Christofolos, and Bernd T. Matthias. Members of the Jason steering committee have included Marvin L. Goldberger (chairman), Murray Gell-Mann, Elliott Montroll, and Kenneth M. Watson. Also associated with Jason have been Jerome B. Wiesner and George B. Kistiakowsky. Six members of Jason also hold membership on the President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC) or one or another of its panels, and there are also close personal connections between Jason and the Defense Science Board and other DOD advisory bodies.

This interlocking aspect is another characteristic that distinguishes IDA from other government-supported nonprofit research centers. Thus, IDA President Taylor, who formerly was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, puts in a good deal of time serving President Johnson on Vietnam matters; in February Johnson also appointed him to head the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. IDA's No. 2 man, Gordon MacDonald, is a member of PSAC and is closely associated with various government advisory groups.

In brief, it can be said of IDA that it is an ingeniously devised mechanism for getting talented and much-sought-after people to work on problems of importance to their government. Appended to this, however, must be the recognition that, first of all, it is impossible for an outsider to arrive at any judgment of the overall quality of IDA's research, since some 75 to 80 percent of it is classified. Second, because of the combination of secrecy and political contention that surrounds many of the issues which IDA has studied—for example, the antiballistic missile—it is impossible for an outsider to judge whether anyone important is paying attention to IDA. Finally, it must be noted that all along the political spectrum, not only on the far left, lots of people are angry at IDA.

ABM Study

Among the hundreds of studies that IDA has performed, the most significant works are said to include definitive analyses of command and control systems and weapons systems planning for well into the 1980's. What impact these analyses have had on decision-making is not revealed, though some IDA executives, in reaction to the SDS attacks, cautiously suggest that IDA is a restraining force against military men who seek a wide-open arms race. It is suggested, for example, that IDA's studies of missile penetration aids raised so many doubts about the effectiveness of an antiballistic missile system that the Johnson administration was able to quiet proponents of the AMB with the promise of no more than a "thin," $5-billion system. The logic of this is not apparent to an outsider, but friends of IDA insist that IDA's studies helped prevent the military from going ahead with a $50-billion system.

IDA prides itself on producing studies that just state the facts; conclusions or recommendations are said to be rare. But IDA, again in apparent reaction to SDS's depicting it as a tool of the military-industrial complex, proudly points to one of its major unclassified studies—an analysis of passenger potential for supersonic transport, produced under contract to the Federal Aviation Agency. IDA's projections indicated that the SST might be a great economic calamity, and it notes that, at a time when it is eager to acquire more civilian work, it did not hesitate to present these findings to the SST's principal backer—the Federal Aviation Agency. The Johnson administration eventually decided to go ahead with the SST program; however, there are those within IDA who maintain that the SST is a fatally ailing venture, and that when it is terminated, as they predict it will be, IDA's study will figure large in the decision.

Also in the area of major unclassified studies is the report on science and technology that IDA prepared last year for the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. This is a solid piece of systems research that boils down to an examination of how new gadgetry and techniques might be employed for bringing greater efficiency to police work and the courts. There are those who maintain that this report is simply another example of the triumph of efficiency over social value—that IDA, operating in the manner of an intellectual automaton, simply concerned itself with techniques for dealing with the practice of crime, rather than with techniques for eliminating the causes of crime. IDA, of course, can answer that other parts of the President's commission were charged with examining the roots of crime, and that it was merely fulfilling its mandate, which was to look for better ways of dealing with crime that is occurring here and now.

Oil Depletion

Though the largest part of IDA's output bearsa military security classification, the impression prevails that many persons within the working ranks of IDA are somewhat to the left of those who bear corporate responsibility for the organization's affairs. It is difficult to document this impression, but one heretofore unrevealed incident offers a tantalizing hint. Several years ago, when IDA, like many other DOD-related "think tanks," began to look around for civilian-related work, a group within IDA prevailed upon the Treasury Department and the Bureau of the Budget to ask IDA to make a study of the economic implications of the politically controversial oil depletion allowance. The study was killed by the IDA board of trustees, which has authority to pass on all work undertaken by IDA. *Science* sought an explanation of this incident from William A. M. Burden, the industrialist, philanthropist, and former U.S. Ambassador to Beligium, who long has served as chairman of IDA's board. Replied Burden: "We

try to pick subjects that are of national importance and that we are competent to handle. Look at the people in IDA. What do they know about the oil business?"

Perhaps nothing, but it is interesting to note that, in an IDA promotional pamphlet titled "The Purpose and Nature of IDA," it is stated that an "important characteristic of IDA is the ability to assemble teams of diversified specialists to undertake a study of a highly complex problem. IDA could maintain a staff encompassing all of the specialities required for some of the major systems studies, but it has developed the capability of bringing together people from industry, from other non-profit corporations, and from universities under circumstances that avoid conflict of interest problems and provide a strong team effort."

SDS is actually a late arrival among IDA's foes; for many years before SDS began to assail the organization, it had come under attack from both Congress and the far right wing. It may be speculated that the congressional ire was inspired at least in part by uniformed military men who felt that IDA's studies were putting a damper on the arms race, but the congressional attacks were based on the contention that IDA, along with other nonprofit DOD-related research centers, was unduly extravagant with the taxpayers' money. A study conducted by a House committee revealed, for example, that an IDA vice president was allowed a $417-a-month expense allowance for which he did not have to account; and that IDA's then-president ran up bills averaging $300 a month at Washington's exclusive Metropolitan Club, which were passed along to IDA. The House committee charged that IDA's salaries were considerably in excess of those paid at comparable institutions. (Today IDA contests that point, but whatever the case, General Taylor receives a salary of $49,200; MacDonald receives $42,900; 71 of IDA's professionals receive at least $25,000, and seven receive over $30,000. IDA maintains that those who leave its employ for other organizations generally do so at a substantial increase in salary.)

The effect of congressional scrutiny of IDA has been a leveling off, even a slight decline, in budgetary support. Thus, last year IDA received $14.9 million but this year it is working with $14 million. Since costs have risen and the need for growth is an article of faith in American organizational life,

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **ACLU CRITICIZES HORNIG:** After a year-long investigation, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has expressed its "deep concern" over the exclusion of William R. Taylor, then a University of Wisconsin historian, from a White House Panel on Educational Innovation, following Taylor's public criticism of the Administration's Vietnam policy (News and Comment, 28 July, p. 409). President Johnson's science adviser, Donald Hornig, has maintained that a formal invitation was not issued to Taylor, a defense which the ACLU's Academic Freedom Committee has concluded is "immaterial" since Taylor already had a verbal invitation. In an interview with *Science*, Taylor said that he had felt "an enormous embarrassment on Hornig's part" during the telephone conversation in which Hornig told him that he would not be appointed to the panel, and that he was "terribly upset that Hornig never made any written clarification" of why he had not been appointed. The Council of the American Historical Association has also expressed concern over Taylor's exclusion. Taylor said that the controversy had had no harmful effects on his career, that he had been offered and accepted a chair at the State University of New York at Stony Brook beginning next year, and that the whole affair "has helped me if anything."

● **CANADIAN MATHEMATICS CENTER:** The University of Montreal has been awarded a 5-year, $1.37-million grant by the Canadian National Research Council to support the establishment of a Mathematics Research Centre. The Canadian Defence Research Board will also provide $400,000 for the center over a 5-year period. The new center will be concerned solely with research at the postdoctorate level, with particular emphasis on applied mathematics. Plans call for a staff of 19 by 1972 including a director, 11 permanent members, and 7 associate members. In addition, 13 visiting scientists from Canada and abroad will be invited to spend up to a year at the center.

● **THERMAL POLLUTION STUDY:** Maryland Governor Spiro T. Agnew has requested a federal study to assess how marine life in Chesapeake Bay may be affected by discharges of water from a nuclear power plant that is scheduled to begin operation in 1973. The proposed study would be similar to a study of the probable effects of nuclear reactor thermal pollution in the Columbia River that will be undertaken by the Department of the Interior and the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration. Governor Agnew requested the study in a letter to Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D–Maine), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution. In the letter, Agnew advocated "that piecemeal efforts by individual states and power companies should be abandoned in favor of a unified and intensified Federally-directed study of the broadest scope."

● **NEW PUBLICATIONS:** The 1967 edition of *Research Grants Index*, a two-volume publication with information on approximately 17,000 biomedical and health science research projects supported by the Public Health Service, is available, at $10 a set, from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Copies of the National Science Foundation publication "Basic Research, Applied Research, and Development in American Industry, 1966" in the NSF series *Reviews of Data on Science Resources* may be obtained, for 20 cents a copy, from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

The Student in Higher Education, a report prepared by a committee of the Hazen Foundation, is available, free, from the foundation at 400 Prospect Street, New Haven, Conn.

● **INTERIOR'S ACADEMIC SUPPORT:** About $25 million in academic research and development contracts and grants will be available from the Department of the Interior during fiscal 1969, the department estimates. The projection, although only about $500,000 above the department's 1968 academic obligation, points to Interior's increasing emphasis on academic support. The department appropriated only $3.8 million in 1963. A brochure describing the department's contracts and grants, *Guide to Department of the Interior Research and Development Contracts and Grants*, is available without charge from the Office of the Science Adviser, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

some IDA executives think Congress outweighs student radicals as a menace to IDA's well-being.

On the right wing, IDA has long been a favorite target for invidious attack. For example, Edith Kermit Roosevelt, writing in the New Hampshire *Sunday News*, observed last year that IDA is part of a shadowy complex that includes the major institutions of government, and she went on to say, "Under the think factory system . . . there is the interlocking directorship between research groups, government posts and consultantships. Obviously," she concluded, "the Communist network has not missed creating its own links into this establishment."

In confronting the problems that now afflict its university sponsorship, IDA has been forced into a rather contorted position. Throughout its history it has fulsomely praised its academic underpinnings as vital to its successful operation. Thus, IDA's 1965 report states, "Without the efforts of these [university] men and the cooperation of these institutions, IDA would not be what it is. We are proud to grace the pages of our report with scenes of the campuses of our twelve Member Universities, as partial recognition of our debt to the entire academic world." Yet, in IDA's pamphlet "The Purpose and Nature of IDA," it is stated that, while the universities have generously supplied people for IDA, "it should be noted that the universities gain nothing by this relationship. It has been and continues to be a valuable form of public service."

Today, of course, the greatest public service a university can perform is to prevent itself from blowing up. Since SDS has successfully converted IDA into a detonating device, IDA's continued existence as an extension of the academic world would seem to be open to serious doubt. Whether such a change would seriously affect the quality of its staff and output is difficult to say. Those who oscillate between IDA and the academic world view the academic foundation as essential to IDA's success. Those who are in IDA's employ on a long-term basis tend to regard it as peripheral or even irrelevant. But there is no doubt that SDS's shaggy troop has seriously rocked one of the Defense Department's most esteemed devices for bringing scientific talent into the service of government. IDA's President Taylor, Vice President MacDonald, and Board Chairman Burden readily acknowledged as much, though they all believe that IDA will emerge from the storm more or less intact. Since nine of IDA's 12 university sponsors at present show no sign of pulling out, they may be right. But SDS is a sort of Jason-like organization, anti-military sentiments are running high throughout the academic world, and the conflict is not yet over.

—D. S. GREENBERG

France: The Latest Eruption of the International Student Revolt

Paris. The university center of Nanterre on the outskirts of Paris has become French higher education's most celebrated trouble spot. Left-wing student activists have created a series of well-publicized incidents, and there have been lurid reports of intramural vice and violence. As a result, many Frenchmen speculated whether Nanterre was an isolated special case or whether it represented the leading edge of a new wave of student radicalism.

Two weeks ago, violence escalated when Nanterre militants swarmed into Paris to join Sorbonne students in what was described as the worst student riots since the mid-1930's. The occasion was a demonstration planned to protest closing of the Nanterre center, but the protests ran the gamut of student grievances, from Vietnam to university overcrowding.

For the past 2 weeks, Paris police and students have been locked in violent combat. As this was written, the French government had been forced to take a conciliatory approach, but "the Nanterre syndrome" among the students seems to be stronger than ever.

Nanterre is one of the "expansion" campuses established to help accommodate France's rapidly growing university population. Its physical circumstances are depressing. It is located on a former military site, in grim surroundings. Neither the campus nor the neighborhood provides the normal setting for French student life; isolation is accentuated by poor transportation into Paris.

One of the ironies of Nanterre is that, when the center opened 3 years ago, the staff of the faculty of letters and human sciences (which was strong in the social sciences, where most French university faculties have been weak) was rated as among the ablest and liveliest in France. The very rapid increase in enrollment at the center has lowered the originally favorable faculty-student ratio, adding to disenchantment.

The demands of the political militants at Nanterre range across a now-familiar spectrum. The militants want to create a "critical university" which students would share in governing, to carry on the "battle against imperialism," and to further the European student movement. Their feelings are conveyed by such wall slogans as "Professors you are old and your culture also," "Let us live," "Victory to the NLF," and "Down with police repression."

The militant minority at Nanterre and at other French universities, until the Paris riots, had been able to rouse the mass of students to protest pitch on only one issue—the regulations for students living in government-built and -administered student residences (*cités universitaires*). The main objections are to strict taboos against visitors in student rooms and restrictions against any sort of political activities on the premises. There have been outbursts against the rules (notably at Nantes, Rouen, and Paris), and on 14 March there was a well-organized "day of action" in which men invaded women's dormitory blocks at most French universities.

Student militants of the recent past tended to look on the present student movement as ineffective and rather frivolous. Opposition by students and intellectuals to the Algerian war was remembered as a successful exercise of student power. One observer, who is a veteran of that opposition effort and still has links with the university, finds the present students "divided between the anarchists and the indifferent."

Although student militancy has a long history in France, nothing like the