

# Chicago Defendants Hold

By William Chapman  
Washington Post Staff Writer

CHICAGO—"The way we approach this," said Rennie Davis, is: "How do you increase the cost to Richard Nixon of carrying out this trial?"

"We'll do it by getting through to the Blacks and the students, who are our constituency anyway. We'll make the costs of this trial on campuses enormous."

With that self-assurance he has brought to conflicts of his time, Davis was speaking late other night about his own trial.

He is a defendant by day, and an organizer and public persuader by night. He is determined that for the next few months in Chicago there will be two concurrent prosecutions—one against him and his co-defendants, the other against the Nixon Ad-

ministration and the war in Vietnam.

Davis is one of the "Chicago 8," the political activists who are on trial here for conspiring to incite disorders at the Democratic National Convention last year. They see the trial—both in and out of the courtroom—as a platform for expounding their views, for continuing agitation against the war, for warning against

what they call the administration's "strategy of repression."

"We hope," said Davis, "to make the courtroom a classroom for the nation."

## UN Notice Sought

Some of their plans seem grandiose — for example, they have contacted foreign countries in an effort to bring the trial to the attention of the United Nations in the manner that South

## Own 'Trial' Out of Court

Africa's racial trials have been debated and condemned.

The defendants are arranging a national strike of law students for Nov. 3 with its theme, "Stop the trial."

They have initiated "conspiracy clubs" on several campuses if for no other reason than to give the word respectability. They are trying to make their trial a focal point for those campus anti-war activities that would be going on anyway.

Inside the Federal Building where the trial proceeds daily, the tactics are different. For the past two weeks, the case has been a major media event with extensive news coverage, and the defendants have used it skillfully.

### Recesses Used

Almost every day at the lunch recess the defendants troop from the courtroom down to a second-floor room where the television and the press await. If the prosecu-

tion has scored a point at 11 a.m., it is roundly denounced by a defendant at 1 p.m.

When a supposedly favorable juror was dismissed from the jury last week, David Dellinger, a defendant, was declaring at noon-time that she had been "sandbagged" by the government. The day before, it was revealed in court that two jurors had been sent threatening anonymous letters; by the time court had resumed in the afternoon the defendant had described that as an FBI "plot."

Television in particular can hardly ignore the lunch-hour counterattacks because they are the only "live" action of the day, cameras being barred from the courtroom.

### Photogenic Yippie

Television finds Abbie Hoffman, a defendant and leader of the Yippies, irre-

sistible. Hoffman was accused one afternoon in court of having seriously offered to take his Yippies away from the convention in exchange for \$100,000. Asked about the charge at the regular news conference the next day, Hoffman turned on a straight face and replied, "Everyone in the country knows it was the Republicans that gave us money—Spiro Agnew gave us \$10,000 in small bills . . ."

Jokes aside, the news conferences have given the defense an unprecedented forum to counter-prosecute the government and get its side across.

The message they seek to explain to the country is that the wrong people are on trial and that Mayor Richard J. Daley and Lyndon Johnson should have been indicted instead.

At a news conference two weeks ago, one defense lawyer, Leonard I. Weinglass, said: "We welcome the opportunity to bring before the people what really happened in Chicago—that the City and the mayor and people in the Federal government conspired to deter peaceful demonstrations." That led to the violence in August of 1968, he contended.

Such out-of-court commentary by defense lawyers was common in the days immediately preceding the trial. Now both Weinglass and co-counsel William M. Kunstler are under the threat of contempt citations for violating a court rule about outside comments.

#### Lively Defense Planned

In about six weeks the defense will begin presenting its own case in court, and its style, too is likely to be unprecedented.

Rennie Davis envisions summoning witnesses who will testify about the history of the war in Vietnam and explain why a protest against it had to be made at the Democratic National Convention.

"We'll also have experts on youth culture, racism, poverty and imperialism," Davis says. "We want to explain our values, our aspirations." Whether U.S. District Judge Julius J. Hoffman, who is hearing the case, will permit such testimony is questionable.

The job of presenting the defendants' case to the coun-

try is coordinated from a four-room office in a run-down building on Jackson Street, a few blocks from the Federal Building. The organization has dubbed itself "The Conspiracy," and made its first money selling yellow buttons with the word "conspiracy" appearing on them.

"The Conspiracy" office directed by Davis consists of six persons who are paid \$30 a week and a number of volunteers. There are two legal researchers, a press representative, and people who help with fund-raising. A "Committee to Defend the Conspiracy" has been put together to raise money for the defense.

On a recent evening, three young volunteers were bolting to the glass-paneled entrance door a large sheet of steel designed to stop any thrown objects. There have

been a number of threatening letters.

One of the volunteers had scrawled on the steel plate a quotation attributed to Deputy Attorney General Richard Kleindienst:

"If people demonstrated in a manner to interfere with others, they should be rounded up and put in a detention camp."



United Press International

Rennie Davis, right, one of eight defendants, meets press



DAVID DELLINGER



THOMAS E. HAYDEN



JERRY RUBIN



ABBOTT HOFFMAN

Associated Press

Quartet of figures in Chicago riot conspiracy trial.