

Letters to the Editors

Various Authors

1966

To the Editor:

“Where were the police and how could such a thing happen” were the questions asked by a stunned audience at the Art Institute on Friday, Oct. 21. They had come for an evening of beautiful music, superbly played by the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Rudolf Barshai.

Outside the hall were about 20 police vehicles to protect concert-goers from the Breakthrough picket line. Yet within the auditorium there was insufficient surveillance. Known members of Breakthrough were allowed in the lobby to create minor disturbances; others were seen to be seated in the hall. The concert proceeded. The first selection was played and as the ovation burst forth, four men sprang onto the stage, from the wings, with two huge insulting signs. Police arrived to quell the disturbance some minutes after some of the audience had taken their own action.

Were we in Detroit, Michigan, USA, or in Nazi Germany? How could this international incident take place under the eyes of what seemed to be intensive security? What would happen now? Confusion was brief and after a prolonged intermission the concert resumed. As the orchestra again walked on stage they were greeted by a standing ovation. The entire program was played to the end. The audience hoped that their applause and “bravos” would assure these fine musicians and their gracious conductor that there were decent Americans.

When one thinks of the American soloists, operas, ballets, the university bands, orchestras, choruses, the competitors in international music competitions, who have been so warmly received and hospitably treated in the Soviet Union, it only increases the shame and revulsion at this obscene incident.

Lucy Haessler
Highland Park

To the Editor:

I have lived in the Detroit scene for many years waiting. Now, after returning from San Francisco, it seems incredible that the Motown bag is really climbing from its womb. The happenings, posters, silkscreening, and the FIFTH ESTATE are turning on.

This is the Mid-West and you've got to start somewhere. There is still much talk of mind expansion and too much bread going for beer (it is not necessary for “groovy” to appear every other word). What can I say? A score is tough and prices are exorbitant? That is not totally important, the mind can be beautiful, real, and creative without being wired-up.

Communication is clogged by urgency and trying too hard...

John Herter
E. Lansing, Mich.

To the Editor:

Being a native suburban Detroiter, I was pleased and delighted to find the *Fifth Estate* for sale in the Head Shoppe, East Village, USA.

I am a frustrated midwesterner who could stand it no longer and have adopted the dormitory scene, Long Island style. I liked what I read in your paper and hope that Detroit will psyche up and freak-out the way it should. Good luck getting Leary in town. He and the Fugs are something nobody should be denied.

Cindy Skalsky,
New York

To the Editor,

Elections are usually pretty misleading things, like the idea is to give the citizenry the image that they are really determining their government, and go from there, straight to the power-control cache. I mean, what's the difference, finally, between Barry Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson? Except that Goldwater isn't as big a crook as Our Pecker-pocketing Leader from Murder Texas. And again, what's the difference between Romney and Ferency, or Williams and Griffin or Cavanagh, etcetera ad nauseum. They're all politicians. And as e.e. cummings had it, "a politician is an arse upon / which everyone has sat except a man," which holds even more today. So the big "races" the papers make so much of are just there to fool you into thinking you've really got a choice, and that if you vote for so and so it's a vote for reason and democracy and free love, while if you vote for someone else you're voting for fascism and violence and two pots in every "bathroom." What you ARE voting for, in either case, turns out to be the good old American way, government by a moronic "elite" of professional greedheads and control addicts and General Motors and AT & T.

But in Detroit right now, I mean a week after this paper comes out, there is a very real human issue at stake, and everyone should be fully aware of what is happening. In one of the rarest of historical juxtapositions, the citizens of this city have the opportunity to really do something about the ugliest, most anti-human agency we have—I mean Records Court in Detroit. If you have never been involved in a "case" in that court—and most white Godfearing middle-class Detroiters have not—you should at least make it your duty to take a day, any day, and sit in one of the eight (soon 12) courtrooms in the hellhole on St. Antoine. And to get a quick historical perspective, read through Charles Dickens' BLEAK HOUSE, set in London in the early 1850s and specifically in the Records Court of that time, CHANCERY.

A day even an hour—on St. Antoine will force you to see that the free courts of America are even worse than Dickens' Chancery, are an abomination in the eyes of human beings, and should be, if not leveled altogether, at least changed radically. I can't begin to go into the horrors perpetrated on the indigent and/or black citizens of this city by the judges and lawyers who make their lair in that cave, but let me just say that I know people, staunch Americans, supporters of "the System" all their lives, whose stomachs were turned by what they experienced there as mere observers. And those of us who have access to a human vision of America, that is who have not been coerced through socio-economic pressure alone into just going along with whatever the "bosses" tell them is their reality, those of us who have been through a trial there in that deadly court know PRECISELY how vile the whole mechanism is, and retch daily thinking of it.

When I speak of "radical change" above I mean to strike directly at the root of the problem, at the men who run that place, and replace those evil creatures with judges who are at least SOMEWHAT humane, who are at least younger than 65 or 70 years old, who have at the very least SOME concern for the people's justice in their hearts and minds—and who have not been trained in the other arm of the judiciary, the prosecutor's office. Anybody who has worked for the prosecutor's office in this city, in no matter what capacity, is a vicious enemy of the people and should be jailed. At the very least, any of these ex-prosecutors MUST NOT BE ALLOWED to sit on the bench. Samuel Olson particularly and all his boys. They brag of their connection with the prosecutor's office, they are that smug, they know how strong their brainwash is and how they have tricked people—the citizenry into believing that they

are working “for the common good. This is a blatant lie—they are, quite simply, enemies of the people and **MUST BE KEPT OUT OF THERE.**

The men running for Recorders Judge (which pays \$27,000 a year cash money, out of the people’s pockets) will be elected for terms up to **TEN YEARS** in length. They can be removed only when they are exposed as totally corrupt (Arthur Koscinski, former Recorder’s Judge, the income tax man who served as judge and failed to file an income tax return for 18 years!!), or if they die. Some of the judges now on the bench are so old, feeble and senile that they can’t even read the documents in front of them. These are the conditions of the court, and we can now do something about them. There are ten vacancies, i.e. ten open spaces, with only three incumbents eligible for re-election—Brennan, Davenport and—Schemanske. There are humane men who can fill some of these vacancies—I am speaking of Henry Heading, Rolland O’Hare, Sheldon Otis, George Crockett, Geraldine Bledsoe Ford, Tom Downs. These men are far from what they should be, granted, but they will make such an improvement in that court that they must be supported. I say this at the risk of coming out like my friends who urged me to vote for Johnson to save the country in 1964—I simply wouldn’t have any part of that election. But this time, I even went to register so I can vote in this election—it strikes me as that important. And I will vote for those men, and I feel that I have struck, in what could be a very significant way, at the root of the rotten tree that is Recorders Court. I mean you start with the **MEN**, always, and even in this most corrupt of cultures men can change things, to take some of the load off the whipped and trembling poor.

A Citizen Artist

fifth Estate

Various Authors
Letters to the Editors
1966

<https://www.fiftheestate.org/archive/17-november-1-15-1966/letters-to-the-editors>
Fifth Estate #17, November 1-15, 1966

[fiftheestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://www.fiftheestate.org)