STP News

Len Schafer

1970

Open Letter:

I have been asked by the STP Coalition for the content of my legal predicament so that people will have a clearer understanding of the police harrasment I have been subjected to.

In the fall of '68, I and many other innocent brothers and sisters had the misfortune of meeting David J. Valler. Valler was running for president of the U.S., '68 was an election year. His platform was LSD and dynamite. He said before a federal grand jury in October '69 that he walked around the "Hip" Community handing these out. While he was on the streets, he tried to get people to bomb police stations, draft boards, and the CIA office in Ann Arbor.

Before Valler's first arrest (grass and LSD sales), he tried to involve myself, John Sinclair, and Pun Plamondon. We did not bite, in either case (him being President or his bombing acts).

On October 31, 1968 I attended the recording of the MC5's first album at the Grande Ballroom. As I left the ballroom, I was attacked by two undercover state police while in my car. The next day, totally pissed off by the harrasment of me and my friends, I placed a brick through a front window of one of their cars, splitting one of their pin-heads open.

I was arrested on the spot and charged with Felonious Assault and placed on $5000 bond. I later copped a plea (pled guilty) and got two years probation with the last six months in the Detroit House of Correction.

When I got out of jail I cut my hair and beard and disappeared into suburbia. Within the week the Special Investigation Bureau, and the state police started arresting people. Over 200 people were taken downtown for questioning about the bombings.

On November 14 when I saw Valler and his friends in hand-cuffs walking across the TV, I knew they wanted me. The next week I turned myself in to the police. The examination took six weeks and cost me $2,400.

The main witness was David Valler's best friend, Ronald Tunstall. The only reference made to me in this case was that Tunstall asked me, "Why was the CIA office blown up in Ann Arbor?" and "Did you do it?"

He said that I said, "I did not blow up the CIA. Why was it there? I thought the CIA was an external organization."

Later I found out that Tunstall was paid by the Special Investigation Bureau to say these things (see FE #103, April 16–29, 1970).

Let it be known that David Valler or Ronald Tunstall were never members of the White Panther Party.

As Valler's case on marijuana came up, he was convicted, he copped to and received a sentence of 7 to 10 years for possession. After two weeks behind bars, he was no longer receiving headlines so he called the FBI.

The FBI and David Valler conspired to further harrass the White Panther Party by adding the charge of "conspiracy to bomb" the CIA office, charging Pun Plamondon, Minister of Defense, with the actual act of bombing, and Chairman John Sinclair and myself with "conspiracy':

The state conspiracy charge carries a 25 year maximum, the federal charge is a 5 year maximum. The total time that the pigs want from my life is 30 years. My present bond in both cases are $5,500.

I understand that bands are asked to play many benefits, however the weight of my harrassment calls me to ask your band to play in a benefit for my coming legal expenses. The benefit is planned on July 14, at the Palladium.

Jack Forrest,

Dep. Minister of Education

White Panther Party.

The above letter is an explanation of the first summer Serve The People benefit. STP is now organizing to establish such benefits on a monthly basis.

To be able to do this we need the support of local bands willing to donate their energies to community programs that will benefit from these concerts.

If your band can relate to what we're doing, attend our next meeting or call the Fifth Estate at 831–6800 for the complete run-down.

At the last STP meeting Open City split from the coalition because of its fear of the 'Serve The People' Coalition name. John Martin, the head of Open City, said that the steering committee of Open City felt that 'STP' would be interpreted by many as meaning "Stop the Pig."

Martin went on to say that this would hinder Open City's operations by inviting police harrasment and loss of suburban liberal support.

Rejecting this argument to change the Coalition's name, STP voted to keep the Serve The People title.

Open City people said that they would continue to attend STP activities as individuals not directly representing Open City.

A meeting of all the "underground" media people in the Detroit area was set up by the Coalition. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a means of coordinating local news for the greatest possible coverage. The result of that meeting will be published in the next STP News.

The next STP meeting will be Tuesday, June 16, 7:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Church, McCollister Hall, 4605 Cass at Forest.

It's open to all groups and individuals that are interested in getting together to Serve The People.

Mace Won't Wear Off...

TUCSON, Ariz.—David Dingledine newly appointed as chief deputy Pima County attorney, took from his desk what he thought was mouth freshener and sprayed it into his mouth.

It was a small canister of chemical Mace, left behind by a previous occupant. Dingledine's comment: "It burns."

fifth estate

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