

Freedom Center trains cold-war leadership Penal reform . .

By Samuel Yette
Newsweek Feature Service

CULPEPPER, Va.—America has its Military Academy, its Naval Academy and its Air Force Academy. But to one band of alarmed conservatives, that's not enough in the war against Communism. So they have founded a kind of cold-war academy.

On 683 green and rolling acres here in the Blue Ridge Mountain country 80 miles from Washington, D.C., stands the handsome home of the Freedom Studies Center—an educational establishment that aims to become a graduate institute of "psycho-political warfare."

"YOU MUST NOT forget," warns John M. Fisher, 49, the ex-FBI man who heads the Center, "that there are 6,000 schools behind the Iron Curtain who are teaching political warfare." And he likes to quote an epigram from his old boss, J. Edgar Hoover:

"We are at war with Communism, and the sooner every red-blooded American realizes this, the safer we will be."

To promote this safety, the Center has a variety of activities. It produces a three-day seminar once a month, a twice-monthly newsletter and what Fisher calls "Radio Free America," a commentary supplied to more than 400 stations.

IT ALSO GETS out individual publications, such as a 28-page pamphlet called "Teaching About Communism: Guidelines for Junior and Senior High School Teachers."

Founded and partially funded by the American Security Council, a Chicago-based conservative lobby, the Center has as one of its major goals the study of Communist strategies and tactics and the training of cold-war leadership. To accomplish that, says Fisher, it wants "to reach people who have influence over others, people who have multiplier potential."

The man with the most multiplier potential on the Center's staff is Elbridge Durbrow, a retired diplomat who served as U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam during the latter Eisenhower years. Durbrow is a director of the Center, conducts seminars and gives lectures with titles like "Communist Plans for Action."

OCCASIONALLY, too, he pulls in a notable guest for one of the three-day seminars. One such was Loy W. Henderson, the 79-year-old veteran career diplomat who was once U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union but who drew the line at speaking to the seminar. "I don't agree with everything they say here, but I believe these are honest men," he said. "Still, I don't agree that you ought to teach hate-hating people because they're Communists and all that."

Fisher has two dreams for his organization. One is to expand it into an accredited graduate school. The Center expects to have 20 research fellows on hand later this winter and next fall hopes to inaugurate a full-time program with 400 students working toward graduate degrees.

His other dream is to gain recognition from the top universities around the country—and this seems difficult of achievement from all present indications. Fisher names some three dozen "cooperating" schools and universities, but when pressed admits they do not recognize the Center's courses for degree credits.

BUT THE CENTER is not without a few friends who, if they are not in high places themselves, are at only one remove from them.

Participants at one recent seminar, for instance, included administrative assistants to U.S. senators John Tower of Texas, James Buckley of New York and James Allen of Alabama, as well as aides to at least two congressmen. And at the Center's dedication, five years ago, among the participants were two senators, a congressman and the U.S. Navy band.

According to published figures, the Center spent \$335,000 last year, but it expects to spend considerably more in the future. The money comes not only from the parent organization, but from individual contributions which range from \$5 to \$100,000.

THERE IS ALSO AN occasional spectacular gift. One has come from a Polish-born octogenarian named Sol Feinstone who gave \$60,000 toward a \$200,000 structure to be called "The Sol Feinstone Library for the Survival of Freedom."

Under the terms of the gift, "the Library will confine itself to the criticism of Communism and/or Bolshevism and/or Marxism-Leninism and/or any other-named movement which seeks to change our social order through the lie, subversion or violence."

The library's aims should be quite in keeping with those of the Center which, by and large, has remained true to its original prospectus: to train cold-war leadership, to study Communist strategies and to become "a private West Point of psycho-political warfare."

Continued from Page 2.

cruel, and the penitentiary is so vicious that a man should escape if he can," Chambers said, adding that often the so-called "troublemaker" in prison is really "the man who hasn't allowed his mind to be crushed out of him," by wardens, guards and legislators.

Chambers spoke of a "hypothetical" incident when a warden is so politically powerful his "pockets get fatter" with prison reform money.

He said the example raised the question, "Who will watch the watchers?"

"I TELL audiences that prison walls are to keep the public out and not the men in," Chambers said, claiming they hide the injustices in the penitentiary.

"Each man's death diminishes you," we're told. Isn't it possible a death is worse if it's slow, day by day, stripping a prisoner of everything that makes him human?" Chambers asked.

Houseparents . . .

Continued from Page 5.

Fraternity men also learn from the young housemothers indirectly, Confer said. The kind of things that bother her will probably bother the girls the men are dating, he said.

Most of the houseparents have attended the University of Nebraska previously. Jerry Bartek, an exception, is still an undergraduate, though is four years older than many of the men in the house.

Philip Bowen of Phi Delta Theta believes the age of the couples can be a disadvantage. Bowen is an alum of the house and the juniors and seniors think of him as a brother. But his membership in the fraternity is also an advantage as he has access to meetings and rooms closed to outsiders, he said.

Mrs. Bartek mentioned a mild lack of privacy, but feels this is part of the obligations of the job. Advantages make up for inconvenience, however.

She hasn't as much work to do as she would with her own home. The Barteks have only three rooms and she has no meals to prepare.

Other fraternities that now have houseparents are Alpha Tau Omega, Beta Sigma Psi, Beta Theta Pi, Delta Upsilon, Phi Kappa Psi, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon.

Most of the couples are enjoying their jobs. Diane Beecher of Phi Kappa Psi concluded, "It's a lot of fun."

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