

# People Soup



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## Fieldtripper's Journal

by Adam Auster

### Prolog

At the beginning of April, I went off on a two week trip to visit various LRYs and LRYers here in the east. Specifically, the Greater Washington Area Federation (GWAF), the Southern Appalachian Mountains (SAM) federation, and the main thrust of my trip, a business conference of the Greater Ohio District/Allegheny Regional Federation of United Liberals (GODARFUL). The conference planners had written us a short note asking one or more of us to please come and help get GODARFUL on it's feet again. Peter was going to meet me at the GODARFUL conference but that didn't quite work out, as you will soon see.

This "Journal" is a composite picture of my own recollections, letters that I wrote back to the folks here in Boston while I was away and my own personal journal. Much of what you will read here was written back in Boston and not "on the scene", nonetheless this article is an accurate depiction of my moment-to-moment experiences.

Much of my second week on the road was spent visiting New College in Sarasota, Florida. References to my visit, interview and personal experiences have been edited out of this account, so as to leave a large period of inactivity. Sufficeth it to say that I was not idle... but that is another story.

Wednesday March 6

Well, it's been a strange day and not an altogether productive one. I ended up having to take a bus from York, PA after trying in vain to either get a ride out or locate some of the LRYers I know there (Ken Dermott, president of the Delaware Valley Federation, lives in York and was off at some meeting of the "York Jaycees" all night!). I got into Washington at about 1:00 AM and I called up Alex in Arlington, VA. He didn't even know that I was coming! Bad vibes, bad organizing and an omen of things to come. Alex's folks were very nice about the whole thing, considering, but I was sort of upset that no one knew about it, because the idea was that we would have a meeting of GWAFers tomorrow night. Now I am wondering if anyone will be able to make it.

Well, I went with Alex to his "Alternative School" (that is, a sort of public "free school") and ended up showing the NARMIC slide show, the Post-War-War, about the current US involvement in Indochina to one of the classes. It was a strange experience, going back into

a school to try and reach the people. Well the response was pretty typical; a few moments of silence after it was over, and then most of the class began to direct their energies towards ignoring what they had just seen, or pretending that it didn't really matter. One girl made a very elaborate show of standing up, stretching and saying: "Well, there's nothing we can do anyway", and then walked out. Most of the class followed suit, leaving about five people who wanted to find out more. We talked for about 20 minutes, mostly about how they could show the slide show in the other non-"Alternative" schools, and gave them the address of the Baltimore American Friends Service Com., the American Civil Liberties Union, and LRY.

One of these people had come in late and missed the first part of the slide show. He asked me if he could see the first part and I said no, I had to go, but if he wanted to come to the (still scheduled) meeting tonight we might show it then. As I was walking out the door he laughed and said, "Oh no, I'm doing my best to stay as far away from LRY as possible".

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