


RUN, TOMMY, RUN!

by Ron Rosenbaum

The real-life adventures of Thomas Tongyai, alias Tommy the Traveler



This is a traveling-salesman story. It's about a salesman for horse and cattle remedies who called himself a Crown Prince of Thailand, who infiltrated S.D.S. activity at a dozen New York State colleges along his route, who encouraged two nineteen-year-olds to bomb an R.O.T.C. building and had them jailed for it, and whose presence finally precipitated the only college riot in America to result in the indictment of the college itself.

The traveling salesman was born Momluang Singkata Thomas Tongyai, but most students called him Tommy Traveler.* For almost two years Tommy held a semiofficial job as "regional traveler" for the loosely organized S.D.S. chapters of western New York State. As regional traveler Tommy was a combination errand boy, angelist and courier, and like most attentive couriers he soon came to know more about what was going on in his region than anyone in the several rather isolated campuses on his route. For all his months as S.D.S. traveler Tommy never attended any of the campuses he visited and never posed as a student. In fact, Tommy took pride in telling students that he was a "professional" traveler. He never concealed his salesman job from his friends, and frequently used the brand-new blue Mustang Mach 1 provided by his company—a veterinary-drug firm—to chauffeur S.D.S. leaders to and from conferences and movement actions. It was unusual for Tommy to participate in an S.D.S. Regional Traveling Committee meeting at the University of Rochester and to give the region's leadership to a good Chinese restaurant and announce that he was putting all of Column A and all of Column B on his company's expense account.

Tommy never tried to look like a student radical or a "movement person." His black hair was cut short, and he kept it neat and combed down; his sideburns were short and trim. He dressed almost exclusively in a three-piece tweed suit, accentuated for movement by a discreet white lapel button bearing the small letters

Tommy knew that short-haired people in suits who talk conspicuously about killing pigs and who ask questions about movement are bound to arouse suspicions. So one of the first topics Tommy would discuss with S.D.S. leaders he met for the first time was his image. "You're looking at this suit and tie and you're thinking, 'Hey, Tommy looks like a pig,' right?" he'd challenge them.

None of us did think he was a pig at first. He was all kill-pigs-and-stand-up-against-the-wall, you know. Then he'd tell us that his whole act, suit and car, you know, was just a cover for his movement work. He told us he used this traveling-salesman job so he could slip off the company for transportation and expenses for his traveling. He made a big thing of how he was really putting the money back over on the company." (Karl Baker, Rochester S.D.S.) Tommy's most effective disguise was his lack of disguise. He had a reputation for taking his contacts into his confidence, unveiling one after another for them, never giving them a chance to look

as the press picked up the story, he became Tommy the Traveler.

for the one he wouldn't reveal.

He'd start with his name. To most students Tommy introduced himself first as "Thom Thomas," doubling up on the one American element of his five-part Thai name. Then, often while at the wheel of his blue Mustang on a long drive between upstate campuses, Tommy would turn to his passengers and reveal to them his entire name, even passing his wallet around for them to see it for themselves on his I.D. cards.

More unveiling followed. Although he looked "American" on the surface Tommy admitted, he was actually half Thai, a cousin of the royal family of Thailand, he told some, a full Crown Prince of Thailand, he told others.

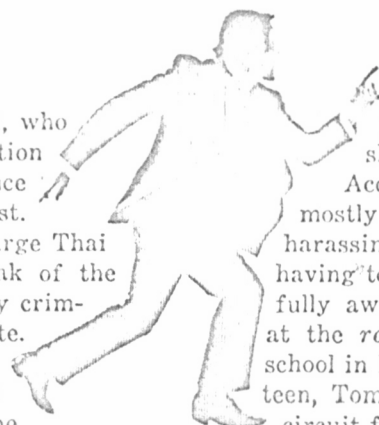
The story continued, with some variations, like this: his father, a figure in the Thai royal family, had been exiled from Thailand because of a factional dispute within the family and had married an American. Tommy's dream was to return to Thailand one day under his royal Thai name, obtain a high position in the royal Thai government and then, using the cover of this privileged position, lead a revolution against his own corrupt family. He used the name "Thom Thomas" for his S.D.S. work because he didn't want the royal Thai embassy to link his real name to radical activities and prevent his return to Thailand when the time was ripe. So far he had maintained his cover: his uncle was Thailand's Minister of the Interior and when Tommy met him on one of the uncle's official visits to Washington, there had been not the slightest suspicion. Tommy was certain he could get that high post in the Thai establishment when he returned and could work as an agent for Thai students and guerrilla revolutionaries. He would destroy the corrupt royal government from within: the Vietcong had men just like him high up in the Saigon government, he said.

Tommy usually made it a point to conclude his story by telling his American revolutionary confidants that he considered himself neither American nor even Thai-American. He was, he told them, "a Third World person."

With a few, a very few of his closest friends in the movement (the ones who sensed something else beneath his shuffling of covers), Tommy would unveil everything in a final attempt to cover it all up. Wearing his three-piece tweed without the "s.d.s." button, Tommy would walk up behind his friend in a bar or on campus, spin him around by the shoulder, hold open his jacket with one hand to reveal a badge of some sort, and say, "I'm Thom Thomas of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I know who you are and you'll have to come with me."

After the laughter—mostly Tommy's—that followed, Tommy would tell his victim: "Nice piece of guerrilla theatre, huh."

Tommy's father, Singkata Tongyai, brought Tommy up to think of himself as an American, an unhyphenated American, and certainly not an oppressed Third World American. Singkata was a Thai as was his father, but Singkata's mother was Russian, a



Czarist exile, according to one story Tommy told, who witnessed savagery and murder during the Revolution and escaped to Thailand. Perhaps from her influence Singkata became almost religiously anti-Communist. In any case, Singkata, a distant relative of the large Thai ruling family, left Thailand around the outbreak of the Second World War and came to America to study criminology and chemical engineering at Michigan State.

Singkata seems to have been something of an undercover agent himself. Before the war ended he had come to love America enough to join the U. S. Army and return to Indochina as an American Army Intelligence officer. After the war ended Singkata continued to make regular trips back to Thailand on "family business" and there is evidence that he may have done work for the C.I.A. An American relative told an investigator attached to the Scranton Commission that, shortly before one of these trips in the early Fifties, Singkata took the relative to a meeting in Philadelphia and introduced him to men who identified themselves as Central Intelligence Agency personnel. They told him Singkata was working for the Agency on his trips to Thailand, and asked the relative to serve as an emergency route of communication between Singkata and the C.I.A.—which meant merely turning over to the Agency some letters Singkata might address to him from Thailand. (Although the emergency route was never used, the relative was convinced that Singkata was a C.I.A. informant.)

Singkata married an American girl, and Tommy was born an American citizen at an Army camp in 1944. After the war, Singkata moved his family to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where his wife's family, the Thomases, had lived for generations. Singkata was a firearms enthusiast and a hunter, and Tommy grew up in a home filled with guns and devotion to America.

Tommy never looked Oriental, or even half Oriental, as a child. Most of the kids he played cowboys and Indians with accepted him as just as American as any cowboy, and saw nothing peculiar about asking him to play Indian occasionally. But a cousin remembers that Tommy was particularly fond of playing *cowboy* in cowboys and Indians. "I think he believed in it more than most kids." (Garry Thomas)

There is a strange and saddening story from Tommy's childhood which hints that his Thai-American background may have caused him pain. When she was eight years old and Tommy was twelve, Tommy's youngest sister, the one closest to him, ran out of a Sunday-school bus into the street and was struck and killed by an oncoming car. Tommy's cousin recalls that the driver of the car, in disclaiming his own responsibility, was heard around town making remarks about the child's "wildness" and lack of control. There were some implications that her mixed parentage, something "foreign" in her blood, or something in her family's "lack of discipline" was responsible for her strange "lack of control."

The youngest sister was the family's favorite and the Tongyai family underwent an emotional upheaval after her death. Tommy's mother was reported almost insane with grief over the tragedy and the ugly stories that followed it. Tommy's father agreed to convert to Christianity and attend her church.

A cousin recalls, "There was something like a religious revival in the family, as if they almost secretly believed these things and were trying to wipe out the feeling that maybe the un-Christian side of the family was responsible for the little girl's death or wildness or whatever it was that might have caused her death."

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percent Americans were fit to play cowboy in a rodeo show.

According to his cousin, Tommy began getting into fights mostly with Mexican-Americans who, Tommy claimed, were harassing him with threats and knives. Full of resentment, having "to prove he was not a Mexican-American, but more fully aware of his own secret hyphenation, and full of anger at the real Mexican-Americans, Tommy dropped out of school in December, 1962. However, that very winter, at age fifteen, Tommy found a job with a traveling rodeo that covered the circuit from New Mexico north to the Dakotas. After the last of the real cowboys left the range to become extras in Hollywood cowboy films, the rodeo circuit was the last place an American could be a cowboy with a straight face, the last place the cowboy could do his stuff—tame savage beasts, the way they had tamed savages and beasts in the good old days. For six months Tommy traveled the circuit, riding broncos and steers and having the best of his life, according to his later stories. Then something happened. It's not clear if Tommy had a bad fall or got into another fight over his "Mexican-American" identity, but Tommy's rodeo life was cut short and he returned East in mid-1963 and the next year came a traveling salesman, a lesser—but no less American—dream.

In fact, in becoming a traveling salesman Tommy was following a tradition on the American side of his family. His mother's father and brother had been traveling men along the roads of north Pennsylvania, the elder Thomas peddling Sipe paints, the younger selling lumber. When Tommy took his first traveling-salesman job he told his mother's family he was happy to carry on the Thomason tradition.

His first assignment was selling dog food for Kraft in Philadelphia, but after taking some courses in veterinary medicine at a community college, Tommy was able to move up from dog food to selling veterinary drugs. His love for horses and cows may have made the shift from rodeo rider to purveyor of horse serums and flea powders that much easier for him.

In August, 1967, Tommy's employer, the Schering Corporation, asked him to shift his route north and take on territory in the western New York Finger Lakes region. Tommy, married and father of a three-year-old boy by this time, moved his family to Penn Yan, New York, the site of Keuka College, a small Baptist-founded women's school. That fall Tommy's wife Lynn enrolled in some courses at Keuka, and one evening she and Tommy attended a meeting of the Keuka peace group. That evening—Tommy's first contact with the student movement—turned out to be rather traumatic for both him and the movement.

Keuka College was not notorious for its radicalism in those days. When Columbia exploded in April, 1968, the biggest issue at Keuka was whether curfew for the girls should be extended past eleven p.m. on weekdays and past one a.m. on weekends. The ten or fifteen girls, mostly freshmen and sophomores, who showed up irregularly for the irregular meetings of the Keuka peace group were hardly the equivalent of the Mad Dogs, the Crazyies and the Mot f---ers to whom the F.B.I. paid the respect of assigning infiltrators. Keuka peace-group girls were "radical" back then only in the sense that they might support a treaty banning underground nuclear tests if it provided for proper inspection by neutral parties. So it is unlikely that Tommy attended his first meeting of the Keuka peace group representing any agency but himself.

The night Tommy attended, the peace-group girls had invited a genuine radical, Douglas Dowd, an anti-war Cornell professor to speak to them. Dowd attacked the war, attacked the spread of American presence throughout Southeast Asia, and in passing made some remarks about Thailand, which was beginning to experience guerrilla warfare in its Northern province. His remarks

Tommy was having difficulty holding his own. "Why are the Communists always right and Americans always wrong?" he repeated.

All at once Tommy's wife Lynn was standing up shouting back at Tommy's attackers. "Why won't you listen to him! He doesn't have to read *The New York Times*! He's from the royal family of Thailand. He knows what it's like over there. You won't even listen to him!" She broke into tears and ran from the room. Tommy followed after her and didn't return that night.

Students were, therefore, surprised when Tommy began to show up regularly at peace-group meetings from that point on, even the small meetings with no speakers, attended by just six or seven Keuka girls. More surprisingly, at most of the meetings that fall and winter, Tommy sat quietly. The occasional question he asked was not hostile; he sounded instead interested, or puzzled, by the left-wing critique of the war.

In addition, Tommy began to show up frequently at the R&M Restaurant and the Wagner Motor Inn in downtown Penn Yan, the bars where Keuka girls went to drink before curfew. He started hanging out in the bars with some of the girls he met at the peace-group meetings. They talked a lot that fall and winter over beers, about politics and personal things, and Tommy began confiding to some of the girls the story of his mysterious background.

Tommy cut a strange, half-glamorous, half-comic figure among the teen-age Keuka girls he adopted. Although most Keuka girls didn't take Tommy too seriously—he was "too weird" to be an ordinary liar, but "too weird" to be believed either—a few believed in him, and Tommy grew very close to one girl in particular.

Tommy met Diane, an eighteen-year-old freshman, at one of the peace-group meetings and they became close friends over beers at the R&M Restaurant. Later Tommy confided to another Keuka girl that Diane reminded him of his youngest sister, or the way she would have looked if she had not been killed at eight. Tommy told them the story of his little sister's death and confessed that he blamed himself for it. He was on that Sunday-school bus the day she ran out in front of that car, he told them. He could have reached out and restrained her, but she broke loose. He had never forgiven himself for that moment.

Tommy said that he shot his own dog because it bit Diane. Tommy always had huge dogs around his house, the better, he said, to protect his wife and children while he was away traveling his sales route. This one was an African razorback hound, a lean muscular breed produced, Tommy told people, by mating dogs with wild jackals or hyenas. One day, after Diane, Melanie Wallace and Tommy came out of a bar in town, Tommy opened the door of his car and the dog jumped out, leaped at Diane and nicked her hand, frightening her immensely. Some days later, Tommy said, he took his dog outside and killed it. Tommy claimed that for weeks after he killed the dog he could hear its ghost return to his house at night, whimpering and pawing at his door, asking to be allowed back in again. He loved the dog, Tommy said, but he never got up to let it in.

"Tommy was always telling us he was in touch with strange powers back then," Sally Gilmour once said, "things like a ghost in his wife's family home in Pennsylvania. I usually didn't believe Tommy's stories, but he looked so, you know, *moved*, talking about his sister, Diane, and the dog, that I couldn't dismiss it.")

Tommy and Diane maintained their brotherly-sisterly friendship throughout that winter. In the spring he suddenly began asking her to introduce him to people she knew who had S.D.S. connections, and started letting people know he was a radical.

"Tommy began coming to meetings about curfews with us and started telling us the way to handle it was to take over the Dean's office and occupy the President's house. He said it seriously. We couldn't believe it. I mean it was curfews. He told us we had to do something that will attract national attention and get national coverage. 'Something big like at Columbia,' he was always saying."

When Diane introduced him to some of her friends with S.D.S. contacts, Tommy began to pump them for information and literature. One girl, Melanie Wallace, touched by Tommy's moody resentments and coltish enthusiasms, told him he'd like reading about Prince Myshkin and once left her copy of *The Idiot* in his car (Three years later Tommy had not returned it, and Melanie had been indicted, on Tommy's testimony, on riot charges.) Other girls loaned him S.D.S. periodicals and books on Marxism. He began asking them to introduce him to "real" S.D.S. people, but they don't remember any such meeting taking place at Keuka that spring.

In the Summer of 1968 Tommy moved his family from Penn Yan to Geneva, New York, about twenty miles northeast. By the time Tommy showed up at Keuka again—early the following fall—there had been quite a change. Tommy arrived with a carload of S.D.S. and Resistance people from Rochester, a trunkful of S.D.S. literature, spoke the latest movement catchphrases, and acted as if the S.D.S. people were all old friends. He told the girls at Keuka he was a regional traveler for S.D.S. chapters in the Finger Lakes region and the S.D.S. people seemed to accept him as that. The Keuka girls couldn't believe it.

At a family reunion in Pennsylvania over the Christmas holiday in 1967, Tommy had told a cousin that he was thinking of infiltrating the student movement—he mentioned the McCarthy-for-President movement in particular—in order to expose the leaders as Communists and Communist sympathizers. If Tommy's father sympathized with this, he may well have introduced Tommy to some of his former contacts in Army Intelligence and other government agencies. (Army Intelligence began its extensive civilian-surveillance operations in the Spring of 1968.)

The F.B.I. had maintained a strong presence in western New York ever since World War II when many Trotskyites and Communists moved to Buffalo to take jobs in defense plants and to try to organize heavy industry. There is a large F.B.I. field office in Buffalo which is reported to have about one hundred agents. And the F.B.I. people in Buffalo could not help noticing the sudden emergence of strong S.D.S. chapters, along with other radical anti-draft and anti-war groups, at the University of Buffalo, Rochester University, Cornell and Syracuse, during the Winter and Spring of 1967-68. With Columbia and Chicago blowing up, it is quite likely that the F.B.I. in Buffalo, like F.B.I. offices around the country had already begun doing something about infiltrating the student movement when Tommy arrived on the scene.

In addition, there are reports that the Bureau occasionally made it a practice to help place informants on various matters in traveling-salesman jobs. Such jobs offered informants a legitimate cover for showing up in any town in the region at regular intervals; there was no need to establish a cover residence and a private life in any one place.

Tommy, however, did not begin to venture off the Keuka campus and show up conspicuously at S.D.S. functions until June, 1968. The months from Christmas to June at Keuka may have been spent in training under an investigative agency and establishing a solid identity as a radical before moving on, but it is also possible that until June, and even for months after he moved to Geneva, Tommy was acting completely on his own. He may have plunged under cover with no one on the surface to report back to.

Fitzgerald saw to it that Dick Diver, ex-expatriate, touched bottom and disappeared in, of all places, Geneva, New York. Geneva is one of those towns in New York State whose pioneer founders preferred taking classical and European names—Rome, Carthage, Athens, Troy, Albion, Waterloo—rather than accepting the descriptive Indian name for their settlement. Geneva grew to become a nineteenth-century manufacturing town.

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Arriving in New Mexico in September, 1962, Tommy enrolled in a college which featured rodeo courses. But all of a sudden, out there in the West, Tommy's "un-American" half began undermining his most American of dreams: the other aspiring cowboys at his rodeo college began treating him as if he were a half-breed, a Mexican-American. While back East Tommy had been a darkly handsome American boy, out West, on the last frontier, people looked at his slim five-feet six-inch stature, jet-black hair and dark complexion and called him "Mex." Apparently he suffered some harassment from the other cowboy-students who thought that only one-hundred-

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Suddenly Tommy was on his feet raising questions.

"How do *you* know anything about what's going on there? What about all the murders the Communists are committing against innocent people? . . . Why do you only call *Americans* the killers?"

A heated argument broke out, with most of the audience attacking Tommy, bombarding him with examples of American atrocities ("Don't you read *The New York Times*?") and telling Tommy, "It's their country, why don't we let them fight it out themselves? It's a civil war."

The figure running across these pages is a model. His face has been hidden because his political sympathies are unknown.

I mean, we'd get to these conferences and they'd usually
le and we'd look at each other and say, 'He called it.' . . .
t you called it.' . . . 'No, I didn't call it.' . . . 'I thought he
'I got the feeling that Tommy would go to Rochester
'Buffalo wants one,' then he'd go to Buffalo and say
'wants one,' and there we'd be at this regional
e."

reated these regional conferences as if they were parties
as the host. (He did, in fact, as steering-committee mem-
plan them and set the date, and as traveler he distributed
s.) He liked to

ound at the
ce, meeting
ing, making
ons, play-
-the-boys

top leadership, name-dropping to
members, watching the flow of inter-
und him with an almost proprietary air.
time of the big S.D.S. conference at Albany State in
1969, Tommy had already become known to S.D.S. people
ols all over the state as "Tommy Traveler," although
he conference knew him as Thom Thomas, some as Tom
d a few as Tom Tongyai.

never felt bad about using two or three names," recalls
raldi, who saw Tommy at the Albany get-together. "He'd
like you were in his confidence and he was shucking the
He'd tell me, 'Well, *these* guys here think I'm Tommy
ut I was in on the real truth."

Albany State conference had a surprise to offer which
whole party for Tommy. The surprise was "The Name
ple from New York City's Bread and Puppet Theatre
yone together for a session of theatre and encounter
ommy played too. After some preliminary touching and
reises, the rules for "The Name Game" were announced.
st thing was you'd take off your shoes and lie down on
nd roll around and every time you bumped into some-
e were a lot of people there—you'd repeat your names
er. Then you'd sit yourself opposite somebody and you'd
r name at them over and over, and they'd do it at you
ames have absolutely no meaning to you or them. . . ."
eraldi)

many people shouting their names, Smeraldi didn't hear
f his names Tommy shouted into his partner's face.
t, there was a lot of chicks there and like the last thing
e piled into this huge heap, you know, and breathed in
was kind of a rush actually."

Tommy. "He was very freaked out by the whole thing,"
ntinues. "He came up to me after the body pile and told
an, I got ahold of a nice girl in there.' That's how he
And the name thing really got him uptight. He told me
thing was bullshit and had nothing to do with the

ll he knew about S.D.S. and the revolution in general,
nd it hard to get close to individual revolutionaries.
particularly those he knew were leaders, Tommy played
ond-banana tough guy. He was Michael Pollard—they
e and Clyde. Tommy seldom talked about anything but
ch meant, for Tommy, talking about guns and pigs.
few attempts at small talk or personal conversation
en in S.D.S. usually began with sex: he had a kind of
esman's repertory of stories about girls he had waiting
ities and on campuses along his route. Tommy would
n Rochester about how he "shacked up with two stew-
ry time he got to Syracuse . . . he'd even show us those
bottles of gin and Scotch like it was proof." He'd pass
grapes of his "stewardesses" to Cornell people. He'd



reconciled to the concept. He began to tell girls in bars in Penn Yan
and Geneva the old traveling-salesman line, that his wife didn't
really understand him—didn't share his radical politics—and
resented his traveling for S.D.S.

"He was always trying to get laid," one of his traveling com-
panions recalls. "And he had some of the *worst* lines. We'd go into
a bar on a campus with some chicks and Tommy would go into a
whole rap about how many of his heavy movement friends had
been worked over by the pigs and how one of these days he was
gonna lose control and take a pig out, and these chicks would be
looking at him wide-eyed, oh my hero, you know—it was incred-
ible." (Mark Smeraldi)

"I thought he was quite good-looking, quite a package in fact,
but I was turned right off when he mentioned his wife . . . and his
line was pure 1950's, 1956 to be exact; I'm sure he never made it
anyplace but the back seat of his car." (A Geneva girl)

"I never saw him going around with a girl on anything but S.D.S.
business, but he was always talking about how he'd pick a girl up
for a night and forget about her—like that made him one of the
boys." (Smeraldi)

But Tommy never even tried to pretend he was one of the boys
as far as drugs went. In fact, almost everyone who knew Tommy
recalls him repeatedly denouncing all drugs, including marijuana,
as counterrevolutionary. Tommy didn't like dealing with people
when they were high—they seemed less likely to take his plans
seriously and they giggled too much at his rhetoric. Tommy was
almost a fanatic on the subject, convinced that people who take
drugs lose control of themselves. "You freak out your mind and
you can't take action against the pigs," he'd tell people. "And worst
of all," he'd add, "if the pigs can't bust you for politics they'll bust
you for drugs."

He'll get a good following that way.'

"Think it over," Rafael remembers Tommy saying as he left. "I'll come back and I'll see you around campus. If you want I can get hand grenades, materials for bombs, anything you want, to give to the kids."

"The kids" at Hobart and William Smith remember Tommy railing against nonviolence over and over again.

"The first time I saw Tommy he was in Bruce Davis' room trying to recruit people for this goon-squad mission to protect S.D.S. chapters. . . . We got into this discussion of tactics and nonviolence. Tommy became extremely irate, just started beating his hand into his fist, jumping around the room, at first arguing against non-violence, but eventually he became so inarticulate, so excited, that all he could do was beat his hand into his fist and jump around the room. . . . his eyes were wild and he really even looked like he couldn't control himself. . . . My initial impression was wow, what's the matter with him. I remember thinking if he's a radical I suppose that's okay, it doesn't really matter how he got that way, but it seemed strange." (Chris Wardell)

And stranger still, Melanie Wallace, who knew Tommy well, swears this story is true: she was sitting in Tommy's car alongside Tommy's young son. "Tommy told me he was teaching his kid how to call policemen pigs. 'Watch this,' he said, and he turns to the kid and says, 'Say pig.' And the kid said, 'Pig,' and Tommy said, 'How about that.'"

"Tommy talked about killing pigs the way guys in Vietnam talk about killing gooks." (Bruce Davis)

For most of 1969, Tommy's talk of violence and killing pigs was sporadic, he made no concerted effort to get anyone to blow up something with him or with his explosives—or else he just couldn't find anyone to agree to it. But he tested almost every S.D.S. and radical leader he took into his confidence.

Only occasionally would Tommy's obsession with killing pigs, blowing up and burning down buildings, bring him under real suspicion. In the Fall of 1969 Tommy made one of his few appearances on the University of Buffalo campuses and was heard talking loudly about "blowing up Precinct 6"—the campus-area precinct. One Buffalo radical reportedly walked up to Tommy and told him, "You're a pig, man, and if you're not off the campus in fifteen minutes you're dead." Tommy met the deadline.

Tommy usually continued to respond to such accusations by telling everyone he knew at the school, and often people at other stops along his route, that his accuser was himself a pig. After Rafael Martinez refused a second offer from Tommy and began voicing suspicions that Tommy was a provocateur, Tommy began going around to some of the other radicals at Hobart and confiding to them his suspicion that Rafael was a pig. But no one took either Rafael's or Tommy's charges too seriously: "I guess most of us thought Tommy was just too screwed up to even be a pig." (Bruce Davis)

It's hard to believe, in retrospect, that more people didn't suspect Tommy, but S.D.S. and the movement were changing then: the leadership was putting on combat boots and leather jackets, the talk was of trashing and "heavy actions," and next to the pigs the worst enemy was "liberal bullshit." "Revolution has come /Time to pick up the gun"; "Seize the time" and "Either/Or" were the slogans. The original Weathermen statement advised radicals to give up the ideal of remaking America in their own image,

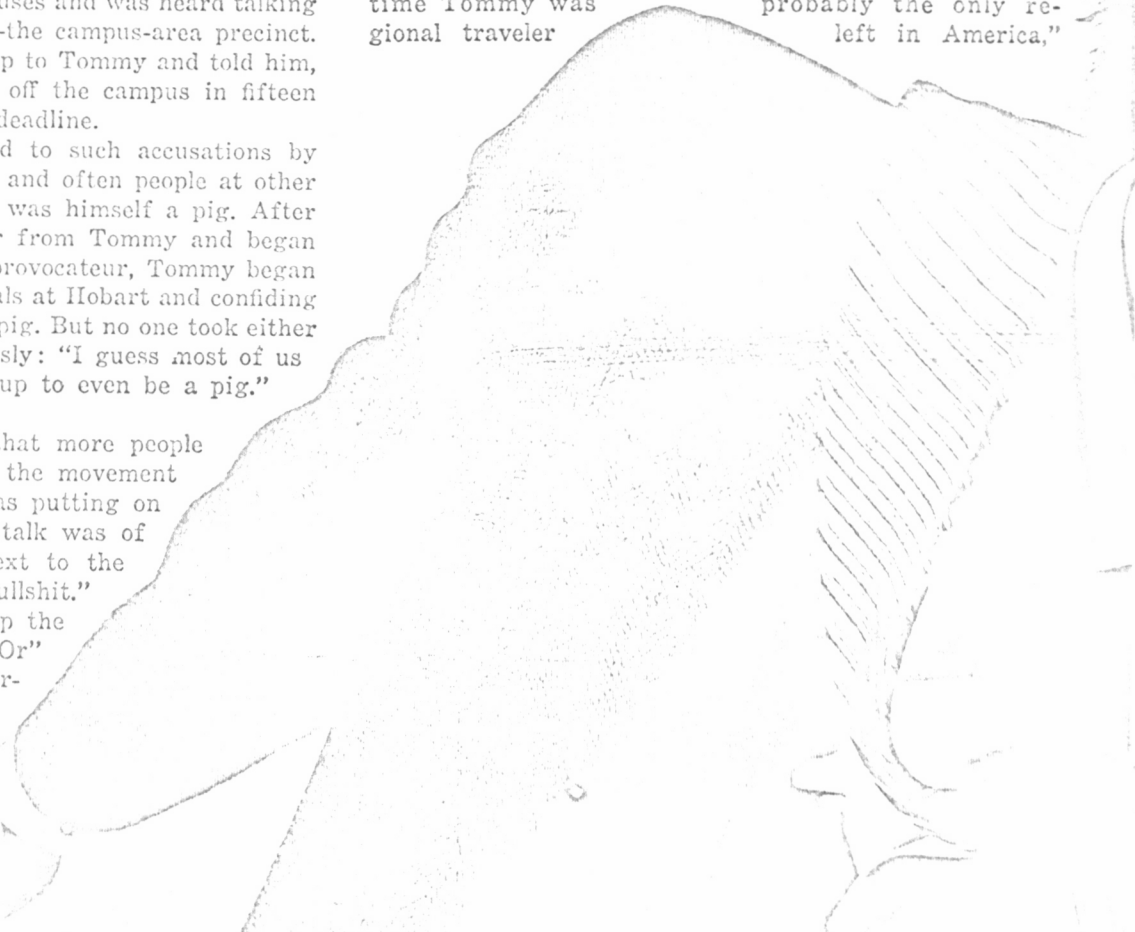
abandon hope for a successful *American* revolution and to consider themselves agents of the Third World Revolution, operating behind enemy lines.

In addition, S.D.S. and the movement had been drawing a new kind of recruit as it spread from Ivy schools to state colleges—the kid who had been wearing leather jackets and combat boots all his life, rather than the kid who learned to imitate Che from reading *Evergreen Review*; people who were just fed up, pissed off and didn't fit anywhere else but the movement; crazies; people who smoked dope and gobbled acid without turning into flower children; people who came to radicalism without being liberal intellectuals first.

And Tommy always had a secret appeal for student radicals who had been liberal intellectuals first, and who were still aware of how much their readiness to act was sicklied over with the pale cast of thought. Tommy was Fortinbras in the field to their Hamlet. You Either part of the problem Or part of the solution. Either—Tommy was always around with his grenade, carried like a forbidden fruit in his hand, offering the means for a quick leap off the hyphen from Either to Or.

It wasn't until April of 1970, after many offers, that Tommy finally made his sale. Big changes had taken place in Tommy's network in the six months before that April. His S.D.S. network had crumbled beneath him, he had been fired by his drug-company employer, hired by the county sheriff as an undercover narcotic agent, and may have been dropped for mysterious reasons by the F.B.I. or whatever intelligence agency he worked for.

A factional dispute split his S.D.S. region in the Spring of 1969 and Tommy seems to have used his courier's network to circulate an "open letter" from some Rochester S.D.S. people critical of Chip's and Joe's leadership to other schools on his route. When Chip and Joe left Cornell in the Fall of 1969 Tommy spread the word along his route that Chip and Joe had run off with funds. With Chip and Joe gone, Tommy was the region's only regular traveler. In fact, "by that time Tommy was probably the only regional traveler left in America,"



cover that under the guise of "college students" Hobart was sheltering Communists, drug pushers, and hippies—the very elements of savagery Geneva had always tried to eradicate.

Tommy moved to Geneva ostensibly because it was closer to the center of his network of veterinarian customers. By this time he did more than just take orders for drugs—he was a detail man, entrusted with the task of distributing his company's literature, the "details" on new drugs, and explaining their advantages to the vets. He began to stop regularly in Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester, and Ithaca, presumably because he was assigned a new set of customers by his company. But Tommy wasted no time in developing a network of S.D.S. chapters to supplement his veterinarian network.

First stop on his S.D.S. route was the office of Glad Day Press, a movement printing shop just off the Cornell campus. Glad Day Press printed *Notes from the Green Piano*, an underground paper distributed sporadically to other schools in the region, and created posters, pamphlets, leaflets and broadsides for S.D.S. and other arms of the movement.

Bill Siebert of Glad Day Press remembers seeing Tommy at the June, 1968, National S.D.S. Conference at East Lansing, Michigan, but not meeting him until later that summer. Tommy appeared at the Glad Day Press office and introduced himself as an S.D.S. organizer from Keuka where his wife was a student. Tommy began spending considerable time among S.D.S. people in Ithaca: "He was there at meetings and dances, always hanging out with leadership people, laughing loudly and acting like a traveling salesman." (Bill Siebert)

Tommy began taking certain people into his confidence—nearly everyone in Cornell's S.D.S. leadership as it turned out—and telling them his entire Third-World-revolutionary-posing-as-traveling-salesman story.

"He told me that if the Thai government found out about his S.D.S. activity he would be deported to Thailand and probably not live too long there. Back at that time these were enough credentials for me." (Bill Siebert)

Cornell's S.D.S. leadership, particularly Chip Marshall and Joe Kelley, along with Jeffrey Dowd, had been "traveling" the schools of the region that spring and planned on calling a conference of S.D.S. chapters to get them together as a region when schools reopened in the fall. Shortly after schools were in session in September, Tommy appeared at the Glad Day Press office, and offered to drive some literature up to Hobart and Keuka since they were "on his way." Nobody trusted Tommy enough for them to reveal any movement secrets to him, but the literature—pamphlets, underground papers—was all in public domain, and there was no one else around to get it distributed. So it was loaded into Tommy's car. When Tommy returned from completion of his first errand he offered to drop literature off at the other colleges along his route. It happened to be a time when Tommy and his route were particularly handy to S.D.S. people because they wanted to keep all schools in the region, including the smaller out-of-the-way campuses, informed of plans for the regional organizing conference in November. These schools always seemed to be "on the way" for Tommy and his company car. So, in addition to delivering literature, Tommy delivered the latest word on the conference. And to students at the smaller schools to whom he delivered the word, Tommy seemed to be an official courier from S.D.S. leadership, perhaps a leader himself.

But back at Cornell, Tommy was still treated as an overeager messenger boy. He kept offering rides to S.D.S. people, particularly Chip and Joe. He drove them up to Geneva that fall for the first meeting of the newly formed radical alliance on the Hobart campus, the Hobart Student Movement.

Not all of Tommy's riders trusted their driver.

"Sometimes," Siebert recalls, "we'd get

assumed it was just a case of mutual paranoia. And Chip or Joe would say Tommy's okay. . . . Chip sort of looked on him as a kid. He'd send Tommy places he thought he couldn't go any more and Tommy would go to places Chip and Joe wouldn't bother to. There just wasn't anyone else who could get the papers distributed regularly the way he did."

Tommy drove a car full of Keuka girls to Rochester in November 1968, for the regional organizing conference he had helped prepare. By that time he had already become a familiar figure to many of those attending, and at the last session of that conference Tommy's salesmanship was rewarded.

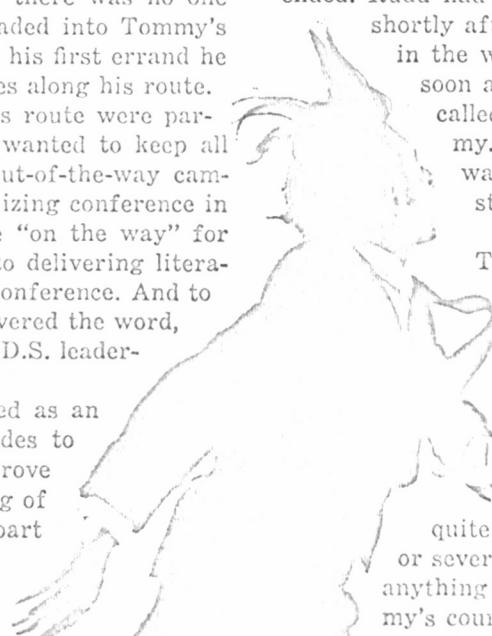
"They were asking for people to do some traveling for the regions, and nobody from Cornell or the Finger Lakes area volunteered. Chip and Joe were too busy with more important stuff. Tommy said he'd do it and everyone said okay. Everyone thought he was a friend of someone else." (Alison Fisher)

On the drive back to Keuka from the conference, Tommy was in a very good mood. So elated was he with his success and the way things were going with the revolution that he opened his glove compartment, took out his pistol and displayed it and loaded it in front of the girls, explaining that it wouldn't be long before the time for shooting pigs arrived.

At first, Tommy's travels were little more than advance work for the recognized heavies of S.D.S. He was their detail man. He might go to a small campus, seek out a student political group interested in S.D.S., distribute copies of *Notes from the Green Piano* and other literature, and tell the group he could bring some real S.D.S. leaders down from Cornell to speak at the college if the group could sponsor them. Then he'd return to Ithaca and tell leaders like Chip Marshall and Joe Kelley that the students at, say, Auburn Community College really wanted to hear them speak—did they think they could find time, did they need a ride? Or he'd tell students at Keuka interested in learning draft counseling that he could bring down some very good people from Rochester Resistance to teach them. And after he explained the demand for draft-counseling trainers at Keuka to the Resistance people, with perhaps a provocative comment or two about the attractions of Keuka girls, he'd drive them the forty miles to Penn Yan.

Tommy was always eager to chauffeur movement celebrities around. There was the time Mark Rudd came up to Ithaca to talk to S.D.S. at Cornell. Tommy stayed close to Rudd throughout the visit, and offered him a ride to the Syracuse airport when the visit ended. Rudd had seen enough of Tommy to decline the ride, but shortly after Rudd arrived at the airport Tommy appeared in the waiting room and tried to make conversation. It was soon as Rudd arrived in New York City that night, Tommy called the Cornell leadership to warn them about Tommy. Tommy later explained to Jeffrey Dowd that he was at the airport merely to meet a couple of stewardesses he knew.

Tommy introduced himself to a girl at Auburn University as "S.D.S. regional traveler from Buffalo." He introduced himself to S.D.S. people at the University of Buffalo as "S.D.S. traveler out of Ithaca." Some people at Cornell remember him as S.D.S. traveler "for the Finger Lakes region." It was hard for anyone to contradict any of these statements. S.D.S. chapters at Cornell and S.D.S. people in western New York were not quite sure (and still aren't) if they were one big region or several overlapping regions, or whether there ever was anything as formalized as a "region" at all. In fact, Tommy's courier service became the closest thing there was to a regional organization. He kept going, informed of the



ty because of what Jerry Rubin said."

Tommy was slightly more permissive when it came to veterinary uses. Two Keuka girls claim that he offered certain pills for horses and cows which he said would cause an abortion if they needed one. "He told us he once got a girl in Syracuse pregnant and that these pills worked. He said if they worked on horses they ought to work on us." (Sally Gilmour)

Tommy never had much in common with the people he was infiltrating. But he never pretended to. He only had, or thought he had, a few things in common with them: a cowboys vs. Indians view of revolutionary struggle, and a devotion to guns and violence as the only solution. Tommy assumed that radicals hated pigs in exactly the same way he knew pigs hate radicals, so very little internal notional adjustment was required, only a transposition of names, and for him to act just like his image of a radical.

S.D.S. people at the University of Buffalo remember Tommy as the crazy who told them he wanted to organize a gun-toting regional terrorist committee" to retaliate against right-wingers. "He told us he wanted to get the heaviest people from each city together to go places where right-wingers or jocks were harassing movement people. He said we had to teach them a lesson."

Tommy told the Buffalo people that he got the idea for the "terror squad" when he was doing some organizing down in Mansfield State College in northern Pennsylvania and some jocks attacked him. "He told us he was always in danger of his life in the small college towns he visited," a Buffalo radical says. He mentioned Redonia, Corning, and Elmira. He said the only thing the right-wingers understood was guns, so the terror squad would have to be armed. He went into this fantasy trip about all of us waiting in a room for some right-wingers who were on their way to beat us up. 'We'd be waiting with three shotguns,' he'd say. 'You're here, you're here, and I'm here.' He'd be pointing to places around the room. 'We could blow 'em all to pieces with just three shotguns.'"

"Tommy told me he wanted to get revenge on these jocks who beat him up down in Pennsylvania by ambushing them with Mace so he could see them fall down on their knees crying." (Mark Smeraldi)

Several University of Buffalo people recall Tommy taking them to his confidence—"Don't let anyone else know about this . . . it's too heavy"—and detailing an even more elaborate cowboys and Indians scheme: "The Olean Assault Force."

Olean is a town of 19,000 located on an empty stretch of Route 19 not far from Cuba, New York, and Bolivar, New York. Over a confidential cup of coffee Tommy explained the Olean Assault Force to a Buffalo activist this way:

"'Things are getting heavy around the nation,' Tommy said. 'The right wing is attacking the left wing. We can't let them get away with it, we gotta show 'em we're tough. So we're getting together assault forces all over the state and you can join the Olean division.' Tommy said we'd live in the hills around Olean for about six weeks of training, while he'd investigate me to make sure I could be trusted, then he said, we'll ask you to do your first job, which might be investigating someone else in the movement to see if they could be trusted, or casing a place to be blown up. Eventually we'd go to the Adirondacks and live there and make raids, like around Lake George we'd take over the tourist traffic, from there we'd expand and eventually control New England."

"He was always trying to get us interested in retaliating against some local right-winger. He would get really excited about his Olean plan. . . . I mean he was the kind of guy who would threaten to wipe out the whole University of Buffalo chapter of Hare Krishna because they couldn't see the importance of regional security."

After a while Tommy became known to people at the University of Buffalo as Maxwell Smart or as Captain Peachfuzz.

and about that time he drove me and Mark Smeraldi out to a field to shoot off his M-1 with him."

At the University of Rochester S.D.S. people remember Tommy because "all he'd ever talk about was killing pigs, putting pigs up against the wall, and guns." In the Fall of 1969 while attending a regional S.D.S. steering-committee meeting at Rochester, Tommy approached Karl Baker, a Rochester S.D.S. organizer, and, according to Baker, "offered to get me some black powder for making explosives and 'anything else' I needed. He said he could get Army surplus guns cheaply and talked about which guns were better for what jobs."

Students at Auburn Community College and at Hobart remember Tommy appearing before them just prior to the November 15, 1969, moratorium in Washington. Tommy advised them that the moratorium itself was "liberal bullshit," but that the Weathermen were going to march on the South Vietnamese Embassy near DuPont Circle and burn it down or blow it up. Tommy counseled people going to Washington to stick with the Weathermen "because that's where all the good violence will be."

On the night of November 14, 1969, when Weathermen gathered at DuPont Circle two blocks from the Saigon Embassy, people from Hobart and Buffalo reported seeing Tommy, wearing a crash helmet, dark sunglasses, and carrying an N.L.F. flag, in the front ranks of the march on the Embassy. The next evening Jeffrey Dowd recalls coming upon Tommy, flag and all, on Constitution Avenue after the first big gassing at the Justice Department. Back at Hobart, Tommy gathered together a few students and gave them a little illustrated chalk-talk about the best tactics to use in the kind of street fighting that followed the DuPont Circle and Justice Department actions.

"He was literally drawing these football diagrams with X's and O's for the cops and protesters. He would show us end runs around police lines, but he said the best tactic was for six or seven of us to get one cop in a corner and kick the shit out of him."

In the Fall of 1969 Tommy knocked on the door of Rafael Martinez, a thirty-six-year-old radical, a friend of the Berrigan brothers, who was enrolled as a senior at Hobart. Introducing himself as a regional traveler from the S.D.S., Tommy told Rafael "he had heard a lot about me. He said he'd heard that I was a real revolutionary, not like the other bullshit liberals and rich kids posing as radicals at Hobart. He said it was time for something really revolutionary to happen and told me he could provide me with weapons and bombs. He told me, 'We could really create a heavy scene

according to a Buffalo activist.

Apparently aware that traveling as an S.D.S. regional traveler made him rather conspicuous in the absence of an S.D.S. region, Tommy tried offering his network to a new radical client in the Fall of 1969. He began showing up at the Buffalo office of Newsreel, the radical documentary film makers near the University of Buffalo campus. Tommy knew some of the Newsreel people from S.D.S. activities and told them he'd like to take some films around to campuses in his region, places like Plattsburgh, Keuka, Hobart, and the community colleges Newsreel hadn't reached before, and use the films as organizing tools.

"He always wanted someone from Newsreel to travel with him to these campuses to show the films—to give him legitimacy, I guess. He was always pressing real hard about going down to Hobart—'Nothing's going on there now,' he'd say; 'we can get something heavy going.'" And of course Tommy rushed to assure the Newsreel people that despite his straight appearance, he was a Third World person, not a pig.

The Newsreel people never really trusted Tommy but, lacking a network of their own to reach the smaller upstate campuses, they finally began giving Tommy some films to take around and show—even if he was a pig, he was spreading the word—and Tommy had himself a Newsreel network to supplement his fading S.D.S. route. He began introducing himself to new people as a representative of Buffalo Newsreel.

By mid-1969 Tommy had left the Schering Corporation and had begun traveling for the J. A. Webster Company, another veterinary-drug firm. But in December, 1969, something went wrong and Tommy was abruptly fired by J. A. Webster.

The way Tommy told the story to his student friends, he was being persecuted by the F.B.I. There was a long-distance call, Tommy said, from his boss at Webster. He was asked to drive up to company headquarters in Wakefield, near Boston, immediately for a "special sales conference." When he walked into the company offices for the conference, he found no conference at all, just his boss, who asked Tommy to hand over the keys to the company car, and told him he was finished traveling, finished at Webster. Tommy told his student friends he was sure the F.B.I. was behind it.

There may be some truth to that. Neither Tommy nor the F.B.I. will admit that there was anything going on between them. But according to Ontario County Sheriff Ray O. Morrow, who hired Tommy as an undercover narcotics agent, Tommy came "highly recommended" from a higher government agency. "If I were to tell you just one word you'd know what I was talking about," Morrow has said. After Tommy's violent surfacing at Hobart on June 5, 1970, he is said to have applied for a drug-control job in Bucks County and to have used as a reference Geneva's resident F.B.I. agent Jerome O'Hanlon. Tommy's close friend, Detective Simon of the Geneva Police Department, explains Tommy's refusal to talk to the press by saying, "There are other agencies involved here, but he can't talk about them. You can't defend yourself when you're doing undercover work for higher agencies." And according to a report of a Special Grand Jury which investigated the events at Hobart:

"... Tongyai testified at length concerning the contact he had with a governmental agency and his interest in furnishing such agency with information of subversive activities. During this period of time, Tongyai was a sales representative for a large drug corporation in a territory covering western New York State. This position facilitated his ability to travel about western New York State and to establish and maintain relationships with various persons on college campuses in this area."

The Grand Jury report never identifies the "governmental agency" and has sealed the details of Tommy's testimony about his relationship to that agency.

Did the F.B.I. get Tommy's boss to fire him from J. A. Webster because his activities were rampant?

ranging traveler. He settled down in Geneva for some hard door to door in fact, at Hobart College.

His task was not easy, for something strange had happened within the Hobart community that year: the campus was by a wave of sensitivity-training sessions: a series of seven-hour one-room one-weekend marathons, an experience shared by almost all Hobart students. "People were all out on an internal trip, and Tommy's politics were so external, real, you know, all rhetoric and empty inside, that no one take him around. It wasn't that we thought he was a pig, but of us had seen inside each other and knew what was inside, with Tommy you got the idea he had only one dimension to s (Bruce Davis)

Although disappointed, even embittered, by the way Hobart's "internal trip" had shut him out, Tommy persisted. In the fall of 1969 he appeared on campus just as school opened, and proceeded to stuff leaflets advertising the Weatherman "Days of Rage" ("We are going to Chicago to kick ass") into the Orientation distributed to all Hobart's freshmen. Later that fall he was around trying to recruit volunteers for the new Vencer Brigades. He asked Sally Gilmour to set up a Women's Liberation group at William Smith, Hobart's coordinate college, "to reach the chicks there." He asked John Kitagawa, a Japanese student, to join with him in forming an Asian-American group of "Third World radicals." He told a meeting of two hundred Hobart students that Weatherman was going down to Washington to blow up the South Vietnamese Embassy "whether they like it or not," and course told them about the X's and the O's when he came back. While sitting around in Slattery's bar in downtown Geneva, Tommy tried to convince a group of nurses from the local nursing school to go out on strike from their hospital jobs and demand abolition of curfews at the nursing school.

But Tommy had bigger things in mind for Hobart. Late in the year it was announced that the area's hawkish Congressman Sam Stratton was to speak at Hobart on January 15, 1970. Students began planning a protest for Stratton's visit.

"He came up to my room for just the second time that fall," Rafael Martinez remembers. "He told me, 'Stratton's coming. Stratton's a pig,' and that we could capitalize on this and 'create a hell scene.' He told me he could get people from Cornell, Rochester, Syracuse to come down and help, 'if the action was heavy enough.' He told me, 'We have the equipment to lock up Stratton in the Albright auditorium with the people inside. I've got a heavy chain that could be used to lock the doors.' He wanted to keep Stratton locked in for a couple of days. He said we could even kidnap him and get him out while the other people are still locked in the auditorium." "Think what this will create, this will be the first time a Congressman has been kept captive. This will give us national and international publicity."

When Rafael declined, Tommy approached a group of students planning a protest at Stratton's speech and detailed his imprisonment idea. Tommy had other suggestions for them, including running his defused grenade down the aisle toward Stratton while he was speaking, as a "piece of guerrilla theatre." He even tossed the idea to them the idea of kidnapping the Congressman.

When the protest group rejected Tommy's ideas, Tommy was enraged. He called their attitude "liberal bullshit." He said Hobart students were a bunch of rich kids who would never stop talking and act. He concluded in disgust that "Hobart isn't worth getting arrested at."

The first time Tommy actually displayed a bomb to Hobart students had been back in February, 1969, when he drove Clarence Young and Mark Smeraldi to a snowy field outside Geneva to practice firing Tommy's M-1 rifle.

"He told us when the weather was good..."

RUN, TOMMY, RUN

(Continued from page 58)

"He'd put this big bottle down in the snow and lit it, then we'd truck off to see what happened. Nothing happened. The fuse went out but Tommy was kind of like nervous and jittery wandering around. I don't know. I still figured he was in S.D.S.—to be that much of an asshole he had to be." (Smeraldi)

Perhaps because of this embarrassingly inauspicious debut Tommy didn't talk much about bombs or bombing until the Fall of 1969 when he entered his Black Powder Period.

Tommy began asking Smeraldi to join him in blowing up a U.S. Army recruiting trailer parked in a lot in downtown Geneva, using Tommy's Phisohex bomb.

Mark declined but, he says, "In order to get Tommy out of our hair for a while," he agreed to accompany Tommy on a late-night expedition to paste a "Fuck the Army" poster on the trailer. It wasn't actually a bombing but Tommy was excited by the idea.

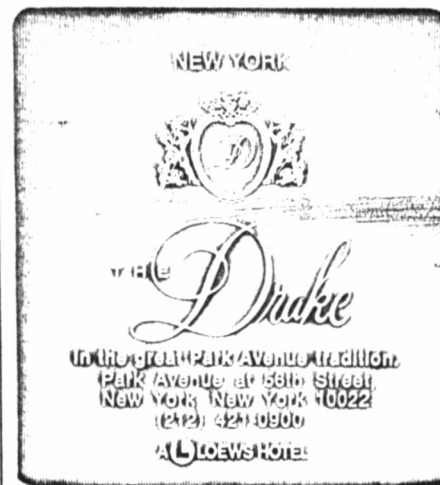
"Every time I've ever done anything like this with Tommy, he was always uptight. He was really paranoid. It wasn't even illegal putting up that poster, but as we're walking down toward the parking lot he was very nervous, really speeding his ass off, he was like hiding behind cars—a car would come into the parking lot and Tommy would crouch down and hide.

"He really got such an adrenaline rush after we did it, he started talking about it as if we'd bombed it, it was really odd, he'd say, 'Boy, would it be great to be sittin' in Slatery's just drinking and hear it go B O O M.'"

Late in the Fall of '69, Tommy invited a black student at Hobart, Kenneth Gilbert, to his house, and offered to teach him how to use guns. He is reported also to have offered to show Gilbert how to use black powder or supply him with black-powder bombs.

In late January, 1970, on the eve of a speech by Dave Dellinger of the Chicago 8, Tommy approached Bruce Davis and Peter Keenan of Hobart, and told them that someone should bomb a building or set off a bomb in the quadrangle to let Dellinger know "something's really happening here." He offered to supply bombs, but got no takers.

In March, 1970, Tommy entered Peter Keenan's room. He had grown a moustache and his sideburns were longer. He was carrying a Phisohex bottle with a fuse stuck in it. Tommy said it was filled with gunpowder and asked Keenan, and Bruce Davis who was also present, if they wanted to "take some action" on the anti-R.O.T.C. issue then building on campus. Peter Keenan recalls that not much more than ten days passed before Tommy approached him again, and asked him again about taking



Use your Zip Code



dynamite at a school-wide meet at Bristol gym. The meeting had called to discuss nothing more inflammatory than curriculum changes but Tommy told Clarence the dents "had to show the faculty were serious about things."

According to Clarence, Tommy offered to bring over some charges of dynamite to place the stands at a few spots in the gym.

"He said that would be enough to shake everybody up, and they wouldn't kill too many people."

When Clarence asked Tommy why he didn't do all the bombing he wanted himself, Tommy replied, "Your school, I'm not a student, so it's not my job to do things for you, you've got to do it yourself."

Meanwhile Keuka College, Tommy's old haunt, was having its own real demonstration ever that April—a sit-in to demand a black-studies program—and Tommy was on the scene.

"He walks into the sit-in, wearing this safari jacket and holding a hand out; there was a piece of paper wrapped around it and he said he had cut it earlier pulling out the fuse of a grenade." (Lisa Feinberg)

After this dramatic entrance Tommy proceeded to "borrow" a projector from the college and show Newsreel films, and to explain to the girls the proper technique for blowing a demonstration.

"When we wanted to know what he meant, he told us the only way to get things done would be to blow the campus into the air, to start with the President's house, the Administration Building, the office of the President, the office of the faculty (Roche)."

Two students said Tommy was around, saying the only way to get things done would be to blow a line he'd repeat about the situation and violence—"just a line, his mind wasn't there," recalled one of them of a Fuller brush man. (Lisa Feinberg, Jane Fleet)

Finally the sit-in leaders urged Tommy to leave and stop disrupting their protest. Tommy stood and argued with them. "He encouraged us to blow up Hegan Hall and he'd give us the matches." The girls laughed at him. But Tommy hung around the sit-in for the next twenty-four hours "mostly playing cards and trying to pick up a girl," she recalls. His favorite card game was two-handed "War."

At one point during the sit-in Tommy met Clarence Yonkers who was visiting from Hobart. He asked him if he wanted to help the Keuka girls by blowing up the president's house for them. Tommy said Clarence he could be back with dynamite and powder in ten minutes if he was interested. Clarence was interested.

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The Grand Jury report never identifies the "governmental agency" and has sealed the details of Tommy's testimony about his relationship to that agency.

Did the F.B.I. get Tommy's boss to fire him from J. A. Webster because his activities were proving embarrassing to the Bureau? Was the F.B.I. itself Tommy's boss? Was he fired for not producing enough, or was he dropped because he was in danger of exposure as an agent? Or did Webster fire him merely because he wasn't selling enough veterinary drugs while peddling his S.D.S. line? It's impossible to be sure.

Whatever went on in the shadowy background behind Tommy's traveling route, a change came over him in late 1969 and early 1970 about the time of the firing. He was no longer the wide-

around trying to recruit volunteers for the new Vencer Brigade. He asked Sally Gilmore to set up a Women's Liberation group at William Smith, Hobart's coordinate college, "to run the chicks there." He asked John Kitagawa, a Japanese student, to join with him in forming an Asian-American group of World radicals." He told a meeting of two hundred Hobart students that Weatherman was going down to Washington to blow the South Vietnamese Embassy "whether they like it or not," and course told them about the X's and the O's when he came. While sitting around in Slattery's bar in downtown Geneva, Tommy tried to convince a group of nurses from the local nursing school to go out on strike from their hospital jobs and demand an end of curfews at the nursing school.

But Tommy had bigger things in mind for Hobart. Late in 1969 it was announced that the area's hawkish Congressman Stratton was to speak at Hobart on January 15, 1970. Tommy began planning a protest for Stratton's visit.

"He came up to my room for just the second time that Rafael Martinez remembers. 'He told me, 'Stratton's coming, Stratton's a pig,' and that we could capitalize on this and 'create a scene.' He told me he could get people from Cornell, Rochester, Syracuse to come down and help, 'if the action was heavy enough.' He told me, 'We have the equipment to lock up Stratton in the Albright auditorium with the people inside. I've got a heavy-duty lock that could be used to lock the doors.' He wanted to keep Stratton locked in for a couple of days. He said we could even kidnap him out while the other people are still locked in the auditorium." "Think what this will create, this will be the first time a Congressman has been kept captive. This will give us national and international publicity."

When Rafael declined, Tommy approached a group of students planning a protest at Stratton's speech and detailed his imprisonment idea. Tommy had other suggestions for them, including using his defused grenade down the aisle toward Stratton while he was speaking, as a "piece of guerrilla theatre." He even tossed to them the idea of kidnapping the Congressman.

When the protest group rejected Tommy's ideas, Tommy was enraged. He called their attitude "liberal bullshit." He said Hobart students were a bunch of rich kids who would never stop talking and act. He concluded in disgust that "Hobart isn't worth getting arrested at."

The first time Tommy actually displayed a bomb to Hobart students had been back in February, 1969, when he drove Clarence Younkers and Mark Smeraldi to a snowy field outside Geneva to practice firing Tommy's M-1 rifle.

"He told us when the revolution came to the school and it was time for seizing buildings we would have to know how to use guns. The three of them practiced shooting the ancient M-1 at intervals with Tommy hitting "maybe one in five," according to Smeraldi.

"The gun was no good, you could fire it fast, but it was the most unsound thing I've ever had the misfortune of getting hold of. Perhaps dismayed by his gun's inadequacy Tommy brought a surprise out of the trunk of his car: a green Pishohex-soap squeeze bottle topped with a stiff red fuse and filled, Tommy said, with black powder.

(Continued on page 1.)

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emergency faculty meeting. "Tommy said it would be a good thing to raise the level of tension around here." Smeraldi turned him down.

"But he came down to the room later and he was talking about this and that type of bomb—he wanted to burn some gunpowder and mix it with some shit to see if it would make a better bomb—he was a pretty hap-hazard scientist—anyway, my roommate had a Triumph bike and there was some chainlube in a spray can in the room, so Tommy said, 'Hey, let's mix it up and see if it flashes higher.' He had it in an ashtray and I told him to take it out in the hall. So he did it in the hallway. There was gunpowder and chainlube and alcohol, he was mixing a lot of stuff, the whole place smelled of sulfur. After that he thought it was a pretty funny deal so he took out this flare gun he had and shot off a few flares." (Smeraldi)

Later, Tommy finally persuaded Smeraldi to go with him to set off one of his Phisohex bombs on campus to raise the level of tension: "He just wanted some huge tremendous explosion so everyone would be up-tight and more radical or something. I don't know how his mind works.

"We went out walking—this is another case where he's scared shit too—he's got another smaller Phisohex bottle and we must have walked two miles looking for the right place. He kept saying this place wasn't cool and that place wasn't cool—too many people here, you know . . . so we finally did it out in the empty lot between Sherrill and Superdorm, we used a cigarette fuse and we were sitting up in the dorm in the window and two cats walk out to this car about five feet away and there's this huge flash, a lot of smoke and absolutely no noise. These poor guys who were going out to their car must have been pretty wrecked at the time because they were saying to each other, 'I didn't do that, did you do that?'"

About this time, apparently dissatisfied with the performance of the Phisohex bomb, Tommy approached John Gilmour, Sally's brother, and one of his closest friends. According to Gilmour, Tommy asked him if he knew anything about explosives, and told him he would get him explosives if he would make them into a bomb for Tommy. Gilmour asked Tommy what kind of bomb he wanted. "Plastic," said Tommy. Gilmour didn't continue the conversation.

On the evening of April 18 Tommy approached Kathy Venturino, a secretary in the R.O.T.C. office. Apparently because some students had told him she was sympathetic to the sit-in, Tommy treated her as if she were an undercover agent for "his," that is the students', side. He asked her where the R.O.T.C. files were located and asked her if he could borrow the keys to the R.O.T.C. office one night. He told Kathy he wanted to remove the files so they could be "messed up" because the sit-in hadn't accomplished anything.

"He told me, 'If you give me the keys I'll give you anything you want'

demanding a more immediate end to R.O.T.C., began a second sit-in on the ground floor of Sherrill Hall. Tommy showed up for this second, more radical sit-in remarkably well-equipped. He brought with him three walkie-talkies, several Newsreel films, and an N.L.F. flag which he proceeded to hang up inside the windows of the lobby. The flag, Tommy explained, "would get everyone pissed off and the only way to get people to do things is to get them pissed off." As for the walkie-talkies, Tommy explained that in the event another building or two—such as the Administration Building—were to be seized, it would be a good idea for the leaders in all buildings to be in communication. He even led expeditions out to "reconnoiter" the quad and test out his walkie-talkie network.

Tommy told people he looked forward to naming the liberated buildings after Che, Malcolm X, Huey Newton and other heroes of the Third World. But he soon became impatient with the slow pace of the second sit-in, which lasted four days. "He was going around from group to group really excited and speeded up, telling us that we ought to break the door down, get in and rip the place up." (Ilan Awerbuch)

Finally some of the radicals and the leadership of the sit-in (including Clarence Youngs and Rafael Martinez) became so fed up with Tommy, his walkie-talkies, and his constant talk of violence they decided he had to be expelled from the sit-in (the moderate Hobert Student Association had already voted to bar Tommy from the campus). Over Tommy's shouted protests the students at the sit-in voted to kick him out.

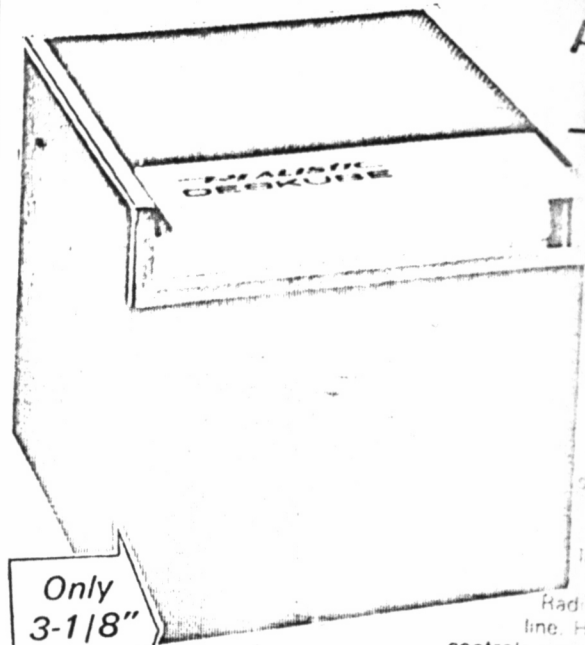
"This isn't a revolutionary action. This is counterrevolutionary," Tommy declared as he left.

Shortly thereafter Tommy encountered another rejection. He asked Sally Gilmour if she wanted to help him bomb the R.O.T.C. office. When she declined Tommy told her bitterly, "Okay. Forget it. You're just like the rest of them," and walked off.

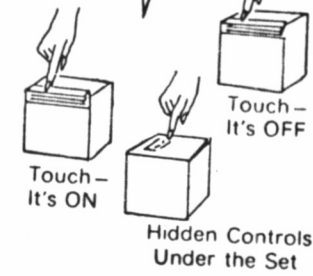
But when the second sit-in came to an end on April 24 without succeeding in speeding up the compromise plan for gradual phase out of R.O.T.C., there were still enough students left unsatisfied to give Tommy one last chance.

The fire-bombing was first proposed two days later, Sunday night, April 26, at a meeting in Greg Shepperd's room in Sherrill Hall. With the exception of the three-room R.O.T.C. office on the ground floor, Sherrill was a dormitory for freshmen, and Shepperd's room was just one floor above the office to be fire-bombed. Present at the meeting were five freshmen and Tommy. Four of the freshmen were surprised to see Tommy there, since they hardly knew him personally, hadn't spoken to him during the sit-in, and hadn't known he was going to be present that night. Friday, when the sit-in broke up inconclusively, the sit-in people agreed they should all break up into small

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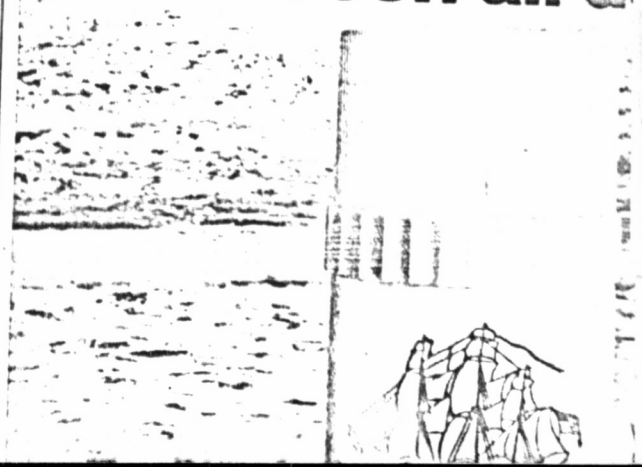


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Where Are the Clark Kents of Yesteryear? They Are Infiltrating the Movement, and Here Is How to Get Rid of Them

SHORTLY AFTER THE 1907 Bolshevnik-led mutinies in Russia, a massive program of police infiltration and arrests rang down on all secret political organizers. Police agents and provocateurs riddled the party ranks. As Bolshevnik membership dwindled, police spies shot to the top of the underground hierarchy. "There was not a single local organization into which some provocateur had not crept," Zinoviev writes in his *Chronicles* of the party. "Every man regarded his comrade with suspicion, was on his guard with those nearest him, did not trust his neighbor."

In spite of its renown, the secret police of Imperial Russia is rapidly being outstripped by the secret police of Imperialist America, where the city of Chicago alone maintains a force of nearly 1000 political agents across the country. The U.S. Army admits to another 1000 domestic infiltrators as necessary preparation for martial law.

The other military services, the CIA, other city and county and state agencies and the FBI have yet to oblige us with information on the levels of their infiltration, though the President has already asked for an extra 1000 G-men to contain the campuses this winter.

Of the 40 substantive witnesses for the prosecution of the Chicago Seven, 34 were undercover agents. Kent State University is hosting 200 federal agents and informers this fall, and despite the growing use of electronic surveillance, several police authorities estimate that 90 per cent of all intelligence gathered on movement activity is the work of infiltrators or informers. George Demmerle, a federal spy who wormed his way through the New York movement for six years, told reporters that every left or progressive organization in the country has at least one agent in its midst. Demmerle himself meandered through the Progressive Labor Party, the Revolutionary Contingent, the U.S. Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, and the Yippies. He headed the New York Young Patriots and founded the Crazies. Demmerle ended his career with the indictments of the Panther 31 and three members of the Revolutionary Contingent for the New York "Bomber Conspiracy." Paranoia swept the movement when Demmerle officially surfaced last May at the huge hard-hat rally in New York, where he was introduced as a "super-spy." He had built such a personable and sincere image among movement organizations that many people felt helpless at the prospect of agents amongst their comrades. But others closer to Demmerle considered him everything from a sexist to "just an asshole." Above all, no one knew him well. "There were always many contradictions in his stories," write the women

of the staff of the New York Rat. "He was never really questioned about his past, his personal life or even his political analysis." Still, the lives and political work of at least 24 good people were left in serious jeopardy.

UNTIL THE NATION'S POLICE archives are opened, and agents and informers can be dealt with collectively, we are forced to deal with them on an organizational level. Even "super-spies" can be uncovered if two conditions are met: knowing the people with whom we live and work, and mastering the basics of background investigation. Knowing your co-workers may sound like a pasty, unsatisfying solution. But background checks alone, even universal checks, are inadequate. Checking everyone's past takes too much time, and informers who have lied about neither their names nor their past can slip by easily. Besides, such a mechanistic approach soon leads to self-defeating paranoia. Everyone has mulled over uneasy feelings about someone. Yet gut intuition remains the only initial basis for distinguishing between paranoia and legitimate suspicion. Careful analysis of the reasons behind intuitions will reveal whether contradictions in a person's behavior should be held suspect.

Sometimes an agent's contradictions are obvious. One undercover agent was repeatedly seen driving a cop car during the Democratic National Convention, while another's girl friend continually told movement people that her boy friend worked for the Chicago police. Usually the contradictions are more subtle. Some agents can never account for their time or whereabouts and are sometimes caught lying. Most lead normal suburban lives in their off-duty hours, but even those who don't must report somewhere at some time. Unexplained income, many long distance phone calls and a hesitancy to discuss personal past offer further reasons for suspicion. For example, a San Diego police spy told some people he was a gardener and others he was a construction worker. Yet in either event, his impeccably clean hands and fingernails gave his story the lie. Frequently, agents are faithful but silent meeting-goers who, when directly confronted for an opinion, demonstrate an abysmal ignorance and indifference to politics. Their lines display the kind of provocateurish flair described in the San Diego Police Department's manual on civil turmoil, in which part of an undercover agent's job is "aggravating potentially explosive situations" so police can move in with guns, clubs or indictments.

Discovering informers depends on intuition even more than does exposing police agents. While agents must lie daily, an informer need hide only that small period of his past and present when he deals with the police. Constantly on the prowl for informers, police sometimes offer movement people \$15,000-a-year salaries to turn over organizational information—\$2000 a head for Weathermen and a paltry \$25 for common GI deserters. The FBI has a slow, insistent method of developing informers, with a standardized pay scale based on the informer's reliability. "Potential Criminal Informants" are then recontacted within 45 days of their first approach.

The first job for a cop on the lookout is to know his potential sources and watch for their weaknesses. When he spots someone in a susceptible position or bordering on disaffection, he moves in with a deal. Fear, materialism and internal hostilities are the levers he uses. For the faltering brother who is wrapped up in a vendetta or rivalry, the cop offers to remove the source of chagrin, and for the person who is uncommonly materialistic, money is no problem. Lenin's friend Malinovsky, though a sometimes-dedicated unionist, was also a big spender and began informing to augment his laborer's salary.

The strongest coercion police have is fear—threatening drug prosecution, revoking a parole, taking a child away. A year ago two law students came to the office of the San Diego Street Journal, offering legal help. Before they left, they had asked many leading questions about staff members harboring runaways. A week later another law student told the newspaper how the FBI and the county sheriff had requested him to infiltrate and inform on the paper and another group. When he refused, they threatened to sabotage his bar examination.

No clear-cut or certain conclusions can generally be drawn about whether someone is informing or not. At best one can know one's friends' susceptibilities and be sensitive to any peculiar behavior. Given the almost inevitable strain of constant suspicion likely to result, it is much more rewarding, and simpler, to concentrate on uncovering full-time police agents. No agent using a phony name and past can escape a simple background investigation. Here's an example.

SEVERAL MONTHS AGO the San Diego chapter of the Movement for a Democratic Military had a new member named Randy Curtis who entered through a local study group. When he first approached MDM, Randy was a liberal; once he sensed that no one was paying any attention to him, he began to talk about "killing pigs." This weighty transition took all of one hour.

Randy was around much of the time, badgering people about moving into the commune, but he could never account for the time he wasn't around. Once, he was caught lying about his whereabouts. No one could reach him directly; his roommate took messages and Randy returned the calls. He displayed virtually no interest in radical politics and his attempts to appear interested were strained.

One Sunday afternoon at a GI picnic, Randy Curtis got drunk and staggered from one person to the next, slapping



Curtis Randall Munro, alias Randy Curtis



John Paul Murray, Jr., alias Jay King (before and after)

each one on the back. "I'm not a pig," he explained pleadingly to each. "You should believe me! I'm not a pig!" No one had said he was, but several people were beginning to wonder. One MDM stalwart decided to pull Randy quietly aside. He presented him with a series of background questions and explained that everyone in MDM underwent such an interview. Randy answered the questions and assured the investigator that he understood their necessity. Though the questions were few and simple, discrepancies immediately appeared in Randy's story. The night before the interview, he had told an MDM woman that he had been divorced in Scarsdale, Nevada, and during the interview he said he had been divorced in Scottsdale, Nebraska. No town named Scarsdale was listed among Nevada towns in a North American atlas. The investigator called the divorce court in Scottsdale, Nebraska, but there was no record of Randy's divorce. A second call did reveal such a record, but a call to the town in which Randy claimed a son had been born proved fruitless.

As more discrepancies cropped up, the investigator returned for more questions. By the third session Randy was visibly upset and complained that MDM was "just too paranoid." He had claimed that his truck was registered to the estate of his dead father, Vernon L. Curtis, but the Kansas Department of Motor Vehicles said that it was registered to a Vernon L. Munro. He also told the investigator that his mother's name was Jean L. Curtis and that she lived in Platt, Kansas. Telephone information for Platt listed no Jean L. Curtis, but it did list a Jean L. Munro.

On a hunch, the investigator went down the short list of Munros in the Polk *City Directory* for San Diego. Near the top was listed a Curtis R. Munro; it showed his occupation as a city cop. The clincher came when the investigator called the Bureau of Vital Statistics for Fort Smith, Arkansas, where Randy claimed he was born on August 18, 1943. The lady on the other end could find no certificate for Randall R. Curtis. She paused for a moment, then said, "Are you sure you don't mean Curtis Randall Munro? That's the closest thing I've got."

By now the investigator was sure he did mean Curtis Randall Munro, and MDM confronted Munro with his real identity before a general meeting of movement groups from San Diego. "Bullshit!" said Munro. "I'm no goddamn police officer!" He stomped out and was never seen again, but for the next two nights the MDM commune was circled with police cars.

No one can create a phony past, no matter how many records he plants; even the most transient people leave too wide a trail to cover, and—as MDM learned—there exists a technique of background investigation. For anyone involved in anything more progressive than the American Legion, the FBI has used it. The trick is to turn their technique against them.

THE SIMPLEST WAY TO SINK an undercover agent is to swamp him with questions about his past—the more specific the better. Don't scare the suspect away. Say that everyone in the organization undergoes similar questioning. If the suspect has been around

long enough to know better, say that other people suspect him, but that you personally think they are being paranoid.

Here are some sample questions:

1. Suspect's full name, address, phone number and aliases.
2. Parents' and stepparents' names (including maiden names), addresses, phone numbers and occupations.
3. Names, locations and dates of attendance for the past four schools the suspect attended.
4. His last four employers with addresses, dates of employment, kind of work and reason for leaving.
5. A description of his last two cars, including physical description, names of legal and registered owners, and license plate numbers.
6. Past marriages, divorces or separations with dates and locations of such actions. The same information on the births of children, civil or criminal court actions and any traffic tickets in the past year.
7. His past four residences, with exact addresses, dates of residency, and the phone numbers while he lived there.
8. All driver's license and draft card information. Look at the cards yourself.
9. Names of two of his long-time friends or acquaintances, how long he's known them and how to reach them.
10. A complete military history, including units, dates, jobs and superiors.

Don't let the suspect fill out a form. Ask the questions aloud and copy down the answers, along with his reactions. No one will be able to answer all the questions completely and accurately, but few agents can remain cool and resolute throughout the entire interrogation.

There are hundreds of sources of background investigation for checking his responses. The following are some of the most common to all parts of the country. Begin with names, addresses and phone numbers. All information must be verified and contradictions checked on. Check the telephone book—and call information, as changes may have been made since the book was published.

The R. L. Polk Company publishes a directory of households for most metropolitan areas. The cost of Polk's *City Directory* is prohibitive, but local libraries usually carry a current edition for their areas. The first section of the *City Directory* is an alphabetized list of heads of households, usually the husband, showing his spouse's name, his job, his employer and his address. The second section is indexed by street address. The resident's name and telephone number follow. The third section is indexed by telephone number. While the *City Directory* is fairly comprehensive, some libraries have current local directories, indexed by street address, providing residents' names and phone numbers. It is published by local phone companies and is usually not otherwise available to the general public. Many libraries keep the old editions of the *City Directory* (which is usually updated every two years), allowing you to verify past addresses and phone numbers.

The Haines Company publishes the *Addressakey*, a volume similar to the last two sections of the *City Directory* but usually more geographically comprehensive.

County assessors' offices have complete listings of all real estate owners in the county. They always list property description first, then the owner's name and address. Sometimes they have a separate index, listing property owners'

names first, followed by the property description. Be polite and the clerks in the assessor's office will be of immeasurable help. If the suspect lives in a rented house or apartment, locate the owner, who may provide information about his tenant.

In California, and probably in most states, voter registration files are open to public inspection and contain a wealth of information that is usually indexed by last name and by street address. For a small fee most State Departments of Motor Vehicles will release individual driving records and information on a vehicle's ownership. Try the county recorder's office, which lists all real property transfers and lien actions and often records births, deaths and marriages. In some parts of the country, bureaus of vital statistics perform the latter functions. The clerks' offices of the Superior, Municipal, Small Claims and Traffic Courts have last name indexes and files for all criminal, civil, divorce and traffic cases. The files are open to the public. Finally, Selective Service Regulation 1606.32(a)(1) states: "Information contained in records in a registrant's file may be examined by any person having written authority dated and signed by the registrant." Insist that the suspect fill out a permission slip, then look through his file.

In addition to checking public records it is almost always essential to develop new background sources—and that means finding political friends in local firms or public service agencies. A contact in the local utility company might provide gas, electric or water service billing files, which probably constitute the most comprehensive addresses-to-resident index available. A friend in the telephone company could supply unlisted phone numbers, while doctors have access to nearly all medical records in their area. A merchant who subscribes to a credit bureau can get information on anyone who's ever bought anything on credit. Members of the Movement for a Democratic Society in Chicago recently uncovered two of their co-workers as police by running a simple credit check.

Since these sources are scattered throughout the country, much of the information must be collected through long distance phone calls. Either learn to make them for free or plan on a huge phone bill. In any case, don't use your own phone, since it is probably tapped. Finally, an investigator needs a variety of ruses or ploys to extract information from civil servants and others who may be less than willing to cooperate with a movement detective. The investigator who uncovered Randy Curtis pretended to be everything from an insurance investigator to a social worker. It's a simple matter of matching the kind of information needed with the right kind of cover story.

The same kind of ingenuity, applied to even limited background information resources, can multiply their usefulness many times and make any investigator the toast of the sleuthing set.

A WEST COAST AGENT recently exposed was using the name John Milton and the cover address and phone number of a 68-year-old woman who he claimed was his maternal grandmother. Movement investigators soon discovered he was a fake but they wanted his real identity. The woman's name was Martha Rindon,

and the *City Directory*, as well as other sources, showed no other Rindons living in the area; but it did list her as the widow of John Rindon.

Checking old issues of the *City Directory*, investigators found a John Rindon listed in the 1958 edition; Martha was listed as his wife. The 1954 edition showed Rindon with no spouse, though he still lived in town; so the investigators looked through the 1954 and 1955 county marriage records and learned that aging John Rindon had married aging Martha Mitzak. Both had been married once before, and both of their mates had died. If what Milton claimed about his maternal grandmother was true, there is a good possibility that his mother's maiden name was Mitzak, as undercover agents generally stick very close to their real histories to prevent slip-ups.

Only one other Mitzak was found in the *City Directory*, an Allen Mitzak who was an engineer and lived in town. Milton had claimed that his mother's name was Eileen, so one investigator called Allen Mitzak and said that he was visiting from Ohio. "My mother had a friend long ago named Eileen Mitzak," explained the investigator, "and when she heard I was coming out West she asked me to see if I could locate her. Mom had heard that she had relatives here."

Allen wasn't home, but his wife was happy to explain that Eileen had married a man named Wilten and was living in New York. The investigator thanked the woman and went to the *City Directory*, where he found John Wilten, a state narcotics investigator, listed with his home address. A stake-out confirmed that Milton and Wilten were one and the same.

Wilten had claimed that his parents were living in New York. It probably would have been easier to go through the address he gave for them, but the investigators were being arrogant. They or any investigators could easily spend all their time chasing bogeymen by concentrating too heavily on standard background checks and forgetting that the safest protection for any collective is to know the people in it. What does "knowing someone" mean? It means talking to the people with whom we work and live about racism, chauvinism and political feelings. Many personal struggles are going on right now; people are trying to purge many old, competitive and supremacist attitudes from themselves and are trying to learn to work as equals in a cooperative manner to make the world worthwhile.

The very things that we are trying to overcome are the things that police use against us to turn us into informers—rivalry, jealousy, materialism and authoritarian attitudes. Yet how many undercover cops understand the complexity or the intensity of these struggles—let alone are capable of feigning the same struggles? If in no other way, we all can intuitively tell when and what our comrades are going through—if we are going through it with them. If we aren't going through it with them, we can never expect to know if a "friend" is finking on us or whether the person is really who he claims to be. A lack of trust is the basis of suspicion.