

Life and Liberty In Alabama

A Commentary

By Nicholas von Hoffman

A year ago Howard Phillips would have been dismissed as another rich-boy Harvard College graduate bouncing about Washington sneering at his "elitist" opponents. Many of us underestimate these types. When we read in their biogs that some of them were, like Phillips, former officers in Young Americans for Freedom, we assumed they meant what they said. We presumed they were telling us what they truly believed when they talked their harsh, but certainly constitutional, doctrines.

Now we know that while they were advocating less government, draconian law enforcement, more decentralization and indifference to problems of race and poverty, some of them were hiring goon squads and others were using the power of their public office for blackmail and extortion. Phillips, the ex-head of OEO, hasn't been connected with that stuff. No, he was handing out money from his agency to pay for the sterilization of black Alabama children. By comparison to Phillips, the Deans, the Colsons and the Magruders look almost good.

Doubtless, in the manner of his boss, when he gets caught, Phillips will say that he didn't know anything about it, that he was lied to by his subordinates, etc., etc.; but the fact is his agency paid for the tying off of the tubes of at least eight blacks, including two girls ages 12 and 14. By so doing, if Phillips did not break a law for which he should go to jail it will only be because Congress never dreamed that a government official would commit such an act.

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was obtuse enough to tell the Senate and the nation that he felt justified in doing everything from abetting burglary to misprision of a felony because his college chaplain broke the traffic laws by taking part in a nonviolent demonstration in the streets.

If OEO "symbolizes seeking change beyond the ken of orderly democratic process," then Phillips can license himself to execute the New Federalism's final solution to race and poverty in America.

It will be carried out while the usurper explains his policies by circulating memos that tell us, "Individuals at the local level will have an enhanced opportunity to shape the course of their own lives, as resources and authority are returned to elected officials who can be credited for their successes and held accountable for their mistakes by voters from whom they derive political authority."

These pieties about accountability from one who would make no accounting even when the law required it! Such libertarian verbiage from one who enhanced the opportunities of those girls and we don't know how many others to shape the course of their own

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Phillips' career is instructive. He has posed as a libertarian/conservative type with a fetishist belief in adherence to the law. In fact, the courts have ruled that the conduct of his office has been a succession of lawless acts. The ruffian ran OEO with such disregard for the laws that the courts have virtually had to take over the administration of the agency. Even the man's presence in the office has been found by both a federal district and appeals court to be an unlawful usurpation.

The statutes provide that the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity can only serve with the advice and consent of the Senate. His name was never submitted to the Senate, perhaps because the White House had a realistic appraisal of the chances of getting the Senate to approve the appointment of a monster who would pay for the surgical mutilation of girls.

Phillips has wanted to destroy OEO from the moment he got in there and before. He once said of it that, "It's come to symbolize the seeking of change beyond the ken of orderly democratic process." Perhaps that's his rationalization for his own lawlessness. Magruder

lives by spaying them like bitch cocker spaniels. Even Billy Graham only suggested castration for convicted rapists.

One final question about Phillips.

How does Richard Nixon find people like him? There are plenty of decent people in Young Americans for Freedom. What kind of perverted talent search do they put on to locate and recruit a moral imbecile like Phillips who should perhaps consider allowing himself to undergo this operation he funds for others?

As if discovering a Phillips weren't triumph enough, Richard Nixon's found busloads of them. The honeymooning Dean, the contrite Magruder, the sinister Segretti, and so many more and so young. Phillips is only 32. What'll he be like when he's 60 and cynical?

Who would have thought America could nurture up both a Dean and a Phillips, and one President who could find them both and appoint them to high office? Questions without answers, except that this revelation may help to explain Richard Nixon's opposition to abortion. There was a better plan.