

Box 471 Cooper Station
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January 28, 1969

To All Organizers, NCers, and At-Largers

Dear Comrades,

As has been reported in The Militant and the Young Socialist, three student leaders in Berkeley, Peter Camejo, Paul Glusman, and Jack Bloom, face up to three years in jail and \$5,000 fine on "conspiracy" charges growing out of protests at the University of California in Berkeley. The demonstrations began over the refusal of the administration to grant credit for a course for which Eldridge Cleaver was to give guest lectures.

These three defendants were separated out from a total of 76 demonstrators who were arrested. While the others were charged with misdemeanors, Camejo, Glusman and Bloom were charged with "conspiracy to commit a misdemeanor," which is a felony. This is a clear case of political persecution, with the D.A. out to "get" prominent student activists.

This case is particularly important because the defendants face prison as a result of the fact that they were part of the leadership of a demonstration that happened to result, directly or indirectly, in illegal acts. This is a clear attack on the rights of free speech, advocacy, and association.

It is important that a national defense effort be organized. Through building a strong defense we can accomplish a dual purpose. First, and most importantly, we can keep these men out of jail by applying pressure on the government from a broad-based and influential defense committee. Secondly, we can educate others on how to build a legal defense campaign, and demonstrate that it is possible to win legal cases if they are conducted properly.

We do not propose a major campaign at this stage in the case outside of California. But important work can be done now. The facts about the case should be made known through campus and underground papers. The enclosed fact sheet can be used as the basis for news articles. Several key individuals in each area (professors, lawyers, artists, etc.) should be contacted to become sponsors of this case. Additional sponsor cards and fact sheets can be obtained from the Berkeley Defense Committee, 2158 Emerson St., Berkeley, California, 94705.

Comradely,

Larry Seigle

Larry Seigle, National
Organizational Secretary

BERKELEY STUDENTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Three students, Jack Bloom, Peter Camejo, and Paul Glusman, face up to three years imprisonment for a recent student sit-in at the University of California at Berkeley. The three were arbitrarily picked out from 198 arrestees in an attempt to victimize them for their leadership role in previous demonstrations.

FACT SHEET

1. On October 22, 1968 one hundred and twenty-two students sat in at Sproul Hall on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. They were protesting the refusal of the administration to grant credit for the student-initiated and faculty-approved course on racism, Social Analysis 193X with Eldridge Cleaver giving guest lectures. The sit-in was completely non-violent and non-disruptive. The students simply sat along the walls in the hallway as a moral gesture.

2. The administration brought police on campus and had all the students arrested. They were charged with trespassing and refusal to disperse. The District Attorney dropped the charge of refusal to disperse. All except six pleaded guilty to trespassing. They were fined \$125 each, and given suspended sentence of 30 days. The other six chose to plead not guilty and hold a jury trial.

3. In reaction to the arrests of October 22, students occupied Moses Hall the following day. All entrances to the building were barricaded. As in Sproul Hall, the sit-inners voted unanimously not to engage in any vandalism, destruction of University property or physically resist arrest. Seventy-six were arrested at 6 AM the morning of October 24. They were charged with disturbing the peace, malicious mischief, and trespassing. The D.A. dropped the charges of malicious mischief and disturbing the peace. The demonstrators pleaded guilty to trespassing and were given 10 day sentences, 80 additional days suspended and a restitution fine of 300 dollars each to cover damages and expenditures claimed by the University administration. Two chose to plead not guilty and have a jury trial. However, three others, Bloom, Camejo and Glusman were separated out for new charges.

4. The D.A. charged the above three with a felony: conspiracy to commit a misdemeanor which carries a maximum sentence of three years and a \$5,000 fine. The D.A.'s complaint specifies three overt acts. Jack Bloom and Paul Glusman are accused of speaking prior to the Moses Hall sit-in at Berkeley's famous free speech area, Sproul Plaza, and advocating "with the aid of loud-speaking equipment" that people move from that area to a "building on the campus of U.C. in Berkeley and physically occupy portions of that building." The accusation against Peter Camejo is that he did "meet with and did direct meetings of several other persons, in the building known as Moses Hall on the campus of the U.C. in Berkeley."

5. The implications of the use of a conspiracy felony in this kind of situation are quite serious. It endangers free speech as

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protected by the First Amendment. If these charges are upheld any future student demonstrations which may result in misdemeanors, such as disturbing the peace or violating parade or sound ordinances, can serve as grounds for felony indictments against those who advocated the demonstrations in speeches prior to the act. Such a precedent opens the way for vindictive and reactionary D.A.'s to single out leading student, GI or black protestors for heavy prison sentences by construing normal open public rallies and meetings as acts of conspiracy.

6. The conspiracy law was first used in a political context against trade union strikers. Recently it has re-appeared in political cases with the Oakland Stop-The-Draft-Week indictment of seven anti-war activists. It is also being used against Chicano students in Los Angeles and SDS members who violated an injunction against picketing the Herald-Examiner in Los Angeles. The latest attempt to use the law politically is the Moses Hall incident.

7. It is common knowledge in Berkeley legal circles that the local District Attorney J. Frank Coakley is out "to get" the three defendants and particularly out "to get" Bloom and Camejo for last summer's events on Telegraph Avenue.

8. All three have spoken in violation of bans on free speech to test them in the recent past. Camejo and others successfully had an ordinance against free speech ruled unconstitutional after an April 12th, 1966 rally. All three spoke at banned rallies in October of 1967 and in August of 1968. In both cases the authorities felt their bans too weak legally to make arrests. However, the U.C. administration suspended Camejo and Glusman for speaking at one of these rallies. Camejo was arrested at 3:30 AM and placed on \$5,000 bail for a speech he made during November of 1967. The warrant for Camejo's arrest stated "for good cause." Protests from ACLU and other attorneys forced Judge Brunn to drop the matter and free Camejo the very next day.

During the summer of 1968 a peaceful rally of 2,000 on Telegraph Avenue was attacked by 200 policemen which led to a week long and violent confrontation between the city authorities in Berkeley and the residents of the south campus area. The demonstrations ended July 4th when the City Council reversed its previous stand and permitted a political rally on Telegraph Avenue without police interference. The press featured Camejo and Bloom as leaders of the protest movement which embarrassed the city officialdom and the police department for their violations of constitutional liberties. The City Manager's report on the incidents admits that city officials sought to arrest Camejo but could find no legal premise to do so.

Jack Bloom, 26, is a leading member of both the Independent Socialist Club and AFT local 1570 at U.C. He is a doctoral student in sociology but has been suspended for the Moses Hall incident.

Paul Glusman, 21, was a history major until his dismissal from the University for Moses Hall. Glusman is a member of the Students for a Democratic Society.

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Peter Camejo, 28, was a history major until suspended. He is a leading spokesman for the Young Socialist Alliance and ran for mayor of Berkeley as a candidate of the Socialist Workers Party in 1967.

Their consistent fight for civil liberties and for the right to present their political views has made the three a target for the local D.A.'s office. Backed up by a red-baiting campaign in the local press directed against Camejo and Bloom for their socialist views and affiliations, the D.A. vindictively picked them out from the 198 arrested during the week of sit-ins.

9. Bloom, Camejo and Glusman were no different in their actions from the other Moses Hall arrestees. The prosecution of the three is clearly a political as well as legal act.

10. A defense committee has been established with the following three purposes:

1. To raise funds for all necessary legal expenditures.
2. To publicize the facts relating to the case.
3. To protest the victimization of the three defendants.

Although not necessarily in agreement with either the views or the tactics of the defendants, those sponsoring the committee feel that the three deserve the support of all those who wish to uphold civil liberties.

Berkeley Students Defense Committee
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