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Listen -- Do you hear an uneasy stirring, a restless whisper, the pulse of an undercurrent? You can hear it if you listen, on your campus and mine, and on campuses across the nation.

The outward symptoms of this smoldering are so various that they may seem unconnected, ranging from the ridiculous to the infuriating, from overt lawlessness to acts of selfless courage. But they are all part of the same picture.

The panty raid, the annual invasion of Florida's beaches, the bottles broken after a ball game -- are in the picture. So are the police car held immobilized, the Mario Savio orating, the 8,000 students whose conscience demands that they join in the heartbreak in Selma, Alabama, that they risk life itself in the jungle society of Mississippi; the Negro students who organize freedom marches and the white students who march along at their side are in the picture, too.

Everywhere students are angry; they are protesting; they are questioning. Last week-end, on my own campus, three freshman girls were suspended for spending a week-end at a motel with boy friends. Yet dozens of the girls from their dormitory protested, maintaining that the Dean's action was an invasion of privacy.

Students at an Illinois college picketed the home of a history professor, denouncing his grading system. About fifty athletes revolted recently because they felt portions of meat served to them in the cafeteria were too small, and their demonstration succeeded in disrupting the kitchen's entire dishwashing system.

Some students have been satisfied to show their spirit of revolt merely in their attire, and our campus, like yours, has its sprinkling of long hair, beards, and bare feet. At the University of Wisconsin, groups form on the steps of the State Capitol to protest the President's handling of a new Viet Nam crisis or to assert their friendship toward Castro's Cuba.

Two groups of students from the University of Minnesota will shortly be heading south and may be expected to see the inside of southern jails -- though from very different standpoints. One group will lie on the beaches of Miami or Fort Lauderdale soaking up the sunshine, until, aroused by some strange compulsion, they go forth to riot and destroy property. These will be jailed with almost fatherly benevolence. The other group is headed for Greekport, Mississippi, where they will spend their spring break working in voter registration. Past experience suggests that many of them will be escorted to southern jails -- though not with fatherly benevolence.

What are the threads which tie all these actions together and make them one uneasy whole?

First, I believe is the need for every person in each generation to prove himself and to the world that he exists as a living, individual human entity. Des Cartes satisfied himself in this quest with "Cogito, ergo sum," "I think, therefore I am." Members of my generation seem to have put the same argument this way, "I act, therefore I am."

It seems to me that it cannot be denied that the assertion of an individual identity has been made very difficult for this student generation. We are herded



into groups of four or five hundred for instruction; we have never spoken to our instructor face to face. We are a name in a class roll, a number on an IBM card.

I think too, that many students are disillusioned with the type of education they are receiving. They feel education has become mass-produced, and bears little relevance to the real problems which they see in their society. Undergraduates in engineering and the sciences, especially in our large universities, see teachers involved in research, with their hordes of students turned over to lab assistants for instruction. They wonder if they are not merely pawns played with by industry, education, and the military.

In smaller colleges, such as mine, pockets still exist where teachers teach and counsel individual students, and where students still feel that their identity is respected. In some departments teachers even find time to talk to us outside of class about our problems and the problems of our world. We are grateful for this experience but we too have the uneasy feeling that time is marching on, and that the type of education which we have enjoyed may soon be extinct here too.

Yes, nearly all of us are wondering and dissatisfied, and the restlessness smolders and grows on our campuses across the land.

Now what do we ask of you who teach in our colleges and universities? We ask no less than education tailored to fit the individual free men and women. We ask for your moral guidance in interpreting the problems and values of our society. We ask you to teach us that ends do not justify means, and that however impatient we may become to reach our goal, we will neglect due process of law at our peril. Extremism in the pursuit of liberty was rather recently a slogan of the radical right. Berkely students have shown us that anyone can play that game. Help us to see that indifference to legality, even by serious and dedicated students, threatens the very foundations of democratic order. We ask you to remember that your primary obligation to our society is to teach students. We ask you to do all this even as we crowd in greater and greater numbers into your bulding classrooms.

Author Stephen Birmingham explores the world of the American youth in his report: A Generation Under the Gun. Mr. Birmingham feels that American teenagers today are more thoughtful, aggressive, more willing to take chances and learn from accasional mistakes, and more interested in improving the world about them than earlier generations have been. Despite the awkward and sometimes idealistic struggle with complexity of life in the 1960's, the essential goodness of American students far overshadows the bad.

Our nation will profit from examining this Generation Under the Gun as it prepares to follow President Johnson in constucting his Great Society. AS the President made clear, it is program to elevate the quality of our individual and national lives through education, appreciation of the arts, improved standards of living for all, and a more rewarding use of our leisure time. More than government planning, it demands understanding and effort from all of us.

The poet Lindsay might have been thinking of us when he wrote this poem:

"It is the world's one crime its babes grow dull,  
Its Poor are ox-like, limp, and leaden-eyed.  
Not that they starve, but starve so dreamlessly,  
Not that they sow, but that they seldom reap;  
Not that they serve, but have no gods to serve,  
Not that they die, but that they die like sheep."

And yet, I'm sure that doesn't describe us, for if it did, there would be no hope in young hearts anywhere.