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Undergrads Here

'Point-Blank' Instigators Exposed

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Three sophomore men and a freshman woman here have been exposed as principal figures in "Point-Blank!"—a small, underground collective which circulated thousands of bogus copies of *The Daily Californian* on May 18.

The identities of Point-Blank members, who are responsible for a number of politically inspired hoaxes here, have until now been secret. The *DC* learned their names in the course of two weeks of intensive investigation.

The four are David Jacobs, Chris Shutes and Chris Winks—transfer students this year from UC Santa Cruz—and Sara Chetin. They share a Northside apartment in a modern apartment house at 2564 Virginia.

Point-Blank also reportedly includes one or two other persons who have not yet been identified.

In its literature, the collective calls itself "situationist", a term which refers to the creating of situations which highlight the absurdity of institutions and organizations.

In addition to a "special last issue" of the *DC*, Point-Blank issued several widely-distributed leaflets this quarter, including "Riot or Ritual?", "7 point program of the (Berkeley) P.R.G.," "You suckers! You've been had!" and "He who laughs last. . ."

In the *Daily Californian* "special

last issue," Point-Blank announced it was they who distributed "phony questionnaires to sociology and psychology students" late last quarter. One source said the group also published a bogus anti-union issue of *PG&E Express*, a union publication.

There has been speculation that Point-Blank put out two leaflets issued in the name of Mayor Warren Widener, but some informants said these were the work of other groups or individuals.

Jacobs, Shutes and Chetin were among six persons who appeared at this reporter's apartment at his invitation last Thursday evening. Another *DC* staffer present at the meeting knew the three at Palo Alto High School.

The staffer could not identify the others. Two were men of about 19 or 20 years, one of whom may have been Winks. The sixth, who appeared to be in his late twenties, spoke with a French accent.

All six left in a huff 15 minutes after their arrival, when it became clear that *The Daily Californian* intended to publish the names of Point-Blank members. "There are six of us and only two of you," said one, adding; "we can be back with a lot more."

One of the group tried to yank the telephone cord from the wall as he left the room. Another grabbed a stack of Point-Blank literature.

As they left, one pushed open a window from the sidewalk outside the apartment. Waving his hand into the room, he shouted, "It would be really easy to toss a Molotov cocktail in here."

Earlier, on the morning on the 18th, observers saw the occupants of two minibusses replace just-delivered issues of the real *Daily Californian* with Point-Blank's counterfeit edition. Altogether, an estimated 6,000 copies of the *DC* disappeared that morning.

One of the minibusses was traced to a University junior here who asked that his name be withheld because of a recent death in his family. The junior said he had loaned the minibus to a friend for a period of time.

On the 18th, he said, the friend turned it over to a member of the



photo by Tewodros Abate

NORTHSIDE APARTMENT BUILDING ... Members David Jacobs, Chris Shutes, Chris Winks and Sara Chetin of the Point-Blank Situationists share an apartment in this Northside building.

collective. An informed source said the minibus owner has close associations with Point-Blank, but is not himself a member.

The words "Les Visiteurs du Soir" were written across the side of the other minibus, which the *DC* has been unable to trace. *Les Visiteurs du Soir* ("The Evening Visitors") was a French surrealist film directed by Marcel Carne which appeared in 1942.

All four Point-Blank principals began their political activism in high school. Persons acquainted with them agreed in separate interviews that Jacobs is the most gifted and dedicated member.

An old friend termed Jacobs "an anarchist to the very core." Another

called him "a superb rhetorician, the most brilliant person I've ever met." Both speculated that Jacobs authored the lengthy essay on the inside pages of the bogus *DC* entitled "Alienation and Its Discontents."

Winks began his political activism at Lick-Wilmerding High School in San Francisco where, during his sophomore year, he posted a daily satirical sheet on the main bulletin board. In his senior year, he resigned from a position as editor of the school newspaper when he felt it would compromise his political beliefs.

Shutes, also known for his sense of irony, is thought to have assisted (see back page)

'Situationists' Revealed

(from front page)

in writing more satirical work in the group's publications.

Many found the *Daily Californian* satire lively and hilarious. The counterfiet issue included a "confession" by the *DC* staff that "nothing ever happens here and it's useless to pretend otherwise," and a laudatory "letter" from University Chancellor Albert Bowker which praised the *DC's* contribution to "the smooth running of our academic community."

The group's work also included a "program" in which prominent community radicals assumed a dictatorial position and called on the masses to "respect private property" and "oppose looting."

The essential message of Point-Blank's literature is serious, however. The leaflet "Riot or Ritual?" asserted that "Until

everyone realizes that they ...have no control over their lives, the May revolt in Berkeley will remain nothing more than just another impotent student protest."

The leaflet set up the 1968 French student revolt as a model because it "exhibited a desire to change everything," revitalized "the class struggle," and resisted all attempts by would-be leaders to represent it and thus manipulate it.

In the course of Thursday's meeting and subsequent telephone conversations, Point-Blank members expressed apprehension about the consequences of exposure.

The consequences they feared ranged from legal action or disciplinary measures by the University to loss of financial aid and jobs.

A survey of municipal and university officials showed most of the fears to be unjustified, however. Civil action could only result if the victims of Point-Blank publishing were to file complaints; none indicated that they would do so.

Police authorities said they would not file complaints of their own because no felonies were involved. Spokesmen for the University said disciplinary measures were unlikely because the campus was not disrupted by Point-Blank activities.

institutions and organizations.

Situationist partisans were especially active in Strasbourg during the student revolt, where absurdist pamphleteering, street theater and classroom disruptions were thought by many students to have "raised the general level of revolutionary consciousness."

French situationist literature usually traces the movement back to 1957. *Internationale situationniste*, a theoretical review edited by Guy Debord, began publication in 1968. The movement now claims followers in London, Copenhagen and New York.

Situationists consider themselves heirs to the surrealist and Dada esthetic philosophies popular in France in the late twenties and early thirties. The central figure in that movement was Andre Breton and others were playwright Roger Vitrac, actor Antonin Artaud, poet and novelist Philippe Soupault, painter Max Ernst and Juan Miro, and writer Louis Aragon.

A significant difference between modern situationists and their predecessors 50 years ago is that the modern group is more concerned with exposing absurdity in politics than in art.

Situationism

Situationism is an esthetic and political movement which first achieved a modest degree of prominence during the 1968 student revolt in France.

The term "situationist" refers to the creating of situations which highlight the supposed absurdity of