

Prominent '60s activists to discuss draft resistance

By Sarah Kitchen

Of the Emerald

Two prominent 1960s activists will visit the University tonight to discuss draft resistance in the '60s and the '80s.

Greg Calvert is the former national secretary of Students for a Democratic Society and a University graduate, and Ken Carpenter is the former Peace Education secretary for the American Friends Service Committee.

According to Calvert, college students don't face the possibility of military involvement like they did two decades ago.

"There is no draft in the '80s, which means the counterpart of Vietnam, which is Central America, is being carried out by a proxy army (the Contras)," Calvert said. "That is a very clever strategy because it is not very clear that they could draft young people into the military without creating the same kind of protest and social upheaval that they created in the '60s."

The National Guard, which trains in Honduras and the Caribbean, consists primarily of people from the working class who haven't attended college, he said.

"It leaves untouched the university and college campuses where there is the most danger to the powers that be of some kind of insurgency," Calvert said.

Calvert taught at Iowa State University from 1964-66, but left to join the SDS, one of the major political groups of the New Left movement of the '60s.

"I found myself in the situation as a teacher counseling and urging young people to resist the war, and specifically young men to resist the draft, and it became a question of moral conscience for me," he said. "How could I continue to enjoy the benefits and privileges of being on a college faculty while I was asking young men to take

risks?"

During 1966-67, when Calvert was the national secretary of SDS, the issue of draft resistance became crucial within the organization, he said. In December 1966, SDS passed a comprehensive draft resistance program that sup-



Greg Calvert

ported all forms of resistance. This program was later amended to include direct support of people in the military and people who had deserted.

According to Calvert, the period from 1960-65 was one of protest and civil rights organizing. The second period, 1965-68, was one of war and resistance, and the third period, 1968-70, was one of direct confrontation with the state. He added that the periods overlapped.

"What happened is that new issues (were) raised, particularly with the war, which forced changes with student tactics," he said.

Issues became broader in the mid-'60s, which sparked more direct resistance to government and military powers, Calvert said. This included resistance to production of weapons, such as napalm; confrontations on

campuses with the Dow chemical company; and a growing awareness of the relationship between universities with military research.

"One of the things that happened with the resistance strategy is that people became very frustrated at their inability

to directly affect policy, and it was that frustration more than anything else that led to the adoption of what I regard as adventuristic tactics," he said.

These tactics included vandalism and increasing emphasis on direct confrontation with police.

"The problem with the turn toward more radical tactics beginning in 1968 was that that wing of the movement that engaged in those tactics began to lose contact with a broad social base in the country, and

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