

Freedom of Speech not political police!

***rally to defend civil liberties,
civil rights and the 1st Amendment***

Friday, 2/16 @ 1pm
meet at the flag pole, main quads

On January 11th, 2001, Judge Richard Posner, a senior lecturer at the University of Chicago, agreed to the city's request to modify a 1981 **consent decree** that had reined in the Chicago Police Department's notorious **Red Squad**, known officially as the Subversive Activities Unit.

This decision jeopardizes student activists and others who may be targeted by the police for their political views. The infamous Red Squad spied on, infiltrated and harassed such "subversive" groups such as the American Friends Service Committee, the United Methodist Church and the League of Women Voters. Thousands of paid and unpaid undercover agents were used to compile Police dossiers on 14,000 organizations and 258,000 individuals.

Judge Posner granted the Chicago Police permission to resume collecting political data on any community group or organization, and to declare, at their discretion, certain groups to be "extreme". Police can then place those "extreme" groups under surveillance. The police are now also allowed to routinely film all protest demonstrations "for training purposes". The reasons given by the Chicago

Police Dept. for asking the federal courts for these powers were patently false, as was pointed out by the original federal judge, Ann Williams, when she rejected the city's petition in 1999. It was shown in that trial that the police have ample power to do their investigations without these expanded powers. A police sergeant involved with anti-terrorism work gave a sworn deposition to the effect that at no time did the consent decree ever interfere with a legitimate police investigation, of hate crimes or anything else.

Judge Posner professes distaste for the antiwar and civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s, which he has characterized as an "anarchic outburst." And he agrees with Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia that "people who look to the courts for social reform do not take democracy completely seriously." However, by allowing the police to infiltrate, spy on and otherwise disrupt social movements, Judge Posner himself fails to take democracy seriously.



sponsored by Creative Progressive Action, a registered student organization at the U of C

What was the Chicago Police Department's Red Squad?

For more than fifty years, the Chicago Police Department's Intelligence Division contained a unit which spied on, infiltrated and harassed lawful political, religious, and civic groups. After eleven years of litigation, a June, 1984 jury verdict and a December, 1985 court decision held that the Chicago Police Subversive Activities Unit, also known as the "**Red Squad**", had unlawfully: maintained an extensive political dossier on Lucy Montgomery (\$10,000 damage award); infiltrated the Alliance to End Repression and the Chicago Peace Council (\$20,625 damage award each); and attempted, in the words of the police, to "destroy the Spanish Action Committee of Chicago, its leaders, and its community influence" (\$60,000 damage award).

These decisions were the first in history holding political file-keeping or infiltration per se in violation of the First Amendment. 27 other plaintiffs were awarded an additional \$397,500 in out-of-court settlements. Due to these decisions the Chicago Police Dept. was forced to accept a **consent decree** which limited its power. The lawsuit revealed that the Subversive Activities Unit:

- * Maintained "subversive" dossiers on more than 800 organizations including the United Methodist Church, League of Women Voters, PTA, Catholic Interracial Council, Planned Parenthood Association, Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, Jewish War Veterans, NAACP, and National Council of Churches.

- * Collected information on 14,000 organizations and 258,000 individuals.

- * Used hundreds of infiltrators who became directly involved in the targeted groups, often as leaders, including a president of the Organization for a Better Austin, a director of the Men's Division of Operation PUSH, and a chairperson of a chapter of the Citizens Action Program.

- * Infiltrated the plaintiffs' legal team for this lawsuit.

- * Passed intelligence reports on lawful political activity to the CIA and FBI.

- * Passed 900 reports a month to the U.S. Civil Service Commission, potentially to be used in denying job applicants federal employment.

- * Burglarized organizational files, membership lists, correspondence and office equipment of the Chicago Peace Council, Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Latin American Defense Organization.

- * Illegally wiretapped homes of political activists.

- * Assisted a paramilitary terrorist group, the Legion of Justice, in physically attacking dissidents and burglarizing files.

- * Targeted peaceful civic organizations such as the Citizens Action Program, the Spanish Action Committee of Chicago (a Puerto Rican civil rights organization) and the National Lawyers Guild for "neutralization."

- * Planned "to negate or nullify sympathetic and political influence, financial and organizational support, and the operational activities" of the Alliance to End Repression, the Chicago coalition that brought the lawsuit which resulted in the consent decree.

(for more info see: Frank Donner, "Protectors of Privilege: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America," University of California Press, 1990. pp. 90-154, 353-55, 357, 362-63.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, February 16th, 2001

Students to Protest University of Chicago Law School Professor's support for Red Squads

SUBHEAD: Students to Protest University of Chicago Law School Professor's overturning of the consent decree limiting police power to spy on activists.

Chicago, IL — Students at the University of Chicago will hold a rally on Friday, February 16th at 1pm on the main U of C campus in Hyde Park to protest the decision of Judge Richard Posner, a senior lecturer at the U of C Law School, to overturn the consent decree which restricted political spying and the disruption of constitutionally protected activities by Chicago Police Department.

After eleven years of litigation, a June, 1984 jury verdict and a December, 1985 court decision held that the Chicago Police Subversive Activities Unit, also known as the "**Red Squad**", had unlawfully spied on, infiltrated and harassed political groups. On January 11th Judge Posner wrote the decision for the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals which overturned Federal Judge Ann Williams' 1999 ruling upholding the consent decree.

Speakers at the rally will include Emile Schepers, program director for the Chicago Committee to Defend the Bill of Rights, and Melinda Powers of the West Town Community Law Office and National Lawyers Guild.

Student groups at the University of Chicago supporting the rally include the Feminist Majority, the Anti-Sweatshop Coalition, Young Democratic Socialists, the Environmental Concerns Organization, Students Together Opposing Prisons, and Creative Progressive Action. The students stressed that the rally will be peaceful and non-violent.

Judge Posner agreed to the city's request to modify the consent decree that had reined in the Chicago Police Department's notorious Red Squad. The student activists seek to remind Posner that the Red Squad spied on, infiltrated and harassed such "subversive" groups such as the American Friends Service Committee, the United Methodist Church and the League of Women Voters. Thousands of paid and unpaid undercover agents were used to compile Police dossiers on hundreds of thousands of Chicago residents. The Red Squad collected information on 14,000 organizations and 258,000 individuals.

Judge Posner granted the Chicago Police permission to resume collecting political data on any community group or organization, and to declare, at their discretion, certain groups to be "extreme" and then place those groups under surveillance. The police are now also allowed to routinely film all protest demonstrations "for training purposes". The reasons given for asking the federal courts for these powers were patently false, as was pointed out by the original federal judge, Ann Williams, when she rejected the city's petition in 1999. It was shown in that trial that the police have ample power to do their investigations without these expanded powers. A police sergeant involved with anti-terrorism work gave a sworn deposition to the effect that at no time did the consent decree ever interfere with a legitimate police investigation, of hate crimes or anything else.

Posner professes distaste for the antiwar and civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s, which he has characterized as an "anarchic outburst." And he agrees with Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia that "people who look to the courts for social reform do not take democracy completely seriously." However, the student activists charge that by allowing the police to infiltrate, spy on and otherwise disrupt social movements Posner himself fails to take democracy seriously.

For more information see: <http://www.concentric.net/~Gutmanpc/>