

Repression Continues in Toronto

Fifth Estate Collective

1983

On June 13th the Toronto Metropolitan Police raided a home of several people active in producing the *Bulldozer* prison support paper and in supporting the Vancouver Five. Ostensibly seeking links to the Litton bombing, a series of charges were brought against the residents. Details of the raid appeared in FE #313, Summer 1983. The following is a report on recent developments.

We have recovered our balance after the raid on *Bulldozer* and the Vancouver Five Support Group. Issue No. 6 was published and mailed out in mid-August without any further problems coming from the state. It is most likely that the threatened charge of Seditious Libel will not be heard from again while it is still too early to know whether any charges will come down around the bombing of the Litton plant.

The charge of procuring an abortion, and procuring instruments for an abortion still stand against Colleen Crosbie. A preliminary trial was set for October 24th but it has now been held off. In spite of our best intentions, we are becoming embroiled in the civil liberties aspect of the case. The Crown has asked that the information, given to the Judge in order to get the search warrant, be sealed in the name of national security. Without having this information it is difficult to prepare a defense on the abortion charges. Moreover, there is the broader issue of the right of access to the information. It is very frustrating spending time and money fighting for civil rights that we know don't mean much when push comes to shove, but such is the nature of the legal system that we must follow it through.

A total of eighteen criminal charges have been laid against people doing support work for the Vancouver Five in Toronto since the beginning of May. Abie Weisfeld faces two counts of welfare fraud for a situation in which the normal procedure would be to simply ask for repayment. Brian Burch, who recently did a forty day fast for peace was charged with assaulting police and Possession of a dangerous weapon during flag raising ceremonies at the provincial legislature on Canada Day, July 1st. A peace camp which had been running on the site for nearly two months had just been closed down the previous evening resulting in fourteen trespass charges. In addition, Burch faces a charge of trespass, Crosbie faces two theft charges involved with the alleged abortion equipment and four face possession of marijuana charges after the June 13th raid.

The Crown has said that no wire tap or room bug evidence would be used at Crosbie's preliminary. Two people, Deyarmond and Jim Campbell from the raided house, were given notices that their conversations were subject to electronic interception. This allows for both room bugs or phone taps or any other means possible. The notices must be given after the warrant authorizing such interceptions has expired. Notices must be given in order for any taped material to be used in criminal proceedings, but do not-have to be given if the wire taps are placed there simply for information gathering by the Security Service.

The state still has all the material taken from the raid. We were allowed to xerox anything that we wanted including the mailing list but there has been no indication as to when such material will be returned. The Peace groups raided much earlier in the year have been having problems getting their material back since the Crown can hold onto such material for fifteen months without any recourse available to those from whom the material was taken.

It is rather disconcerting that the left in Toronto seems little concerned with either the wave of harassment that has happened here or the trials currently under way for the Vancouver Five. There have been notable exceptions to this. Some very good support work has been done. But all in all, it is clear that we can't depend on massive solidarity to keep us free of the hands of the state. In many cases it seems that people simply do not know what to do even if they are aware of what this series of raids and charges represent. Canadian politics simply are not developed enough to deal with these perpetual crises situations.

Many people simply seem to have short attention spans. Others develop complicated rationalizations for non-support. It is too much for some people that the alleged abortion took place in the home without the divine guidance of a doctor. This supposed affront to professionalism is used to discredit us as neo-flower children.

All in all, these events have not given us any more faith in the left. We do however now know much more clearly who our friends are and who can be counted on in times of trouble.

We still need financial assistance. These lawyers fees are deadly even if the lawyers aren't out to become wealthy. It has sentenced us to indefinite terms of paid labor and this seems to be cruel and unusual punishment in itself. The state strategy of disrupting people's lives and work through criminal charges works quite effectively. Not much is gained by denying that. If anyone can help out financially, or politically, please write to Bulldozer, P.O.B. 5052, Stn A, Toronto, Ont., Canada.

Bulldozer No. 6 as well as previous issues are available through the Fifth Estate Bookstore, but we encourage orders to go directly to the above address as a show of support.

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