IN CASE OF POLITICAL OR MILITARY CRISIS

Suggestions for action at 2XX

(Canberra Peacemakers is an activist group working for peace and social change through grassroots nonviolent action. The following suggestions emerged from a weekend workshop in December 1981 involving members of Canberra Peacemakers, some 2XX workers and other interested people. The suggestions are for preparation and nonviolent action to keep 2XX operational during a crisis in which attempts might be made to close the station.)

Some possible crises

1) Elections or parliament are suspended indefinitely following a political coup (such as 1975).

2) Police powers are greatly extended following an alleged (or real) terrorist attack or threat (e.g. after a Hilton bombing type incident).

3) Martial law is declared after a nuclear attack on Pine Gap or some other military installation.

Before the crisis

1) Prepare and practise decision making procedures for a crisis, including how to handle rumours and infiltrators.

2) Prepare tapes about nonviolent resistance.

3) Promote community awareness of methods of nonviolent resistance through broadcasts, leaflets and training workshops (e.g. simulate defence of the station).

4) Forge links with unions, community groups, other media and particularly with CB operators. Strengthen the internal network of 2XX workers and supporters.

5) Broaden skills and knowledge about radio to provide technical backup (e.g. knowledge of the location of the land line).

During the crisis

1) Broadcast accurate information about the crisis and about nonviolent methods of resistance such as strikes, demonstrations, boycotts and noncooperation with orders. Keep broadcasting as long as possible. (Use pre-recorded crisis tapes if available.)

2) Appeal for information on resistance activities and on activities of the aggressors. Invite resistance groups to broadcast.

3) Provide links between resistance groups and with other media centres. Coordinate resistance activities such as meetings and bans.

4) Liaise with Telecom workers, other media groups and CB radio groups to ensure continued transmission.

5) If the 2XX studio or transmitter is threatened: call for people to come to the station and to protect the land line and transmitter. Prepare studio evacuation if necessary. Record everything that's happening.

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Approaching 2XX concerning social defence*: some preliminary notes

Goals: To learn about people's responses, objections and resistances to social defence (SD);
To gain experience promoting SD;
To expose more people to ideas about SD;
To explore the role of radio in SD;
To integrate nonviolent action training with preparation for SD;
To strengthen and extend grass-roots organisations and actions for peace.

Strategy: See attached sheet, "Notes on nonviolent defence".

Action: Approach 2XX - initially selected people - with ideas, materials and proposals for 2XX involvement in preparation for SD, including
(a) distribution of material on SD to 2XX subscribers and announcers and staff, and presentation of SD ideas on various 2XX programmes;
(b) formulation, in conjunction with 2XX staff and others, of plans for SD in the event of an invasion or coup;
(c) SD simulation involving 2XX, possibly including programming, and possibly including nonviolent action training in advance.

Preparation by Canberra Peacemakers: reach consensus on goals, strategy, action, participants, time line; make necessary preparations for action, including understanding, materials and plans.

* social defence = nonviolent defence = nonmilitary defence = civilian defence. Each name has advantages and disadvantages. Which should we use?

Civilian defence is easily confused with civil defence.
Nonviolent defence usefully emphasises nonviolence but may be interpreted as being passive.
Nonmilitary defence is clearly in contrast with military approaches, but does not emphasise the positive side.
Social defence focusses on what is being defended and how, but has no immediate meaning to most people.

Brian Martin, 14 August 1981