

May 21, 1969

Today, May 21, 1969, we enter Local Board No. 53 at Silver Spring, Maryland, to mutilate Selective Service records and office equipment. We use black paint to destroy files; we pour our blood to symbolize America's systematic destruction of life throughout the world.

We accuse you, the American government, of mass murder in Vietnam; of economic oppression in underdeveloped nations as well as in our own cities; of political suppression of minorities at home with the use of terror and coercion, of the creation of a lifestyle based on the priority of property over life. We strike at the Selective Service System because it is used to feed the horror of genocide abroad and the suppression of legitimate dissent at home. We act also because seven out of eight young men are channeled into the "national interest."

We have worked within the system through the schools and legal dissent. We have picketed, leafleted, sat in and walked out. But we find our efforts drowned in the despair of those who give lip service to change and their lives to organized misery. We act outside the law because this country has legislated poverty, hunger, and murder to satisfy the needs of bureaucracy.

Our action coincides with our belief in the ability of the human spirit to persevere misery and to replace it with the joy of life and love. Given a fair chance, a man will always choose freedom over slavery, but in a country where free choice is a myth, that decision does not come easily, and a great deal of sacrifice will be made before men can truly be free.

We condemn the American government, and from this day forward we declare:

As long as one man is free, the instruments and institutions of war and oppression are not safe from his hands. Until the eyes of death are forgotten, the halls of justice will echo with the roar of our anger. Until peace is a reality, the hearts and hands of free men and women will not be stilled.

We appeal to your hearts and minds. Join us.

May God have mercy on our nation.

MICHAEL BRANSOME

JONATHAN BAYLESS

LESLIE BAYLESS