London School of Economics: End of a Year of Upheaval

London. Here in this best-mannered of nations, where it is explained that the police can patrol unarmed because they have pencils and notebooks, the level of student militancy generally would fall beneath notice in the combat communiqués that pour from campuses throughout Europe, the United States, and Japan. There are a few exceptions, and the most prominent is to be found at the London School of Economics (LSE), a University of London branch, cramped into a narrow downtown street off one of London's busiest thoroughfares and filled with approximately 1700 undergraduate students, 1300 graduates, and 300 faculty members. Established in 1895 by Sidney Webb as sort of a West Point for promoting socialism, LSE in its early days was hovered over by George Bernard Shaw and other Fabian apostles, and eventually it acquired a worldwide reputation as the home base for such scholars as Harold Laski and R. H. Tawney. Since the social sciences, outside of economics, have generally had a difficult time achieving recognition in British universities—Cambridge faculty just this month voted to establish a degree course in social sciences—LSE has long ranked as Britain's leading center for such studies, and, because of its political genesis, has also held, long beyond the fact, a reputation as a center for left-wing intellectualism. And, in the quickly disappointed belief that it is such, many students flock to enroll.

Whatever the realities of its present academic and political status, there is no doubt that, over the past year or so, LSE has firmly established itself as the most turbulent of British institutions of higher education. Early this year, following disorders, it was shut down tight for 3 weeks. Lord Robbins, the 70-year-old academic and business executive who heads the school's topmost board, the Court of Governors, told a newspaper interviewer that things have reached the point where Dostoevski's *The Possessed* is a useful handbook for understanding what is happening at LSE. Edward Short, the cabinet minister responsible for education, took to the floor of the House of Commons several months ago to proclaim that LSE was in the grip of "thugs of the academic world," referring in large part to a group of American graduate students, most of them fresh from service with SDS back home, who have played a prominent role in LSE's troubles. Some of these students modestly dispute their importance, though one of them, in comparing the respective contributions of British and American activists at the school, states, "They know about Trotsky and we know about sit-ins." As for homegrown campus radicals, though apparently small in number, they often perform to international standards, as witness the rhetoric of 29-year-old Robin Blackburn, an assistant lecturer, who told a crowd of students that Education Minister Short and his colleagues are "scum," and that "these bastards have given us the opportunity to mobilize students up and down the country." Amidst such rhetoric, Blackburn and two other faculty members have been fired, court injunctions have been obtained against 13 persons, mostly students, scores have been temporarily suspended, and the LSE administration even went to court to request, unsuccessfully, that several be jailed. Sit-ins and classroom boycotts have been too numerous for anyone but a careful note-keeper to recall which happened when and in relation to what.

All of this has been happening in the absence of direct confrontation with such standard American detonators as the Vietnam war, the draft (there is none in England), black power demands, or the commonplace European complaints of incredible overcrowding and perfunctory tradition-bound instruction. Thus, there is something of a difference in the LSE upheaval, and therefore it may be useful to examine the situation, both as a phenomenon in itself and for what it may portend for higher education in Britain.

If we look back over the events at LSE during the past 2 years, the most significant elements appear to be: (i) a haughty insensitivity on the part of the school's management; (ii) an organizational structure that virtually walls off the school's center of administrative power from the mass of students and teachers; (iii) a standard contingent of energetic and tactically alert revolutionists who look upon the school as a convenient starting point for moving toward more ambitious political goals; and (iv) a student body that, by the very nature of LSE, tends to be inquisitive about the justifications for social and political forms, but, more important, one drawn from a generation that is less and less in harmony with the antiquities that are so lovingly institutionalized in British life. To put this last point another way, it may be interesting to visit a reincarnation of the past such as Williamsburg, Virginia, but it is another thing for a blue-jeaned, radically read, Rolling Stones fan to be asked to take part in the original version.

Adams an Issue

The present run of troubles at LSE can be traced back to 1966, when it was announced that a former LSE economics teacher, Walter Adams, would be leaving his post as head of the multiracial University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland to become director of the school. Without engaging very much attention, student radicals, mainly members of the feeble Socialist Society, issued a barrage of accusations concerning Adams's relations with the racist regime that had unilaterally declared Rhodesian independence for the purpose of assuring continued dominance of its white minority. The worst charge to bear examination was that Adams had not fought against the Rhodesian administration. Supporters argued in his behalf that he had, after all, kept a multiracial institution going in a hostile setting, and that his libertarian record ran back to pre-World War II days, when he played a leading role in helping Jewish academics flee from Germany and settle in Britain. More to the point, some persons raised questions about his administrative abilities, but, in any case, the Adams issue failed to evoke much student response—until the LSE administration, proceeding in the style of colonial administrators dealing with unruly natives, invoked an obscure regulation to discipline one of the student protesters. The student, who happened to be president of the Student Union, had identified himself, in

a published newspaper letter protesting the appointment, as a student at LSE, and this was in violation of a rule that such identification might not be given without permission of the school. The student was summoned to a disciplinary board—on which there was then no student representation. Unmoved by the obscurities of the Adams issue, the student body was easily moved by the concrete case of one of its leaders being prosecuted for violation of a nonsensical regulation. And it responded with a boycott of classes. The disciplinary board eventually decided that the letter-writer had committed "an error of judgment," though "in good faith," and dropped the case. Not long afterward, the letter-writing rule was abandoned. But the germ of politicization of the mass had been nurtured, and the pattern was set for inept administrative performance that the radical core could exploit to arouse the mass of students.

Center of Power

In these circumstances, the organizational arrangements for governing LSE came to play an increasingly important part in determining how the administration would respond to what it perceived to be unacceptable behavior. Legal authority for running LSE is vested in a Court of Governors of approximately 80 more or less distinguished businessmen, educators, government officials, and other luminaries, most of whom are so busily engaged elsewhere that, for many of them, LSE is simply another item on their *Who's Who* entry. The real center of power is a 12-member Standing Committee, drawn wholly from the Court of Governors. Of these 12, five are outsiders, mainly businessmen; the remainder consists of the LSE Director, Pro-Director, and four LSE faculty members who are elected to the Court by the faculty and, who are, in turn, elected to the Standing Committee by the Court. Interestingly, throughout the difficulties of the past year or so, the business members are widely reported to have argued for a soft line in dealing with the students, while the academics are said to have argued for harsh measures. As one faculty observer explains it, "The business people are accustomed to dealing with unions and buying their way out of trouble. The faculty people think in terms of rules and principles."

Functionally, effective power over the school's affairs was wielded by the Standing Committee, with little countervailing force from the large and unwieldy Academic Board, to which all 300 faculty members belong, or that Board's General Purposes Committee, a 16-member body responsible mainly for preparing the agenda for Academic Board meetings. Adams became director in October 1967, and, several months later, the chairmanship of both the Court of Governors and the Standing Committee was taken over by Lord Robbins, an LSE faculty member from 1929 to 1961, head of the famous Robbins study group that charted the great expansion of British higher education in this decade, chairman of the *Financial Times*, and, by all accounts, a powerful figure who has consistently overshadowed Director Adams in decisions on how to deal with the students. On the student side, there was the Student Union, embracing the entire student body, but, until the Socialist Society decided that the Union was an attractive arena for political purposes, it was rarely concerned with anything more serious than amenities in the student lounge. Such was the organizational background against which agitation began to accelerate early in 1967, some months prior to the arrival of Adams and Robbins.

In February 1967, when students were denied use of the school auditorium to hold a protest meeting against the Adams appointment, they broke down the doors and held it anyway. Disciplinary charges were brought against six of them, and these charges then touched off what was then a remarkable event for Britain—a sit-in, involving about 450 students. (The London *Times* described the sit-in as "unprecedented in British university history.") The Board of Discipline then decreed suspension for two student leaders, one of them an American postgraduate student, thus touching off various high-level comments about the menace that might be inherent in U.S. enrollees, who accounted for about 12 percent of the overall student body. (Even a year before these troubles, Adams's predecessor as director stated in his annual report, "It is reasonable to doubt whether this strong American influence is on balance good for the school.") The sit-in went on and was met with the temporary suspension of 70 students. The situation cooled down with the arrival of the 1967 Easter recess.

Meanwhile, it got through even to the Standing Committee that LSE was on the way to repeating the blow-ups of certain celebrated institutions abroad. As a consequence, a 23-member committee, including five students, was set up to prepare proposals for revising the running of the school. Three of these students subsequently quit, charging the committee with "pomposity" and an unwillingness to allow students significant representation in the school's management. The committee then turned in a report that, though offering no evidence of pomposity, did bear out the charge about inadequate representation. Under the proposed reorganization, students would be given four to eight places in a 60-member Court of Governors; three places on a 24-member council; and five places in a 50-member senate. The students who remained on the committee wrote a minority report calling for the school to be governed by a senate that would include substantial student representation. The minority report was accepted by a meeting of the Student Union attended by about 10 percent of the student body. The episode left the administration convinced that the student demands were insatiable; the students came away convinced that the administration sought to buy them off with token representation.

Showing the Flag

Even at this stage, however, the student body was so little engrossed with politics, internal or external, that, when France went through its student-inspired cataclysm in May 1968, LSE students looked on approvingly but did nothing more overt than fly a red-and-black flag over the school as a symbol of sympathy.

Last September, when the current academic year began, the "revolutionists," variously estimated at 10 to 40, but with a sympathetically inclined following of around 300, sought an issue of broad political significance, something more cosmic than rules for writing to the newspapers or holding meetings. The rationale, as one of them explains it, was "to move the students away from concern over infringements on their personal prerogatives, and get them dealing with fundamental political issues." However, since semisocialized, peaceful Britain presents few issues for stirring up the masses, the best the radicals could come up with were the faraway matters of Rhodesia and Vietnam. But in the best Blimp tradition, the administration and the

Standing Committee were soon to come to their assistance and also were to stir up faculty concern about how the school was being managed.

In October, a mass Sunday march against U.S. policy in Vietnam took place in London. Amidst erroneous reports that the march would bring violence (a small breakaway group did get into some fights near the American embassy, but the main body of the march proceeded without incident), the Socialist Society inspired the Student Union to vote to occupy the school over the weekend for use as a staging area, refuge, and first-aid station. LSE Director Adams responded by closing the school on the Friday preceeding the march. About 200 students then took over the premises to keep the buildings open. A few days later, Lord Robbins inadvertently began the process of politically arousing the teaching staff by noting that a few youthful faculty members had encouraged the occupation. And, in the style of a gunboat captain assigned to show the flag, he warned the faculty that assisting the students in such circumstances could be regarded as "a grave offense . . . warranting termination of contract." To which he appended, "On this occasion, having regard to the immaturity of those concerned, we took the view that the process whereby staff in clear breach of contract can be dismissed need not be invoked." A few days later, the Student Union voted, 229 to 85, for "direct political action"—whatever that might be. And a week later, 76 of the 300 faculty members responded to Robbins's warning with a letter that stated, "The threats are particularly objectionable because they are specific in the action which may be taken but wholly imprecise about the nature of the offense." A separate letter signed by seven well-recognized "moderate" faculty members declared, "We resent this new authoritarianism and we resent being treated . . . as middle level management on whom is to be imposed obligations to obey the directors' instructions whatever their own view."

At that point, things were looking so bright for the tiny Socialist Society that it dropped its general policy of not running for office in the Student Union and put up five candidates for seats that had become vacant when a moderate bloc resigned in an attempt to arouse student support against the radicals. All five Socialist Society candidates were defeated by an average of 200 votes apiece, which, even allowing for the confusions of LSE student politics, suggests that radical exploitation of specific issues, abetted by the administration's all-thumbs response, had become the main propellant of the Society's success.

At the beginning of 1969, the radicals began to bear down hard on Rhodesia, scattering allegations about Adams's activities there, accusing members of the Court of Governors of having financial interests in Rhodesian companies, charging that the school held investments in Rhodesia and South Africa ($1200 in South Africa is all they ever turned up), and inveighing against recruiters for Rhodesian companies coming to the school, though few, if any, ever did actually show up at LSE. And, as the radicals grievingly acknowledge, the students yawned. But then the administration came to their assistance.

"Tear Down the Gates"

Late in January, Lord Robbins chose to attend a meeting of the Student Union, in the course of which a member of the building staff politely inquired whether a series of steel gates that had been installed in major corridors after the October sit-in were in conformity with the fire regulations. Robbins explained that the gates were there to protect school property against various dangers, including sit-ins. At the time of the meeting, the gates had been installed for several months and had evoked little interest. Now, in the setting of Robbins addressing the increasingly politicized Student Union, and with his acknowledgment of the gates as a means for controlling political activity, a new issue suddenly blew up—and it was infinitely more powerful than the abstract issue of Rhodesia. "Tear down the gates" became a call that readily aroused student support. Director Adams responded by declaring that the gates would stay. On 23 January, the Student Union voted, 365 to 332, against the gates but also for negotiating their removal. Adams insisted they would stay. The following day, the issue was taken up again by the Student Union, and it was voted, 282 to 231, with 68 abstentions, to tear them down; this the students immediately went out and did with axes and crowbars. Thirty-six were arrested, and proceedings leading to dismissal were started against three faculty members—one of whom was charged with simply commenting approvingly on the removal of the

NEWS IN BRIEF

• **MAYER NAMED NUTRITION ADVISER:** President Nixon has named Harvard University nutritionist Jean Mayer as his special consultant on nutrition. Mayer, who has frequently criticized the government for insufficient support of antihunger programs, will head the White House Conference on food, nutrition, and health in October.

• **SEVERE DAMAGE TO AEC PLANT IN COLORADO:** Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) officials say that the fire on 11 May at the AEC nuclear weapons production installation at Rocky Flats, Colorado, is the most costly single accident in the AEC's history. Damage to the AEC's plutonium production plant, located northwest of Denver about 12 miles from the University of Colorado campus, is estimated at $40 to $50 million, excluding the cost of reprocessing plutonium which escaped during the fire. Two nuclear weapons production buildings were contaminated by radioactive materials during the fire and AEC officials estimate that it will be at least a year before the facility will be in full operation again. The Rocky Flats facility is owned by the AEC and operated by the Dow Chemical Company. Possible causes of the fire are being investigated by a special AEC committee.

• **MENINGITIS VACCINE DEVELOPED BY ARMY:** A vaccine that may prevent spinal meningitis, an infectious bacterial disease which has been a particular problem in military camps, has been developed after about 6 years of research at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington. Malcolm S. Artenstein, director of the project, says the vaccine, still in the experimental stages, may substantially reduce the number of persons carrying and transmitting the disease. He said that although the vaccine produces antibodies to the disease, it must be administered before exposure to the disease. The Army plans broad experimental use of the vaccine on Army volunteers. The vaccine is not expected to be available for public use for at least 2 years. The number of cases of spinal meningitis is estimated annually at about 200 to 500 among military recruits and about 3000 among civilians.

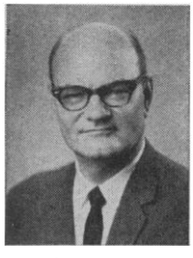
gates after they were down. Adams shut the school, and it remained shut from 24 January to 19 February. The school then obtained injunctions against 13 persons, most of them students, and from then to the end of the school term, LSE was continually in turmoil of one sort or another. Proceedings to renew the injunctions and to jail some of the students evoked further student demonstrations, which in turn led to new arrests and still further demonstrations. When the new term opened toward the end of April, the Student Union voted, 468 to 42, to boycott classes. The faculty, ever more convinced of the ineptitude of the administration, but particularly incensed by the dismissal of three of its number, adopted a resolution, 100 to 24, with 14 abstentions, calling upon the University of London to review the dismissals. This recommendation has been accepted, and the Student Union in turn agreed to suspend its boycott. However, questioned as to whether he would recommend amnesty for the three faculty members, one of whom apparently played a leading role in egging on the students to take down the gates, Adams replied, "Should I let bygones be bygones? I think it would be the act of a coward for me to let down my colleagues, and a public confession that we were not prepared to defend academic freedom. . . ."

As the term ended, the LSE administration was drafting new codes of student and faculty behavior, amidst reports that the intention is to provide a framework that will really enable the authorities to crack down hard and fast on troublemakers.

At the same time, the administration has made a direct offer to include student representatives on the disciplinary board and also indicates it would negotiate student membership on the Standing Committee. But, at this late date, it is difficult to find anyone who believes that the next academic year will be a peaceful one at the London School of Economics.

—D. S. GREENBERG

APPOINTMENTS



R. K. Huitt

S. Borowitz

Ralph K. Huitt, professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin, to executive director of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. . . . **Sidney Borowitz**, acting head of the department of physics at the New York University, to dean of the NYU College of Arts and Science. . . . **Malcolm L. Peterson**, associate professor of medicine at Washington University School of Medicine, to director of the Health Services Research and Development Center at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. . . . **B. S. Chandrasekhar**, professor of physics at Case Western Reserve University, to dean of science at that university. . . . **Arthur E. Maxwell**, associate director of research of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, elevated to director of research of the institution. . . . **Hla Shwe**, associate professor of physics at Ripon College, Wisconsin, to professor and chairman of the physics department at East Stroudsburg State College, Pennsylvania. . . . **Irwin W. Pollack**, psychiatrist-in-chief at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, to clinical director of the community mental health center of the Rutgers Psychiatric Institute. . . . **Israel Light**, chief of the Educational Program Development Branch in the division of Allied Health Manpower of the National Institutes of Health, to dean of the School of Related Health Sciences at Chicago Medical School. . . . **Vincent T. Oliverio**, head of the biochemical pharmacology section of the National Cancer Institute, to chief of the Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology at NCI. . . . **Edmund F. Ackell**, dean of the College of Dentistry at the University of Florida, to provost for health affairs at the university. . . . **Eric B. Ward**, former president of Ward-Davis Associates, to executive secretary of the Federal Council of the Office of Science and Technology, Executive Office of the President. . . . **Abraham T. K. Crockett**, head of the department of urology at Harbor General Hospital, to professor and chairman of the division of urology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

RECENT DEATHS

Hadley Cantril, 62; former chairman of the psychology department at Princeton University; 28 May.

Lucy Chamberlain, 75; retired chairman of the department of sociology and anthropology at New York University's Washington Square College; 22 May.

Adam Eberle, 80; retired general medical superintendent of New York City hospitals; 23 May.

Frank Gray, 81; retired physicist with Bell Telephone Laboratories; 23 May.

Frank M. Hand, 69; chief orthopedic surgeon at the Kiwanis Crippled Children's Clinic, Washington, D.C.; 3 May.

Charles P. Huttrer, 63; special assistant to the director of the Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health; 30 May.

William H. Innes, 55; Army nuclear physicist with the Advanced Research Projects Agency; 2 June.

W. Bruce Johnson, 39; director of the electrical sciences and applied physics division of the engineering school of Case Western Reserve University; 5 May.

Catherine Macfarlane, 92; research professor and professor of gynecology, Woman's Medical College; 27 May.

Knox E. Miller, 82; retired medical director with U.S. Public Health Service; 18 May.

Paul Neal, 43; analytical chemist with the Food and Drug Administration; 25 May.

Hugh C. Neale, 44; retired chief engineer of the atomics division of American Machine and Foundry Company; 30 April.

Joel N. Novick, 66; chief otolaryngologist at Washington Hospital Center and Howard University Medical School; 2 June.

Hermann H. Remmers, 76; professor emeritus of psychology and education at Purdue University; 11 March.

Jack Weinstock, 62; urologist and medical director of the United States Life Insurance Company; 23 May.

Hugh B. Wilcox, 77; retired professor of mathematics and analytical mechanics, University of Minnesota; 22 April.

Harry N. Wright, 87; former president of the College of the City of New York; 4 May.

Stanley P. Young, 79; retired biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 15 May.