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Protestors, Police, Presidents  
and Politicians  
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Protest against the Vietnam  
War in Western New York

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**PROTESTORS, POLICE, PRESIDENTS AND POLITICIANS  
BUFFALO, BROCKPORT, BLACKS AND BUFFALONIANS:  
BLOODY BATTLE AND PEACEFUL PROTEST AGAINST THE VIETNAM WAR  
IN WESTERN NEW YORK**

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Honor's Thesis

Mentorship and Advisement given by Dr. Ken O'Brien and Dr. Bruce Leslie

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### Introduction

In Western New York, there are two campuses whose histories share some fundamental similarities. Located sixty miles apart, The University of Buffalo and SUNY College at Brockport expanded during the 1960's, growing both in number of students and physical size. Both institutions would take on new roles as educational centers, focusing on research and the performance of faculty. In 1965, Albert Brown was inaugurated President of SUNY Brockport with a vision that would cause the campus to expand rapidly, while UB would do the same under President Martin Meyerson, inaugurated in 1966. During the next 5 years, at both campuses, there would be increasingly turbulent racial strife and activism. These years also saw the rise of Anti-Vietnam War protest on both campuses. As students rose up to stand up for their idealistic notions about the war, or out of the practical fear of being drafted, the trails of UB and SUNY Brockport would diverge.

Vietnam snuck up on the American public during the late 1950's into the early 1960's. The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations eased America further and further into the war being fought in Vietnam, which was becoming increasingly Americanized. The Cold War was fully underway as well. McCarthyism caught America's attention in this era, as the infamous Senator Joseph McCarthy led an impromptu charge against "communist infiltrators." These were the turbulent times when the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs incidents also occurred. This time

period held the American public in a state of suspicion as well as a state of fear and instability.

For anyone who was protest minded, this was also a confused time in America where the Civil Rights movement dramatically and forcibly changed American society. With Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X leading the way in the late fifties, protestors fought vehemently for equal treatment and equal opportunity. For the white, ivy-league college students who had taken on the fight for Civil Rights in the early 60's, they found themselves facing another challenge that hit a little closer to home. With the government drafting thousands of youths, protestors saw the increasing role that America played in the Vietnam War as another American illness to remedy.

The national Anti-War movement began to gain momentum in 1965 and continued through 1972. What started as a messy slough of protest organizations took shape during this time, trying to add form to passion. They used the precedent of peaceful protest set by the Civil Rights movement as their preferred mode of protest. When this seemed to fail, many protestors became discouraged and turned to a more violent form of protest called the New Left Movement. Others simply became disillusioned with the movement, phasing themselves out entirely.

The City of Buffalo itself was going through a period of flux during this time period as well, causing residents to be wary of outsiders. This largely blue collar

factory city contained a sense of community that had been enjoyed by Buffalonians in the past and was now seen as being threatened by invading social groups. Buffalo had always had an element of ethnic segregation in its makeup but during the time of civil rights, there was another large emigration into the city, this time African American. Racism was a key problem in Buffalo, as it continues to be today. This added influx into the industrial center caused there to be a sense of social instability by the established residents of the city.

In the Village of Brockport, things were more stable. The war still affected the Village, but on a much smaller scale and with less intensity. Issues of ethnic strife existed, but due to the low number of African Americans in Brockport outside of the college, it was rarely a large problem. African American students of the 1950's have documented instances of prejudice in the Village, but such incidents were few and far between. In fact, during the 1960's the main thrust of racially motivated incidents or protests in Brockport occurred on campus and did not involve the Village at all.

During the 1960's at these institutions, there are three things that need to be considered. First, there were great similarities between the two campuses, specifically the similar rates of growth at both places and attitudes of President Brown and President Meyerson. Second, the Anti-Vietnam War protest at UB was facilitated to be more violent by the social makeup of the City of Buffalo and UB students and the more direct approach that UB students took by taking their protests not only to the campus,

but to the city as well. In Brockport, the protest was concentrated mainly on campus and rarely branched out into the seemingly irrelevant rural Village of Brockport. Third, the administrations of UB and SUNY Brockport handled the protests differently, which had a drastically different effect on the ferocities of each institution's protests.

### Narrative

*University of Buffalo, February 25, 1970*

"The pigs are coming! The pigs are coming" a student shouted as he ran into Norton Union. Instantly, a crowd of 140 students who had been demonstrating began to prop chairs and couches against the doors to try and block the police's entrance, but ditched that effort as a group of 20-30 University policeman, fully equipped with riot gear barreled through the door. As the crowd fled through the halls of the union, the policemen reportedly trampled those who fell behind and put their night sticks to use on the crowd at the end of the hall. Pulling leaders of the demonstrations from the crowd, the police handcuffed them and began to lead them back through the hall. Students began to tear off legs from chairs and other pieces of furniture apparently to use as brute clubs on the policemen. One student who got too close felt the brunt of a night stick across his head, knocking him unconscious as the enflamed cop continued to hit him. As the police retreated and emerged from the Union, they were greeted with rocks, traffic signs and trash cans, thrown from a crowd of four hundred students. Running for their lives, prisoners still in hand, the police retreated to the Lockwood

Library. Campus Policemen did not know that Peter Regan, Vice President of the University, had already called in members of the Buffalo Police Department and the Erie County Sheriff's Department hours before the events transpired, who were positioned and ready for battle on the outskirts of the campus. The local press was told that the Campus Police were called anonymously by an unsubstantiated report that there were students adorned with war helmets and spiked clubs, neither of which were ever found or even reported as having seen. However, before the incidents took place, Peter Regan was heard ordering Campus Police to arrest students suspected of breaking windows the day before.

The protesters gained reinforcements as well, as three hundred students built up the barricades at the Union, which they now refused to leave. Another eight hundred protestors, massed in the area to verbally and physically show their anger at the police presence and actions. An administrative official, Bob Williams, ran into the administrative building, Hayes Hall, where all of the commotion had begun, and told the staff, "They've gone wild. The Big mob is coming over. They're looking for heads." He said that the administration should "get the hell out of the building" and be prepared to physically protect themselves. Members of the administrative Security Task Force watched invisibly from nearby buildings with binoculars in hand. Tom Connolly, member of the Security Task Force and Vice President of the Faculty Senate, went to the protesters in the Union to try and negotiate them into vacating the building, threatening



suspension to those who did not. They refused. He later described the group as a tense swarm of frenzied students who fought with themselves and with other students who drew close enough to the Union.

Moments later, the battalion of mixed police forces barraged the Union with teargas bombs and pepper spray and then converged with night sticks and teargas shotguns in hand. They were met by a volley of rocks and pieces of pipe and furniture thrown by the occupants of the Union. During the near twenty minutes of bloody battle, a faculty member named Mac Hull tried to diminish the injuries by running up to the policemen and shouting at them to prevent them from further beating the students. When this failed to stop one officer, Hull sent him to the ground by ramming him in the shoulder, where the officer began to look for his scattered flashlight and seemingly forgot about all else. He remembered seeing a policeman try to comfort an injured girl who had just been clubbed outside in the street. Both were absorbed by the chaos in the union. The cop turned to Hull saying, "She won't let me help her." Hull replied, "I don't blame her," and cradled her in his arms until "help arrived."

This incident had been sparked by the events from the days before. Black protestors staged a sit-in at a varsity basketball game on Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1970, calling on white students for tactical support. The game had to be cancelled. Instead of talking to the students and coaches, as the students hoped they would, the administration called Campus Police along with the Buffalo Police Department (BPD). The next day, black

members of the basketball team met with Regan. They began to accuse their coach of racist behavior towards the black players on the team. The next day a freshmen game was played while another varsity game was cancelled by mutual agreement between the black leaders and the coaching staff. This time campus police were present for the entire game. This police presence is what the protestors marched on Hayes Hall for on February 25<sup>th</sup>. While the black students met with Regan again on February 25<sup>th</sup>, white students wanted to know why the police presence had been ordered when there had been no precipitating event. Regan later tried to say that he had been worried about the reaction of the students to the game being cancelled. However, when student demonstrators came to Regan, demanding to see him, he responded "I'm dealing with the blacks, get out." The black students later were reported as saying that they would not get involved, for fear of getting their heads cracked by the BPD. The white protestors, 70% of whom were Jewish and many of whom were from NYC, seemed to be oblivious to this danger. After the battle in the union, a police officer was reported as saying that America "should have let Hitler win, he'd have known how to take care of the f\*\*\*ers."<sup>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Baumer. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. August 25, 1970. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>2</sup> Tom Connolly. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. May 24, 1971. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>3</sup> Don Flournoy and Les Milbrath. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. April 1, 1970. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>4</sup> Michael Frisch. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. December 3, 1972. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>5</sup> William Greiner. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. June 1, 1970. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>6</sup> Mac Hull. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. March 26, 1970. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>7</sup> James McGovern. Interview by Dean G. Pruitt. March 14, 1972. c/o University at Buffalo Archives

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth J Heineman. *Campus Wars: the Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1993. pp. 238-242.

This was the State University of New York- University at Buffalo on February 25, 1970. From 1965-1975, SUNY Buffalo experienced tremendous pangs of protest against the Vietnam War. On campus, protestors took part in what they saw as a national movement to end the war and to oppose the ideologies of those who continued it. They joined national groups such as the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF). These protestors helped to shape how the anti-war protest would take place in Buffalo.

### **The City of Buffalo**

The City of Buffalo was established in 1832 as the population of the area increased dramatically due to the massive immigration of the mid nineteenth century. The first public school in New York was established in Buffalo in 1839. Over the next century, wave after wave of immigrants would travel into the city. By the 1950's there were large populations of Irish, German, Polish, and Italians, each sectioned off into clearly divided neighborhoods.

As the Civil Rights Movement began to gain momentum, there was a massive increase in the population of African Americans in the City of Buffalo. Between 1940 and 1970, the population had increased from 17,694 to 94,329, an increase of almost 500%. Continuously, this population continued to be stuffed into the east side of Buffalo. Whites continued to move out of the east side and into different

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<sup>9</sup> Dean G. Pruitt and James P. Gahagan. "Campus Crisis: The search for power." In *Perspectives on Social Power*. Edited by James T. Tedeschi. Chicago: Aldine, 1974. pp. 351-360.

neighborhoods or into the nearby suburbs. The Jewish and Italian populations that made up almost 86% of the population of the lower east side in 1930 shifted themselves out so that they made up only about 20% of the population. This movement was simultaneous with the influx of African Americans into these neighborhoods, which implies causation. This causation is reflected in the term that the locals have applied to the trend; "suburban flight."<sup>10</sup> The African Americans who tried to move into different neighborhoods found it increasingly difficult to do so. Apartment landlords of different ethnicities either did not want to rent their rooms to African Americans, or the other tenants would complain and harass the new occupants until they left. Ethnic homeowners refused to sell their homes to African Americans out of a desire to preserve the ethnicity of the neighborhood.

In the 1950's and 1960's, the African American districts began to experience great increases in the rates of crime in those areas. In 1955, 71% of the city's homicides occurred in the African American Districts. A decade later, the rate of theft in the three Ellicott districts was the highest in the city along with homicide, burglary and arson rates. In response to this trend, African American adults posited the idea that the local employers were not hiring the black youth of the area. They attributed the resulting free time after school to the increased rate of crime and violence in the area.

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<sup>10</sup> Kevin Baker. Interviewed by Joshua Baker, April 26, 2005.

A severe decrease in industrial and manufacturing employment of African Americans in the city also added to the problem. There was also a decision by the City of Buffalo that the new SUNY campus would be built in Amherst instead of an East side district. African American residents had hoped that by having the campus in the East side, economic opportunity would increase as well as the involvement of Civil Rights protestors.

In May 1967, riots broke out in several of the black districts black teenagers said "They gonna catch much hell if they don't do sumpin' now."<sup>11</sup> After a few days the riots subsided, but with the assurance that they would continue after school let out, which they did. The riots gave the African American community another black eye and reinforced the opinions of some ethnic Buffalonians.<sup>12</sup>

This distrust and disdain the residents felt for the African Americans in the city would carry over to the protesters at UB who protested for civil rights. Residents saw the African Americans in the city as competitors for the waning number of jobs in the factories. The crime rates and poverty rates of the black sections of the city inspired not sympathy but fear from the other neighborhoods. As the protestors on the college began to throw their lots in with the blacks, they were scorned by the residents of the city of Buffalo.

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<sup>11</sup> "Preliminary Report on the Disturbances in Buffalo" on The Buffalonian website.

<http://buffalonian.com/history/articles/1951-now/1967riots/index.html>

<sup>12</sup> Neil Kraus. *Race, Neighborhoods, and Community Power: Buffalo politics, 1934-1997*. Albany: State University of New York Press, Albany., 2000

The ethnic population was overwhelmingly blue collar. The GM and Ford plants employed many in their factories on Route 5 on the outskirts of the city. Bethlehem Steel did the same until the mid-1970's when economic pressures caused it to shut down leaving a mammoth mass of metal to haunt the city residents, thousands of whom were left unemployed. Most of the residents were also intensely Catholic. The Jewish residents that had resided in the East side during the 1930's, made their way into different neighborhoods and into the expanding suburb of Amherst. The Polish population moved west to Lovejoy/Kaiser Town. Italians and Germans moved to the North side, while the Irish continued to occupy South Buffalo and move further into the Southtowns, a group of suburbs to the south of the city.

#### **Antiwar Protest at UB**

The protest movement at UB in some ways reflected the national protest movement, while in other ways it was affected and shaped more by the dynamic of opposition it received by the City of Buffalo. The police would come to be an ominous presence on campus. Protestors internalized their distrust of the police and city residents. There was also direct opposition by the City Council. These two things helped to create a dynamic of conflict between the protestors and the city. This volatile combination made the University of Buffalo an interesting but dangerous, and for some a ridiculous, place to be.

The administration, led by-Chancellor Clifford C. Furnas, brought the University of Buffalo into the SUNY system in 1962. In order to foster the massive restructuring of the college that he strove for, he hired a multitude of liberal faculty who had no ties to or affection for the city of Buffalo.<sup>13</sup> The pre-SUNY faculty members were mostly conservative professors who had been a part of the institution for years.<sup>14</sup> Kenneth Heineman said, "Faculty who supported the Vietnam War and university military research tended to have been the recipients of grants from Federal Cold War Agencies."<sup>15</sup> After the transition, 75% of the faculty did not have tenure. Of the dovish radical faculty, 83% did not have tenure, 39% were doctoral candidates, and 21% were Jewish.<sup>16</sup> In 1969 there were forty-eight core antiwar faculty activists, of whom 75% were not liberal. Liberals at this time were disillusioned by the trend of violence that had recently emerged in the new left, and as a result, were reluctant to take part in any form of protest that could turn violent at any point. Residents saw this as an influx of outsider intellectuals.<sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup>

Martin Meyerson became the President of the University after the resignation of Furnas. He was a self-proclaimed advocate for the freedom of speech that should be exercised by students. Meyerson claimed that he wanted to make SUNY-Buffalo the

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<sup>13</sup> David A. Gerber. "The Fate of the Righteous steely in Precinct 20: 1972 McGovern Campaign in a Buffalo Neighborhood." *New York History*, vol. 80, October 1999, pgs 455-475.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Heineman, pg. 66

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 113-115.

<sup>17</sup> Jeffrys-Jones. Pg 44.

<sup>18</sup> Heineman. Pgs. 150-170.

"Berkeley of the East," not realizing that while being the leading public institution in the country, Berkeley was also a hotbed for liberal activism and violence. Under Meyerson, UB became a university where liberalism was promoted and rewarded, with activists gaining positions of prominence on campus. The editors of the school newspaper, as well as many of the student government officers were fervent activists.<sup>19</sup>

As far as the student movement went, peaceful effort reigned throughout the first half of the sixties, which followed the trends of the national movement. Leaflets and peaceful organization were the only real techniques that the student protestors used up until 1966. In 1966 however, draft resistance and protest became the antiwar faction's *modus operandi*, mirroring the national movement. Faculty members took positions as draft counselors for the black and blue-collar students who wished to avoid the draft. Sit-ins were conducted at draft centers and Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) recruitment centers on campus. Hundreds of students over the duration of the Vietnam War burned or turned in their draft cards. Resistance rallies were held which attracted hundreds of student and faculty members. Large protests were held on campus, with hundreds of people in attendance. Hundreds of students were sent, with Student government moneys, to national rallies in Washington, DC. All of these things were held with the support of the administration at UB, but with the condemnation of the city of Buffalo. This condemnation would continue to grow as the New Left

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<sup>19</sup> Heineman. Pp. 161-173, 210-214.



national movement affected the students at SUNY Buffalo, inciting them to more violent forms of protest. Gang-like mobs would commit acts of arson and violence. In December, 1967, five hundred students, realizing that their peaceful application of pressure on the administration was having no effect, formed roving bands that scoured the campus in search of Dow Chemical Company recruiters. Dow Chemicals was the company that researched and produced napalm for the government. At a protest, a mass of students swarmed the Themis Project site, destroying about \$200,000 worth of property. The Themis Project was a science-related project funded by the Department of the Navy. This violence and chaotic behavior was seen with no small amount of scorn by residents of Buffalo, who saw these outsiders as trying to disrupt and destroy how their city worked. As we see in the events on February and March in 1970, this view would have a huge impact on how events would transpire.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Invasion of the New York City Jews.**

The social makeup of the protestors reflects a tensional mindset of Buffalo residents. Disproportionate to the student population, Jewish students made up 44% of the antiwar protestors. Likewise, 47% of the population came from NYC while only 29% came from the Buffalo area. For the pro-war faction on campus however, 63% came from the Buffalo region.<sup>21</sup> This group tended to be less vocal and usually spoke

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pg 113-115.

in response.<sup>22</sup> This reflects a different mindset by different types of residents, not only in terms of the war but also in how they saw college. Blue-collar students from the City of Buffalo saw college as a means to an end, as a tool that they were paying for. These students felt pressure from their parents either to not go to college at all, or if they did, then their mission was to study and to not waste their time protesting. Many privileged students from NYC did not feel this parental pressure and felt free to protest and revolt.<sup>23</sup> Parents from Buffalo saw the invading outsider students as being a bad influence on their children. As one mother said in an editorial, "I am fearful of his mind and his soul literally. He saw violence (at UB) such as he had never seen before and for the first time he is the one who is calling the police pigs...Perhaps as taxpayers and citizens we should also stand up and be noticed, so that we can have peace of mind when our children are at UB-not fearing what may fill their minds or destroy their souls."<sup>24</sup>

This was not a simple case of war-mongering hawks seeking to silence the opposition. This was not an ideological opposition where anyone opposing the government's involvement in Vietnam must be on the side of Russia, although that played a role in their opposition. In fact, Buffalo, by and large, opposed Vietnam. As early as 1966, 81% favored negotiating with the North Vietnamese, while 48% favored

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p. 81

<sup>24</sup> Editorial. Courier Express, March 10, 1970.

pullout.<sup>25</sup> After all, as blue-collar citizens, their children were the soldiers whose blood was being spilled in Vietnam. They despised how these privileged students were abusing the names of the soldiers in Vietnam, condemning them as "immoral baby-killers." They despised the disrespect that students showed towards the Police officers by calling them pigs and taking every opportunity to lob insults and sometimes missiles their way. This was not a disagreement in opinion over the war. This was a condemnation of the protestors' lawless and chaotic behavior.

In opposition to the dissidents, protests infuriated the residents of Buffalo, including the BPD. Some made the same broad generalization that the federal government made; that every protestor held the same agenda as the protestors across the nation. When a march was made in 1965 where protestors traveled from the SUNY campus to the Peace Bridge in downtown buffalo, residents shouted from their porches, "Jews! Jews! Show me a Jewish Commie and I'll show you a faggot!" The police were called in and a couple of protestors were arrested for disturbing the peace...by walking down a sidewalk. When a young man resisted, his head was allegedly split.

However, when members of local clergy rallied with protestors in Lafayette Square, the police allowed it to happen without incident, out of respect for the clergymen. This type of response reflects the way that Buffalo's resident population was intensely

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<sup>25</sup> Heineman. pp.110-113

intolerant of students specifically. In these types of cases, the BPD seems to have been simply the strong arm of the city.

Opposition to the student protest was not strictly a grassroots movement, but included the formal government as well. Buffalo police, FBI and CIA agents targeted student and faculty antiwar leaders. There are many reports where leaders noted that they were under police surveillance. A faculty member named Fred Snell received a bullet from the BPD at his home when a political candidate he had supported lost. In a separate incident, another faculty member reported that police pulled up to where he was sitting at an outdoor restaurant, with a multitude of weapons on the passenger's seat. Buffalo City council passed a resolution requiring landlords to notify the BPD when they began renting apartments to students.<sup>26</sup> As Kenneth Heineman said, "These radicals needed to be monitored."<sup>27</sup>

This was a position held by many in the Buffalo community. In one instance, protestors attempted to distribute pamphlets at a public high school in the city to show how they would bring an end to the war. The kids, however, did not seem to appreciate their concern for the country and proceeded to beat up and rob the protestors.<sup>28</sup>

The students did not make the situation any better. There were many points where the students took the opportunity to throw their opposition in the faces of the

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<sup>26</sup> Heineman, p. 170

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Heineman, p. 171

Buffalo community. For instance; when warned by other students not to anger the Buffalo Community, the YAWF said, "We cast our lot with those who want to fight fascism, not those who bow down before it."<sup>29</sup> Another time, SDSers screamed at a Polish judge, "Fascist Judges must go!"<sup>30</sup> David Gerber was a member of SUNY faculty at the time and said:

Many of these outlanders, politicized and counter-cultural, had, in the minds of local people, helped turn the campus into a war zone of demonstrations, dope-smoking, sexual license and confrontation with the police...The university people regarded the (city) as full of blue collar ignoramuses, reactionary Catholics, racists, and bigots<sup>31</sup>

Overall, SUNY University at Buffalo was the nexus of sixties' violence in Western New York, with many reasons and causes playing roles behind it. The attitudes of the residents of Buffalo and the effect that they had on the Buffalo Police Department's actions played a role. The attitudes and actions of the local protesters, especially the leadership, played a role. The violent stance that the administration of the university took towards protestors and disruption played a role. The trends and shifts in the national protest movement had an effect on what happened in Buffalo. Together, they

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Heineman. p. 211.

<sup>31</sup> David A. Gerber. "The Fate of the Righteous steely in Precinct 20: 1972 McGovern Campaign in a Buffalo Neighborhood." *New York History*, vol. 80, October 1999, pg. 459.

amalgamate into a complex series of influences that dramatically built up into a clash between city and university, Buffalonian vs. Student.

### Narrative

*Brockport, May 5, 1970*

At ten o'clock in the night, a group of 300-400 students left the mall at the center of campus where they listened to angry voices about the injustices of the times, both foreign and domestic. Fired up and aware of their plans, they headed to Hartwell Hall and performed a sit-in on the ground floor. At this time, Hartwell Hall was an administrative building holding the office of President Albert Brown. Their demands were simple: Shut down the school's everyday life and do not penalize those who protest. Shortly after the sit-in began, the Black Student Liberation Front, inhabitants of the Wari Kattari Cultural Center, set their home on fire down the street from Hartwell, apparently to spread chaos and confusion on the campus. As firefighters appeared and put the blaze out in less than an hour, members of the BSLF ran through the campus mall and through the dorms shouting, "They're burning our building down!" At Harmon Hall, a kerosene can and kerosene soaked clothes were found in a room of a BSLF member, prompting the Resident Director to instruct all of the college students to stay in the building and not to let anyone in. When 30 members of the BSLF, they were met by battle-ready students holding hockey sticks, baseball bats and other makeshift, old fashioned weapons. After a mild scuffle, one white student took the only serious

injury of the night, needing stitches. The administration at Brockport allowed 35 members of the BSLF to take refuge from the burning building in the College Center at 2 AM. At the request of the BSLF leader, two uniformed police officers were stationed at the College Center for safety purposes. Other than these, no police presence was requested, despite the bragging of the sheriff that he would remove violent protesters.

Early the next morning, after only 7 hours of peaceful protest, the administration came to an agreement with the students that at 9 AM the Faculty Senate would meet with the intention of resolving the student grievances and requests. The protesters left with the assurance that their request for a moratorium would be observed. As promised, the Faculty Senate, with the approval and input of President Brown, passed a resolution to observe a two-day moratorium from classes, and to allow faculty members the option of waiving finals and taking grades purely on essentially whatever they wanted. Of course, what the administration did not explicitly tell the students is that the Moratorium would take place on study days, when no classes were to be held anyways. When the administration put the grades in the hands of the faculty members, it took the burden of condemnation off of them and put the scrutiny on the professors who could more easily handle forty students than three hundred.<sup>32 33</sup>

## The College at Brockport

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Jennings. *Brockport*. 2006. Student Paper. Located at the Drake Memorial Archives.

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In comparison, very similar events transpired on the campuses of SUNY Brockport and UB. Between 1965 and 1973, Brockport's attendance increased almost four fold. Where approximately 3,000 students attended in 1965, the attendance in 1973 had skyrocketed to nearly 12,000 students. In terms of physical size, SUNY Brockport needed to accommodate such high numbers of students, so construction projects began. The Brockway and Dailey dining centers were built in 1966, with Harrison added two years later. Lecture halls and classroom buildings such as social sciences building Holmes Hall, science and mathematics center Lennon-Smith, the Tower Center for Fine Arts, and Edwards Lecture Hall were built between 1967 and 1968. The Tuttle Physical Education Complex and the Seymour Union both came in 1968. And then there were the dorms. In 1968, Benedict, Dobson, Harmon, and Gordon Halls were completed allowing 600 more students to live there. In the same year, the Briggs high-rise was constructed making space for another 600 students. Similar high-rises Mortimer and Bramley were constructed over the next two years, each adding another 600 students worth of dormitory living. In terms of land, SUNY Brockport, under the leadership of President Brown, expanded its boundaries to Redman Road, and acquired the Alumni House and the Wari Kattari Cultural Center. President Brown had a vision that SUNY Brockport would grow and expand to be a University that would appeal to the nearby city of Rochester, similar to the University of Buffalo. Although it never reached that



status, under President Brown, the campus did grow exponentially both in number of students and in physical size.<sup>34</sup>

Both President Brown at Brockport and President Meyerson at UB had a desire to make their institutions centers for research. As a result, new waves of faculty were hired. At both places an emphasis on research and publication decided who was hired and who was not. Also, new structures of administration were set into place at both institutions. At Brockport, responsibility and authority were divided in different departments and new realms of administration. In 1966, President Brown hired a Vice President for Academic Affairs and a Vice President for Administration. For the first time, Brockport had positions such as Dean of Graduate Study and Research and a Dean of Students. Where there had been a Student-Faculty Association in the past, President Brown divided these into the Brockport Student Government and the Faculty Senate. Clearly, the lines of authority and responsibility were being drawn to facilitate higher levels of achievement.

### **The Village of Brockport**

The Village of Brockport also expanded over this time period. In 1940, 3,950 people lived in the community. By 1960, 5,256 people claimed Brockport as their home and by the late sixties this number escalated to over 6,200 people. The businesses in Brockport continued to grow as small businesses gathered into Brockport's first plaza in

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<sup>34</sup> Dedman, Wayne. *Cherishing This Heritage*. New York: Merideth Corporation, 1969. pp. 288-300

the late sixties. Larger companies and factories such as General Electric, the Owens-Illinois glass bottle and container factory and DynaColor took over many of the buildings that private entrepreneurs had previously occupied, like the piano factory that went out of business. In the new business district there were supermarkets, furniture stores, a new post-office, a movie theatre, grocers, liquor stores, bakeries, bars, lunch counters and soda fountains peppering the main stretch of town.<sup>35</sup> Expansion, yes...large town, no. The Village of Brockport was still a closely knit small community. This had an effect on the way that villagers saw the campus and the students who attended there.<sup>36</sup>

As SUNY Brockport's population quickly quadrupled, the students were frequenters of the town shops, coming into direct contact with other villagers and local store owners. When the college went from having 3,000 students to having 12,000 students (twice as many residents in the village), there was a considerable amount of reluctance by the villagers to accept the college community. By and large the attitude was that if the students minded their manners and behaved themselves, they would be tolerated. This attitude would be strongly resounded when the Vietnam War Protests began to affect the town.

The Village of Brockport had always had an unwillingness to accept radical ideas of change. In the realm of race, there is a documented occurrence where black

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<sup>35</sup> Dedman, Wayne. *Cherishing This Heritage*, New York: Merideth Corporation, 1969. 288-300

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

Brockport students were not wanted and were therein excluded to the rural outskirts of town. For instance, during the 1940's, Edwin Harris Mitchell, James Singletary, C. Bruce Lee, and Noreen Anderson tried to find a room in town but were rejected repeatedly. Finally they procured a room, upstairs in a barn on a farm outside of the village. According to Mr. C. Bruce Lee, they were charged a staggering amount for a dirty room where they were barely fed. He described the group as being the "...earlier students who came unwanted and unwelcome to campus." The villagers were either unwilling or unable to rent to these black students.<sup>37</sup> Later, in the 1950's, black students would achieve frequent spots in campus life, which they reasoned was due to their life of rejection outside of collegiate activities. Earl Mosely, who served on many clubs and as a freshman class officer, said, "There was no-one to be involved with... I did what I had to do. I kept active, I was all over...I joined clubs and kept myself busy." The remembrances of the early black communities spoke of the barriers of distance, race, and at times, hostility. They felt that there was a "lack of awareness of who they were as young people with educational dreams."<sup>38</sup>

When the protests began in Brockport, the hostility of the villagers to the students grew as well. After the main protests in 1970, villagers felt that "the campus is

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<sup>37</sup> Personal Correspondence between Mr. C. Bruce Lee and Mr. Charlie Cowling, collected in the following Student Paper. Darroch, Kathleen, *SUNY Brockport and the Language of Race: Many Voices*. 1998. Located at the Drake Memorial Archives.

<sup>38</sup> Darroch, *SUNY Brockport*. pp 3.

a good place to stay away from these dāys.<sup>39</sup>” Another thought, “I just don’t give a damn as long as trouble stays on the campus.<sup>40</sup>” Frequently, villagers gave this warning that students should keep their distance. When the protesters marched through the main business district in 1970, villagers on the very next day staged their own march against the doctrines and actions of the protesters.<sup>41</sup> The protestors in response seemed to disregard the village entirely as being a small cog in the larger American machine. Out of everything that happened on campus, the fire at the Wari Katari center and a march attended by about 150 people were the only ventures protesters made into the village. By and large, the protesting students largely ignored the village as a whole.

### **The Administration of Brockport**

The most influential factor for the outcome of the protest movement at the College at Brockport was the approach that President Brown took. The administration under President Albert Brown effectively defused any problems by being approachable and conciliatory to protestors who were motivated by racial issues and against the war in Vietnam. During 1970, the Administration at SUNY Brockport allotted the “Afro-American Students Club” \$7,276.35 for the administration of their club. The Brockport Student Government had only been given \$9,695.79 for the same year.<sup>42</sup> The year before, the Administration purchased a house for the Black Student Liberation Front

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<sup>39</sup> Democrat and Chronicle. *Brockport*. Oct 13, 1970.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Butz, John N. *The Polite Rebellion: SUNY Brockport and the Vietnam Era*. 1991. Located at the Drake Memorial Archives.

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(BSLF), telling a student that "the blacks need a hang-out: a place to go." Of course, this hangout was complete with a pool table and a ping-pong table. When Bill Moreall signed the BSLF letter of demands to the president, he said, "If the Administration shows itself to be unresponsive and irresponsible, it may be necessary for the students to come together to let the administration know that we will no longer continue to exist on our campus. In the words of the BSLF demands- 'Now the time has come'. In response to the letter of demands, President Brown sent a letter to Lee Spain, the BSLF leader saying "We want to work with all student groups, including the BSLF, in bringing a greater degree of justice and opportunity to all members of our society." This response directly mirrored the rhetoric of the Civil Rights movement of the decade before, in a thinly veiled attempt to pacify and win over the BSLF.<sup>43</sup>

In terms of the Anti-Vietnam Protest Movement, Brown took the same approach. When the sit-in of Hartwell Hall occurred, President Brown mediated in person and assured that the protestors would have some sort of satisfaction. In a letter sent home to parents a month later, President Brown made the situation clear for parents. He represented what both sides of the disagreement thought, assured parents that no class time or finals would be taken away from those that wanted it, and explained how they got around the moratorium. Brown also validates what the protestors did, rather than

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

condemning their actions as many administrations did, such as President Meyerson's at the University of Buffalo.<sup>44</sup>

Directly, he said

In view of what happened on many other campuses in the country, a great number of students, faculty and staff at Brockport are to be congratulated for the responsible, mature, and thoughtful way in which they performed. Although, there were brief periods of tension, we did not find it necessary to call outside law enforcement agencies for assistance. Such a difficult decision, which has often proven to be more inciting than calming, was made unnecessary by the excellent work of the marshals and the independent good judgment of the people on the campus.<sup>45</sup>

Brockport, quite obviously, was very different from Buffalo. The protestors' attitudes were much different. The climate surrounding the protest at Brockport was much less volatile than Buffalo. A "sleepy little college town" could hardly be thought to garner as much condemnation as a city could. Most importantly, the attitude of President Brown and his administration was far from being the hard-lined authoritarian administration of the University of Buffalo. On the contrary, Brown's conciliatory response to the student protests on campus had a large impact on the way the events would turn out.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Official Letter sent by President Albert Brown to alumni and parents on June 25, 1970.

## The National Protest Movement

The national protest movement took many shapes and sizes. At its worst times, it was a straggling, stalled-out engine composed of disoriented and discouraged youth, not knowing where or how to act, and not sure that they wanted to anymore. As the war progressed, the pacifist doctrine that was a residue of the Civil Rights Protests began to grow old to many protestors. Some members of the antiwar groups began to abandon pacifism and turn to more militant approaches, further repelling the already loose coalition of protesting forces away from each other. Different groups of students would also have different sociopolitical agendas and platforms, but they all were seen as being under the protest umbrella. Charles DeBenedetti described one protest, where hippies smoked their dope and women's rights activists made their case, while Black Panthers taunted them with chants of "Pussy Power." These divisions between those who opposed the war often made it nearly impossible to make a concerted large-scale effort. Most local demonstrations after 1967 were generally on the spur of the moment and either more of a "celebration" than a protest, or they ended in bloody conflicts with police. One of the last national marches at the Capitol Building ended with the National Guard mounting semi-permanent machine guns on the Capitol Building as rioters rushed up the steps. This only added to the disillusionment of the common protestor. As DeBenedetti wrote, the common perception was, "What's the use?"

There were glorious times, however, when these groups allied together for a common purpose: to stop the war. When these few occasions took form, they were able to organize into demonstrations and marches with numbers surpassing the 50,000 mark. One of the first occasions was also a magical experiment in conjury, as they attempted to will the Pentagon into levitation.

In her book, *Peace Now*, Rhodri Jeffrys-Jones outlines a major tactics that the national antiwar movement utilized well: draft resistance. SDS was organized in 1962 as a student organization to address the social injustices of America. By 1964, with the emergence of the national draft, SDSers were chanting across the nation "Hell No, We Won't Go." The draft, in a sense, provoked the wrath of the emerging youth culture in the early sixties. It was seen as an attack on the entire generation. Protestors saw the induction and deportation of these boys, whose median age was nineteen years old, as a physical price that was being paid by a generation who "did not approve of the war." As the draft was set in place, many youth coming from upper-class families were able to use their family's connections to obtain deferments from military service<sup>46</sup>. But, for many middle and lower class youths, the options were limited essentially to draft dodging in its many forms. Some fled to Canada or other countries. For many in the Northeast, the University of Toronto became a popular destination for students. As a form of protest, deserting America was a black eye to the American government, which

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<sup>46</sup> Rhodri Jeffrys-Jones. *Peace Now*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999. pg.57.



was already being beaten up by the international consensus against America's involvement in Vietnam.<sup>47</sup> Back in America, students took action against drafting agencies and Army recruiting centers such as ROTC. They organized both sit-ins at the entrances of such agencies and also demonstrative protests against universities allowing recruitment stations to be set up on campus. Members of college faculty also took part in draft counseling aimed at students and youth primarily from middle to lower class backgrounds. They helped to increase knowledge of the "conscientious objector" status that students and youth could take to avoid a combat position in military service. This pushed the individual cases of draft resistance into the national limelight, which antiwar protesters hoped would raise the social consciousness of the nation.

The other form of protest that antiwar dissidents were able to use fairly well was the coordination of nationally organized demonstrations. Some were local and spontaneous, massing numbers usually in the hundreds. However, student organizations such as SDS and YAWF were occasionally able to organize synchronized rallies in several major cities across the United States. These massive demonstrations gave "the impression of widespread disapproval."

It is important to note that protestors and even those holding antiwar passions were the national minority through the 1960's, indeed the extreme minority in places like Buffalo. In 1964, 85% of Americans supported Johnson's intervention policy in

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid. pg 57.

Vietnam. Five years later 65% still supported Nixon in his policy toward Vietnam. Even on college campuses, this seemed to hold true. At UB, over 60% of the students on campus supported America's presence in Vietnam, with only 10% being actively opposed to the war, leaving 30% who may have opposed the draft but supported the war in general.

This trend may have been caused by the Cold War culture of the time. Still recovering from the push of McCarthyism, America was still fearful of Communist plots to infiltrate American Society. 200,000 FBI and CIA agents were employed strongly by the successive presidents to monitor the actions of antiwar dissidents and to assess how they might be under communist control. J. Edgar Hoover wrote that the antiwar movement was "influenced by domestic and foreign subversive elements," and that the FBI would miss no opportunity "to destroy this insidious movement."<sup>48</sup> Since President Johnson could not fathom the idea that it could be patriotic Americans leading these movements, he believed they must have been under Communist party direction, whether domestic or foreign.<sup>49</sup> The general position of the government seemed to be either black or white. Either you were for the Americans or you were for the Communists and anyone who spoke out against the actions of the government was automatically considered to be "Red," a term used to insinuate communist party affiliation. This trend continued in the American media and seems to have been due to

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<sup>48</sup> As quoted by DeBenedetti. p. 231

<sup>49</sup> DeBenedetti, p. 232

the efforts of the FBI. Hoover directed his agents to try and morally discredit the movement leaders across the nation. With this kind of powerful and subversive governmental opposition, it is no wonder that a majority saw participants in the antiwar movement as degenerates possibly under the control of the Soviets.

It is rather difficult to sum the antiwar movement up simply because it was so complex and diverse. Elements of the hippy counter culture became the most publicized as they were the most interesting to look at. At the other end of the spectrum, extremist radicals became the most interesting and easy to hear because of how vocal they had become. Activist criminals, such as Daniel Berrigan smearing blood into draft records, tarnished the political legitimacy of the movement as a whole. Governmental opposition skewed reality into a mishmash of communist fear. Henry Kissinger later said, "The peace movement created a general atmosphere of lawlessness, of assault on the government, of trying to bring the government down by paralyzing it. All of these things contributed to a hysterical atmosphere."<sup>50</sup>

And yet, there were instances of unwavering logic and brilliance in the opposition to the war. Instances where Noam Chomsky wrote, "It is the responsibility of intellectuals to speak the truth and to expose lies." Instances where Martin Luther King Jr.'s made a speech saying, "If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power

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<sup>50</sup> Gil Dorland. *Legacy of Discord: Voices of the Vietnam War*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2001. Pg. 23

without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight." Instances where activists made an actual effort to bring peace and succeeded. For example, Tom Hayden, co-founder of the SDS, bravely went to Hanoi and took three POWs back to New York with him, making a true difference and impact in the war, at least for those three POWs. These instances are too many to list here, but many contain an emotion and passion felt by a select few, painting a very different picture of a movement that impacted and swayed the American government and society.

### Conclusion

In essence, tension in many forms culminated at UB that violent day in 1970. The tension of the Cold War that affected the nation played out in Buffalo, as residents suspected questionable behavior as a sign of ideological corruption. The tensions of the Vietnam War played out, as kids from Buffalo continued to be part of the army that was injured and killed. The racial tensions that had been affecting Buffalo since the early 1950's, due to the growing population of African Americans on the East side drove the sit-in at the basketball game and fueled the police's behavior toward those protestors in the Norton Union. The tension of a feeling of hopelessness and desperation solidified the resolve and moral assuredness of protestors, however small-minded and misguided their actions may have been. The growing tension between the residents of Buffalo and "intellectuals" at UB, who continually snubbed their noses at each other, shaped both the police's attitude towards the students and the students' attitude toward the city

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entirely. The additional tension that the administration caused by alienating their students and condemning their behavior spurred nothing but apprehension. These tensions finally exploded into a fury of violence on a snowy day in February in the halls of the Norton Union.

In Brockport, things were much milder. Student's political attitudes were just as fiery and goals just as lofty, but the steps that they took to achieve those goals and express those attitudes were nothing compared to Buffalo. Brockport's small-town villagers did not contribute the fuel to the protestor's fire that Buffalo residents did. The racial tensions in Brockport existed but were not as prevalent due to the lack of a high black population such as Buffalo's. Racially motivated protests gained some momentum on campus, but did not expend any effort towards the Village of Brockport. This trend continued throughout the protests against the Vietnam War. The conciliatory approach that Brockport's administration under President Albert Brown took with protestors helped to defuse this potentially violent situation. The cases of Jackson State, Kent State and most likely UB obviously served as an example to President Brown of what not to do. Instead, President Brown dealt with protestors the same way, whether motivated by racial issues or by the Vietnam War. Where other administrations tried to deal with their protesting students with an iron fist, bound and determined to squelch this aberration of student behavior, President Brown validated and recognized the protestors' behavior. Instead of condemning and alienating the

protestors, Brown allowed them to express themselves and worked with them to alleviate the frustrations they had.

Overall, this is a picture of Western New York during the sixties and seventies. The University of Buffalo and the SUNY College at Brockport had many differences that directly impacted how the student protest movements against the Vietnam War would take shape. Racial demographics and larger city developments provoked hostility between the city and the students in Buffalo, where in Brockport the population was much smaller in scale and racial strife was much milder. The protesters had similar attitudes but the protesters in Buffalo expanded into the city, where protestors at Brockport mostly stuck to the campus. The most influential difference was most definitely in how the administrations handled the protests. Where President Meyerson's administration at the University of Buffalo was authoritarian and iron-fisted, President Brown was less condescending and more conciliatory. At Buffalo the students exploded with violence at the treatment they received. At Brockport, students seemed to appreciate the concessions that were made to them and the respect that President Brown showed to them. These reasons, considered together, show the situations to be complex and difficult, together making the difference between war and peace on Western New York campuses.



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### The 1967 Riots in Buffalo, N.Y.



### Preliminary Report on the Disturbances in Buffalo June 26 -July 1, 1967. By the Staff of the Store Front Education Centers.

(09.06.02) In 1967, riots that rocked the East side of Buffalo from June 26th through July 1st of that year, virtually shutting down the city. In one night (June 28th) of Violence over 40 people were hurt, 14 with gunshot wounds. For an analysis of the riots click on the images on the right and you can read the report of the causes of the racially motivated uprising.

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**PRELIMINARY REPORT**  
**on the**  
**DISTURBANCES IN BUFFALO**

**June 26 - July 1**

**By the staff and volunteers of the  
Store Front Education Information  
Centers.**

**Frank P. Besag, Project Director**  
**Robert Hawkes, Co-director**  
**Lawrence Peterson, Center director**  
**Edgar Shoulders, Center director**  
**John Melvin, Center director**

**Steering Committee**

**Bertrand Austin**  
**James Bell**  
**Rev. Otis Bostic - Church of Faith By God**  
**Alfred Jackson**  
**Arthur Green**

The purpose of this report is to define possible reasons for the recent disturbances which have occurred here in Buffalo. It is an attempt to assess the view of the people of the street rather than the view of experts in the area of race or human relations. The purpose here is to build communication between the people on the streets and those in a position to do something about the causes of the riots. Some means must be made to communicate with the people who are plagued by the problems harsh enough to cause them to riot.

In Buffalo, the State University of New York at Buffalo, has been instrumental in establishing just such vitally necessary communication channels. Under the direction of Dr. Frank P. Besag, the Cooperative Urban Extension Center has originated a set of "store front information centers." Through these centers the State University has attempted to more greatly involve itself in community affairs of minorities. Two centers have been established in East Buffalo and one in Lackawanna. All three centers have been able to establish in depth and positive relationship with the Negro community, and through this relationship have been able to determine what some of the reasons and causes were for the discontent. It is from these centers, which have remained open until three or four in the morning, that the incidents in these reports were gathered. All of the data are gathered from first-hand reports. Mr. Robert Hawkes, Co-director of the project, Mr. Larry Peterson, Mr. Edgar Shoulders, and Mr. John Melvin the three center directors; Mrs. Sheryl Lumpkin, as well as Dr. Frank Besag, manned the Centers and established greater communication so that greater understanding could be achieved with the people involved in the riots. Under normal conditions, the education information centers are engaged in tutoring, job referral, as well as dealing with personal problems. During the riots, however, the centers became the headquarters for information gathering, information giving, medical assistance, etc.

In discussing riots, it must be kept in mind that these outbursts generally are emotional outbursts stemming from prolonged frustration and discontent. The reasons for rioting and the spark igniting them are, however, often distinct and separate entities.

In viewing the Buffalo riots, it is difficult at most, if not impossible, to pinpoint the initiating spark. If anything, the outburst may be attributed to long periods of frustration. As one young Negro youth explains, "We jus' tired a bein' lied to, that's all." For a long time the people have remained disgruntled about the poor housing and jobs with no future. In seeking answers, they have been told that poverty programs, city, state and Federal, would help them out of the ghetto. None have worked as yet and the city continues to make similar idle promises. Promises mean nothing anymore and the people are no longer willing to listen. Explained bluntly by one youth, "They gonna catch much hell if they don't do sumpin' now." A stance has been taken and there exist no way to rationalize and explain that rioting can only be detrimental to the cause. As far as the people are concerned, the only route out is to riot, even if it serves only to release pent up aggravation, whether through vicarious or personal involvement. If all

the youth can see for themselves in the future is what their parents had in the past, they feel hopeless and that they have nothing to lose. In many cases, people have reason to continue rioting. For example, many of the houses in Buffalo are so dilapidated they should not be occupied, yet they remain occupied. When discussing the fire that completely destroyed the white owned Woodlawn Bar and Grill, a young man, about 25, remarked, "the raggedy joint needed to go anyway." How true the complaint was is debatable, but the young man felt it was one logical reason, among others, to justify the act.

Another problem is the lack of sufficient employment. "Many of the youths here," as stated by Mrs. Sheryl Lumpkin, "have the same desires as their white counterparts." That is to be financially secure, own a car, and/or take the girl-friends out on dates, "things they can't very well do without money." The discontent is heightened when shop owners do not hire youth from the neighborhood. As explained by a participant in the first WBFO broadcast People to People, "We think we should be given a chance, quite naturally, if we don't work, the man shouldn't keep us, but we should be given a chance." The situation is not improved when futureless jobs for \$1.50 an hour are given. The objection to these jobs is not the salary, but rather that they are menial and have no future. Whether or not the complaint is true, the feeling itself makes the problem very real. To quell rioters, city administrators attempted to open 3,000 jobs. The question raised in the community is, "Where did all these jobs come from all of a sudden?" This implies that if there had been no riot the jobs would not have been forthcoming. There is also a decided feeling in the Negro community that the jobs will be withdrawn as the threat of riot subsides.

At this point, a word should be said about the behavior of the police. It is at present, impossible to fully judge the behavior of the police since a fact and rumor are closely interwoven. There is little doubt that there were some cases of physical brutality. Some of these can be explained by the pressures under which the police operated. However, the cases of degrading words, actions, and deeds, which make up a spiritual and human, rather than a physical brutality may be of greater significance. As one young Negro said, "My cousin was asking for the crack of the head that he got 'cause he's crazy the way he acts and talks. He had a brick in his hand. But when the police call me "nigger" and tell me to get my "black ass" off the street that makes me mad."

The most disturbing aspect of the riot is that the offer of jobs and opening of recreational facilities will not stop the riots. Both of these demands on the part of community residents are symbolic expressions of a deeper sense of powerlessness, that is, the feeling that no one listens to them and that their requests are not met. Jobs and recreation are merely symbols of a felt lack of significant communication. When communication is established, the frustration and aggression recede. In the present instance, there is every reason to believe that the turning point in the riots occurred on Thursday, June 29th when Mayor Sedita

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spoke to and listened to a group of young leaders at the Michigan YMCA. The point here is that this communication should be continued so that the people in the community will continue to feel that they are listened to.

However, three things have occurred already: 1.) the communication between the power structure and the community has not continued, 2.) many of the promised jobs have not been forthcoming (this should not be viewed as an act of bad faith but rather as an impossible promise which was made in the hope that it could be fulfilled), 3.) the basic negative attitude of the police toward the community has not changed. This negative attitude may be of greater significance than the isolated instances of physical brutality.

Those who have dealt with the problem of frustration and the riots caused by it in Buffalo, are of the opinion that unless an effort is made to establish permanent significant communication that the riots will break out again during this summer. There is still a high degree of frustration and a feeling that riots are the only way to be heard.