

Spies eye SDS

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The name has been changed to protect the guilty, said one observer, but it's still political burlesque. The House Committee on Internal Security, formerly known as HUAC, unveiled its 1969 version of the subversion follies with three days of public hearings on SDS and other left groups. There were few surprises.

Security was tight with eight armed guards in the hearing room. HISC chairman Richard Ichord (D-Mo.) indulged in little more than wishful thinking with the remark, "There are certain groups who would seek to disrupt these hearings." There were no disruptions.

First on the witness stand was Bradshaw Mallard, a Gainesville, Fla., policeman who posed as a student attending a rally on the University of Florida campus. One woman campus SDSer found out he was a plainclothesman and apparently shook him to the core with a well-placed obscenity.

Citing "overriding public interest," Ichord subpoenaed New York Times reporter Anthony Ripley who covered last year's SDS convention in East Lansing, Mich. If not unfriendly, Ripley was reluctant. He said that his appearance put the press in the middle and made it more difficult to cover the movement and gain the confidence of "disaffected youth."

The entire committee went to town to try to find out just what goes on at an SDS function. Ripley hedged, finally stating, "SDS has a kind of free-form policy." When asked to summarize some of the ideas presented at the SDS convention, he said he was unable to do so because the rhetoric was so thick that his mind was spinning in confusion most of the time.

Next was hired snooper Neil Wetterman, a HISC investigator who took in a rally at Kent State University in Ohio, two months ago. It was an SDS rally but since SDS wasn't recognized on the campus it was billed as a Yippie meeting.

Ichord leaned over his microphone with a most concerned look. "Are the Yippies recognized there?" he asked incredulously. The audience laughed.

Among the speakers at the rally, Wetterman reported, was Bernardine Dohrn, SDS interorganizational secretary. He testified that Miss Dohrn had a nice appearance, seemed like an "intelligent girl" and expounded on her politics, which were recounted for the committee.

HISC spent laborious hours proving that the SDS national officers had "admitted" they were "revolutionary communists." Small "c," not capital "C" Ichord kindly pointed out.

The committee then reconstructed virtually minute by minute the events surrounding the disruption of San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto's speech in March at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. The speech, titled "Law and the Campus," was never completed as SDS converted the meeting into a melee.

Following this, the committee was then entertained by a Newsreel film about the Panthers—"Off the Pig"—which had been shown at Georgetown. HISC members wanted to know if the words "off" and "pig" had to be interpreted to students by movement activists. "It really didn't have to be explained," replied a straight GU student who had seen the film in his dormitory.

The hearings are likely to continue for another few weeks, until the committee has thoroughly read into the official record that SDS is a subversive organization.