



# Christian Anti-Communism Crusade

July 1, 1974

P. O. BOX 890  
124 E. FIRST ST  
LONG BEACH, CALIF. 90801  
HEmlock 7-0941

## THE MAKING OF A TERRORIST

Angela Atwood was one of the six members of the Symbionese Liberation Army who was killed in the gun battle with the Los Angeles police which took place in Los Angeles, May 17. Her husband, Gary Atwood, is a student at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. He is also a member of the Bloomington Young Socialist Alliance which is the youth group of the Socialist Workers Party, which is Trotskyist Communist.

An interview with Gary Atwood is published in the Trotskyist Newsweekly, *THE MILITANT*, June 7, 1974. He discusses the path taken by his wife Angela and their close friends, Bill and Emily Harris, who are two of the surviving members of the S.L.A. and who, accompanied by Patricia Hearst, are hiding from the police.

When Gary Atwood first met Angela in 1969, she was completely apolitical. Her transformation into a fanatical guerrilla was in close association with Bill and Emily Harris and was influenced by: 1) Marxist and radical literature; 2) Experiences as a student activist; and 3) Her associates in Berkeley, California.

During their early radical days, the Atwoods and the Harrises worked together very closely. Later their paths diverged as Gary separated from the other three. He read different literature and mingled with different companions, and he chose the Leninist pathway of mass action and mass violence, which repudiates individual terror as counterproductive. Angela, Bill and Emily were influenced by Che Guevara, Regis Debray and the example of the Palestinian guerrillas and decided that acts of individual terror could inspire and recruit millions to similar revolutionary conduct. At the end, Angela despised Gary and accused him of being a "cop-out."

Despite the genuine and bitter conflicts between those who advocate and practice individual terror and those who advocate limiting violence to mass action, they are objectively collaborating in a program to destroy the institutions of a free society so that dictatorship will prevail.

The story told by Gary Atwood is informative, interesting, and heartrending. It shows how the ideals of the young, when misdirected, may lead them to self-destruction. Here are extracts:

"Gary Atwood, whose wife, Angela, was among the six people murdered in the brutal FBI-police attack on the hideout of suspected members of the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) in Los Angeles, is currently a student at Indiana University here. He is a member of the Bloomington Young Socialist Alliance.

### Student Radicals

"Gary Atwood and Angela De Angelis were students at Indiana University in 1969 when Gary first met Bill Harris. Harris had been a soldier in Vietnam, and when he returned, convinced that the war was wrong, he joined the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. 'When I met Bill in 1969, he was a member of the VVAW on campus,' Gary explained. 'Our first political conversations were concerning his experiences that summer in the demonstrations at the Democratic Party convention in Chicago.'

"At about that time, Gary met Angela, who was taking a course in the theater department along with

Bill. 'Angela was not politically involved in the least,' Gary said. 'But she would listen to the conversations that Bill and I would have about the war.'

" 'When the Cambodia invasion occurred in May 1970, and the Kent State students were murdered, we participated in the demonstrations. We started reading RAMPARTS magazine. Bill became interested in the Black Panther Party, and in addition to the war, our conversations included discussions of the Panthers' 10-point program, the trial of Panther leader Huey Newton, and the police murder of Bobby Hutton.

" 'Angela began to take a stand on her own on these questions. She was working as a student-teacher at Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis. She discussed with her class the ideas of the Black Panthers, and was reprimanded by the school authorities. After the Kent State murders, she wore a black armband to class and was asked to remove it. This led finally to Angela's writing a letter to the principal and other school authorities, denouncing them.'

"Bill Harris was involved in supporting a professor at IU who was fired for his radical views. Bill and another friend tried to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars, with an idea of staging a 'guerrilla theater' protest." (Page 28)

#### Communist Literature

"Gary had begun to read some works of Marx and Lenin, although without any particular commitment at that time.

" 'At the same time, Angela was beginning to become conscious of sexist oppression and used to get into arguments with Bill, because she felt he didn't treat her as an equal. She also read Engels on the family, which put Bill somewhat on the defensive. Bill never read very much in Marxist works, at that point.

" 'We had all wanted to go to the April 24, 1971, and subsequent May Day antiwar actions in Washington. For some reason I don't remember, only Bill went.

" 'At about this time, Bill began reading the GUARDIAN, but didn't associate with any group. I continued to study Marx.'

"Angela and Gary were married in May. Right after they were married, Gary heard from his draft board that he had been granted CO status.

"During the school year, Gary had taken two courses in Russian literature. With his characteristic thoroughness, he decided that he had to understand the political and social background to the literature and this led him to read Trotsky's 'Literature and Revolution,' which made a positive impression on him. At the same time, Angela's reading of Engels led him to read that Marxist master also.

"From this reading, he found himself supporting the Bolsheviks, 'I used to have arguments with Bill about the Bolsheviks,' Gary told me. 'Bill knew very little about the Russian revolution. He took a course on the Cuban revolution and read Guevara and Debray. At this time, he began to discuss ideas of armed struggle. He passed on Guevara's books and Debray's to me; I read the former but never got to the latter until later.'

" 'I was still interested in the Bolsheviks and talked to Bill about Trotsky. He hadn't read any Trotsky, and only a little Lenin. He never studied Lenin.

#### Women's and Homosexual Liberation

" 'That summer Emily came to Bloomington, and the Harrises moved in next door to us. Emily was

beginning to radicalize, and she and Angela had discussions on women's liberation. I was somewhat backward on this, and Bill accepted it more quickly than I did.

" 'There was a group of gay people who lived upstairs, and they would have discussions with us about the discrimination gays suffer. Bill, although not gay, became involved in supporting a picket against a bar that discriminated against gay people.' " (Page 22)

### Life in the San Francisco Bay Area

"Gary had decided to quit school that June and take his alternative service in the San Francisco Bay area. He began working in a neighborhood community center as his alternative service, and Angela got a job at the Bank of America. She also was taking a 'free university' course in Marxism. The teacher's position apparently was that Marx was outdated, and this led to arguments between Gary and Angela about Marx. Personal problems grew between them and they separated for a time.

"Gary and Angela got back together at the end of the summer, and in the fall, the Harrises came to the Bay Area and lived with them. Over the summer, Bill had worked with the Angela Davis defense committee in Bloomington. Gary and Angela moved to Berkeley, while the Harrises remained in Oakland

"Angela got a job as a waitress, and this led her into union and strike activities, as a strike was then in progress.

" 'Together with the Harrises we also began to do some work in support of the farm workers.' " (Page 22)

### Terrorism Versus Mass Action

"After the terrorist action carried out by Black September at the Olympic games in Munich, they had an argument. Gary characterized the action as politically unwise and as 'terrorist.' Bill thought that while he had reservations, it was a generally positive action that should be characterized as 'armed propaganda' and not 'terrorist'. Bill said such actions were a means of calling attention to the plight of the Palestinians.

" 'I couldn't convince him,' Gary said, 'that my disagreement with this action did not mean that I did not support the Palestinians. Bill kept classifying me as a petty-bourgeois intellectual.'

" 'I would refer to lessons of the past, to the regressive line of past terrorist movements, and kept trying to get him to read Lenin. He would answer that I was an intellectual.' Angela didn't participate in this discussion, but Emily was opposed to the Black September action." (Page 23)

### The Influence of Mao

"For a time, Gary worked in a private school in Chinatown. This led him to learn more about China and to read Mao. Bill had gone to some classes given by the Venceremos Brigade and showed Gary some of their literature.

"Later, Bill began to attack Trotsky with arguments he got from Maoist sources. He said that all of the Marxists, in which he included Stalin and Mao, were OK, except Trotsky.

" 'Bill kept pushing more and more the concept of armed propaganda and armed struggle. Angela was adamantly opposed to these ideas. Bill was developing a concept of praxis as against theory.' " (Page 23)

### The Parting of the Ways

" 'I decided that I would go back to Indiana University to complete some school requirements, and then come back to Berkeley to continue my studies. Angela wanted to stay in Berkeley, to continue her union work and her participation in a women's liberation organization.'

" 'I came back to Bloomington in August of last year and never saw my wife or the Harrises again. When I arrived on campus, two farm workers in California had just been killed. I was angry and went to a farm workers meeting on campus. There I met some members of the Young Socialist Alliance for the first time.

" 'I went to some YSA classes, especially one on the coup in Chile. The coup had had a big effect on me. These educational were very timely for me, for they were about revolutionary strategy. They related to many of the things I had been arguing about with Bill Harris.' " (Page 23)

### The University Class

" 'I also took a class in Marxism at the university, and two YSA members were in it. The three of us tended to dominate discussion in the class, and this also brought me closer to the YSA. I began to read, under the encouragement of the YSA, more of the works of Trotsky.

" 'Angela and the Harrises talked to me by telephone, and we corresponded. They were working with prisoners in defense of Popeye Jackson, a leader of an organization of former prisoners. Angela was also continuing her activity in women's liberation groups.

" 'Angela and I agreed we did not want to get back together. I still heard from her and from Bill after that. When I told Bill I was going to YSA classes, he told me that the YSA was a case of the blind leading the blind. In retrospect, this comment tragically applies to the SLA.

" 'I began reading THE MILITANT as well as the GUARDIAN, although I preferred THE MILITANT. I had also read Trotsky's TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM by this time.

" 'I continued to have discussions with YSA members about armed struggle. I still was trying to find some place for a strategy of armed struggle that would somehow complement the TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM. Over time, the YSA convinced me of the Marxist position on this question, against individual terrorism or any attempt to substitute the actions of a small group for mass action.' " (Page 23)

### The Choice of the Gun

" 'In the meantime,' Gary continued, 'the rhetoric of Angela and Bill began to escalate. In August they had sent me a pamphlet called POLITICS AND GUNS that had a pick up the gun line.

" 'As the fall went on, I became more and more opposed to her and Bill's ideas on armed propoganda and actions by isolated groups. So our polemics became even more heated.

" 'The rhetoric of Angela's letters was very similar in tone to those Patty Hearst has sent to Stephen Weed. I decided I didn't want to go back to Berkeley in December.

" 'I had received leaflets they were putting out, espousing the line of the gun. My last big argument with them was over Christmas, by telephone. I discussed the leaflets they had been sending me.

" 'On the question of armed propoganda, I explained how futile their ideas were. I told them of past historical experience where people who had attempted to put such concepts into practice inevitably ended in failure. The actions of such groups in the past had only ended up jeopardizing the whole left.

" 'At that point, Angela hung up on me. I received one more letter from her in January, full of invective, charging I was a sellout.' " (Page 23)

This report gives some insight into the conflicts within the communist camp. Despite all the differences, all are agreed that capitalism, imperialism and the American system of government are evil and must be destroyed. The argument concerns the best way to achieve this. The various programs complement each other.

## CREATING CRIMINALS

The Symbionese Liberation Army was formed in Berkeley, California. The first public act of this army was to murder Marcus Foster, the black Superintendent of Schools of Oakland, California, with cyanide-impregnated bullets. The "crime" for which he was "executed" was to approve the presence of police in schools in Oakland which were plagued with violence.

The radical professors who had seized control of the School of Criminology of the University of California at Berkeley were vehemently opposed to the presence of police on violence-plagued campuses. It is possible that they inspired the actions of the S.L.A. In this case, the School of Criminology was well-named--it was creating criminals.

The university authorities have decided to close the School of Criminology. Massive protests have been organized to protest this decision and armed riot police have again been needed on the Berkeley campus.

The following article, published in the June 19, 1974, *GUARDIAN*, the radical newsweekly which supports Communist China, describes the situation:

# Students rally at Berkeley

By JOHN KEILCH

*Guardian Bay Area Bureau*

Berkeley

Over 3000 University of California students engaged in a week-long series of rallies and sit-ins early in June, in one of the largest demonstrations to hit the Berkeley campus in years.

The students were protesting the administration's plans to close the School of Criminology and to restructure the Ethnic Studies programs. Both the "Crim School" and Ethnic Studies are enclaves for radical faculty members, whose courses enjoy great popularity among students.

University authorities, disturbed at this breakdown of bourgeois ideological hegemony, are moving with determination to eliminate the radicals' incursion into the academy.

On June 5, 100 heavily armed riot police were called on campus by University Chancellor Albert Bowker to disperse a student occupation of Haviland Hall, where the School of Criminology has been located.

Ironically, the riot squad secured the shutdown of a school which had originally been designed to produce "professionals" for law enforcement and corrections agencies, particularly the police. To a large extent, the School of Criminology still serves this purpose: 30 percent of the 1970-72 graduates are now employed in the criminal justice system.

But in the past five years a left-oriented

school of thought has emerged, centered around radical faculty members Tony Platt, Herman Schwendinger, Paul Takagi and Barry Krisberg, and a number of radical graduate students.

Characterizing themselves as "radical criminologists," these teachers and students have worked for community control of the police in Berkeley elections, helped high school students organize to oppose Justice Department-funded, police-in-the-school and identification programs and lobbied against the proposed Center for the Study and Reduction of Violence at UCLA (a laboratory for psychosurgery and behavior modification experiments on prisoners).

### RADICAL CHANGES

The radicals also pressed to change the structure and content of the school itself. A policy of admitting 50 percent third world and women was adopted. David DuBois, editor of the Black Panther newspaper and radical lawyer Barbara Dudley were hired as visiting professors. Courses included such guest lecturers as former Ramparts editor Robert Scheer, author Paul Jacobs, Black Panthers Elaine Brown and Ericka Huggins, and such films as "The Battle of Algiers," "Growing Up Female," "The Murder of Fred Hampton" and "The Winter Soldier Investigation."

Ideologically, the radical criminologists taught that legally defined "criminals" were really victims and focused instead on the

activities of the wealthy and privileged who are beyond incrimination under the present system.

"Any objective study of the sources of crime," explains instructor Barbara Dudley, "leads to the conclusion that it is poverty and injustice which drive people into petty crime and that the most grotesque forms of theft and corruption go unpunished. Any method of detection of 'criminal types' points directly at the White House and this is unacceptable to Chancellor Bowker."

The attempt to "sanitize" the School of Criminology began with the denial of tenure to Tony Platt in 1969 and continued with the denial of tenure to Herman Schwendinger in 1973. But this customary method of academic repression was ineffective in weakening the position of the radical criminologists and the administration decided last year to take the unprecedented act of eliminating the entire school. Bowker plans to replace it with a "safe" interdepartmental program in criminal justice.

Although Bowker postponed announcing the decision to close the school until "dead week" when students were preparing for finals, the response was intense. A student and faculty Committee to Save the Crim School organized sit-ins on four separate occasions preceding and after the announcement. Broad student support was expressed in rallies and mass marches on the campus.

## COMMUNISM AND THE BLACK REVOLUTION

The mobilization and control of black militancy has long been an objective of communism in the U.S. A giant step towards the realization of this objective was taken at a Conference on Racism and Imperialism which was held at Howard University on May 23 and 24. Most of the 800 who attended this conference were students.

A report on the conference is published in the June 19, 1974, GUARDIAN. The author of the report is Phil Hutchings, who was formerly secretary of the Student National Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) which was previously known as the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee before it turned to violence under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown.

Hutchings makes it clear that the ideas of communism conquered, but that the established communist parties were rebuffed. The Communist Party U.S.A. and the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party competed for control without success. Hutchings reports:

"What is the principal problem facing Black people at this time in history? What is imperialism? What is racism? What is the difference between class struggle and national liberation? What is the correct strategic program for Black liberation at this stage in our movement?"

"These and other major questions concerning labor and the unemployed; youth and education; women in the struggle; justice, the police and prisons and the general political direction of the Black struggle were the highlights of the recently completed Conference on Racism and Imperialism held at Howard University on May 23 and 24. This national conference on the Black movement was called by the steering committee of the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) in recognition of the fact that Black people are at a stage in the struggle which required regroupment and the development of a new approach." (Page 8)

### Ideology

"Much of the conference debate centered on the two-line struggle occurring in the ALSC itself, between a dominant position asserting that the chief enemy of Black people in the U.S. (and Africa) is monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and an opposing line which argued that racism (or European society) is the primary enemy and that capitalism and imperialism are secondary. Those stating the first position argued that the ~~extension of this line was to attack and overthrow the stronghold of monopoly capitalism and racism--the United States system of capitalist and racist exploitation.~~ Advocates of the other position which saw racism as primary pushed for separate Black institutions and developing a unified Africa as a precondition to black advancement in the U.S.

"The conference generally reaffirmed the stand in favor of the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist position taken by the ALSC as the logical outgrowth of its 'Statement of Principles' adopted in the summer of 1973... Much of the credit for this direction can be attributed to the ALSC leadership and especially those from the Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU).

"Since the demise of the Student National Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s, YOBU has probably been the major radical Black organization which has pushed mass struggles as the way to increasing revolutionary development and growth in the Black movement. The organization has been located primarily in the South with its nucleus grouped at the now dissolved Malcolm X University in North Carolina.

### The Conversion of Playwright Leroi Jones (Imamu Amiri Baraka)

"To many, the major surprise of the conference was the support of Imamu Amiri Baraka for the anti-imperialist, anticapitalist position. Baraka, from Newark, N.J., who is the secretary-general of the National Black Assembly and the chairman of the Congress of Afrikan People (CAP), attacked neo-colonialism, the Black 'pseudo-bourgeoisie' and upheld the need for a vanguard party committed to scientific socialism to lead the struggle.

"The main basis for what Baraka has called 'a new era in our politics' can be traced to Newark itself where the experiences of Baraka with 'Black' Mayor Kenneth Gibson have clearly shown the role of neocolonialism and the relationship of Black front-men for monopoly capitalist and multinational corporations." (Page 8)

### Stokely Carmichael Rebuffed

"One consequence of the conference was the rejection of Stokely Carmichael and the line of his All-Afrikan People's Revolutionary Party. According to Carmichael, the only question facing the Black community was that of 'nationalism.' He argued that the primary goal was to struggle to liberate and unify the African continent under socialist principles. He said building socialism in the U.S. could not be the main objective for African people in the U.S.

### The Communist Party U.S.A. Rebuffed

"Other groups also received setbacks at the conference. Even though the conference was only sparsely attended by members of the Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL) and the Communist Party, they had no influence upon it at all. Angela Davis did not attend the conference although she was at the African Liberation Day march the following day." (Page 8)

### The Trotskyists Rebuffed

"The bid by the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) to get the Conference to endorse their line on independent electoral politics was likewise rejected." (Page 8)

### Amilcar Cabral--The Hero

"In a national Black conference dedicated to ideological clarity it was worth noting that the major theoretical authority was not Karl Marx, Lenin or Frantz Fanon but Amilcar Cabral, the assassinated leader of the PAIGC in the new republic of Guinea-Bissau. Cabral is popular with all tendencies in the Black movement for their own reasons. He is upheld by those close to the CPUSA because he was public in supporting the Soviet Union and the existence of the world socialist countries. Cultural nationalists in the movement like the attention Cabral gave to culture and identity in the national liberation movement. Black Marxists admire his dialectical and historical materialist approach to the problems of Guinea and struggle in general. And then there are those who like Cabral because he was a Black man leading a successful armed struggle against Western colonialism in Africa." (Page 8)

### The Absence of Black Workers

"Although the conference attendance of 700 to 800 persons reflected a student-based movement with few workers being present, the organizers and participants from practically all ideological positions agreed with the slogan 'Black workers take the lead.'" (Page 19)

Black-White Alliance

"As usual the question was raised about alliances with white radical groups. This delicate issue was often spoken around without any direct resolution. However, I would think that such alliances will not be forthcoming in this immediate period... But the type of issues discussed and the level of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist organizing planned practically insures some form of working coalitions in the future. As Baraka stated, 'we cannot act as if whites do not exist. We cannot have a skin brotherhood, for the Black united front is not the ultimate weapon but that of a true vanguard revolutionary party is.' " (Page 19)

Marxism-Leninism

"What is important and one of the historic points of the conference is that for the first time before a mass Black assemblage the language and methodology of Marxism-Leninism became legitimate within the Black liberation movement.

"As increasing theoretical development can only come from new and higher forms of practice, the future theoretical direction of the Black revolutionary movement (and the total revolutionary movement in North America) can go forward to the extent we begin to put into practice what was consolidated at this conference." (Page 19)

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