

Tucson Probe

A Grand Jury Jails Radicals

Venice,
Los Angeles County

A federal grand jury's meeting in Tucson to investigate West Coast radicals has already resulted in the imprisonment of five young people for contempt and future criminal indictments are expected.

This is the latest in a series of investigations of radical activity around the country directed by the United States Department of Justice.

The main prosecutor in Tucson is Guy Goodwin, chief of the Internal Security Section of the Justice Department, who was also involved in the highly publicized Chicago and Seattle conspiracy cases.

REACTION

Radicals here have called the investigation a "witch hunt" and an attempt to isolate the "Movement from potential sources of support in the liberal community. They also feel that their Constitutional rights have been violated by procedures used in the Grand Jury.

An assistant U.S. attorney in Tucson, who refused to be identified, called the radical's charges untrue.

The Grand Jury is investigating an incident in which some radicals, who the prosecution said belonged to the Weatherman, purchased dynamite in Tucson with intent to transport it to California. One person, John Fuerst, has been indicted in connection with the incident but has not been apprehended.

The five radicals from Venice who were subpoenaed

by the Grand Jury were asked broad questions about their activities and associations over the last two years. Only a few questions dealt with the purchase of the dynamite.

The five, after refusing to answer on the grounds of self-incrimination, were granted immunity from prosecution.

When they still refused to talk, on the grounds that the questions violated their rights of free speech and other Constitutional guarantees, they were cited for contempt.

Teri Volpin, who is 22, spent seven weeks in jail and Dave Scheffler, 24, served five weeks. Three other women served three weeks apiece. The five were released on Christmas Eve when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals granted them bail, pending the appeal of their contempt convictions.

The appeal will be decided on January 18. If it fails, the five will probably be returned to jail for the duration of the grand jury's meeting. The jury is expected to sit until the end of March and, possibly, to the end of the year.

The defendants' lawyers complained that they were not given enough time to prepare a defense against the contempt charges or to prepare an adequate brief for the appeal.

The assistant U.S. attorney retorted that "they get just as much time as anybody else."

The investigation and jailings have shaken this ocean-front community near

Los Angeles, which has for years been a haven for non-conformists.

SHAKEN

Several local radicals gathered the other night to discuss the situation at the Midnight Special, a "revolutionary" bookstore which also serves as a community center.

Miss Volpin, who works with the anti-war movement within the military, said "there seems very much to be a concerted effort to destroy the movement nationwide."

"The government is turning to the intensified use of the legal system as a mechanism of repression," added Barry Litt, one of the defendants' lawyers. "You see this reflected all over the country — in the Angela Davis case, in the Panther trials, in the Chicago and Seattle trials."

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