

The American Youth Movement of the 1960s-1980s: A Critical Analysis from The Perspective of William F. Buckley's Conservative Views

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Abstract. Back in the history of 1960-1980s America, youth movement is happening like a fire through America. The students are forming their own political party and organizations; they are doing protest in violent or unviolent ways. According to the historical papers, students and stuff like took over collage buildings and control hostages, doing radical speeches about the compulsory service in the Vietnam War which lets several Americans to die and bleed without a clear and main purpose in the deep jungle. The youth movement in 1960-1980 are a political, religious or social movement or agitation lead by youth and students aiming at reform or revolution of the society and policy or whatever they think needs change inside the U.S.A. Based on this, an American conservative intellectual of the 70's and 80's called William F. Buckley states his opinion on the Youth Movement happening in 1960-1980 America, and this paper will analysis the issue about this and provides the possible solutions.

Keywords: William F. Buckley, political party, organizations.

1. Introduction

In the statement from William F. Buckley, he criticized the youth movement completely from the start to the end saying a lot of nasty stuff to describe the youth movement as a failed joke and a shame of the youth generation in the 60's to 80's [1]. The statement from William F. Buckley was concurred and confirmed with evidence of many of the aspects he mentioned in this statement.

In 1964, the student protests erupted from University of California at Berkley and then quickly spread to the whole generation of youth and students around the country in America. The students occupied the administration building of University of California at Berkley with hostages [2]. They did this because students think the college is too conservative and they do not like it. The leader of Berkeley's Free Speech Movement (FSM), Mario Savio, compared the university to a machine and suggested the student to quote "Put bodies against the gears, against the wheels and machinery, and make it stop until we are free." Another quote from the Port Huron Statement, written by students' activists in 1962 (especially Tom Hayden): While two-thirds of mankind suffers undernourishment, our own upper classes revel amidst superfluous abundance. Also, in 1968, the Mobe and Yippies which is one of the branches in the New Left and youth movement state that they claim that they are going to put LSD in the city's water supply to show their contempt to the US political process at that time [3]. In 1962 the representative of the SDS, SNCC, CORE and the student peace union met in Port Huron and called on college students to change the political and social system, and to "liberate the poor, the non-whites and all enslaved by conformist" to encourage more youth to join the organization to fight for the better future of USA. From the start of the statement from William F. Buckley, the statement suggests that "These young slobs ceaselessly moaned about our broken society while living on their capitalist parents' dime, speaking with freedoms guaranteed in their crooked constitution." In these texts, the standpoint is basically clear. This text suggests that these protesting student are doing extremely violent act like occupying the collage administration buildings, taking hostages to confront the police and some other radical acts that are shamelessly wasting their parents who is a capitalist's money on their collage life to protest and call on the college students to say stuff for the crazy reform that in Buckley or other older generation's view is "anti-capitalism" and aggressive for capitalism in America and the American society that makes nothing change but a mess

at last. In this statement, Buckley also mentions that the students are speaking with freedom guaranteed in their crooked constitution. This statement is fair according to the Port Huron Statement written by student activists (especially Tom Hayden) and the fake statement from the Mobe and Yippies that they are going to put LSD in the city's water supply [4].

2. Analysis

During the big wave of youth movement in the USA, radicalism exploded among the US youth generation and students, thus leading to the formation of the New Left and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to form. These people along with the SNCC, CORE which is the organization formed because of the civil rights movement that fights for the benefits of black people, and the student peace union meet at Port Huron calling on the college student to change the political and social system and to liberate the poor, the non-whites and all enslaved by conformity. The movement of the new left and the establishment of the SDS was also inspired by the working-class radicals in the 1930s and the counterculture wave in this time detracted possible new left recruits and alienated potential sympathizers such as US Labors who might otherwise have supported the New Left's anti-capitalism. Furthermore, in the 1972 president election, in middle America some counterculture delegates youth even suggested to let the Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong to be McGovern's president competitor and the party are also aiming to equitable distribution of wealth and power which sound defiantly communist [5]. Back to the statement of Buckley, in the statement he mentions that the students and youth in this movements are quote glorifying foreign leaders who slaughtered their populace by the millions [6]. These acts by the youth demonstrated above in the youth movements by students or the New Left and SDS was seen by Buckley as the same as the "old left" which is something like an old communist force like Stalin or Mao who slaughtered their populace by the millions inside of America. In Buckley's view, the New Left and SDS is the same as the old school communist powers because these people support Mao for a candidate of the USA and are also inspired by the 1930 working-class radical in root. Furthermore, these people also openly state that they want equitable distribution of wealth and power which is sensitive to the people of the old generation who experienced the terrifying cold war communism in America [7]. All this stuff added together does sound a bit communist, especially for the older generations. The statement of equitable distribution of wealth and power from these youth and suggestion of advising Mao to be the competitor for the president election with McGovern also confirms the statement from Buckley that they are speaking with freedoms guaranteed in their crooked constitution. Which is basically speaking whatever they want and does not care about the result and impact of the society [8].

As the youth movement was going, students started to go crazier. A lot of the kids are on drugs, doing sex, especially the hippies are doing more sex and more hemp, LSD Drug (a synthetic drug that produced colorful hallucinations and inspired much psychedelic art and some rock music.) or other drugs like heroin openly compared to other generations in American history. Also, in 1967 Republican politician Ronald Reagan states that the youth movement protests can be summarized in three words: Sex, Drugs, Treason [9]. Furthermore, there was a professor in this period from Harvard University Dr Timothy Leary discovered a kind of hallucinogenic mushrooms on a visit to Mexico. Then he openly advocated the use of drugs for students in his Psychedelic Review to: Turn on, tune in drop out." He was fired finally by the university because of this. This stuff is significant because in the statement of Buckley that their drug fueled leaders performed pantomime politics that offered neither substance nor action, while their horde of followers didn't give a fart for policy, only unifying around the draw of adulterous lust and fading highs [10]. The statement here is clear with what it stands for. This part of the statement criticized the failure of youth movement and stating that it is neither substance nor action and it is inspired by drugs, sex and highs. Well, this statement is true based on what Regan said which is "the youth movement protests can be summarized in three words: Sex, Drugs, Treason. "At the same time, the situation of that professor openly advising their student to use drugs in his psychedelic review did show an overall situation in the American youth society

because even professors of the students start to suggest drugs openly. In China we have an old saying called Wei Ren Shi Biao which basically means the teachers are the model of students. If even the model of students starts to advise drugs, not to mention what will the student do and think about drugs in America at that time. However, the alliance with African Americans was uneasy, as demonstrated by divisions amongst the 2000 delegates at the National Conference for the New Politics (1967) in Chicago, who tried unsuccessfully to create a unifying political party. In this source and evidence, we can clearly see that the youth movement protesters did not success on substance and action because first, they failed to create their unified party, second, they got a huge division inside the 2000 delegates of the party which basically means they don't have any cohesive force from the inside to make an action. Even though they tried but because of the inner problem, the action they did is totally meaningless anyway, even if they successfully created the party, it will be collapsing soon based on this division inside. The failure of the creation of this party is certain [11].

3. Discussion

We can see based on the above, the statement from Buckley did sound concurred and confirmed based on the source and evidence provided on the above text. However, the argument about this statement still has some big limitations and errors about the youth movement and the new left. We could say that the youth movement was indeed a total mess and a failed joke of history, but as we look closer to the event, we can still see some good results in the bigger picture that these young kids achieve. The youth movement event is not what the statement is trying to suggest, which is offered neither substance nor action, simply a joke to be ignored by history" and "By the end it of it all, their legacy was only societal shame and generational regret. Instead, the youth movement was encouraged by the government of the United States in the first place and did achieve some good results and part of the goal protested by the student in America [12].

In the year 1961 January 20th, after the US president election, the new president of America John F Kennedy did his inaugural address to the American citizen. In this inaugural address, he states a that ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. It also mentions stuff like peace and war, ignorance and prejudice, poverty and surplus in this speech [13]. This is significant because the things that Kennedy states were exactly what the youth movement are aiming for in the later protesting and acts in the society. Events like The Port Huron Statement that are calling for liberating the poor and slaves and protesting about economic and military investments in this Cold War status quo aka the US intervention in the Vietnam war and the military competition with the CCCP. Another two quotes we are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit. It began to see complicated and disturbing paradoxes in our surrounding America. And while two-thirds of mankind suffers undernourishment, our own upper classes revel amidst superfluous abundance. Aka, a strong will of the American people to follows what Kennedy have said in that speech: Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. So, in a general view, it is convincing to say that the youth movement was encouraged by the government at first.

At the same time the youth movement was going in America, the Vietnam war was also on the march at the same time. The war was seen in the USA as an unnecessary and brutal war that is going on. Soldiers are put into the forest without a clear plan and target, they need to search for the hidden Vietcong under huge psychological pressure fighting in the jungle. They also be careful of the nasty traps set up by the Vietcong forces because a small wound will shortly get effected by the wet and moist jungle and be deadly for the solder which is not possibly get immediate treatment after infection. A lot of solders are having PTSD and drugs after attending to the war and could not recover. There are a series of protests happening in 1964, 1965 and 1967. In 1964, 1000 students from Yale University staged a protest march in New York City [14]. During 1965, many universities held a teach-in, with anti-war lectures and debates and 20000 people attended. In 1967, the New Left organized the National Mobilization Committee to End the War (the MOBE) and had a high-profile

pretest with so much as 100 thousand people attending and shouting their slogan Hell no, we won't go. They even want to levitate the pentagon. These protests and speeches or debates are super radical, especially the protests on Washington and New York in 1964 and 1967, the protestors even encounter physical conflicts with the police and breaking cars and burning off buildings [15]. However, these protests, especially the huge one with 100 thousand people in Washington DC 1967, did work somehow. The protest gives the government loads of pressure and are forcing the government to act on making peace (retreat) in Vietnam based on the quotes from Nixon's inaugural address that he's (President Johnson) been under such pressure because of that damn war. Fast and these anti-war protests were a big part of the pressure that is stressing president Johnson and forcing President Nixon to act on retreating from the war [16]. It was not what the statement implied to be total failure, inspired by drugs and highs, a complete joke ignored by history and leaders performed pantomime politics that offered neither substance nor action or by the end it of it all, their legacy was only societal shame and generational regret. In the youth movement, the MOBE and the New Left still succeed in some of the aims like the desire of peace in Vietnam which absolutely brought benefits by making less people dying and being tortured by this pointless war" and helping the government to get the trust from the Americans again, they are doing the right thing in this. These are a group of brave American youth that is using its own power to fight for peace and love and achieving something. History should remember those youth that saved a lot of people from dying in a war instead of making jokes and ignoring them in the history of America. They still did achieve something great in general and the protests are with "action and substance in it. So based on these analysis and evidence above, the statement from Buckley is not that much convincing because the youth movement and the New Left pushed the government to get out of Vietnam by the protesting and debates which indeed achieve some goals, they are aiming for during the youth movement.

4. Summary

In general, the youth movement was concluded under the control and methods used by President Nixon. In this event, there is violence, there are people with ideals, there are people wounded in this event of fighting for idealism. Based this research, through the history of youth movement, it shows that a numerous of the students and youth are likely extreme and radical in this movement and based on most of the views and evidence from historian and history, it is indeed to be considered a considerable failure and joke in history. But even though the students are radical and a bit extreme in this event but there is still a room of value produced by these radical or extreme, like the pressure given to the government by protesting aiming to end the war that contributed to the decision of USA to retreat from Vietnam, which should be remembered than to be ignored by history.

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