

Light My Fire

Fifth Estate Collective

1970

Isla Vista, Riot On

When students in Isla Vista, Cal. burned down a Bank of America branch in February, it became a symbol of the building revolutionary movement. But they didn't stop there; a month later they torched the prefabricated unit that was to replace it.

Then, on June 4, word of 17 secret indictments of political activists was leaked (conspiracy, etc.). The city had planned to wait until students had split the town for the summer before handing them down.

When people found out about the repression, the response was tremendous. Guerilla units battled pigs, staged a raid on the new bank, and trashed wealthy real estate offices. Not being able to deal with the adept guerillas, the pigs resorted to terrorizing the entire community (sound like Vietnam?). They dumped tear gas everywhere and arrested and beat people randomly, young and old. This only educated thousands of more people, who responded with a mass curfew violation across from the bank. The week ended with over 1,000 arrests.

775,000 Riot

Anti-U.S., anti-government protests and riots took place in Japan on June 23. There were some 775,000 participants in 1,345 demonstrations, many of which saw students and other leftists battle police with steel pipes, fire-bombs and other weapons. The rioting and protesting were the result of the Japanese government's renewal of the U.S.-Japan military pact. The ten-year-old agreement permits the U.S. to maintain air and naval strike forces in Japan.

West Coast Bombings

A bomb explosion and fire damaged a Center for East Asian Studies building in Berkeley, Cal. on June 31 (you can imagine what they do there). In the previous two weeks, a pair of Bank of America branches were bombed in both Berkeley and Los Angeles. No one was injured in these blasts. These bombings are part of a building armed struggle in the West, centered around Berkeley, Los Angeles, Denver, and Seattle, which has had about 40 blasts in the past year alone.

War in Belfast

Heavy rioting broke out in Belfast and other cities in Northern Ireland on June 27th. Since then, 11,000 British troops were called in, and the rioters escalated to sniper fire and firebombings. The toll so far has been 12 dead,

hundreds arrested, and hundreds injured, including both rioters and soldiers. The oppressed Catholic minority there is protesting the six-month sentence of their Parliament leader, Bernadette Devlin, for “inciting to riot” last summer. Much of the rioting has been between Catholics who want Northern Ireland independent of Britain and Irish Protestants. When troops come in to put down the clash, it is like the police dealing with a KKK-Black Panther fight. It ended up the troops only fighting the Catholics.

Italian-Americans Protest

50,000 Italian-Americans rallied against police and FBI harassment June 28th in New York City. Apparently, the pigs have been treating Italian-Americans as if they were all Mafia members. After the rally, 12,000 marched on the FBI office to continue the protest. On the way two pigs were stabbed. There seems to be a division between the younger Italians who want to fight pigs, and the older ones who want to wave American flags and say, “Look! We’re not really criminals.” But when the man comes down he doesn’t distinguish too sharply.

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