

Infrastructure of Repression

The right wing in this country, following its long - established inclinations and now supplied with plausible pretexts by bombings and preparations for bombing, is fomenting schemes for large - scale repression. Most or all of these semi - paranoid plans gravitate toward the President or members of his staff, not only because they require Administration approval to be put into practice but because on the record Mr. Nixon is not the type of Chief Executive who will dismiss intensified repression out of hand. As an old - time Red - hunter he is, in fact, inclined by temperament in that direction himself, and counterrevolutionists may be justified in hoping for an era in which the Bill of Rights will become a scrap of paper.

A few items may be inspected out of a mass of material pointing to this conclusion. The Washington Bureau of *The Oregonian* (Portland, April 5) dug up a story, "Radicals Spur Study of Dropping '72 President Vote," which states that the White House has ordered several hush-hush security studies, one of which, apparently to be carried on by the RAND Corporation, the most noted of U.S. "think" factories, will evaluate the possibility that "radical elements" may succeed in disrupting national elections. Using force, unspecified except for mention of bomb threats, these "rebellious factions" may make it "unsafe" to conduct a national election as early as 1972. The idea seems farfetched, the story goes on, but after last month's rash of bombings, "someone in the White House apparently sees a danger of the tactic being used against the democratic system and thinks Nixon should be prepared."

Another exhibit comes from the *Los Angeles Times* of March 18. The federal government is dispensing funds to the states under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1969. California's share is estimated at \$18.8 million, to which the state and localities will be expected to add another 25 per cent. One of the measures contemplated is a super - duper intelligence system which is described by Dr. William W. Herrmann, chairman of the task force on riots and disorders of the California Council of Criminal Justice. Dr. Herrmann is a "senior operations scientist and counterinsurgency specialist" of another noted think tank, Systems Development Corporation of Santa Monica, Calif. He envisions "a coordinated intelligence system" designed to "separate out the avowed, dedicated activists bent on destroying the system" from "the vast bulk of people in the middle," presumably Mr. Nixon's "silent majority." If there are just grievances, the intelligence system will also ferret these out and devise programs "to win the minds and the hearts of the people." Having proved so successful in South Vietnam, the specialists in counterinsurgency are now planning to apply their techniques in the homeland.

In the White House itself a highly placed Nixon aide, Clark Mollenhoff, is inspecting individual income tax returns to get something on miscreants of past Democratic administrations. It is a safe assumption that plenty of crooks existed while the Democrats were in power

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(besides those who were caught); the assumption is equally safe as regards the Republicans. But by what right does a politician like Mollenhoff have access to income tax returns? Tom Wicker (*The New York Times*, April 14) points out that the oldest truism in the whole field of human liberty is that once this sort of thing gets started there is no telling where it can be stopped. He quotes a *New York Times* story which states that the Administration, dismissing what one aide calls "hangups about snooping," was planning enlarged use of wire tapping, undercover agents, etc., the previous exploits of the FBI in these fields being regarded as inadequate.

One reason for this is that earlier "internal security" systems were directed almost entirely against the Communist Party, which, being organized as a political party, was easily infiltrated, so much so that government agents were said to have been contributing a fair portion of its funds by paying their dues as "card - carrying" members. "Weathermen" and similar activists are harder to keep under surveillance. Another fault of old-line intelligence activity was that it was directed primarily against adults, but Dr. Arnold Hutschnecker, a former personal physician to Mr. Nixon who is not practicing psychiatry, has a plan to catch subversives and other criminals shortly after they emerge from the cradle. He would give psychological tests to all 6, 7, and 8 year olds to identify those who have "violent and homicidal tendencies" and send the severely disturbed (his criteria) to special camps. Dr. Hutschnecker is not certified as a medical specialist in psychiatry, and Dr. Walter Barton, medical director of the American Psychiatric Association, says that to the best of the Association officers' knowledge his proposal has no support whatsoever within the profession. That's fine, but neither did the Nazis have any support among pre - Hitler psychiatrists.

Crude Plot: Crude Plotters

Several aspects of the wretched plot to launch impeachment proceedings against Justice William O. Douglas should be kept in mind. The chances of impeachment are almost nil; it is the cheap partisan politics behind the move that should be emphasized. Rep. Gerald R. Ford, right hand uplifted, assures us that the move is a wholly nonpartisan effort; he will neither sponsor nor co-sponsor the resolution to investigate "the many charges and allegations." Sponsors will be drawn from both parties. But this disclaimer will deceive no one; the move has partisan politics - Nixon - Mitchell - Agnew politics - written all over it. Last November, Mr. Ford said that if Judge Haynsworth was not confirmed, Justice Douglas should be impeached. This statement, which sounds like political blackmail, was discussed at the time with Clark R. Mollenhoff, special counsel to the President. And in a recent television interview Vice President Agnew tied the rejection of Haynsworth and Carswell to the move to impeach Douglas.

The plot is aimed not at impeaching Justice Douglas but at making life so miserable for him that "to protect the Court" he will feel that he must resign. Now that the

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