

# Looking for “Litton Connection”

...Toronto Police Seize Prison Paper

Fifth Estate Collective

1983

This statement was received July 7 from the publishers of *Bulldozer* magazine.

On June 13<sup>th</sup> the Metropolitan police raided our house on Cambridge Ave. as part of the ongoing investigation into the bombing of the Litton Systems Plant outside the city last October (see FE #311, Winter 1982–83).

On one level, this is just one of a series of raids which have taken place in Toronto. Unfortunately, there are many indications that this is a definite escalation of the harassment that has been directed against anti-authoritarians and activists within the peace movement.

First off, the raid was directly linked to the fact that the local support work for the Five people arrested in Vancouver and charged with the Litton bombing and other acts of sabotage has essentially been centered in our house. Much of the initiative has come from some of the people living here; we are connected to them politically and personally. We support them as friends. And we support them politically because we believe that it is imperative to support political people facing charges stemming from political activity regardless of the charges involved.

## Prison Newsletter Seized

More disturbingly though, the raid also seems to be a direct attack against *Bulldozer*. (For anyone not familiar with *Bulldozer*, it is a magazine written by and for political prisoners, with production and distribution being done by some of the people living here.) We were in the midst of production for issue no. 6 which was shaping up to be the best issue yet. We were, and are, excited by this issue and the raid caught us at virtually the worse time possible.

Seizure of the copy for the new issue was specified in the search warrant. The typeset galleys were taken along with the original articles. The mailing list was also seized. Production has been set back for a month and some expenses will have to be duplicated. Xeroxes of the mailing list were returned to us and we are currently trying to get the typeset copy back as well.

The political offenses listed on the warrant—and it is important to note that no charges have been laid along these lines—are seditious libel and sabotage of Litton. These remain over our heads as potential charges and could be laid at any time.

Immediately after the raid, we thought that the accusation of association with the Litton bombing was merely an excuse for the police to come fishing. But as the situation clarified, it has become more apparent that the Toronto authorities are very seriously looking for the “Toronto link.” On one level this is encouraging because it indicates that they have very little information on what actually did happen leading up to the Oct. 14 bombing.

Their case against the Five accused is probably very weak. The danger lies in the strong temptation the local police must have to “solve the case” regardless of what evidence exists.

The police have been caught flat-footed recently and have drawn blanks in virtually all of the major cases over the past year or so. These cases include the mysterious deaths of over twenty children at Sick Kids hospital; the

sexual abuse and strangulation of nine women last summer. And the British Columbia police actually produced most of the leads that exist on Litton.

It is hard to maintain the image of being a prestigious police department when the statistics indicate quite the opposite. It is quite possible that someone in Toronto will be set up for the Litton rap. It could be us; it could be someone else. But one shouldn't be surprised if it happens.

What is obvious is that the threat of such a charge as "seditious libel" is an attempt to stifle debate and discussion. *Bulldozer* is a legal magazine yet its existence was severely compromised by the raid. *Bulldozer* is a forum of communication for the "disappeared" people in North America, those people who have been buried by the state in the prisons.

Increasingly *Bulldozer* was finding its community among the political prisoners, white, native and black, whom the state is trying to silence. As a collective we sought to use our media skills to give voice to those people who had directly challenged the power of the state.

## **Home Was Bugged**

In this Brave New World that we find ourselves in, communication itself becomes suspect. Without having committed any crimes, we discovered that our most intimate as well as our political conversations were monitored within our own home. We knew for quite a while this was a possibility but it is quite an intimidating and choking experience to concretely learn that little of our lives has been protected from the prying ears of the state over the past several months. To not be able to speak freely in one's own home for fear of listening devices merely confirms our worst fears of the state; that there can be no compromise between our freedom and the state's existence.

One direct result of the surveillance on us was the laying of four criminal charges on a woman who had no direct participation in the political activities for which the warrant was issued. The charges against her are very serious; procuring an abortion, procuring instruments for an abortion and two theft charges. We protest these charges and are totally outraged by them. The person charged is innocent of any wrongdoing. At the time the charge was laid, it was used as leverage to try to gain information on the political activities of others.

## ***Bulldozer* Will Come Out**

In spite of the tensions that have percolated through all of us from the trauma of the raid and its aftermath, we are gaining strength and experience. We are prepared for whatever comes and we will fight on both the political and legal fronts. Financial support is needed to challenge the legitimacy of the search warrants, but especially for the abortion charges.

This woman is suffering persecution because she chooses to live with "enemies of the state." It is doubtful that many people could be under intensive surveillance for some months without engaging in some behaviour deemed "criminal" by the law.

*Bulldozer* no. 6 will come out. It will be late. It will be good. Ironically, we were having problems writing an introduction on "Resistance and Repression." But that problem has been solved.

It should be noted that the last time a charge of seditious libel was laid was in 1950. So, to even use it as a threat indicates the depths to which they are willing to stoop. We need political, moral and financial support. Money received, unless specified will be shared between the costs of bringing out *Bulldozer*, fighting the abortion charges and other support expenses.

Please send any contributions to *Bulldozer*, P.O. Box 5052, Stn. A, Toronto Ont., Canada M5W 1W4. And remember, the Vancouver Five need your support now more than ever.

Although plans are not definite at this writing since we just received news of the above raid, the *Fifth Estate* is planning to coordinate a fund-raising event here at our office/performance space; contact us later in July for details. Also, *Bulldozer*, the current issue as well as previous ones, is available through the FE Bookstore, but we encourage

orders to go directly to the publisher at the above address as a show of support. A fuller version of this statement is also available from them.

This statement was received July 7 from the publishers of *Bulldozer* magazine. The *Fifth Estate* urges complete support for those being victimized by the Toronto police.

## **Related**

See "Vancouver Five Charged With Litton Bombing" in this issue.



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Fifth Estate #313, Summer, 1983

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