

Report From the San Francisco SDS Regional Office

The Regional Office serves as a co-ordination and communication center for a significant amount of radical activity north of L.A. There are about five people working full time as office staff members. The office sends staff members to campuses and other groups who want to hear from SDS people. People also drop into the office for general information on SDS and for advice on how to implement organizing and educational projects. There is an electric mimeograph machine in the office which prints a biweekly regional newsletter, leaflets and flyers needed by Bay Area SDS people, papers, and bibliographies. A small room is set aside for a library which is being formed there. Little time has been spent fund raising because all the office staff has their own means of support. However, the office is in debt and hopefully some effective fund raising will take place.

A couple of programs, draft counseling and the SDS New School, are directed directly out of the office. A conscientious objector with 1-0 draft status has been giving advice and plans to hold a meeting of people who have applied and who are going to apply for the 1-0 classification. The New School is composed of three classes: Agencies of Social Change; Marx and Freud; and, Processes of History, a course on revolutions.

On the campuses SDS has grown tremendously this semester as a response to the war in Vietnam and because the SDS Regional Office is something to which campus radicals can relate.

At S.F. State College some members of SDS are looking for a flat to serve as an office for a free student union. The union will deal with the problems students have as citizens living in off-campus areas: police, rents, the draft; and, it will also be concerned with on campus problems: irrelevant courses, poorly paid faculty, administrative restrictions.

Across the bay the West Oakland ERAP project is dead. However, several SDS people from the Cal Berkeley chapter are leaders of successful freedom schools in Oakland. There is also some work being done with high school students around the issue of Vietnam. The Student Committee for Agricultural Labor(SCAL) will probably become part of Berkeley SDS. This group has done significant research and organizing in the Valley, and has worked in the Bay Area to materially support the grape strikers. On the campus, although meetings have drawn 150 or so students, SDS has failed to significantly involve these students in radical activity. The chapter recently decided to institute study groups to read, discuss, and think about movements for social change and how they can be successful. This is in part a response to the Berkeley VDC and to the fact that it will probably cease to exist in the near future. Berkeley SDS is asking how it can change the single issue, crises oriented ad hoc-ism of the FSM and VDC into an on going movement for social change.

There are also chapters on the State Colleges of Hayward, Sacramento, and San Jose.

The Sacramento State chapter and SDS people from the Davis VDC met with some people from Berkeley and the Regional Office last week-end(Dec. 11-12). At Davis there had been some success in talking to groups of students in the dorms about the war in Vietnam and its causes and ramifications. There has also been some thought of starting an ERAP project there.

In Chico an assistant professor who works with the Chico State College SDS chapter was tried and convicted because he used profanity in a speech at an anti Vietnam war rally.

In Washington and Oregon there are some stirrings, but the potential of that region is still mostly potential which could use a regional office with full time staff. Reed is quiet, but a couple of people are working full time in Portland against the war. There are several somewhat active SDS chapters on other campuses in Washington and Oregon.