

20 Jul 72

Your note of 7/15/72 on charges filed against Vets for Peace (Vietnam Veterans Against the War?): "My spontaneous reaction ... is that it is a fabrication probably by some professional agent provocateur." You're right - there was an infiltrator, FBI. You may know this by this time.

I believe it was the day the subpoenas were served that Larry Bensky (of KPFA, one of the Pacifica team in Miami) had a phone intv with one of the VVAW people. I think the VVAW man at the other end of the line was in Tallahassee. Didn't keep the tape because I was sure this would be reported (should have known better) and because I needed the cassette for something else. Have seen nothing on the fink in the NYTimes, SFChron, SFEEx or NOSI, not even of the fact of the subpoenas.

If you'll trust my memory (not that I recommend it^{*}), the VVAW man said the informer involved - and he gave his name, too - was working for the FBI, they had 15 hours of tape (presumably of his own account of his involvement), that they had it hidden in a secure place, and that the informer had threatened two of the VVAW leaders and their wives, "he said he would get them." From his description the man was psychotic.

Last evening KPFA had a program described as a Miami wrap-up, produced by Larry Bensky, and in the hope that it would include his intv with the VVAW man I taped it, but it wasn't included. But it did include a statement by someone I assumed to be another VVAW man, not by phone because there was background noise and music, and I assume in Miami. (Bensky is remaining there between the conventions.) Unfortunately the program is in the form of a montage made up of many individual segments, most of them without introduction, names or dates, or indication of the circumstances under which the statements or interviews were made. This segment (transcribed from tape) appears to be part of an interview with - or statement by - a member of the VVAW, and starts and ends just as it appears below, presumed VVAW member speaking:

"He [the infiltrator] said that he had been in the service and got in trouble and [unintelligible] by the FBI and told that if he didn't turn informer or infiltrator VVAW would be thrown in jail. He said that that was OK with him; he went through about 15 hours, 16 hours of training; when he got out of the service his car was paid for, and his home was paid for, and he was given an expense account. And that region wasn't necessarily that strong and he came off as a sincere, dedicated person, and he rose up - and it's easy to rise under [under those circumstances? - unintelligible].

"He said that he was told specifically to watch leadership of VVAW and he gave approximately 15 hours of taped testimony that we have locked someplace. Among the things that he said was that the government was specifically on the lookout for four leaders of VVAW - I don't want to give their names at this time. He also said that the leadership of VVAW would be getting pulled into a grand jury investigation shortly. And those first two things have been happening; those four people have been followed, have been picked up by local police and FBI, have been questioned and their lives have been threatened, etc.

"And the third thing that he said was that certain New Left leaders would be murdered during the conventions. And so that only leaves to be found out whether that was in fact true, or whether he got carried away with his own testimony.

"But we thought it was important to bring it out, you know, for two reasons. One, if it was being planned, this possibly will stop it, this might squelch their plans. And two, if it does happen, it shows in fact what the Nixon government, with the police power in this country, are all about."

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* You know anyone else who could misplace a kitchen spoon and not find it for four days? In a kitchen as tiny as this, in a house as small as this? And then find it among the clipped papers to be taken to the garbage can? When the spoon is a PURPLE spoon?