

WRITERS AND EDITORS WAR TAX PROTEST

P. O. Box 255

127 West 83rd St.

New York, N. Y. 10024

1 December, 1967

Fellow Signers,

We now have 450 names joining our action, nearly \$5600 in the bank, and no assurance that any of the major newspapers where we plan to take an advertisement will take it. Two months have been spent dickering with the NY Times (where 11 of the signers work), which has just refused an ad revised to meet earlier Times objections. Aryeh Neier, executive director of the NY Civil Liberties Union, wrote to the publisher of the Times on November 10, asking why the ad (identical to the text you've signed) had been refused. Previous inquiries had resulted in verbal statements from Vincent Redding, advertising acceptability manager, that the ad had been rejected on "legal grounds," which he would not specify. On November 16, Harding Bancroft, executive vice-president of the Times, wrote to Mr. Neier, stating that "the advertisement was turned down by the Times in accordance with our general policy that we do not accept advertising urging readers to perform an illegal action." He cited our request for readers to check a box indicating they wished to join us (the top box, "I wish to add my name..."). He also enclosed a 1961 Times editorial which stated, "...a free press truly means: the maintenance of open communication in the realm of ideas...our policy with respect to political advertising is to keep our columns open to those who wish to express a particular point of view, no matter how widely divergent it is from our own."

We dropped the offending box, and resubmitted the ad. Yesterday, the Times refused the ad again.

For the record, we are now asking for an account of their reasons, but it is now obvious that we cannot plan on placing the ad there. We are now approaching the NY Post and the Washington Post, and we will place the ad in the February Ramparts, as well as a January NY Review of Books. Should the two Posts decline to run it, we will try the Boston Globe, Chicago Sun-Times, San Francisco Chronicle and, if all these fail, the London Times.

We have received inquiries from signers about the relevance of continuing to stress our refusal to pay the 10% surcharge, which has its ups and downs according to the whims of our leaders in Washington. We have decided to let the 10% item remain first (though in our layout the 23% refusal by "some of us" is equally prominent) because a) that's what got it started and b) our best information is that the continual dislocation of the economy by the war will make it imperative that the administration try to get the 10% considered again in January, if it is in fact dead this session.

The \$5600 in our bank account would not have been enough to pay the Times \$6800 per page fee, but since they have relieved us of the burden of paying them for their democratic "open columns" policy, we may need even more money to place the ad in the several papers mentioned above. If anyone is sitting on \$100, \$500, or \$1000 which they can do without, or can suggest to us where we might find such money, we would be grateful. Several of the organizers plan to take personal loans to pay for the ad (and composition and correspondence expenses) should it be necessary.

Lastly, for those in the NY area, we are having a deficit party on December 22 at Betty Friedan's apartment in The Dakota, 1 West 72nd St. Tickets are \$15 a person, \$25 a couple, and all, signers or not, are welcome to attend. Reservations at the above address, or by phone, evenings, at TR 3-2776. Among those signers present will be Eric Bentley, Mrs. Friedan, Paul Goodman, James Leo Herlihy, Larry Josephson, Dwight Macdonald, Gloria Steinem, and Gerald Walker.

We will write again as soon as there's news, hopefully better.

Lawrence M. Bensky  
Gerald Walker  
for WEWTP