

Hell No, They Won't Go

Fifth Estate Collective

1967

On October 16, young men in Detroit and in cities across the United States will have turned in their draft cards to federal officials.

In Detroit, at least 20 men are expected to take part in the actual resistance at Cadillac Tower in Downtown Detroit, site of the Selective Service System while a support demonstration will take place outside beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Also, a diverse number of groups will hold a press conference prior to the picketing where statements of support for draft resistance will be read. Led by the Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam, such groups as Veterans for Peace, Detroit Committee to End the War in Vietnam, other women's, civil rights, and community groups will speak.

The clergy organization besides offering their support of draft resistance will offer their churches as sanctuaries to draft resisters who are pursued by the government.

The press conference will be chaired by Rev. Archie Rich and the clergy statement will be read by Father Maurice Geary.

It will be the first major anti-draft effort organized by the Resistance, a group of young men who have turned from protesting the war in Vietnam to an attempt to slow down the flow of manpower into the war effort.

The young men who make up the Resistance are uncertain now how many men will end their complicity with the draft on October 16, but they hope for several thousand. "there are at least several hundred who are committed," says Rodney Robinson of Redwood City, California, "and a lot more who are searching their consciences."

Besides turning in their draft cards, the group also plans to present letters saying they refuse to cooperate with the Selective Service System and will refuse to go into the army if inducted.

What happens to members of the Resistance after October 16 is uncertain. The few individuals who have returned their cards before have usually gotten another one in the mail from their boards, and are often later declared delinquent and called for induction.

But the members of the Resistance do know what action they will take after October 16. Besides hoping that they can slow down the ** flow—of manpower to the war, they also expect that October 16 will provide greater visibility for their' opposition to the war and the draft. Starting October 17, they hope to take advantage of that visibility. They plan speaking tours, civil disobedience, and other actions to "keep vital the spirit generated by October 16." They plan another, larger non cooperation day in December, and still larger ones after that.

If any member of the Resistance is given 1-A status and called for physicals or induction, all members of his local group are supposed to go with him to the induction center, "leafleting, talking to other draftees, perhaps disrupting." They hope this will result in even more visibility. They also expect that some of them will eventually face jail. At that point they may go underground, leave the country, or go to jail.

The Resistance began in California, organized by Dave Harris, Stanford's radical student body president, and a few others. It spread to several other cities and began to gain momentum this summer. It is primarily a local movement. The groups cooperate but there is no national office.

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