

SLATE alums meet to recall when radical wasn't chic

By Carl Irving
Examiner staff writer

A student political group, which shook up administrators at the University of California's Berkeley campus in the late 1950s and 1960s, will be remembered at a reunion of former members this weekend.

SLATE, as the group was known, was born in 1957 and died in 1968. In between, it helped launch some of the nation's first student protests for civil rights and against the Vietnam War.

San Francisco attorney Peter Franck, who is organizing the Berkeley reunion at which 125 people are expected, recalled that SLATE "galvanized" the campus, when members demanded that student government become active on such issues as nuclear weapons, racial discrimination and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).

SLATE members were washed off the steps by fire hoses at San Francisco's City Hall when they gathered there in 1960 to object to HUAC's Communist hunting tactics. Later, there was the civil rights movement in the South, and still later, the expanding war in Southeast Asia.

But it all began, said founder Mike Miller, when he and others living in the Co-op dorms and at the campus YMCA became impatient with "sandbox" student government.

The group was baptized as SLATE by the student newspaper when Miller and others organized a slate of candidates to take over campus government at the next election.

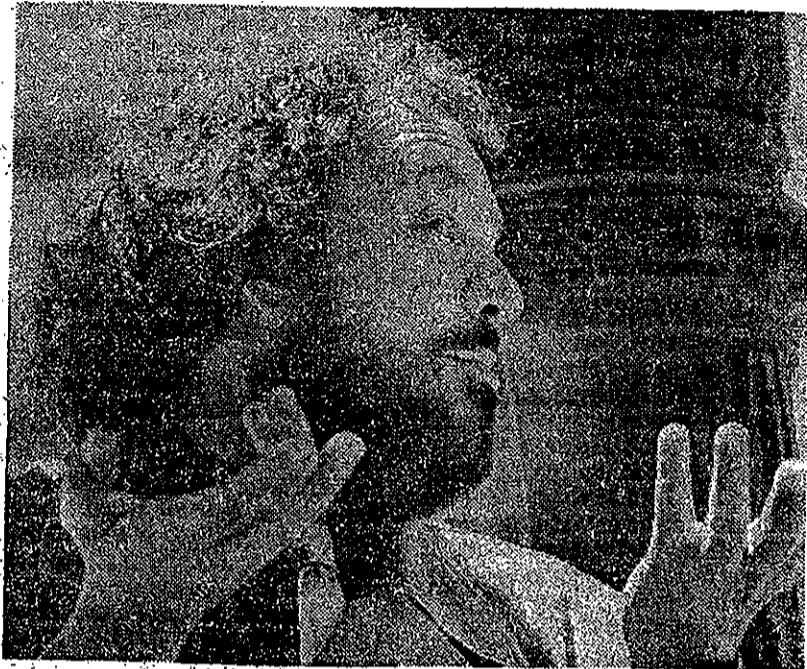
SLATE failed, but the movement, dedicated to what at that time were considered left-wing causes, thrived. And many members never forgot what they learned.

Miller, for instance, for a decade has headed the San Francisco-based Organized Training Center, which helps organize groups and trains them in strategy and tactics to bolster causes in the name of social justice. Mike Tigar (now teaching at the University of Texas-Austin) became prominent as counsel in social causes. Susan Griffin became a prominent feminist author and poet, and Kate Coleman, a widely read writer.

When the campus administration tried to prevent such issues as nuclear bomb testing and racial discrimination in fraternities from getting on a student ballot, "a lot of us were radicalized," recalled Franck.

The chancellor (Clark Kerr) had decried student apathy in the '50s, and we took him seriously. Suddenly, they didn't like it anymore.

SLATE became nationally known, and people came from other cam-



Examiner file photo

SLATE founder Mike Miller, above, and Kate Coleman, left, as they looked in the mid-'60s. Being charter members of one of the first new-left groups taught them lessons they still apply today.



pus to learn from its members, among them Tom Hayden, a long-time radical politics figure and now a California state assemblyman.

"He spent most of the summer with us and then went back to Michigan and started a campus political group," Franck recalled.

Franck later returned to Berkeley with a law degree and helped represent some of the 800 demonstrators arrested in 1964 when they conducted a sit-in in Sproul Hall, the campus administration building.

An Examiner reporter in 1965 described SLATE with a "floating membership of about 50 students." Gradually, the organization's activities faded away, its last evidence of life a popular annual publication reviewing the professors and their courses with descriptions ranging from "insufferable bores" to "easy graders."

The reunion will involve members

who early on had been active in attempting to generate student support on a variety of issues: against apartheid in South Africa and compulsory training in ROTC, and for organizing farm labor and providing birth control information at the student health center.

Franck expects a number of achievers to attend the reunion including State Sen. Bill Lockyer, D-San Leandro. Some, including Franck, have settled into roles removed from public issues. Franck, for instance, formerly headed the Pacifica Foundation, sponsor of Berkeley radio station KPFA and four other listener-sponsored stations, that in his words, "have strong concern for covering movements for social change in the country."

Franck now devotes much of his time and energy to his law practice, specializing in entertainment and copyright issues. "I have to make a living," he observed.

After a private gathering Friday night at a Berkeley home, the SLATE reunion will resume Saturday at Dwinelle Hall on the campus.

A party-dance on Saturday night and picnic Sunday will close the reunion.

Man faces charges of kidnapping after siege

Special to The Examiner

MILPITAS — A 34-year-old man was in jail today facing charges of kidnapping, assault and false imprisonment after police were held at bay for five hours by a gunman with a woman hostage.

James A. Moore, 34, was arrested shortly after 8 last night after he walked out of a miniature golf arcade with his hands over his head. A woman who police said was held hostage was

at his side.

Spectators cheered as the woman was released. Moore was handcuffed and taken into custody.

Police say Santa Clara County sheriff's deputies were attempting to serve a \$5,000 felony warrant on Moore yesterday when he fled his home outside Milpitas and led deputies on a car chase.

He abandoned his car and took

cover in the Golfland Arcade at Jacklin Road near Highway 680 about 3 p.m. Police say Rhona Prince, a 21-year-old arcade worker, was held hostage.

As more than 60 police officers, Santa Clara County sheriff's deputies and California Highway Patrol officers surrounded the arcade, officers began telephone negotiations with the gunman.

WANTED . . . 2,500,000 Secretaries

DIABETES
Downtown Supply Center
DISCOUNT PRICES
All Major Blood Sugar