

Dear Larry,

When you see Ron Dorfman, would you convey my thanks for his Skolnick's Web?

And the suggestion that he was overly kind?

If all he can bring himself to say is, "The man is reckless, ignorant, disruptive, destructive, insensitive, stupid and wrong," then he falls short of understanding that poor egomaniacal crook who is a determined wreck and would eliminate the credibility of all of those who would genuinely seek to heal the ills of a sick society.

On the other hand, he is a man who can achieve what for rational people is the impossible, libelling the likes of Danny Groth.

He is a slanderer whose skill at this craft excels such established professionals as Manchester, witness Skolnick's charging that those heartbroken men who were protecting JFK when he was assassinated were part of a conspiracy to kill him.

He is crazy, but who can stoop to such Skolnicking and say so?

I do wish there had been a bit more space. It is not alone ^{because} ~~that~~ Skolnick meets frequently with DJ agents that questions about what he is up to can't be avoided. Every thing Skolnick does conforms to Dorfman's opening, is designed to make people "fearful", to make them wonder what is "behind every mailbox." With more reason than I have ever seen attributed to him, Skolnick fills the role of somebody's agent.

It is a fine piece and I did enjoy it.

I wish I thought it held some prospect of diminishing the attention every insane thing he says gets.

Even Mussolini made trains run on time. But how about the rest of what he did?

Sincerely,

Skolnick's Web

By RON DORFMAN

One of the functions of political surveillance — whether so intended by official policy or not — is to reduce the effectiveness of dissidents by making them suspicious of one another and fearful of the personal consequences of their political activity. As expressed in the documents stolen from the FBI office in Media, Pa., the intention is to convince as many citizens as possible that there is "an FBI agent behind every mailbox."

It's well known that there can be, and frequently is, an informer in even the most tightly-knit organizations. The December issue of *Harper's* carries a cover story on William Lemmer, a Vietnam veteran who joined the anti-war movement at the state university in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Lemmer, convinced that military intelligence authorities were pursuing him, became an informer for the FBI in the belief they could, or would, "protect" him and his buddies in the Vietnam Veterans Against the War from the military and the police. When he found that that was not the case, he confessed to other VVAW leaders, but nevertheless testified against them before a federal grand jury in connection with demonstrations planned for the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach. Lemmer was obviously on a shaky psychological footing, Frank Donner reports in *Harper's*, but still the FBI exploited him, driving him to the edge of madness.

Not a very pretty picture, and certainly something that political dissidents have to think about.

But there is really no way to eliminate the possibility that one of your trusted friends is reporting everything you say and do to the authorities. For that matter, there is really no way your trusted friends can be 100 per cent certain about you.

Which brings me to the subject of Sherman Skolnick.

In the fall of 1969, Skolnick produced a newspaper — it lasted only the one issue — whose main feature was a centerspread chart entitled "The Web." The Web purported to show how almost everybody in Chicago who was to the political left of Mayor Daley was linked to the United States Central Intelligence Agency. The "links" were often circuitous; the *JOURNALISM REVIEW*, for instance, was "linked" to the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Robert Hutchins' think-tank in Santa Barbara), which was

in turn "linked" through the Parvin Foundation to Las Vegas gamblers, former Chief Judge William J. Campbell of the federal district court in Chicago and Justice William O. Douglas of the United States Supreme Court, and ultimately to the CIA. (Robert Hutchins happens to be an idol of mine, and CJR received much advice and a \$2,500 grant from the Center to help it get started.) The other "link" that tied CJR to the CIA was the Taconic Foundation. The day after *The Web* appeared I called the director of the Taconic Foundation and asked where the money was; he told me not to hold my breath.

I mention this not to establish credentials — CJR is whatever it is on the face of it, and people can make judgments for themselves — but to illustrate by way of introduction the problem that Skolnick poses for a number of people in Chicago. As reported previously ("The Sky is Falling," CJR November 1972), Skolnick has a wide following, particularly on local campuses. He has scored several direct hits in his relentless pursuit of venality among the judiciary. The fact that he operates from a wheelchair (the result of polio) commands a certain admiration and sympathy.



Richard Kimmel

But it must be said. The man is reckless, ignorant, disruptive, destructive, insensitive, stupid and wrong.

Since publication of *The Web*, Skolnick has carried on a crusade to convince people that the disturbances at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago and the resultant trial of the Conspiracy Seven were really the product of a CIA plot to discredit the Left. Central figures in the bizarre plot that accomplished this end, according to Skolnick, are Rennie Davis, Tom Hayden, and Don Rose.

The full story is laid out in a seven-page, single-spaced document entitled

"Chicago 7 — Are They For Real?" (The complete text is available from Skolnick's Citizens Committee to Clean Up the Courts, 9800 S. Oglesby Av., Chicago 60617.) It would be an extraordinarily difficult — and ultimately pointless — task to attempt to examine every statement made in this sheet. But a few highlights ought to give the general drift.

Basically, Skolnick's method of "research" is to take recognizable persons, "link" them by means of association with other persons or institutions to still other, presumptively evil, persons and institutions, and then draw from this "research" mind-boggling conclusions totally unsupported by fact or reasonable inference.

Thus, we have the Don Rose connection. Rose has been active in Chicago, in movements for peace, civil rights and independent liberal politics, for more than 20 years. He has either managed directly or been a strong influence in the campaigns of a number of politicians, including all of the city's seven independent aldermen and, most recently, was co-chairman of the campaign for Bernard Carey, who unseated Edward V. Hanrahan as Cook County state's attorney. Rose is generally acknowledged as the engineer of what may prove before too long to be the destruction of the Daley Machine. When there used to be a civil rights movement, Rose was its PR man in Chicago; he served as flack for Martin Luther King's Chicago crusade, among other things. Similarly, he served as public relations counsel to the peace movement, and was the spokesman in 1968 for the National Mobilization Committee (which, with the Yippies, organized the convention demonstrations) and in 1969 and 1970 for the Conspiracy defendants.

In short, Rose has been around. He is a public person, and certainly not above criticism. But here is what Skolnick has to say about him:

"Rose was an executive of an ultra-right wing, quasi-governmental organization, Public Administration Service, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago. PAS is connected with, and does work for, the U.S. War Department, Mutual Security Agency, and a CIA subsidiary, the Agency for International Development. Among other things, PAS does work in putting together police training information. The funding for Don Rose's work comes, in part, from the CIA pass-through, the Taconic Foundation. . . ."

Keep

"Rose was and is able to control the public image of Rennie Davis and others of the '7', as purported 'radical revolutionaries,' by way of Rose's father-in-law, Jesse Bogue, an executive with the worldwide wire service, United Press International."

There is more, of course, but let's just take it in manageable bits. The "ultra-right" Public Administration Service is a non-profit consulting firm operated jointly by all the agencies housed in the Public Administration Center on the University of Chicago campus. Those agencies include the American Public Welfare Assn., the National Assn. of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the International Assessors Assn., the International Assn. of City Clerks, the International Assn. of City Managers, and, at one time, the Council of State Governments.

The ultra-right wing has long considered the Public Administration Service to be a Communist conspiracy because of its advocacy of metropolitan government (PAS designed the Miami-Dade County metro). Even now one can find occasional copies of a booklet circulated among far right organizations entitled "Terrible 1313."

Rose's job at PAS, from 1965 to 1967, was publications director. As such, he produced such right-wing tracts as *Automated Data Processing in Municipal Government*, *Public Utility Regulation* (updates), *Municipal Refuse Collection*, and its exciting sequel, *Municipal Refuse Disposal*.

As for PAS's relationship with the nation's police departments, it has done some consulting, mostly on administrative matters such as record-keeping. One study produced during Rose's tenure there, however, clearly gave away PAS's fascistic orientation; it began: "The Cleveland Police Department is shot through with pockets of honesty."

Skolnick's references to PAS's work for the War Department and the Mutual Security Agency equally clearly refer to work done in the 1940s and early 1950s. The War Department became the Department of the Army in 1947, and the Mutual Security Agency was abolished in 1953.

Nowhere in the literature produced since the late 1960s on CIA funds channeled through foundations to liberal or radical groups will reference be found to the Taconic Foundation being used as a conduit. The most severe radical criticism of the Taconic Foundation was that it attempted to "channel" black organizations into "moderate" activity like voter registration.

All through the period leading up to the

Democratic National Convention in 1968 Jesse Bogue was UPI's financial editor in New York. He did not come to Chicago as Central Division News Editor until late in 1969, by which time the reputations of Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden had been firmly established. Even were this not the case, the world press was here in person for the convention and the trial and had little use for UPI in assessing the characters of the main protagonists.

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Under the heading "Background and finances of the 'Chicago 7'" Skolnick reveals that Davis, Hayden *et al.* were "funded by federal money, channeled to them through pass-through organizations connected with the government." He even gets specific here. "\$192,000 in federal money and \$85,000 from the Carnegie Foundation [sic], acting as a conduit for the Central Intelligence Agency, were funneled . . . through a front calling itself the Chicago Student Health Organization."

In 1968, the Student Health Organization participated in, but did not administer or control, a project of the Division of Regional Medical Programs of the National Institutes of Health, funded ultimately by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The section of community medicine of Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital administered the project, one of several run in various parts of the country in the first flush of exuberance occasioned by the entrance into the nation's medical schools of the activist college generation. The hospital supplied the funds and was reimbursed, under contract, by the government. Expenditures totalled \$192,300.

An administrative staff of four working under the general supervision of Dr. Joyce Lashof organized 124 health science students (medicine, nursing, hospital administration, etc.) and 75 high school students into area teams. One team produced a study of emergency rooms and clinics in hospitals that provide primary health care for the poor. Another did a study of prescription pricing in Uptown drug stores. Another examined health care needs and facilities in the Lincoln Park area, etc. The studies were later compiled into a report and published (GPO 0-355-233, 1970) in a small edition.

The students were paid for their labors — \$320 per month for the health science students and \$200 a month for the high school students, a total of \$144,894.96 for the summer. The names of the students, their employment and payroll records are available at the hospital. The remaining \$47,405.04 is fully accounted for in ad-

ministrative expenditures. All payments under the grant were made by the Presbyterian-St. Luke's special fund accountant.

It is undoubtedly true that many of the students in the project worked as individuals to help set up medical facilities for the impending demonstrations, but that can hardly be classified as "funneling" money to Davis and Hayden.

Later that year, the Student Health Organization received a grant of \$85,000 from the Carnegie Corporation to sustain the organization's operations and establish a National Service Center for Health Science. The money was spent on staff salaries and a lot of fancy office equipment which eventually became the property of the Medical Committee for Human Rights when SHO went out of business. Again, an accounting of the funds was made to the Carnegie Corporation and is available for inspection. One of the project directors is now at County Hospital and another is working in a poor community in Santa Fe, N. M. One could, I suppose, ask them whether they used their paychecks to live on or signed them over to Rennie Davis.

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I have a couple more examples of this sort of thing but I'm getting tired of it and I suspect the reader is too about this point.

The simple fact is that Skolnick has invented, almost out of thin air, a "conspiracy" that extends from the highest levels of government to most of the leadership of the movement that opposes that government. So pervasive and devious is the conspiracy that Skolnick concludes, on the one hand, that people are being taken in when they demonstrate against Nixon ("eleven hundred young people were jailed after being duped by Rennie Davis into trying to encircle the GOP convention hall in Miami Beach") and, on the other hand, that people are being taken in when they use the political process (Hayden's Indochina Peace Campaign "is plainly designed to drive all those who oppose the war into McGovern's tent, where they will be rendered impotent and harmless"). Damned if you do, damned if you don't.

Informers there are, and *agents provocateurs*. Has Skolnick considered the implications of his own frequent conversations with agents of the Justice Department? Of course, they only talk about crooked judges — or do they? Isn't that a good cover! But I wouldn't accuse, not at least until I can get this beam out of my own eye. It's just thee and me, Sherm, and I'm not so sure about either one of us.