

1-5-1968

Resist Newsletter, Jan. 5, 1968

Resist

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter>

Recommended Citation

Resist, "Resist Newsletter, Jan. 5, 1968" (1968). *Resist Newsletters*. 2.
<https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter/2>

RESIST *a call to resist illegitimate authority*

NEWSLETTER # 3

January 5 , 1968 - 763 Massachusetts Avenue, Room 4, Cambridge, Mass. 02139

WHAT, BEYOND SUPPORT ? a program suggestion

Many people have expressed the wish to do more, in "adult groups," than raise funds and provide moral support. I want therefore to sketch a few program ideas that are being tried out in various places in the country. I should also say that when we have a sense of the viability of the Vietnam Commencement (described elsewhere in this Newsletter), the Conditional Pledge (Newsletter #2), or further direct action in Washington, we may help to mount such programs, too.

I-A program: Local boards are required by law to list the names (though not the addresses) of all men classified as I-A at the last Board Meeting. It is therefore possible for anyone to get those names (trouble with recalcitrant local board clerks can usually be taken care of through a phone call to the State Director of Selective Service, or, as a last resort, through a court order). You can generally figure out where a man lives, and then call or visit him (writing is not usually much good, and calling often fails to establish sufficient contact). You can tell him that you understand he has been classified I-A, and that that means he will soon be drafted. You don't know what his feelings are about the draft or about the war, but you want him to know that if he wants to obtain a different draft status and needs help, you can provide counselling and literature. And if he, like you, is unhappy with the war, you want him to know that you are with him and will help him in any way you can. Obviously, we can reach only a small proportion of I-A men, but the impact of such a program in a community can be enormous. And it is precisely the sort of thing that can be done well by concerned and informed adults.

A similar program requires people to go with inductees or men having physical examinations to the examination station (and inside, where that can be managed). You can generally find out when and where busses pick up men to bring them to central examining stations, and you can generally get out, meet the men, and take the bus with them. A good leaflet or the small draft information card (available by writing to Boston Draft Resistance Group, 102 Columbia St., Cambridge Mass. 02139) is quite important for this kind of work.

Both these approaches demand that you establish good draft counselling programs. We have a new and very complete counsellor's kit, the contents and price list for which have been sent to all contact people. The cost of the kit will be published in the next Newsletter. We will also help you set up local counsellor training sessions; regional American Friends Service Committee offices will also be of great help in this respect. To some, counselling may seem tame, but it forms the basis of most programs addressed to young people who are not at the point of direct confrontation with the draft system.

Finally, a number of groups have been trying to develop high school projects: a small group will be trying to coordinate such efforts from the national office. Approaches tried include draft counsellors at military "career days," leafletting, ads in the school or underground paper, finding opportunities for speakers at clubs or assemblies, and petitions to school boards for the establishment of regular draft counselling services.

We are anxious to have your experiences in such projects, and other ideas for programs beyond "support."

-Paul Lauter, National Director-

VIETNAM COMMENCEMENT: program for action

At Berkeley, faculty and students are planning a "Vietnam Commencement" ceremony to dramatize their support of the increasing numbers of seniors and graduate students who face the decision to resist the draft. The feeling among the Berkeley group, as it may well be on other campuses, is that the Class of 1968 is the nation's first "I-A class." In the Commencement proposal written up by the Berkeley group, it is stated: "Our objective is not to seek student deferments. Our concern is with the personal crisis of every young man who faces conscription into a war that deeply offends his conscience." The Commencement will have as its immediate focus two pledges now in circulation on the Berkeley campus. The first is a statement of resistance to be signed by students who have determined to refuse induction:

Our war in Vietnam is unjust and immoral. As long as the United States is involved in this war, I will not serve in the Armed Forces.

The second is a statement of support to be signed by faculty members and others not subject to the draft:

Although I am not subject to the draft, my opposition to our government's policy in Vietnam compels me to support those draft-eligible Americans who have pledged to refuse induction. I believe that their decisions are legitimate acts of conscience opposing an unjust and immoral war. I pledge to support these young Americans with encouragement, counsel, and financial aid.

In addition to publicizing the pledge campaign and to saluting those people who have committed themselves to the course of resistance, it is hoped that the Commencement "will also be an opportunity to strengthen the resistance of all of us who oppose the war, regardless of the form our opposition may take. And it will amount to a pledge of ongoing support for all who may subsequently decide that they must defy the draft!"

We welcome your reactions to the Berkeley program. If people feel this a useful focus for work, and if we get strong positive feedback about this or the "Conditional Pledge" outlined in the last issue, the RESIST national office will take on the task of coordinating such efforts.

Riordon, CADRE Organizer, Gets 3-Year Sentence

On December 18, 1967, Dennis McKittrick Riordon was sentenced to 3 years in federal prison for resisting induction. Those familiar with Dennis' draft resistance work agreed the sentence was minimal and could be explained only as a testimony to the profound impact made by his integrity and deep conviction on the Justice Department representatives involved with his case, particularly presiding Judge Julius Hoffman.

Dennis' public draft resistance began on April 15, 1967 when, having decided to forego a pending CO claim, he burned his draft card with more than 170 other draft refusers in the Sheep Meadow in New York's Central Park. He then returned to the Chicago area, where he had been heading a civil rights organization, Freedom Drivers.

In Chicago Dennis met with several other April 15 draft card burners, including ex-Green Beret reservist Gary Rader, and began to discuss plans for common defense in the event of immediate prosecution. As these discussions continued and prosecution failed to materialize, the idea of a more permanent resistance group developed, and by early May CADRE (Chicago Area Draft Resisters) had been born. From that time to the date of his incarceration, Dennis worked full-time in draft resistance activity, spending part of his time draft counselling for the American Friends Service Committee and the rest as a CADRE organizer. In his work with CADRE Dennis made numerous public appearances on radio and television discussions and documentaries, and his draft card burnings and public act of draft refusal on September 13, 1967, gained wide renown through the local press.

No mention was made of Dennis' history of draft resistance, in court December 18. The prosecuting attorney, David Hartigan, and the attorney for the defense, George

Pontikes, had previously agreed to deal solely with Dennis' refusal of induction on September 13. News clippings reporting the defendant's anti-draft activity had been omitted from the file by mutual consent.

In a court packed with about 80 Riordon supporters, neither the prosecution or the defense made any opening statements. The only interference with any part of the defense was Hartigan's perfunctory objection to the first question put to Dennis by his attorney: Why had he refused induction? Judge Hoffman explicitly acknowledged that this question could only have been asked in an effort to provide mitigation of sentence, but overruled Hartigan's objection. Dennis explained his refusal by pointing to inequities and discrimination in administration of the Selective Service law, particularly the inaccessibility of the CO classification to the uneducated and those with unorthodox religious backgrounds.

A single question was put to Dennis by the prosecution: Did you refuse induction on September 13, 1967? A simple affirmation elicited no cross-examination from Hartigan. Testimonies by four character witnesses, and a request for probation by Pentikes did not halt the impending conviction. (Judge Hoffman alleged that probation would encourage "thousands of others to resist the draft at a time when GI's are dying in Vietnam.")

The 3-year sentence was decreed despite Judge Hoffman's obvious growing interest in the defendant, who explained his stand simply and with eloquence. The judge's deliberation over the sentence was obviously uncomfortable.

Riordon will serve out his term at the federal prison in Springfield, Missouri.

-Richard Boardman-

(Note: The next issue of the Newsletter will run a similar account of trial and prosecution.)

BULLETINS

THE RESISTANCE IN DENVER, Colorado has sent a plea for aid to the National office. In part the letter reads, "The Resistance here in Colorado is the original poor relations. We have no financial angels here, and it is next to impossible to get anti-war people to contribute donations to any but the very group they belong to, since they have little enough money as it is....\$10 is to us what \$100 is to you. We can't even raise that. We have to hassle to get up \$5 to get paper and stencils for leaflets." The Resistance consists of 5 boys and 2 girls who have "dropped out" to work full-time. In view of their poverty, the group has done a heroic job of organizing and demonstrating already. (contacts made in local high schools, daily demonstrations in front of the Induction Center, plans to send two people on a tour of other Colorado campuses, and as well to organize non-registration among high school students). However, the letter proceeds, "our almost nonexistent financial situation keeps us from doing all that we are capable of." A monthly donation of \$100 is solicited from National Resist; \$400/month is aimed for altogether to pay, among other things (rent, phone bill, etc.) for \$5/week per organizer for food. "Any amount you can send towards this goal would be like manna from heaven to a starving group of organizers who get nothing but harassment and who are economically blacklisted for jobs here, due to the reactionary nature of the region we are working in." Donations are urgently solicited to: The Resistance, P.O. Box 10453, Denver, Colorado 80210.

*

HENRY BRAUN, a poet and an assistant professor at Temple University who turned in his 5-A (overage; Braun is 37, married, and the father of two children) draft card to the Justice Department on October 20, was notified by his Buffalo, N.Y. draft board in mid-December that he had been reclassified I-A. When the New York Times reported erroneously that Braun planned "to appeal his reclassification," Braun wrote a letter to the Times stating, "I do not plan to appeal and have not

asked for a hearing to that end. I would, however, like to meet the members of my draft board personally to discuss the morality of the war and the draft with citizens of my former home town. I turned in my draft card at the Justice Department in order to share some of the young resisters' jeopardy. I now know at least a small part of what it must feel like to be a young man unable to afford college or, maybe, what it will feel like to be a graduate student in the fields of history, music, or literature. I think every man in our country -no matter how old he is- should consider himself I-A, and then ask himself how he should act in relation to the war in Vietnam."

Times Magazine (29 December) titles its article on Braun "A Surprised I-A" but fails to indicate that Braun was surprised not that there was a response to his act of October 20, but that the response came from his draft board and not from the Justice Department. Many others, including citizens with no sympathy for draft resistance, will share his surprise.

*

IN A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE the Boston Globe reported Sunday, December 31, that 25 draft resisters had been convicted in 1966 and 1967, and that almost 200 in Massachusetts face prosecution in 1968. The page and a half spread entitled "Draft Resisters Feel Crackdown" and (in continuation) "Many New Ways To Avoid The Draft, But Enlisting Still Works," was devoted to listing at random ways of evading conscription and to citing officer training opportunities in the armed forces. Col. Paul F. Feeney, deputy director of the Massachusetts Selective Service Hq., is quoted as saying of "deferment seekers," "Frankly, I think it's lack of guts." Of CO's, however, he remarks, "We can use all the o.o's we can get our hands on. They're wonderful workers."

The article is heavily weighted. Needless to say, no distinction is made between evasion and resistance which, through the reporter's slant, are pretty well equated. The sheer space given to the account, however, and to a fairly long companion article on emigres to Canada, indicates the impact that resistance in Massachusetts is beginning to have.

*

In a letter to President Johnson, 320 LAW STUDENTS from 20 law schools (including NYU, Harvard, Boalt Hall, Hastings in San Francisco, Columbia, Yale, Chicago, Georgetown, Stanford, and the University of Pennsylvania) have pledged to "refuse to participate in military service" if called to fight in Vietnam.

*

The New York Times reported December 12 that CONVICTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THE DRAFT LAWS had doubled in the past year, and that judges had handed out stiffer sentences. Figures from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts showed that 748 persons were convicted during the fiscal year ending last June 30. This compares with 372 during the previous fiscal year. The average sentence for the 666 persons who went to prison was 32.1 months compared to 26.4 months in the previous year and 21 months the year before that. The figures also indicate that the Justice Department has obtained convictions in about half the cases it has prosecuted.

*

THE BLUE BUS, an underground magazine put out by high school students in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, has been under fire from the commander of the Marple-Newtown VFW post as an organ of "Quaker pacifists." The commander also charges, according to the Philadelphia Inquirer, that the magazine is "being produced on school property and perhaps on school-bought stock." The editors of the magazine deny these charges. The magazine, one of them says, is dedicated to "peace, religion, philosophy, music -anything of a controversial nature." Up to now at least, the Blue Bus has continued to roll.

*

A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "WHY RESIST THE DRAFT?" has been composed by Fred and Suzi Moore of Philadelphia, Pa. The pamphlet explains why conscription must be

viewed as morally indefensible. Fred Moore served 17 months and 10 days on a 2-year sentence at the Allenwood Federal Prison Camp. Since then he and his wife have been speaking against the draft and encouraging non-cooperation. For the pamphlet and other info., write to: NON-COOPERATION & PRISON c/o Fred and Suzi Moore, 1526 Race Street. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102.

*

Some items from the Sept.-Oct. News Notes of the CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS: On October 11, U.S. District Judge Frank M. Scarlett imposed what is believed to be the heaviest sentence given a selective service violator since World War I, on Clifton Thurley Haywood, 24, a Black Muslim: two consecutive five-year sentences and two \$10,000 fines. Individuals are urged to write to Judge Scarlett, U.S. District Court, Brunswick, Georgia, expressing their objection to this Draconian sentence...CCGO West Coast Office is participating in a series of Draft Counselors' Training Sessions in cooperation with representatives of World Without War, Students for a Democratic Society, the Berkeley Draft Information Committee and others. The series consists of eleven Friday evening symposiums designed to inform prospective counselors on all areas of the counseling process and the options of draft age men. Topics of discussion will include the relation of counseling to ideology, conscientious objection, the various deferments, the Resistance, ghetto counseling, CO's in the military and reserves and the question of voluntary exile...Of a group of 75 men in training for the medical profession who met on Oct.11 in San Francisco to discuss their special problems with conscience and the draft, approximately 80% stated they would go to Canada before accepting induction to fight in this war, and about 10% have filed or are planning to file for I-O. The meeting was sponsored by the Health Professionals Against the War in Vietnam.(Subscriptions to CCGO News Notes can be obtained by writing to CCGO, 2016 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103).

*

RESISTANCE ORGANIZATION IN VARIOUS AREAS:

Seattle: two groups have draft resistance as their primary focus, Draft Resistance, Seattle, and Mothers Against the Draft-Fathers Against the Draft (MAD-FAD); other organizations that have undertaken some draft resistance activities, education or support include the University Committee on War & Peace, AFSC, Seattle Women Act for Peace, Seattle Civil Action Committee, and Greater Seattle Clergy & Lay Concerned About the War. MAD-FAD is now conducting a campaign for draft counseling for high school students, including a demand that the School Board allow a draft counselor to be present on every occasion when military recruiters are allowed to come into the schools. (Information re: MAD-FAD and other organizations mentioned may be obtained by writing to them c/o Sue D. Gettfried, 4811 N.E. 107th, Seattle, Washington 98125). -New Mexico: All N.M. signers of A Call have been contacted; two workshops to train draft counselors have been held and a third is scheduled for Jan.22; at present, however, there is only one non-cooperator, a University of New Mexico student. -Yellow Springs: financial and legal support is being provided for 91 Antioch anti-war demonstrators arrested in Cincinnati. Three of these students were given 30-day sentences in the Cincinnati workhouse on contempt charges. An editorial in The Dayton Daily News, Dec.10, accuses the sentencing judge, George S. Heitzler, of perpetrating "Frontier-Style Justice," and describes the travesty of the "contempt hearings" -if those parodies of justice can be dignified by the term 'hearings'." -Twin Cities: The Twin Cities Draft Information Center is an independent organization formed in September whose ultimate goal is the abolition of conscription. The Center provides draft counseling, support for The Resistance, and speakers to talk about draft resistance. It also does extensive leafletting of college students and at induction centers. The Center is financed entirely by voluntary contributions, and money is needed to support an office, a full-time organizer, and a variety of activities. Contributions to: Twin Cities Draft Information Center, 1905 3rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404.

*

FROM THE RESISTANCE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER, December 13: Next nationwide Resistance action, April 2. The New York Resistance plans to consider in the immediate future the effect of the Stop the Draft Week activities at the induction center, their value to the Resistance, and whether the New York Resistance should participate in similar disruptive tactics in the future. In Chicago, CADRE has decided to start directing its attention to college campuses in the area, which, with the exception of Northwestern have up to now been curiously unresponsive to the Resistance. Meanwhile, at least twenty lawyers have agreed to make their services available to CADRE members. Religious services at which draft cards have been burned or turned in have been held in recent weeks in New York (86 cards, 750 supporters present), Washington, San Francisco (89 cards, 480 statements of complicity), Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and New Haven. Cards have been turned in or burned in other forms of demonstration at Chicago, Cincinnati, Providence, Portland, Ithaca, Austin. Of the 16 original members of the Ithaca Resistance, seven have been reclassified, including Father David Connor, Rev. Paul Gibbons, and Nathaniel Pierce, all of the Cornell United Religious Works, and James Matlook, Professor of English.

*

dissent and the university ... What to Do?

(The following is based on a letter sent to us by Douglas F. Dowd, Department of Economics, Cornell University. We would like your reactions. We will print letters we find important on this subject, since we hope to get debate going on possible future programs for RESIST.)

The remarks that follow are addressed to those who already dissent from the major directions of United States policy, and especially to those who are members of the academic community. To all, it is clear to one degree or other that we are deep in crisis. It may be less clear that we must think much more about certain aspects of that crisis if we who dissent are not to do ourselves in.

For some time it has been clear that the universities have been the centers of dissent and resistance. It is less obvious that the university is likely to become one of the first casualties on the home front. What began largely as protests and discussions directed against the war in Vietnam has now evolved into increasing attacks on the complicity of universities in the war effort. Such complicity is evidenced in recruiting on campus and in certain kinds of research on campus or in association with the university. As the activities condemning recruiting and research mount, so the inclination of faculties and administrations to condemn and punish the protestors also mounts, even though many in those faculties and administrations are themselves against the war. Is there a right and a wrong in this deadly tangle? I believe there is, and I believe that the protestors are in the right. Believing they are right may be comforting for them and for us, but this is no longer enough. If resistance is to continue, and if at the same time the university is to preserve its integrity, belief alone is unfortunately insufficient. We must first define and explain our position, and then communicate it to all concerned. By such action we shall be able to take our stand more effectively.

We are condemned and punished for interfering with recruiters, and for condemning research connected with the war. The attack against us is couched in terms that appeal to the higher values of the university--the rights of all to think, speak, and research as they choose. However, such terms involve a confusion, since those pronouncing them seem to forget that the emergence of

recruiting and research on campus were themselves violations of the most important right of the university, This is its integrity, the moral prerogative of the university to be a center of learning and debate, not a marketplace for industry or a tool for doing the work of outside agencies inimical to its beliefs. University integrity is called into question by recruiting, whether this be for Parker Pen or Dow Chemical, for the CIA or the marines, and by research, whether it be in bacteriological warfare or in counter-insurgency techniques.

Recruiting of all sorts came into being as a mutual convenience for suppliers and demanders of services; there is no difference of principle between this and having service stations on campuses. It is true that in some colleges we train people for jobs, but it is nothing more than a convenience to provide as well rooms in which they may consult about job possibilities. There are few who would object to the provision of this sort of convenience. Many, however, object to the provision of such a convenience when it is associated with an evil. When the objections of these people begin to rock the boat of the university, the proper action is not to expel them, but to re-examine the dangers posed by providing the convenience.

In connection with these questions, the issue of free speech is nearly always posed. Those who protest recruiting would not, I imagine, protest the right of Dow Chemical or the CIA to appear in public to make their cases and discuss them. That is freedom of speech. However, there is absolutely no connection between freedom of speech and university aid in recruiting. Those of us who protest recruiting look with horror or distaste upon those who join in making napalm, but we don't try to keep them from taking such jobs. We seek only to keep the university from cooperating in making such jobs available on the campus. This is where the line must be drawn.

The remarks made in connection with recruiting may also be seen to apply to military research. It is not as easy to know where to draw the line for research in general, but it is easy to say that for most campuses the line should not be where it is. Just where it should be drawn is a distinction that full and serious university-wide discussion would surely help to reveal. Certainly research should never include work on bacteriological warfare, or the like. Might it include government-sponsored studies of air pollution? Perhaps, after some discussion of exactly what that might entail. But until such discussion on these explosive questions takes place, we stand in great danger of having the university itself explode, and those who are trying to clean it up are most likely to be the ones destroyed in the explosion.

As a firm believer in university "neutrality," I feel that the universities have no business in directly aiding non-academic agencies to find personnel, or in doing the research for non-academic agencies. Such personnel indeed will be found; such work will indeed be done; both will in fact be undertaken by people who come from universities. However, to have such work done under university auspices kills neutrality, and makes the university a biased participant.

One might end such remarks with some questions. If universities train people to work, say, for Dow Chemical, they also "train" people to work in the peace movement. Shall the universities recruit for the peace movement? Of course not, Shall the universities allow students to organize themselves on campuses? Of course. Should the universities favor SDS over YAF, or vice-versa? Of course not. Is it proper for universities to provide conveniences for outside agencies? Since when? On what grounds? To what ends? By whose decisions? At any cost? Let us reason together, before it is too late.

•••••