

CENSUS RESISTANCE 1980



By Lawrence Samuels

Privacy is what it is all about.

Originally, the census, as established in the U.S. Constitution, was only concerned with population figures of the United States. Basically, the only question the census taker would ask is "How many persons live in your household?" And that was all they asked besides everyone's full name. They didn't ask how many toilets you owned or with whom you slept. Only since the middle 20th century have personal questions crept into the census questionnaire.

To make matters worse, the census is **involuntary**. Citizens must submit to interruptions in answering personal questions or be subject to a \$100 fine. Outrage is the only word! And then to top it off, the government gives assurances, promising never to divulge census information which is stored in government computers. Since when has the government been able to keep secrets? And if the information is to remain secret, then why ask all the personal questions in the first place? Of course the information is **not** secret; it will remain no more a secret than the *Pentagon Papers*.

HISTORY OF CENSUS RESISTANCE

Although two persons were convicted in 1960 for failure to answer the census, 1970 marks the first year that a nation-wide census resistance movement emerged. Called the *Hawaii-5*, five employees of a Hawaiian radio station campaigned vigorously against the 1970 census.

After the radio station repeatedly urged people to resist the involuntary nature of the census, the government reacted by pulling the station's FCC license. Only one of the *Hawaii-5* was convicted and fined \$100 which was paid by the Committee for a Voluntary Census. Later, his conviction was overturned in court.

1980 RESISTANCE

Around 3,000 persons in 1970 resisted and mailed their census forms to Society for Individual Liberty's (SIL) Committee for a Voluntary Census which spearheaded the census resistance movement. More than one million persons are expected to resist in 1980, mailing their census forms to census resistance organizations. Both SIL and Society for Libertarian Life (SLL) have set up voluntary census committees to take in census forms and donations.

If you wish to resist, mail us either a letter of support opposing the census or the census form (xeroxed or real one) and a dollar if possible to:

Voluntary Census Committee

Society for Libertarian Life

P. O. Box 4

Fullerton, CA 92632 Phone [714] 962-6491

or to:

Committee for a Voluntary Census

Society for Individual Liberty

P. O. Box 1147

Warminster, Penna. 18974

NOTE: If you resist, a census worker will most likely come to your residence. We suggest that you ignore him/her and refuse to answer questions. Most census workers will be college students.