

Judge Keeps the FBI Away

New York

The FBI was ordered by a federal judge yesterday not to snoop on the national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance, scheduled for December 28—January 1 in St. Louis.

U.S. District Judge Thomas P. Griesa barred confidential informants of the FBI from "attending, surveilling, listening to, watching or otherwise monitoring" the sessions.

The alliance told Griesa that FBI surveillance might discourage member attendance and might result in the keeping of lists that would jeopardize members if they

sought government jobs later.

The judge acted after an employee of the site where the convention is to be held had told the court she had been informed by an FBI agent that the FBI would attend the sessions.

Griesa ruled, "The proposed surveillance threatens a substantial impairment of the First Amendment rights of those attending the convention, with the government failing to show justification."

The judge observed that the FBI apparently considered the YSA a "Marxist, revolutionary organization

whose purpose is the illegal overthrow of the United States government."

The court commented that the alliance claims "nonviolent beliefs" and that the FBI—represented by the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan—proved "absolutely nothing" about violent revolutionary activity or any other illegal activity at past meetings.

"As a matter of policy," Griesa said in his opinion, "the healthy thing for our society to do is to permit this group to freely have their discussions of the issues which concern them and of their theories."

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