

On Organizing Anti-Represion Teach-ins

Teach-ins are an excellent method of bringing people together to learn about issues. Hopefully, these people will then organize actions and groups to do something about what they have learned. Two models are presented here to give some idea of what can be done in teach-ins focusing on repression. The schedule for "Program on Political Repression" shows what kinds of resources might be used to reveal the tools of repression available to local and national authorities. The report on "On Trial: The United States Government" includes a discussion of the problems of organizing teach-ins with an open, free-flowing format.

Program on Political Repression

Fifteen groups in the Pittsburgh area cooperated in organizing the "Program on Political Repression", a day of workshops, speakers, and films examining the repressive forces working against political activists on a local and nation-wide scale. It was held at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie-Mellon University on Saturday, January 17, and was attended by 1500 people. The program consisted of the following:

FILMS: Black Panther, Mayday, Peoples Park, Pig Power, Summer 68, S.F. State Strike, Yippie film on Chicago*

SPEAKERS: Gilbert Venable, Executive Director, Pittsburgh area chapter of the ACLU, "The Legal Aspects of Political Repression"

Robert G. Coldny, Professor of History, University of Pittsburgh, "Historical Perspectives on Political Repression"

Abbie Hoffman, one of the Conspiracy Eight

David Owens, Professor, University of Pittsburgh

Reggie Schell, Minister of Defense, Black Panther Party of Pennsylvania

WORKSHOPS: "Local Police" - their reaction to persons of opposing political viewpoints - led by R. Stanton Wettick, Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Legal Service Association and Robert DeLeo, staff attorney for the Legal Service

"The Extermination of the Black Panthers" - led by Claude Allen, professor at Point Park College, and Russ Trunzo, staff member of the Repression Information Service Committee

"Suppression of Political Views in the Media and Arts" - led by Charles Robb, editor of the Pittsburgh Point, and a representative from Newsreel

"The New Technology of Repression" - led by James Holland, professor at the University of Pittsburgh

"County, State, and Federal Prisons" - led by Landrew Smith and Jan Shwitzer, ex-convicts, and by Bob Shwitzer, ex-convict and draft resister

"Political Repression in High Schools" - led by Jenny Schneider and Gene Fellner, students at Taylor-Allerdice High School

*The films were obtained from Newsreel. For a catalogue of films...