



# THE AXON

Monday,  
April 26, 1971

...direct from the NERVE CENTER, Rm #127

---As of February of this year, the Stanford Medical Community for Peace formed a number of action committees. It is under the auspices of the Committee on Nonviolent Civil Disobedience that the following project has been undertaken.

## ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

A variety of motivations have brought each of us into the field of medicine; but the essence of the work we are all involved in at this medical center is the preservation of human life. Yet here we are - citizens of a country that is responsible for the killing of hundreds of thousands of people in Southeast Asia and is continuing that killing every day. If we are willing to accept any responsibility for the actions of our government, and as citizens we must, the hypocrisy of our position is clear. About a year ago Dr. Henry Kaplan spoke at a Medical Center meeting about his sense of personal frustration in realizing that during every week more people are killed in Indochina than he could save in a lifetime. That speech has been quoted so often that it sounds trite. But, then, the same is true for the casualty figures we hear every night on the news.

Repetition doesn't make the argument any less valid. Every single day this war continues, people die. As long as our country has any part in the destruction of human life, we in medicine are made hypocrites. We cannot minister

to the needs of people in Palo Alto and, at the same time, stand by in silence while American bombers slaughter human beings in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

We in the field of medicine must join with others to stop the war. It is consistent with our moral commitment to the preservation of life. Indeed, it is appropriate that we be in the forefront of those dedicated to ending this slaughter.

Mass marches in San Francisco and Washington do not necessarily mean real commitment for each individual. It is necessary to stand up and be counted in some way which is personal and meaningful.

What are the alternatives? Violent action is not consistent with membership in the medical community. Petitions and marches are not enough. And yet, in order to live with our consciences, we must make a clear decision and then act.

Therefore, some members of the Stanford Medical Community for Peace intend to commit a relevant act of civil disobedience. Those who wish to discuss and possibly support this nonviolent action are urged to join us this Tuesday evening April 27 in #127 at 8 pm.

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