

The Minnesota 8

Monday, July 13, 1970, *Minneapolis Tribune*, "Accused of Sabotage. Family, Friends Call 8 in Draft Raids Idealists" by Molly Ivins. She described the eight.

Charles Turchick, 23, valedictorian of his class at St. Louis Park High School, Phi Beta Kappa and magna cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota with a major in philosophy. Turchick had won a scholarship and was enrolled in the university's law school for next fall.

After he graduated from the university in 1968, Turchick joined VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) for a year and worked in a Job Corps camp in Illinois and on housing problems in Milwaukee.

"He came back so disillusioned and discouraged and bitter, I guess from seeing how bad things could be in this country," said his father David Turchick. "But he still wanted to help humanity. He enrolled in law school last fall but dropped out after a few weeks because he said the work was so simple he was bored. They took him back again for this fall anyway when he reapplied. Chuck is something special, an idealist. He's not like those kids who are messed up with drugs."

Turchick is the 11th ranked table tennis player in the state, has won innumerable trophies in the sport and is also a fine classical pianist.

Peter Simmons, 19, would have been a junior at the University of Minnesota this fall, majoring in history and planning to go to law school. He is a graduate of Brooklyn Center High School, and is on the Brooklyn Center conservation commission. He has written conservation columns for the Sun newspapers and when he was still in

high school he won a \$200 prize in an essay contest on conservation.

Simmons became politically active during the summer of 1968. He worked on community organizing projects during the summer of 1969 and turned in his draft card during the October Moratorium at Washington, D.C. He worked with the Minnesota Student Union, a student rights organization, and has more recently been active in trying to get the principal of Brooklyn Center High School to dissociate himself from the local draft board.

“Pete was off the hook as far as the draft goes,” said his mother, Mrs. Mary Simmons. “He said it was ironic when his number turned out to be 355. There are just so many pressures in this country that force young men like Pete out of their normal, constructive activities.”

Francis X. Kroncke, 25, is the program director at the Newman Center, University of Minnesota. He was raised in New Jersey but his family moved to Hastings, Minn., and Kroncke went to St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn. He spent a year as a seminarian and then went on to get a master’s degree in theology from the University of San Francisco. He has been teaching two summer courses in theology at the College of St. Catherine’s in St. Paul.

Kroncke, described as a wide reader, has talked to friends about the need to re-order the soul of America. He feels changes can be brought about in a number of ways and considers teaching one of them. “He is just basically a very moral

person,” said one friend.

Brad Beneke, 21, comes from a rural area in southern Minnesota. He attended Concordia College in Moorhead for more than a year and played football there. He came to Minneapolis and has most recently been working with mentally disturbed teenagers as a psychiatric assistant at Glenwood Hills. The summer after he left school, Beneke worked at a Big Brother camp.

Beneke had gotten conscientious objector status from his draft board, but refused to do alternative service. “Brad wasn’t one to go to demonstrations,” said a life-long friend. “He reads a lot and is tremendously concerned. He is not a pacifist but would choose nonviolent means wherever possible. He is very concerned about keeping the means of the movement for social change as humane as possible. He had worried about actions like the one he tried to take heightening the level of violence in this country.”

Michael Therriault, 23, is a graduate of South High School and majored in psychology at the University of Minnesota. Therriault had for a brief time attended Nazareth Hall, a seminary. He refused to pay the \$25 graduation fee when he left the university and so has never received his diploma. He has worked in the Twin Cities Draft Information Center, a draft counseling service and refused induction himself.

Therriault has said he feels strongly that the draft is unjust and that it discriminates particularly against poor people. He said he

felt that the name of the group with which he was caught, the Minnesota Conspiracy to Save Lives, was literally a life-saving project. He says the draft takes lives and bodies and uses them for purposes decided by the government without the assent of the people.

Therriault had also done research that showed the draft fell particularly heavily on rural areas and small towns, taking a higher proportion of men from those areas, which was the reason for attacking outstate draft offices.

Clifton Ulen, 22, is a close friend of Therriault and lives with him at 1214 SE 14th St. Ulen, from Hibbing, Minn., was attending the University of Minnesota and is described as “an outstanding student.” He had dreamed of going to law school and becoming a “people’s lawyer.”

Ulen, too, felt strongly about the draft and hoped the action he planned to take would “give lives back.” He is described by friends as a particularly reflective person, whose political responses are not “reactionary radical” but reasoned out carefully.

Ulen and Therriault had learned to play cribbage joking that if they were caught they’d have something to do in jail. The reported yesterday morning that their guards wouldn’t allow them to have a cribbage board.

Don Olson, 26, is a soft-spoken activist who has headed Students Against Selective Service since 1967. Olson comes from a working-class background, is a graduate of the University of

Minnesota with an international relations major and did two years of graduate work in public administration. He was president of Zeta Psi fraternity.

Olson had at one time planned a career in diplomacy or the foreign service and twice won The Minneapolis Star's World Affairs Contest. However, he has been a full-time radical for about three years now, working at the Draft Information Center, teaching at the Free University and participating in several radical projects. He is a draft resister and his opposition to the draft is a matter of conscience as well as politics. Olson is a pacifist.

William Tilton, 22, is a well-known figure on the University of Minnesota campus. He has been active in student government there since his freshman year, including sitting on the Inter-fraternity Council, the All-University Judiciary Council, on the Morrill Hall investigation committee and for a term as vice-president of the Student Association.

Tilton is credited with "cooling" a number of tense situations, most notably the confrontation between police and demonstrators on the Nicollet Mall after the main rally of last October's Moratorium. On that occasion, Tilton paced among the demonstrators pleading, "Let's work for peace. Break it up. You're not doing any good for peace this way."

Tilton was one of the leaders of the student strike at the university after the Cambodian Invasion and emphasized throughout the strike that it was against the war, not the university. Tilton has been active in the New Mobilization to End the War and the Liberation Coalition, the group supporting those arrested during

the Morrill Hall incident. He turned in his draft card last Nov. 13. He is an articulate radical and although he has not been a member of the radical movement as long as some who were arrested with him, his opposition to the war in Southeast Asia is of long standing. Most people who know him comment on his qualities of leadership and charisma.