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GROUP HERE SUES ON SURVEILLANCE

Police Unit Is Said to Violate
the Rights of Dissenters

By ARNOLD H. LUBASEH

A suit to bar the city's Police Department from the surveillance of political dissenters in violation of their constitutional rights of free speech, association and privacy was filed yesterday in Federal Court here.

The suit seeks to compel the Police Department's Special Services Division to deliver all its dossiers and files to the Federal Court here for inspection and asks the court to destroy any information that was improperly collected.

It also requests that the court enjoin the intelligence-gathering division from using informers and infiltrators to gain information about dissident groups except when authorized by a judge or other independent authority.

The suit charges that police surveillance activities are designed to discourage citizens from "freely associating and communicating with others to advance their objections to governmental policies and social conditions."

Panthers Among Plaintiffs

The 16 plaintiffs who initiated the suit included three recently acquitted Black Panthers, Abbie Hoffman, three New York University students, several peace group representatives and a member of the Gay Liberation Front.

They brought the suit as a class action for all residents of the city who object to governmental policies or social conditions and who are subjected to surveillance or infiltration by the police.

The lawyers who filed the suit are Martin R. Stolar and Jethro M. Eisenstein, who acted with the support of lawyers from the New York Civil Liberties Union, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Lawyers Guild, the Center for Constitutional Rights and the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee.

Mayor Lindsay and Police Commissioner Patrick V. Murphy are named as defendants in the suit, along with the Special Services Division and its commanders.

The Special Services Division was formerly called the Bureau of Special Services. It investigates labor disputes and guards visiting dignitaries in addition to maintaining information on radicals and activists.

According to the suit, the division has dossiers on "numerous persons who have expressed criticism of social conditions or governmental policy, or who espouse unorthodox or dissenting beliefs, and who have engaged only in lawful activity."

The suit accuses the division of showing these dossiers to governmental agencies, academic officials, prospective employers, Selective Service officials and others.

The division is also accused of recruiting "informers to join political or social organizations, to report the activities of such organizations and to attempt to provoke such organizations into unlawful conduct."

Among many allegations, the suit contends that the division's agents frequently pose as press photographers, that one of the

division's undercover men solicited Brooklyn Black Panthers to participate in an armed robbery and that the division supplied a bar committee with a dossier on an aspiring lawyer who had signed a petition against the Vietnam war on the basement bulletin board of the Columbia Law School.

Ira Glasser, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, said in a statement that recent decisions indicated that "the courts are not going to allow law enforcement officials to erect the apparatus of a police state through systematic surveillance of peaceful protest."