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SITUATION INFORMATION REPORT

Trends and Developments, WDC, Week ending: 17 May 1968

POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

1. Available information sources fail, to date, to reflect specific objectives of the Poor People's Campaign. Construction of Resurrection City on the mall began this week but appears to be suffering from a lack of funds and construction material.\* There have been reports that some of the early arrivals have left the area to return home. Campaign officers attribute these departures to "illness" rather than to disaffection with the Campaign itself. Reporters seeking to interview residents of Resurrection City are not allowed to do so unless the interviews are conducted in the presence of Campaign Marshals. There has been no information reported this week indicating any direct threats to CIA or its personnel.

See last page

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Poor People's University Planned

2. Organizers of the Poor People's Campaign are working with a committee of faculty members at area colleges to set up a Poor People's University in the Washington, D.C. area. Stoney COOKS, a 25 year old coordinator of campus and student activities for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is reported to be the originator of the idea for a Poor People's University.

The announced purpose of the school is to study poverty, its problems and tactics for its elimination. Classes are planned in non-violent tactics as a preparation for students participating in Campaign demonstrations and in such subjects as Economics of Poverty, Racism, Capitalism as a System, the relation between the Vietnam War and Poverty, Welfare Regulations and Qualifications, the Negative Income Tax, and Corporate Establishment.

Supporters of the program are reported to have already met with the representatives of the consortium of five area universities (American, Catholic, George Washington, Georgetown and Howard), and have requested use of class rooms, dormitories and other facilities on their campuses. These universities are expected to have responded to these requests at a meeting on the evening of 15 May 1968. While many leaders of organizations participating in the Poor People's Campaign would act as teachers and leaders of discussion groups, the proposed university also hopes to have a corps of experts such as author, Michael HARRINGTON; Ebony magazine editor, Lerone BENNETT, Jr.; Bayard RUSTIN, Harry BELAFONTE, Joan BAEZ, David DELLINGER, and Ivanhoe DONALDSON, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

It has been announced that the University plans to invite speakers ranging from Henry FORD and John GARDNER, the former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, to Dick GREGORY and Todd GITLIN and Tom HAYDEN, former presidents of Students for a Democratic Society. Stoney COOKS is reported to have said that it is hoped also that lectures and discussions at the Poor People's University will inspire students to return to their home communities and campuses to mount similar local confrontations. According to COOKS SCLC is planning a collegiate-level organization to continue the Poor People's Campaign.

During a visit on 4 May 1968 at Harvard University, Stoney COOKS is reported to have said that plans are being made for 5,000 students to participate in the Poor People's Campaign from 29 May to 8 June 1968. At this time COOKS announced that SCLC is setting up a free university at which "movement people and poor people will talk about what's happening and what poor people can do". COOKS said, "rather than everybody doing their own thing this summer, we want them to do the poor people's thing." According to COOKS the students would be asked to accompany groups of poor people when the Washington Campaign disbands, and to work with them for the summer.

Members of the faculty committee working with them on the Poor People's University according to COOKS are: Grady TYSON and Bernard ROSS of American University, Sister Mary GERALD

[REDACTED]

of Trinity College, Cynthia THOMAS of Georgetown University, Clifton JONES and Roy D. JONES of Howard, Mal HARRIS of George Washington and Sister Mary FRIEDA of Catholic University.

SOURCE: Overt sources including the Washington Star of 14 May 1968, the Washington Post of 15 May 1968 and the Harvard Crimson of 6 May 1968.

AUTHENTICATION: Probably reliable

• COMMENT: Among the reported potential instructors and guest speakers at the proposed Poor People's University it is noted that:

• Harry BELAFONTE: a known Communist sympathizer [REDACTED]

Joan BAEZ: a folk singer, has been actively engaged in Vietnam protests and draft card burnings.

David DELLINGER: the organizer of the march on the Pentagon in the fall of 1967 and has made at least two trips to North Vietnam at which times he spoke to Ho Chi Minh. He spent 11 days in Communist China and has visited Czechoslovakia, where he met with North Vietnamese delegations and the National Liberation Front in Prague.

Ivanhoe DONALDSON: is reported to be the New York City Director of SNCC. He attended the Berkeley Black Power Conference, in October 1966 as an "SDS organizer" from Harlem, and has been a frequent speaker at Vietnam protest meetings and rallies. At the Third Annual Socialist Scholars Conference in New York City in September 1967 he said "those who struggle in Bolivia and in Cuba are my allies". He is also quoted as saying that in 1968 "revolutionary forces" would not confine themselves to Negro areas but would go downtown and begin to burn down the white ghetto banks and draft centers in 20 U.S. cities.

Todd GITLIN: as of July 1967 was affiliated with the Radical Education Project of the Students for a Democratic Society. In 1962 he was Correspondence Editor for a

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

publication called "New University Thought". Other persons associated with New University Thought were David HALPERIN, son of the well-known Communist, Maurice HALPERIN, and David A. SIQUEIROS, former Secretary-general of the Communist Party in Mexico.

Lerone BENNETT: is reported to be the author of Mayflower, History of the Negro in America 1619 to 1962.

Stoney COOKS: is reported to have been one of the United States "Peace" representatives who met with representatives from North Vietnam and Viet Cong in Prague, Czechoslovakia in September 1967

Tom HAYDEN: In addition to having been associated with the Students for a Democratic Society, he also has been connected with the Radical Education Project and Ramparts Magazine. In 1965 accompanied by CPUSA Committee Member, Herbert APTHEKER and Staughton LYND, Assistant Professor at Yale University, he made an unauthorized trip to North Vietnam. Following this he addressed a Detroit group of 600 individuals demonstrating against United States action in Vietnam.

Michael HARRINGTON: President for the League for Industrial Democracy, who has a history of membership in Left Wing Socialist groups, has entertained Communist Party members in his home in the past. He claimed in 1955 to be a conscientious objector but would fight in anti-colonial wars. He called for U.S. ending the Korean War in 1953, criticized the U.S. policy in the Middle East as imperialistic in 1958, protested U.S. invasion of Cuba in 1961 and advocated U.S. unilateral disarmament in 1962.

SOURCE: U.S. Government  
AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### Freedom School Planned

3. In addition to the Poor People's University, the Freedom School will be another educational component of the Poor People's Campaign. The Freedom School is designed for participants in the march including children, young persons, and adults. Charles W. CHENG of the Washington Teachers Union is reported to be the Director of the Freedom School. CHENG is quoted as saying that "our educational philosophy is going to deal with racism, poverty, oppression and the filthy war in Vietnam.

There reportedly are about 100 teachers and other Washington residents who have been attending training sessions for the school during the past six weeks under the sponsorship of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Washington Teachers Union, and AFT local.

The curriculum will stress "black awareness" and the cultural heritage of Indians, Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans. According to CHENG, classes will be held at the sight of Resurrection City and wherever demonstrations take the marchers.

SOURCE: Washington Star, 14 May 1968 and the Washington Post  
15 May 1968.

AUTHENTICATION: Unknown reliability

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### Potential for Violence

4. The Poor People's Campaign coming as it does in the wake of unprecedented riots in the Nation's Capital last month adds to an already combustible atmosphere that could be exploded by a minor incident, and there are warnings that black extremists and other militants will try to promote incidents so this campaign will degenerate into violence.

SOURCE: FBI Current Intelligence Analysis dated 15 May 1968

AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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Militant Black Power

7. James L. BEVEL, a militant aid to Reverend ABERNATHY, stated on 1 May 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, that the Southern Christian Leadership preaches non-violence, but could not be responsible for what individuals might do. He explained that Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and their followers might participate in the Campaign.

SOURCE: FBI Current Intelligence Analysis dated 15 May 1968  
AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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8. Charles KENYATTA, head of the American Mau Mau, has announced that he and some of his followers will participate in the Poor People's Campaign.

SOURCE: FBI Current Intelligence Analysis dated 15 May 1968  
AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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9. Wolf LOWENTHAL of the Downtown Poor of New York City has stated that one plan of action during the Poor People's Campaign is for participants to barricade themselves inside the Justice Building or similar Federal buildings until Cleveland SELLERS is released from jail. SELLERS, who was formerly SNCC Program Director, was convicted for selective service violation but has not been sentenced.

SOURCE: FBI Current Intelligence Analysis dated 15 May 1968  
AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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10. George BROWER, also known as Freedom George, a black extremist and self-described leader of the Young Militants, a loose-knit group of activists, has stated that Stokely Carmichael plans to turn the Poor People's Campaign into a "bucket of blood" and that SNCC groups from Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, New York, and California with prior assignments will be in Washington.

SOURCE: FBI Current Intelligence Analysis dated 15 May 1968  
AUTHENTICATION: Reliable

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11. Reece W. JAMES, a negro militant in Washington, D.C. claims to be carrying incendiary bombs which could be used to create chaos and havoc during the Campaign.

[REDACTED]

SOURCE: FBI Cable dated 16 May 1968, NI2378

AUTHENTICATION: Reliable sources

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2. James BEVEL, Campaign official, stated on 15 May 1968 that when more space was needed for camping it will be taken without a permit.

SOURCE: FBI Cable dated 16 May 1968, NI2378

AUTHENTICATION: Reliable sources

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