

"We" object to the standard concept of "knowledge" as an abstract body of facts and techniques standing above every-day experience. "We" see knowing as a part of experience, one dimension of our being-in-the-world. "We" see true education as a horizontal process where people exchange experience and compare practice, and from there struggle to construct correct ideas by which to guide further action. "We" see the proper place of study as combined with work in the community, and the proper role of the student as involving himself or herself in the struggles of the community.

The Free U. is trying to be a vehicle for exchange, an arena for struggle, and an instrument by which the community can educate itself.



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The "Palo Alto Times", a daily newspaper published in Palo Alto, California, on July 27, 1971, page 1, printed an article entitled "Midpeninsula Free U. Forsakes Culture for Politics--and Dies", which declared in part as follows:

"The Midpeninsula Free University (MFU) is apparently dying.

"The MFU, an educational experiment that once numbered 1,200 devotees of every conceivable counterculture, probably will be legally dissolved by its revolutionary leaders, who say it doesn't meet the political needs of the people.

"Martin Eichner, legal counsel for the MFU, said today that he will meet next week with MFU officials to decide whether to dissolve the five-year-old corporation.

"Eichner said a decision has not been made. MFU officials could not be reached for comment, but Amanda Noble, the organization's coordinator, believes it is not serving the needs of working class and street people.

"TOO ESOTERIC

"Most MFU officials are members of Venceremos, ('We will win') a revolutionary organization based

in Redwood City and East Palo Alto. They believe that most people in the revolutionary movement can't relate to the MFU's individualized and esoteric classes in Zen Buddhism and classical guitar.

"Bob Cullenbine, a former MFU coordinator, said today, 'I heard two months ago that the officers were attempting to dissolve the corporation. I haven't seen a course catalogue since February. To the best of my knowledge there are no meetings and no classes because the membership is so small.'

"If the MFU is not legally dead, it is anything but healthy. Its membership has fallen to about 70 this summer; it was about 700 last year.

"Its character also has changed. Revolutionary and political courses overshadow the typically atypical courses in poetry, literature, psychodrama, artificial intelligence and Chinese cooking. At one time culture-oriented courses far outnumbered ideological courses.

"'At one time there were more than 200 courses worth taking, now there are about 20 good non-political courses,' Cullenbine said.

"More than a year ago, MFU leaders were converted to a revolutionary philosophy, and through elections 'Venceremos got into a position of almost total leadership,' Cullenbine said. 'They were no longer in a position of attempting to persuade and change. They were in control, so decision making for the Free U moved away from the Free U.

"'In making specific decisions, vilification of minority points of view has become the style of the organization. In effect, minority voices are told if you don't like it, get the hell out', Cullenbine said.

"ANYTHING GOES

"The MFU has weathered several stormy years in Palo Alto since it began in 1966 and anyone

was free to teach anything that turned anyone on. In those days, the MFU was one of the outstanding examples of a growing number of 'free universities' across the country.

"Courses stimulated the mind and both soothed and titillated the senses, giving rise to what its detractor called the 'touchy-feely school.'" Courses included kiteflying, trout fishing, guerrilla theater, bread baking, Jungian astrology, medication, study of utopias and evolution, encounter groups for lovers, calligraphy, writing, poetry, and art of William Blake."

AMANDA NOBLE has identified herself publicly as a member of Venceremos.

Venceremos Party (VP) has its genesis in an ideological schism within the Revolutionary Union (RU) which, in mid-December, 1970, culminated in the RU Peninsular collectives, South San Francisco, Redwood City, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Stanford, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and some RU members from San Francisco and San Jose, California, withdrawing from the RU and forming a separate organization. The VP faction holds that the "revisionist" RU in over-emphasizing the role of the industrial proletariat in the revolution has down-graded and betrayed the Black and Third World revolutionary struggle within the imperialist U.S. VP holds that armed struggle is an actuality now in the U.S. and advocates the furtherance of this struggle by sabotage and urban guerrilla warfare.

The RU was founded in early 1968 and is a militant, semiclandestine organization. Its objectives, as set out in its publications, are the development of a united front against imperialism, the fostering of revolutionary working class unity and leadership in struggle, and the

formation of a communist party based on Marxism-Leninism-MAO Tse-tung thought, leading to the overthrow of the U.S. Government by force and violence.

The "San Francisco Chronicle", a daily newspaper published in San Francisco, California, on July 29, 1971, page 41, published an article entitled, "Free U Folding in Palo Alto", which declared as follows:

"The Midpeninsula Free University, that innovative and iconoclastic experiment in Palo Alto, is near death.

"Claiming the 'Free U' doesn't meet the 'political needs of the people,' its leaders have threatened to have the five-year-old institution legally dissolved.

"Coordinator Amanda Noble said yesterday the legal move is just a formality.

"'We have decided to disband the university because of lack of support from the community,' she said.

"She said the Free U 'no longer relates to the needs of the working people and street people. Times have changed, and what used to be a form of alternative education for college students has really become a form of the Establishment.'

"The Free U once attracted 1200 followers per quarter, who took such diverse courses as candlemaking, poetry and Zen Buddhism.

"The Venceremos leadership switched the emphasis to Marxism, Maoism and self-defense, and last year's membership of 700 fell off to about 70 this summer.

"Cullenbine said that 'at one time there were more than 200 courses worth taking, now there are only about 20 good non-political courses.'

A source advised on August 19, 1971, that the MFU has ceased to exist as an organization. After moving from

376 Waverley, Palo Alto, limited operations were conducted out of 1969 University Avenue, East Palo Alto, during the month of June, 1971. Operations of the MFU officially terminated during July, 1971.

[REDACTED]

II. GENERAL ORGANIZATION

A. Location of Headquarters

As noted previously, the headquarters of the MFU has changed several times since its inception.

In March, 1971, it was reported that the MFU was seeking new office space because other tenants in the building at 376 Waverley Street, Palo Alto, were withholding payment of their rent until the MFU moved from the building.

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b7C While headquarters were maintained at 376 Waverley, most classes were conducted in private residences away from the school.

[REDACTED]

As noted previously, the MFU no longer maintains any headquarters since July, 1971.

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B. Principal Officers

As noted previously, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The last catalog issued by the MFU in the Spring of 1971 listed the following staff: