

Jim Williams, SSOC/SDS]

The Goldwater phenomenon continues its spread across the American body politic, causing concern for American liberals, radicals, and decent people generally. In every community, new strength is being shown by the Goldwater forces.

Since the San Francisco convention, the two following major trends have become discernible:

1) Public sentiment is obviously swinging toward Goldwater at an unpredicted rate. Before the convention the Gallup poll showed that Goldwater had only 20% of the public behind him, whereas Johnson had the support of about 73% of the nation. In the very short space of three weeks after the convention, a similar poll showed Goldwater's support had jumped to 39%. Of course, much of this increase was based on pure-and-simple party loyalty --- but note that at this point his support had doubled. Goldwater has also made terrific gains in the South which are still hard to estimate simply because of their immensity. The abdication of George Wallace from the presidential race has boosted Goldwater's chances in the South tremendously, and it is safe to say that he will carry most of the South in November. While Wallace appalled liberals by capturing 30-40% of the vote in his northern primary challenges, it is important to realize that Wallace -- in the South -- would actually have won many of the primary elections. The transfer of the Wallace bloc is, then, critical to a Southern Goldwater victory. Recent events in the North -- e.g., the riots in Rochester, Harlem, Chicago, and Jersey -- will only serve to increase the intensity of the "white backlash" in these states and will help Goldwater in terms of new cadre and money as well as votes.

2) Goldwater's capture of the Republican party machinery and the victory of his ideology are complete, and he is now engaged in a mopping-up process of consolidation. The conditions set by the Wallace forces for their support of Goldwater are alleged to be veto over the appointment of the Attorney General and the barring of civil rights leaders from the White House. Even the Negro defection from the party, which was expected, has not been as total as was previously thought (even in Louisville, the Negro Republican bureaucracy is supporting Goldwater.) The apparent paucity of defections of Republican liberals and moderates throughout the rest of the country has not indicated a major trend toward realignment in the national sense. (Even Lindsay, one of the most forceful liberal Republicans, has yet to take a strong stand against Goldwaterism).

Thus, the Republican bureaucracy has remained intact in Goldwater's hands and Goldwater has moved to consolidate his control over it by the appointment of key rightists to important positions. It is important to note here the contempt with which Goldwater has been able to treat the bureaucracy and the lack of substantive organizational or ideological concessions to the liberal or moderate elements. The attitude of the larger sections of the party has been to go along with their defeat; even Scranton, who had called Goldwater a "dangerous man," capitulated without a struggle or a whimper.

Most state delegations were infiltrated by Goldwater supporters and members of the John Birch Society, and showed the results of the intensive spadework done by the right within the party. Observers have point-

ed that the Texas and California delegations were prime examples of rightist control. California's 86-man delegation was led by William F. Knowland, staunch McCarthyite ex-Senator, and Los Angeles sheriff Peter Pitchess, a former FBI agent. According to the New York Times of July 23, there were "between 12 and 24" hard-core reactionaries among the rank-and-file, including Mrs. Patrick Frawley, wife of the Schick corporation head who is a backer of Fred Schwartz's Christian Anti-Communist Crusade. About 12 delegates were wealthy corporation figures who represented a large section of California's economy; about 45 were small businessmen and professional people. There were no Negroes, Jews, or Mexicans in the delegation, despite the fact that these comprise approximately 25% of California's population.

In Texas, the Birchers take open credit for capturing the party for the ultra-right. Many former Johnson backers -- such as Robert Kleberg, president of the famous King Ranch -- now support Goldwater's treasury. In Kentucky, the Birch Society and its front, the United Association of Constitutional Conservatives, made tremendous strides and captured the Kentucky delegation. (This is also the case in local and state politics, the 3rd Congressional District Republican incumbent, M.G. Snyder, from Louisville, being one of the few members of Congress to the right of Goldwater, and Louis Nunn, defeated gubernatorial candidate, also is a staunch Goldwaterite.) The list of Goldwater's national contributors is also impressive, and puts the lie to the myth of "Eastern money" being necessary for victory. Oil-magnate H. Jack Porter of Houston, Texas put it this way:

"Because population and political power has shifted, financial power goes along with this shift; for the first time the West and Southwest will contribute a major share of the candidates' campaign funds, and the party will not have to depend on Eastern funds."

Goldwater's brain trust is also composed of the ultra-right; Stephan T. Possony, Gottfried Haberler, and Edward Teller are representative of the nature of his advisors. National Review staffers Russell Kirk, L. Brent Bozell, and William F. Buckley are also prominent in the speech-writing and publicity end of his campaign, as is former writer for the anti-semitic American Mercury Karl Hess (recently labelled as Goldwater's Sorensen by Murray Kempton, Hess coined those famous acceptance speech lines about extremism.)

Also apparent in every community is the fact that the "lunatic fringe" rightists are increasing their activities and have, in many areas, acquired a mantle of respectability and integration with the Republican organization which was formerly veiled at best, and unacknowledged at worst. At a recent meeting in Louisville, Rightist Billy James Hargis encouraged followers that they could now "stand up and be counted" for Goldwater was "their" man. For once, he pointed out, the rightist viewpoint must be given "equal time in the left press." Except for the kookiest elements, such as the Nazis and the National States Rights Party, the right is united behind Goldwater, with all the significance of cadre influx that will have.



I point specifically to the influx of cadre that is the result of Goldwater's candidacy. This is the most important contribution of the far right -- that is, persons who will give much of their time and energy performing the countless organizational tasks and administrative work. Rightist housewives will be manning desks and the little old ladies in tennis shoes will be out ringing doorbells. The reatest or -ganizational weakness of the Republican Party has been its lack of such cadre in the past. At this point, the right is much better organized and has more devoted cadre than does the left or the liberal center.

Reaction is on the march in America today. How it developed and why is an important question for the left.

THE BASE FOR REACTION: WHAT IS GOLDWATER'S CONSTITUENCY AND HOW DID IT GET THAT WAY ?

We have always been aware of a reactionary strand in the thread of American politics, and are well aware of its history: the Know-nothings, the KKK, and other nativist movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and the degeneration of populism during this period which hardened into outright racism. We are also familiar with peculiarly 20th century examples: the Bundists, Columbians, and the Coughlinites of the '30's, the Jenners and McCarthys that followed them, right up to the slick, modern reaction of today. American reaction has not previously followed the lead of older European reaction but rather has hewn to its own meagre tradition. In the post-war period, though, the right seems to have borrowed more from the essence of Occidental reaction. The most important thing about reaction in American today is that it has achieved an organizational sophistication which it never previsously had.

Historically in this century, reaction and facism have been born out of an economic and political crisis in which the industrial elements and the middle class have felt themselves to be particularly threatened or hurt. In Germany and Italy, it was largely the middle class which felt itself economically threatened. Facism was geared, then, to the needs of a frightened middle-class as distinguished from traditional European reaction, which was geared to the needs of the old aristocratic elements. The damands of facism were an umbrella under which were gathered many of the middle class demands and those of the lumpenproletariat. Facism was brought to power by the middle class elements. It did, however, devour its children in a short period, revealing that the middle class had been used -- i.e., its social dynamic had been directed to accomplish the aims of monopoly capital.

America knows this tradition also. Native leaders such as William Pelley and, to some extent, Townsend and Huey Long, owed their political careers to the frenzy of a disestablished middle class.

Yet, we are not in a period of severe economic crisis now. We are in an era where profits are up and stable, and the threat of de-

pression is non-existent. We are neither faced with revolution at home or economic collapse. What, then, is the valid explanation of the rise of reaction among the middle class?

The history of the middle class in the post-war period has been one of rapid growth, expansion, and consolidation. But, and this is a crucial point, the nature of the middle class has changed from the traditional sense.

Historically, the middle class in America were the shop-keepers and artisans -- i.e., people who had some fair degree of economic independence; the middle class also included farmers and a variety of other occupations. Today, the middle class is a different animal indeed -- that is to say, we have seen the replacement of the shopkeeper as the mainstay of the middle class by the modern professional man. While today's middle class retains the apparent status and trappings of the old middle class, its role in society has been sharply altered. The middle class has, in reality, lost its base of power in the society. In a nation of shopkeepers, each shopkeeper swings some economic weight, some "real" power, but in an economy increasingly dominated by monopoly and oligopoly, in which the middle class is now an employee rather than an independent agent, the middle class has lost its economic power and subsequently much of its political power. In a vulgar sense, one could speak of the "proletarianization" of the middle class. This has resulted in the New Right and the new forms of protest. As William A. Williams puts it:

The program of such protesting middle class people is reactionary. They retain the ideas and general outlook of the time when that class did enjoy a position in the property system that gave them power and influence. They are for more concerned, incidentally, with recovering their former ability to act upon their environment than they are worried about their own status. To this important degree, they understand their own situation better than the academics who write about a status revolution. But these middle class discontents want to restore the past and hence they are reactionary.

The pressures upon the middle class in America today are many. One can quickly note that the neat world of the middle class suburb is beset by many demons -- mortgages, bills, interest payments, status expenditures; in short, the middle class is suffering from a profound sense of economic insecurity. Although the middle class has not suffered the economic rout they experienced during the depression, it too is suffering from having won the war but not having tasted the fruits of victory. It is full of fear -- fear that automation will next rid itself of the middleman as it is already depopulating the factories of blue collars; fear that it will be "outvoted" in the United Nations by all the "under-developed" nations that "it" is supporting; fear that its favored place in white, Protestant America is being un-

that Goldwater has the potential for gaining the support of the middle class. This is why the left still has a chance for an alliance with the middle class if it will speak to the very real needs of that class.

The menace of the Goldwater movement is not that it is made up of "kooks;" on the contrary, the group that showed up at San Francisco was well-heeled, and solidly middle class. As I. F. Stone has said:

This Mr. Conservative of 1964 is quite different from Taft, the Mr. Conservative of 1952. In foreign policy, Taft was an isolationist; he wanted to keep the country out of trouble. Goldwater, if not exactly an internationalist, is an ultra-nationalist who is ready to get into trouble anywhere. Taft fought NATO; Goldwater wants to strengthen it with nuclear weapons. Taft was what used to be called a Republican stand-patter with progressive fringes; Scranton was correct when declared several times in San Francisco that on such specific issues as labor, education, and housing, he was closer to Taft than to Goldwater. In the political spectrum, Goldwater is half-reactionary, half-rightist European style.

THE MEANING OF THE GOLDWATER CANDIDACY

As we have already pointed out, the Goldwater campaign is aligning all sorts of previously splintered and often opposed groups of rightists around a single national program. The factional differences between a Thruston Morton and a Robert Welch have become almost meaningless in the new context. While the Birch Society was merely an "out" fringe group yesterday, today it is a partner in an important political alliance.

The Arizonan's candidacy will also enable the right to further rationalize its organizational forms, and we will witness the growing merger of much of the right, which will have respectability and legitimacy to a previously unknown degree. It will also guarantee rightist control of the Republican party, particularly in local politics.

Goldwater's campaign also raises the danger that the dialogue already hideously far to the right on the political spectrum will shift even further right, and will center around topics chosen by the ultras -- that is, we will debate how to beat communism rather than how to end poverty, etc.

Other dangers are that the left may seriously continue to underestimate Goldwater and fail to see the deep social ramifications of his movement. It is also possible that Goldwater may capture some of our constituency in the wake of the white backlash -- the poor whites in the South, lower middle class people on fixed incomes, etc.

There is also the real possibility that Goldwater may win. Has anyone really considered what that would mean? Questions do arise which ask what he could really do. Some say that Goldwater would be severely

determined by the Negro revolution and minority groups; fear of Russian superiority; fear of spreading revolutions, etc. Important is the fear of the loss of identity as the old ways pass from the scene and new, modern but unfamiliar ones take their place. The middle class is becoming deeply alienated in a sense in which it has never been before. The middle class is economically dependent and politically atomized.

It is to this group that Goldwater most immediately appeals; he has a program designed to meet their needs and responsive to their plight. Goldwater's appeal, though, goes further than this. There are other elements in the society for which he has an attraction.

One of these elements is a section of the working class, particularly that element that supported George Wallace (e.g., the Gary, Ind. steelworkers.) All manner of skilled workers, crafts and building trades feel pressure from two sides. On one hand they are pressured by increasing automation and the loss of their jobs which would probably mean that they would never work again. On the other hand, the Negro demand for fair employment is a threat in an already strained situation this has resulted in the "white backlash" and a new racism where none had previously had a hold. Cynicism is apparent among many workers who frankly distrust Johnson and his administration.

A separate category is really an umbrella -- the racist vote. This is composed of the sections of the middle and working classes mentioned previously, plus other less-defined strata. There is no room for doubt in the minds of any of the American racists: Goldwater is their man. Every racist element, from the Klu Klux Klan to the Citizens Councils, has actively endorsed him; every manifestation of the "white backlash" will vote Goldwater. Few radicals and liberals have really grasped the depth of racism in the American psyche, and only the recent northern demonstrations have revealed just how deep that sentiment is.

The significance of Goldwater's movement is that, as I stated earlier, it is an umbrella under which gather many scattered and diverse elements: the Negro-haters, the anti-semites, the anti-laborites, the anti-communists, the nationalists, the states' righters, and all the various grippers of the middle class. Facism is also an umbrella. Facism arms and unites the scattered masses. Out of human dust it organizes combat detachments; it gives the middle class the illusion of being an independent force.

What is the size of this constituency? What is its force? The year of bragging about a "nation of the middle class," comes back to choke us. Potentially, Goldwater's base is the whole middle class, a major element in our society; potentially, his base is with the skilled workers and the lumpenproletariat. Potentially, then, Goldwater has the base for victory.

Radicals have always put forth the shibboleth that the middle class cannot play an independent political role -- that is, it must unite, either with the haute bourgeoisie or with the working class -- and that it really makes the key to either side's victory. That is why one saw

limited and unable to carry out his program, and that what we would face would be another round of Eisenhowerism rather than reactionary terror. Some speak in terms of concentration camps and dictatorship. Neither of these is quite true but the fact remains that his victory would be an unparalleled disaster with real dangers to all of us and to civilization as we know it.

It must be pointed out that the loss of votes in the November election at the polls won't be half as important to Goldwater as the retention of the tight, disciplined, right organization. There is no point in consoling ourselves that Goldwater will probably be defeated at the polls. An electoral defeat will not rid us of the organization -- the Birchers, and the other ultras -- that made it possible for the right to capture the Republican Party, and is already bracing itself for another battle. Just as the Dixiecrats in the Democratic Party continue to arm themselves, with or without Federal aid, to fight the unarmed civil rights workers, so the Birchites in the North become the polarizing force for reaction. The significance of the Goldwater phenomenon will outlast the November election.

THE RESPONSE OF THE LEFT

For some time now, we have heard about the need for a coalition of Negro, labor, and liberal forces from such persons as Walter Reuther and Bayard Rustin. This call is based on a growing realization that a new strategic political regrouping is necessary to defeat the growing ultra-right, and to implement the national programs of full and fair employment, adequate housing, good schools, and so forth that we are all agreed upon as being minimally necessary for a solution of the social ills which now plague us. Rustin and most of the Negro leadership now realize that a political alliance with liberal groups is necessary if the civil rights revolution is to continue. Reuther and most of the labor movement realize that their base is not big enough to prevent anti-labor legislation from passing; nor is it large enough to pass the program for liberal reform which labor favors. Liberals, particularly white collar suburbanites, feel politically isolated and atomized, and realize that their chances for continued liberal and moderate programs lies in an alliance with new left forces.

We have, then, the need for a realignment of our party system and the development of a new political coalition. This coalition must include the above-mentioned groups, as well as expanding to include new groupings which have no political voice. This is largely the element that we call "the other America," the urban and rural poor, the Negro ghettos, etc. Unfortunately, the traditional Democratic and labor elements are unable to reach these new, and needed constituencies. The Economic Research and Action Project of the Students for a Democratic Society is now making an attempt to reach these elements and certainly will make an effort to defeat Goldwater in the ghettos. It is not likely, though, that this will represent a significant force simply because of the time factor, and the fact that the indigenous organizations of the poor are not developed enough to carry out this task at present.

What are the areas where students can be most effective in the shortest amount of time? How can one prevent the Democratic Party from moving right?

The Democratic Party and the labor movement's political arm (the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education, COPE and the Teamster's Democratic-Republican-Independent Voter Education, DRIVE) are not highly skilled at dealing with reaction in a political sense, or in handling the challenges of the right in such a way as to prevent the political dialogue from moving to the right. Liberals and radicals do have more of this knowledge and the necessary skills at hand for this job and can fill some very real needs in the coming campaign.

Student activity in the coming election can take several forms.

Registration of students. Students at large universities, and in university cities (e.g. Boston) might concentrate on turning out the graduate student vote. This means first, attempting to get grad students in the area where the university is located to register. There are often local restrictions on this written into the election law in order to prevent a concentration of liberal voting strength from developing around the universities. This is a good year to challenge such restrictions in the courts, particularly in areas that are controlled by Democrats who may look more favorably on the student vote during the campaign. Contact the local American Civil Liberties Union, Americans for Democratic Action, or the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education for help in initiating such an action. Students who register should also enroll in order to be able to vote in future primary elections.

It is impossible to register older students in some instances; then, a go home and register this weekend campaign can be conducted and followed up with an absentee ballot campaign. In some states it is possible to register by mail. Groups in need of specific information on registration laws in their state can contact the League for Women Voters, the national or state Democratic Committee, as well as the local board of elections and the local COPE. SDS is also able to provide this information.

Registration and campaign work in the community. Groups at smaller colleges where there is no risk of thousands of graduate students being lost can turn their attention to the community around the school and join with local organizations. In many cities the AFL-CIO COPE is an important group to work with. It is important because it is critical that labor make a massive turnout against Goldwater, and that defection among racist workers must be fought or counter-balanced. Labor needs a 100% turnout in this election, and this will take work. COPE is also important because it is the most liberal organization in the Democratic camp with the most power. This means that if COPE handles itself in the right way much of the tendency of Democrats to move right will be checked. COPE has this power. Another reason for working with COPE is that it will be the easiest group for students to relate to in the short amount of time that we have. COPE is desperately working to get people involved at all levels of political work. This includes voter

registration, precinct work, and education programs against the ultra-right. Students have already cooperated with COPE in Louisville, have developed a program and campaign against rightist ultras.

The local COPE office is located generally in the offices of the city central labor council where you are. A glance at the telephone directory will provide contacts. If no central labor body exists, contact an individual union and they will help give direction.

Other critical areas to which students can also relate, though not as well, are middle class people and ethnic groups such as Polish, Czech, and Italian associations, etc. These are areas which feel the white backlash very strongly, and which have been traditionally Democratic; here, this year, there is a strong danger of defection. What particular forms this work should take is still in doubt. You could investigate this by visiting local ethnic group clubs and seeing what the situation is. Quite possibly you could begin work among the middle class by forming a Volunteers to Defeat Goldwater committee of some sort which would engage in propaganda work in the middle class communities. COPE could also be contacted to work in these ways.

On campus there will be a raging debate about the issues. Organizations of the right, such as the Young Americans for Freedom and Youth for Goldwater clubs, will actively involve the student community in discussion and rightist activity. This also is a battleground for liberals, but one shouldn't let campus polemics deter work in the communities where the real battle will be won or lost.

ONE FINAL WORD FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIKE JOHNSON

Many persons who are opposed to Goldwater are not particularly enamored of Johnson. They may be radicals who feel that Johnson is insincere about his programs, or they may be moderates who feel that Johnson is moving too fast. Whatever their disagreements, it would be silly if they would rather see Goldwater win by virtue of their inaction. This must be emphasized that Goldwater's defeat is the issue. This is the central idea of the campaign, not the defense of Johnson or the criticism of Johnson. One can work against Goldwater without necessarily working for Johnson in a way that would compromise one's particular morals if that is the case. Yet, one should point out that the Democratic program this election is the best program which the Democrats have ever put forth. Perhaps the "New Society" isn't on the agenda this election -- but can one afford to disdain a step in the right direction?

Also available from SDS:

"Goldwater: The Public Record," compiled by Doug Ireland and Steve Max
"Goldwater and the White Backlash," by Thomas Kahn

registration, precinct work, and education programs against the ultra-right. Students have already cooperated with COPE in Louisville, have developed a program and campaign against rightist ultras.

The local COPE office is located generally in the offices of the city central labor council where you are. A glance at the telephone directory will provide contacts. If no central labor body exists, contact an individual union and they will help give direction.

Other critical areas to which students can also relate, though not as well, are middle class people and ethnic groups such as Polish, Czech, and Italian associations, etc. These are areas which feel the white backlash very strongly, and which have been traditionally Democratic; here, this year, there is a strong danger of defection. What particular forms this work should take is still in doubt. You could investigate this by visiting local ethnic group clubs and seeing what the situation is. Quite possibly you could begin work among the middle class by forming a Volunteers to Defeat Goldwater committee of some sort which would engage in propaganda work in the middle class communities. COPE could also be contacted to work in these ways.

On campus there will be a raging debate about the issues. Organizations of the right, such as the Young Americans for Freedom and Youth for Goldwater clubs, will actively involve the student community in discussion and rightist activity. This also is a battleground for liberals, but one shouldn't let campus polemics deter work in the communities where the real battle will be won or lost.

ONE FINAL WORD FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIKE JOHNSON

Many persons who are opposed to Goldwater are not particularly enamored of Johnson. They may be radicals who feel that Johnson is insincere about his programs, or they may be moderates who feel that Johnson is moving too fast. Whatever their disagreements, it would be silly if they would rather see Goldwater win by virtue of their inaction. This must be emphasized that Goldwater's defeat is the issue. This is the central idea of the campaign, not the defense of Johnson or the criticism of Johnson. One can work against Goldwater without necessarily working for Johnson in a way that would compromise one's particular morals if that is the case. Yet, one should point out that the Democratic program this election is the best program which the Democrats have ever put forth. Perhaps the "New Society" isn't on the agenda this election -- but can one afford to disdain a step in the right direction?

Also available from SDS:

"Goldwater: The Public Record," compiled by Doug Ireland and Steve Max
"Goldwater and the White Backlash," by Thomas Kahn