

East Detroit Gets It On!

Fifth Estate Collective

1970

The people of East Detroit are undergoing a fast and, in many ways, painful awakening process that is cutting through all levels of the community.

On June 8 at a graduation party on Lincoln St., the police pushed 200 kids out onto the street and ordered them to leave the neighborhood. Arguments followed and, when the cops saw that the kids were not going to jump at their command, they called in reinforcements from the neighboring suburbs and Detroit.

The reinforcements arrived and a total pig riot ensued. With a fire engine blocking one end of the street and the cops coming from the other, confusion reigned as guys and girls were beaten with clubs and ax handles.

During the melee the crowd was hosed down by the fire truck.

After a half hour of gleeful headbusting the cops spread out through the community making more arrests, bringing the total busts to eighteen.

In order to justify their actions the cops have fabricated a story against one of the people arrested. They claim that he attacked a cop with his belt, when actually he was beaten to the ground by the pigs and a fireman and then thrown in jail with a broken arm and refused medical care or a phone call.

They have charged him with felonious assault and are trying to railroad him through to a heavy jail sentence in order to make an example of him. The others arrested are charged with being "disorderly persons."

The bust was not an accident or isolated incident. It was just another chapter in the continuing crackdown on young people with new life styles and ideas that threaten the established order in East Detroit and throughout Amerika.

But the story doesn't end there. The community exploded with energy in response to the police action. Until the early morning hours after the bust, angry parents and kids packed the police station demanding an explanation, resulting in one more arrest.

On June 22 three hundred angry parents and students confronted the East Detroit City Council and demanded an investigation of the entire incident. The councilmen quietly laughed at the people and, in a classic revelation, the community suddenly saw the power gap between them and their government.

The people then got it together to show that they weren't going to put up with being messed over. They are planning a rock concert benefit and other events to raise money for the defense of those busted: They are also building community support for the trials which start July 14.

Twelve of the defendants, who have formed themselves into the PEOPLE'S DEFENSE COMMITTEE; are being represented by Buck Davis of the National Lawyers Guild and are pulling together a strategy to defeat the cop conspiracy and Judge Calvin Rock (one of the most reactionary judges in the Detroit area).

The present movement of people in East Detroit not only has challenged the authority of the cops and City Hall, but also has upset the position of a group of "liberal" pseudo-politicos. Three women, led by a Mrs. Acres, who run around hobnobbing with the City Council and the Board of Education, are trying to undermine the defendants' efforts to clear themselves.

Among other things they are spreading the rumor that Buck Davis has been disbarred from practicing law in Michigan. Clearly, they feel that their unofficial political positions are threatened by a “radical” movement in the community and are doing everything they can to squelch it, with no regard for the defendants. Pigs come in all forms.

An important struggle is developing now in East Detroit and support is needed at the trials on July 14, 9:00 AM at City Hall in East Detroit. The PEOPLE’S DEFENSE COMMITTEE has turned a defense into an offense and people in East Detroit with information or interested in helping should contact: 831-6800.

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