

RYM-II, Weathermen Test the Winds of Chicago

By Liberation News Service

CHICAGO — Thousands of SDS members from across the country — responding to two separate calls — took to the streets of Chicago last week.

The 400-man Weatherman faction, which broke hundreds of windows, braving police gunfire and suffering dozens of arrests on the action's opening day, returned to the streets last Saturday. But Wednesday, before the sun set more than half of the Weathermen were in the hands of the police, facing years in jail.

At the same time, nearly 4,000 young radicals marched through Chicago's Puerto Rican ghetto under the leadership of SDS's Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYM-II) faction and the Young Lords Organization (YLO), a Puerto Rican revolutionary group. This march, enthusiastically received by the community and closely watched by the police, was part of a series of actions organized as an alternative to the Weatherman program, widely criticized as tactically suicidal and not designed to increase the movement's mass support.

The four-day SDS national action opened Wednesday night, when the Weatherman faction — wearing helmets and carrying sticks — charged through Chicago's fashionable Gold Coast district, smashing left and right the windows of stores, banks, cars, apartments and hotels.

The street action followed a bonfire rally in Lincoln Park at which it became clear that the Weathermen had brought virtually none of the thousands of "working class street kids" whom they had hoped would join their "white fighting force" on the side of peoples colonized by the U.S. Empire.

The Weathermen came here to affirm and dramatize through a national action what they had been saying in a dozen cities for months — that the revolution is now, that it is winning, and that white people are ready to fight alongside black, brown and Third World people. The drama in the streets — the helmets, sticks, the shattering glass, the police with drawn guns — presumably made the vision seem more real.

Twisting through the streets, Weatherman's main group held together, maintaining the offensive for about eight blocks before being dispersed by police. Seventy-five people (including 40 Weathermen) were arrested. The Weathermen report that sporadic police gunfire injured seven demonstrators (the Establishment press reported only three of these injuries, while the police admitted to only one shooting). A dozen cops were injured.

While Weathermen were able to run loose for some 15 minutes Wednesday night, their final attempt to "tear up Pig City" on Saturday was brutally stopped in its tracks by heavy police deployment.

The 180 marchers, readied for their last ditch stand, gathered at the remains of the Haymarket Square police monument (blown up a few days before). The site had been publicly announced, and the cops were ready.

The Weathermen, who had obtained a parade permit, marched about ten blocks into the Loop under heavy police escort, then broke from the official route, attacking cops and smashing windows. Hundreds of police, many helmeted, many in plainclothes, went into action. Within minutes, the Weathermen were either dispersed or under arrest. Many demonstrators were beaten, several policemen injured, and Chicago's chief lawyer, who is in the habit of appearing at demonstration to play cop, got his neck broken.

Even before the march started, SDS National Secretary Mark Rudd and other Weatherman leaders were arrested in a surprise raid by plainclothesmen. Rudd was badly beaten in a night-stickswinging pig orgy that lasted 10 minutes. The Weatherman leaders were charg-



ed with conspiracy to commit mob action in conjunction with earlier Weatherman actions.

Saturday's massive march through some of Chicago's ghetto communities (primarily Puerto Rican, but including some black and poor white communities) was the high point of the alternate Chicago action, organized by RYM-II, the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords.

Nearly 4,000 SDSers from across the country, led by a contingent of purple-bereted Young Lords, took the

The Weatherman have returned to New York.

I encountered them yesterday in Bryant Park. They explained how more "pigs" were sent to the hospital than Weatherman. They said 57 "pigs" were injured. After continuing the discussion which had started weeks ago as to whether I was doing the right things for the movement, one of the Weatherwomen (an old friend) attempted to use some karate on me. She tried to kick me (you must remember, this is a show of friendship). I grabbed her leg. She then told me she had broken her toe in Chicago, so I let go.

A few seconds later, while arguing with six Weathermen at once, a seventh grabbed me from behind, putting me in a full Nelson. We danced around for a few seconds, as I tried to trip him. He then released me. The Weathermen left a little while later.

—Howard Reis

streets in defiance of police orders. They covered the street for five blocks, waving fists and chanting: "U.S. Out of Vietnam!" "Free Puerto Rico!" "Power to the People!" "Free Bobby Seale!" and "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, the NLF Is Gonna Win!"

The marchers were joined by hundreds of community people, most of them Puerto Ricans, as people yelled encouragement and flashed fists from the sidewalks and apartment windows. The march ended at Humboldt Park, in the center of the Puerto Rican community, with a rally in honor of Pedro Albizu Campos, the Puerto Rican independence leader who died a year ago, and in honor of two Puerto Rican youths, members of the Puerto Rican Latin Kings, murdered by Chicago police recently.



Steve Ross/Newsweek

"We must work with the people, serve the people, become one with the people," Yoruba, Deputy Minister of Information of the New York Lords, and one of the rally's speakers, said. "If the people want the pig offed, we're gonna off the pig. Not because we're a gang, but because we're servants of the people."

"We blew those pigs' minds," he said. "They can't believe that a bunch of long-hairs, spicks and niggers got together for a disciplined march. We blew their mind today, and we're gonna blow it all over the world."

In an earlier RYM-II/Panther/Lord action, Thursday, Oct. 9, a crowd of 2,000 defied court regulations and rallied in support of the Conspiracy Eight (organizers of the August, 1968, Chicago Convention protests). They gathered in a plaza just outside the Federal Building where Judge Julius "Magoo" Hoffman's kangaroo court moved into the second week of the conspiracy trial.

"All power to the Conspiracy Eight! May their conspiracy grow!" Yoruba told the fist-waving crowd. "We're making a revolution to free everybody — black, brown, white, yellow, red."

Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panthers, criticized the Weathermen for being "adventuristic, opportunistic and Custeristic." He accused the Weathermen, who decided to scrap their own plans for an action outside the court in order to join the larger rally, of "leading people into confrontations they are not prepared for." Hampton sternly warned the Weathermen here not to engage in any provocative acts at the rally. Mike Klonsky, last year's SDS National Secretary and a top RYM-II leader, told the rally, "The key is reaching out to masses of people, not running in the streets by ourselves."

About 500 SDSers moved from the Federal Building in downtown Chicago to a RYM-II/Panther rally outside an International Harvester tractor-producing plant. More than 100 workers, most of them black, joined them. The company plans to close down the plant soon and offers the workers who get laid off slots with no seniority in another plant which happens to be located in a lily-white suburb an hour away. The rally sought to link up the struggles of students and industrial workers and avoid immediate battles with the police. RYM-II leaders warned the police ahead of time that if any trouble started, it would clearly be the fault of the police.

Addressing the crowd, one black worker said: "This is where our struggle begins. This is where we struggle together — the students, the workers, the blacks, Chicanos, Indians — a mass revolutionary movement."

The factory had in effect been shut down by the rally. Almost 90% of the workers stayed out. Yet only a few white workers appeared at the rally, and it is unclear whether most white workers stayed home because they supported the rally or merely to avoid confronting it.

Elsewhere, tight police security was instituted in 57 city high schools. Student IDs were checked, fire alarms were turned off and extra cops patrolled the halls inside the schools and kept an eye on nearby street. In addition, Gov. Ogilvie called up 2,500 National Guardsmen after Chicago police officials requested additional reserve forces. The Guardsmen waited in local armories, and 300 of them were called out to patrol the Loop in the wake of the Saturday action. Despite Weatherman's intentions, in any case, the regulars of the Chicago police managed to contain and control the efforts at disruption and dislocation.

Weatherman suffered 290 arrests in the four-day action, with bond totalling nearly \$750,000. That means it will cost \$75,000 cash to get them all out. (The annual SDS budget in recent years has been \$90,000.)

But Weatherman leaders are unanimous in calling the national action "a victory for the people."