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In every country the militants are a small minority, but a minority able to weave a strand of vague, inchoate resentments into fulminant protest. The leaders of protest have learned that there is much to protest about. The reasons for this go beyond the revolution in communications or mere leadership techniques. They have to do with the gulf between society's institutions and the people those institutions are designed to serve. Next to the surface almost everywhere are complaints which grow out of the conditions of student life and a demand for university reform. Poor administration-faculty-student relations, inadequate facilities, outmoded curricula, bureaucratic licensing requirements, "sudden death" examinations for the purpose of reducing swollen enrollments--all provide fuel for discontent.

And there are issues which grow out of the image which students have of society--its impersonality, bureaucracy, and the ponderousness of its political dynamics. The real activists view the university as only a proximate cause, the foe close at hand. For them, the real enemy is distant from the scene. It is society organized for efficiency at the expense of the individual, a treadmill that destroys initiative and traps the unwary.

In an era of global stalemate, they find the slogans of the Cold War singularly unconvincing, the resurgence of the 19th Century nation-state in De Gaulle's Fifth Republic anachronistic, and the participation of ruling and opposition parties in coalition governments which sometimes have the parliamentary support of Communists as proof that latter-day politics are a charade.

These attitudes, particularly in Europe, are a consequence of the failure of social and political institutions to accommodate themselves to the remarkable economic strides of the postwar period, the absence of compelling ideological issues, such as those embodied in the 1930s in the Spanish Civil War, and the diminution everywhere of moral authority. Many political parties--for example, the Socialists in Italy, France and Germany, the Anti-Revolutionary

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Party in the Netherlands, the Republicans and Monarchists in Italy, the Communists in most places--no longer are issue-oriented or responsive to the needs of the constituencies they purport to represent. A younger generation finds government bureaucracy--especially in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands--antiquated, cumbersome, and in the hands of a generation that came to power twenty-five years ago and remains committed more to preserving its authority than to utilizing political power to renovate society.

French students bitterly criticize De Gaulle's "arbitrariness," his fascination with nuclear armaments at the expense of badly needed public works, his disregard of public opinion, and the manner in which he stages periodic elections to legitimize his "mandate" and perpetuate what they consider to be one-man rule. And they are no more attracted to De Gaulle's pretensions to national glory, as witness Daniél Cohn-Bendit's rejection in March 1968 of "national flags and frontiers."

Few single issues can impel large numbers of students to demonstrate, although the role of the United States in world affairs, particularly US involvement in Vietnam, is most evocative. It is especially so in the United States where students who are critical of American policy and who regard Selective Service as a means for quashing dissent are



ANTI-U.S. DEMONSTRATION IN PARIS, 7 APRIL 1967

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distressed by the prospect of being coerced into supporting physically a course of action to which they object on moral grounds.

Abroad, local US involvement and the alleged role of the Central Intelligence Agency provide a backdrop against which to mount a protest over the Vietnam war--the first major conflict in the lifetime of the dissenters. Opposition to American involvement in Southeast Asia and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is fueled in Germany, for example, by the Kiesinger government's advocacy of the so-called Emergency Laws and the distrust which many students have of government by coalition. Egyptian students, hypersensitive to the appeals of Arab nationalism, see American participation in a "Zionist conspiracy" aimed at establishing Israeli hegemony in the Middle East and blame the rout of Arab troops by the Israelis in June 1967 on US aid. In Argentina and Brazil students take to the streets against unpopular military regimes which they are convinced are maintained in power through US support. In Panama and Mexico they do so out of resentment over malfeasance or corruption of one-party rule--but always against a backdrop of US involvement.

In Communist countries, anti-American demonstrations can be deceptive; they are hardly a valid manifestation of student dissidence. Anomie nevertheless exists. Russian students resent the heavy-handed attempts of party leaders to bolster a myopic view of history. Dismayed by the revelation of Stalin's perfidy and the fall of Khrushchev, they have been quick to ask whether the Soviet system is at fault. They have turned back in upon themselves, according to most accounts, searching for a new value system grounded in individual worth. Polish and Yugoslav students, far from seeking to overturn the Communist state, hope to nudge it into fulfilling its avowed goals and have rioted against the obstructive tactics of party bureaucrats who bar the advance of a younger and better educated generation.

The children of a generally affluent generation--West or East--are less concerned with matters of economic livelihood or the challenge of building a revolutionary state on the ruins of autocratic rule than were their fathers and some, at least, are deeply engrossed in matters of life-style.

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The Student Explosion

As a general observation, student activism has emerged in times of political flux, when social values have been subject to challenge. The mid-1960s are such a time. The concern with which present-day activism is viewed by many is traceable, of course, to the violence which sometimes accompanies it. It also is due to puzzlement over the ultimate objectives of the protesters, who arise out of student bodies drawn from a far wider social base than before, and apprehension over the number of people who might become involved if protest truly is symptomatic of a deeply rooted malaise. There also is a vague feeling that the dissidents are likely to prove more effective with time and the opportunities afforded them by expanding communications.

Next to defense, education is the biggest business of the modern state--and the greatest need of the underdeveloped countries. University populations have more than doubled world-wide in ten years. There are 600,000 students in France and 350,000 in the United Kingdom. The Federal Republic, which has 370,000 in its universities, anticipates 500,000 by 1970. The USSR has 1,900,000 full-time university students. Japan, which like the United States has committed itself to the goal of mass education, has more than one million. There are more than six million Americans enrolled in colleges and universities.

This implosion has strained facilities in all but a few countries; the construction of buildings and the expansion of faculty have not kept pace. Neither has pedagogy made adequate use of modern invention. The situation is especially critical in the great metropolitan universities abroad, e.g., in Paris, Rome, Buenos Aires, Rio, where scores of thousands of students live for long periods of time in hostels and tenements under conditions approaching genuine hardship. At the Sorbonne, for example, more than 100,000 students live in congested quarters and study in obsolescent buildings designed for far fewer than half that number.

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More important than antiquated buildings and crowded living conditions, however, has been the failure of university authorities and faculties to modernize administrative techniques, reform curricula to meet the needs of an increasingly technological society, or improve teaching methods. Many courses have little if any relevance to contemporary life. Degree requirements dating back a hundred years force a student to commit to memory great bodies of irrelevant data.

Many of the new generation of European and Latin American and Asian students are from lower- or lower-middle-class families; they have first-hand knowledge of the socioeconomic ills of the day. They arrive at the university with high expectations and an acute appreciation of the type of course content which is likely to prove functional in their lives. All too often the reality does not live up to expectation.

There is an unmistakable correlation between academic discipline and propensity to protest. While it is somewhat misleading to generalize, students enrolled in professional schools, such as Law, Medicine, or Engineering, seldom are found among campus demonstrators. Where there are exceptions, as in parts of Latin America where medicine is regarded as a "liberal" undertaking, the explanation usually can be traced to the effects of emigration on a university faculty or to a significant event in the development of the particular school.

Professional and preprofessional students are vocationally oriented; they are obliged to master a clearly defined body of data and to submit to regular examinations designed to test their progressive skill in applying that data.

The protesters come from what are described as the Liberal Arts--precisely the faculties which have had to absorb the brunt of increasing enrollments and which are hard pressed to maintain any semblance of high standards.

Except in the United States, there is too little information to shed any light on the character, academic

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standing, etc., of most of the prominent student dissidents. Men like Rudi Dutschke or Karl Dietrich Wolff of West Berlin's Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund and Daniel Cohn-Bendit of Paris' 22 March Movement are reputed to be better than average students, with considerably more than average oratorical skills. Dutschke, for example, survived the taxing routine of undergraduate study in Germany and was admitted to advanced studies at the Free University.

There are ample data to support the view that some of the best of the students in US universities are involved in protest--and that they often are found at schools judged among the finest in the country. Kenneth Keniston, whose books The Uncommitted and The Young Radicals provide valuable insights into the student psyche, maintains that socially-directed protest requires a special cultural climate, that is, certain distinctive values and views about the effectiveness and the meaning of demonstration and about the wider society. Finally, some historical situations are especially conducive to protest. Keniston believes that there may exist what he terms a "protest-prone personality."

Summarizing a large number of academic studies published since 1965, Keniston notes that almost all student protesters in the United States are outstanding performers in the classroom; the higher the student's grade average, the more likely it is that he will become involved in any given political demonstration. Similarly, students come from families with liberal political values; a disproportionate number report that their parents hold views which are essentially similar to their own and accept or support their activities.

More than 1800 of the 2100 colleges and universities in the United States have reported no significant dissidence. The most serious outbreaks in the United States have occurred in a handful of universities--mostly in the so-called multiversities, which have reputations for arbitrary management, restive faculties, high drop out rates, etc., or in smaller schools where Negro students have sought to improve their lot.

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Open communications between administrators and students are critical to the maintenance of the kind of climate which operates against dissidence; so, too, are close student-faculty ties. A restive junior faculty proves an irritant and frequently provides protest with its initial impetus--especially when more senior faculty members abdicate teaching responsibilities.

In much of the world, the real executive authority is vested not in the university but in a government ministry; day-to-day control is entrusted to a political appointee. In Mexico, for example, university rectorship often seems a steppingstone to the governorship of a state. Given the prospect of election to high office in a one-party state at the close of a brief university career, no rector will prove too tolerant of dissident students. Elsewhere, in much of Europe, administrators have little sway over autonomous faculties; rectors are elected for brief terms from among senior faculty and are unlikely to oppose for long their past and future colleagues.

The tenured faculty long have been the autocrats of the academic world. Thanks to government-sponsored research and consultant contracts, private practice in medicine or law, political careers, and a plethora of other outside interests, they have become absentee autocrats. At the University of Rome, for example, a few senior professors appear in class only once or twice a term. None of the law faculty at Lille lives in Lille. Faculty members at Nanterre, outside Paris, commute from homes in the capital and seldom can be found anywhere outside the classroom. When present, many European faculty are unapproachable; they are mandarins. First- and second-year students in the Netherlands are prohibited by custom from addressing professors. The problem is further complicated when, as in the Federal Republic, senior professors because of economic interests or professional jealousy conspire to keep down the number of postgraduate students admitted to teaching positions, and candidates whose progress thus is stymied further swell already large enrollments.

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In the United States the compulsion to publish has stimulated increasingly narrow academic specialization and less and less meaningful classroom instruction. Actual teaching all too often is left to graduate assistants or is designed to further some line of esoteric research being pursued by a professor. As David Reisman and Christopher Jencks observe in the recently published The Academic Revolution, the inquisitive or sensitive students who hope to find a "visible relationship between knowledge and action, between the questions asked in the classroom and the lives they lead outside it" receive, instead, "pedantry and alienated erudition."

In the Middle East, Japan, Latin America, and even Europe violence has been a hallmark of student dissidence. Protest has grown more militant in the United States because those who speak for it are convinced that docility does not succeed, that over the past several years only violence or the threat of violence has won a respectful hearing. In short, they believe that society is structured in such a way that it can ignore or blunt peaceful protest, but that it abhors interruption and will pay attention to the noisy picket line or raucous demonstration that closes down a vital institution.

Student demonstrations are expressive, rather than directed; they are calculated to dramatize an issue and attract public notice. The demonstration itself becomes the focal point of the action.

This view of the efficacy of confrontation is rooted in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, where a few hundred activists employed sit-ins and other means to expose to public view regional customs which became an intolerable embarrassment to be remedied under the pressure generated by an aroused public opinion. It has been buttressed by the urban riots of recent years.

Rightly or not, the dissidents sense that latent support for their cause exists and can be galvanized by direct action, that their critical view of society is shared by a far larger number of their age group.

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In the US, the dissidents have looked without success to the residents of the ghetto; in France with momentary success they found the support of the young workers in the industrial complexes which ring Paris.

It is moot whether television or newsreel coverage of a demonstration or a riot can spark similar outbreaks elsewhere, although several commentators have remarked on the likelihood that a disturbance at Columbia, for example, may embolden dissident students at other schools and cause them to press for relief of their own grievances. French officials found no evidence of significant foreign involvement in the recent Paris riots--but they do cite what they describe as the "grapevine effect" which television coverage of earlier riots in New York and Berlin and other cities had on the mood of the students at Nanterre. It seems likely that the media, by their emphasis on violence, police intervention, etc., add to the intensity and duration of a disturbance. They also tend to evoke sympathy at least on the part of like-minded students elsewhere--sympathy which confirms the belief of the protesters in the probity of their cause.

A student in the US, France, Brazil, or Japan probably does identify with his peers in other countries and is more likely to share their values and feel that their problems are his. Because of the accessibility of foreign-language books and newspapers



UNIVERSITY PROTEST IN PARIS, 9 NOVEMBER 1967

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and the type of avant-garde art and films which are so popular in most university communities, there are few, if any, cultural impediments to this kind of identification. Moreover, today's students are highly mobile; they travel within their own countries and abroad, frequently enrolling for study at foreign universities. Many universities have a cosmopolitan character. In the academic year 1967-68, for example, there were 90,000 foreign students registered in American schools and 80,000 Americans studying abroad. In 1966, the last year for which cumulative totals are available, there were more than 100,000 students from the lesser developed countries enrolled in European or US universities. An estimated 10,000 were in the USSR in December 1967.

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