

Jerry Rubin Busted in New York

Martin Jezer

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NEW YORK, N.Y., June 15 (Liberation News Service)—Three plainclothes police arrested YIPPEE coordinator Jerry Rubin at his apartment late Thursday afternoon and charged him with possession of dangerous drugs—a felony. From the conduct of the police, it was clear that the bust was politically motivated.

Jerry was alone in his lower East Side apartment at about 5:30 pm Thursday June 13 when the police knocked at his door. They said they wanted to question him “about a homicide in the Bronx.” Jerry let them in, demanding to see a search warrant. They thrust a piece of paper with Jerry’s name and a signature on it, but refused to let Jerry read it. Their questions soon turned from homicide to drugs and finally to politics.

The police remained in the apartment for about a half-hour, threatening and bullying Jerry and rifling through his papers, creating what Jerry called “an atmosphere of terror.” They asked questions about YIPPEE ESSO (a Lower East Side organization), Cuba, Castro, Communism, China and Russia and knew that Jerry had been to Cuba in 1964. “Their questions were less for specific information than for general intimidation,” Jerry said later, but “there was no possibility of my refusing to talk until seeing a lawyer because the cops made it very clear that they were going to beat me unless I answered their questions.”

One cop went methodically through his phone book, remarking at names like Allen Ginsberg and certain political organizations. Another cop went through Jerry’s papers shouting over and over again, “This guy is subversive.” The police told Jerry that they had his house under surveillance for some days, watching who went in and out, because, they said, “We want to know who your friends are.” “When we left the apartment,” Jerry said, “all the papers were strewn throughout the floor, a Castro poster was ripped off the wall and torn, and the place had been turned inside out.

Jerry was handcuffed and taken in a private car to the local ninth precinct, where he was booked. At the station house, Nancy Kirshan, who lives with Jerry, was also arrested. She had come to the station house with Abby Hoffman of YIP in response to a phone call from “a friend of Jerry’s,” who probably was a cop. Police asked her “political questions tinged with anti-Semitism,” but no charges were pressed.

From the station house, Jerry was taken to Criminal Court, where, while awaiting arraignment, he was beaten on the head and kicked in the spine by one of the arresting officers. After his release on \$1,000 bail he went to Bellview Hospital, where Dr. R.P. Bazemore said that from X-rays it looked like a probable fracture of the coccyx (a small bone at the lower end of the vertebral column), a painful but not serious injury. Jerry’s hearing was June 18. He will be represented by attorney William Kunstler, who said that he viewed this as a “political trial.”

Whether this was an isolated incident or the beginning of a concerted effort to bust movement leaders on narcotic charges is yet unknown. But in Chicago a YIPPEE organizational meeting and benefit dance have already been raided, with a total of 36 arrests.



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