



# **Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History of the 1960s Anti-War Movement**

*Carl Oglesby*

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In 1964, Carl Oglesby, a young copywriter for a Michigan-based defense contractor, was asked by a local Democratic congressman to draft a campaign paper on the Vietnam War. Oglesby's report argued that the conflict was misplaced and unwinnable. He had little idea that its subsequent publication would put him on a fast track to becoming the president of the now-legendary protest movement Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). In this book, Oglesby shares the triumphs and tribulations of an organization that burgeoned across America, only to collapse in the face of surveillance by the U.S. government and infighting.

As an SDS leader, Oglesby spoke on the same platform as Coretta Scott King and Benjamin Spock at the storied 1965 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. He traveled to war-ravaged Vietnam and to the international war crimes tribunal in Scandinavia, where he met with Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. He helped initiate the Venceremos Brigade, which dispatched thousands of American students to bring in the Cuban sugar harvest. He reluctantly participated in the protest outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention and was a witness for the defense at the trial of the Chicago Seven the following year. Eventually, after extensive battles with those in SDS who saw its future more as a vanguard guerrilla group than as an open mass movement, Oglesby was drummed out of the organization. Shortly after, it collapsed when key members of its leadership quit to set up the Weather Underground.

This beautifully written and elegiac memoir is rich in contemporary echoes as America once again must come to terms with an ill-conceived military adventure abroad. Carl Oglesby warns of the destructive frustrations of a peace campaign unable to achieve its goals. But above all, he captures the joyful liberation of joining together to take a stand for what is right and just -- the soaring and swooping of a protest movement in full flight, like ravens in a storm.

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