

# NOTES FROM THE VALLEY PEACE CENTER

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## A DAY IN THE LIFE



In case you've wondered what goes on all day at the VPC, here is one woman's account:

As one goes to work on a typical afternoon at the Valley Peace Center there are usually several people waiting outside the door. So the confusion begins before the office is even opened. It is almost futile to try and open the 20-odd pounds of mail that has to be carried daily from the Post Office, but a vain attempt is made. No one has to be told that the "movement" is burying itself with words on paper. Just as the first letter or parcel is almost undone the phone begins its incessant ring. The first call is from a Minister, 38 years old, father of five, who has been sent an induction order by his draft board. He wants to know if he has to go. We tell him no and advise him about the appropriate course of action. There are now three people waiting at the desk. The first is a sleepwalker who wants to know if his condition will keep him out of the Army. He is asked to wait in line for the draft counselor who is already busy speaking a a young man with Selective Service problems. Before anyone else can speak the phone rings again. A counselor in Williamsburg wants our advice on a letter of support written for a CO. In the letter the writer insults the draft board members several times and the counselor wants to know how we would deal with this problem. Now there seems to be only one young man at the desk. He says that he is AWOL from the Marines and he heard that the Valley Peace Center could get him out of the service. Upon closer examination it is discovered that he is actually a deserter because he had escaped from a stockade with AWOL charges already pending against him. He goes on to say that it was only because he was ordered to get his hair cut that he escaped "all those times." After inquiring what "all those times" meant it was learned that he escaped not only from the brig but also twice from civilian authorities who had arrested him for illegally hitch-hiking around his home base. . . The phone has stopped ringing for awhile because the counselor is using it, trying to find out the correct procedure for getting a written affidavit which the sleepwalker must have from his wife before 6 AM the next day when he is to be inducted. Since the counselor cannot type out the affidavit because the typewriter has no letters on its keys, she and the sleepwalker leave to try and find another typewriter. . . . As the deserter resumes his tale the phone rings again. It is a young girl who was arrested while registering for summer school because she had a small American flag sewn onto the waistband of her pants. She was referred to a local lawyer whom we hoped could be of some help. Just as the AWOL-deserter began to tell how he escaped from the "brig" the third boy who was originally waiting at the desk comes over with 15 CO Handbooks, over 100 forms and pamphlets (all varying prices), 20-odd books on different subjects, several bumper stickers and buttons. It seems as if his committee has \$15,000.00 to spend and he is starting at the Valley Peace Center. Adding up all the prices for these miscellaneous items takes forever. . . The Marine is then advised to seek out some legal help immediately and he leaves reiterating that he will not have his hair cut. . . The phone starts to ring again . . . there are still three boys to counsel . . . the mail hasn't been opened . . . and it is one half hour past closing time.

## IT'S NOT EASY

While we're talking about life at the Center . . . It's very hot in