

# Letters

Various Authors

1977

## Dear Friends:

Learned recently that funds for the arts have been cut drastically in Detroit or Michigan, and that a "state representative" Wierzbicki defended the policy by saying that music, art, and dance have nothing to do with people's lives. Of course, Wizbugger, or whatever his name is, is correct. As dadaist Richard Holsenbeck once said, "Art regarded from a serious point of view is a large scale swindle."

Thanks to capital, to the division of labor, to academics, to venal artists, to Grosse Pointe matrons, and to slimy politicians the likes of Wutzufuki, art has no relation to life. Life is sterile, and art a trashy ornament. Human beings must leave art behind and learn to live beautifully. And we can only do so by creating a paradise on the ruins of capital in all its forms.

Meanwhile, it seems fitting to create conceptualist-dada musical pieces. I have two in mind: "Duet for State Representative and .38 snub nose revolver," and another to be performed from the tower of the so-called Renaissance Center: "Flying Politicians: The Rite of Spring."

Salud y Libertad

Mr. Venom

Durango, Mexico

*Staff Note:* Printed below is an invitation sent by a section of the CNT to a conference/festival to be held this month in Barcelona. While the English translation suffers a bit, the enthusiasm is clearly communicated. For further information contact: CNT, Sindicato de Espectaculos, Pasaje de la Paz, 8 principal, Barcelona, Spain; phone: 318-62-95.

To the Fifth" Estate

The C.N.T. Catalanian Committee in cooperation with other related Associations is intending to organize a "Libertarian Journeys" on July 22, 23, 24, and 25, in order to promote a meeting between all the different options that today take part in the Anarchist Movement in the world, seeing the favorable progress that C.N.T. (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo) is getting now in Spain.

We hope that this idea will permit to get a meeting allowing, under a joyful atmosphere, the natural conformity of the different options and discernments in our Movement.

The all foreseen events try to join theatre, music, bookstores, reviews, and so on, in a permanent Festival at a great garden in Barcelona, with cinema, colloquies, conferences, cultural discussions, etc. in different closed sites, also in Barcelona. We would like to promote a discussion about general interest subjects, remaining unsettled and which consequently obstruct, in our opinion, the connection with all the Libertarian groups in the world.

Our interest is to reach a positive discussion about anarchosyndicalism, analysis, method, ecology, general culture. In this way, we are calling all persons and groups related with C.N.T. in Spain, as well as in all the other countries.

So, we understand that it will be possible to get the cooperation between all the tendencies, minds and the different points of view in our International Movement.

We also wish to ask you to extend our purpose over the other Libertarian Organizations in your country, in order to get a greatest convocation capacity and to our event become known wherever.

Health and Anarchy!

CNT

Comite de Catalunya

Barcelona, Spain

## **To the FE:**

Prejudice is usually reinforced through the use of stereotypes. Peter Rachleff demonstrated this fact neatly in his April 1977 FE article on "The New Family Therapy." His article makes a valid point if we assume that all family therapists are phony in their intentions and artificial in their methods.

I doubt, however, if all therapists would fit into this murky existential category. Even aside from my doubt, how are we to know of the authenticity of the therapists who he is writing about?

I bring this point to your attention because the argument against family therapy rests on the stereotype of the therapist as the disingenuous social engineer. If he had portrayed therapists as concerned individuals working with their clients to restore in them their own autonomous selves, I doubt if you could have drawn the same conclusions.

I agree that some therapists seek to support only superficial and cosmetic changes in their clients. This I am against, for it does keep people bound up in their anxious chains. But opposite these therapists are the ones who truly support the self-integration and self-responsibility of the people they work with.

It is these therapists that I will stand by for they help move people (and in part society) towards freedom. I would not want your contempt or your prejudice to stand in their way.

Also, the article provided no sources for this "New Family Therapy." I would appreciate knowing them so I could judge them for myself.

Rich Ailes

Philadelphia

*Peter Rachleff Responds:* You suggest that my argument will hold up only if we assume that "all family therapists are phony in their intentions and artificial in their methods." I would argue that, at least for the new school of family therapists that I considered in my article, the opposite is the case. Their intentions are explicit—to rescue the "family" as an institution from the morass it is sinking into.

For them, a viable family is a prerequisite for a "healthy" life in this society. Their methods are anything but artificial—they have a well-developed understanding that no individual can be "treated" in isolation from the major social relationships into which he/she directly enters on a daily basis. Such therapists do seek to go beyond "superficial and cosmetic changes in their clients."

They seek to create a "responsible" individual, one who can live and survive competently within the confines of capitalist daily life—"responsible" at the work-place, "responsible" to the family. For one who has found such life intolerable, the therapist must engineer major changes in outlook and self-conception.

This brings me to the even more sticky aspects of your objections. I doubt seriously if your suggestion that therapists seek to treat clients so as "to restore in them faith in their own autonomous selves," will hold up under close scrutiny. Putting the question of whether this is even a goal aside, one must ask whether this is possible, whether the path to "autonomy" can lead through the subjection to authority.

The means applied in therapy are grounded in the role of the therapist as an expert in re-organizing the client's life. I would like to see you explain in some concrete detail how this can be worked out. Please tell me more about these therapists that you "will stand by." If I am wrong in saying that, much as there are neither "good" nor "bad" cops (or politicians), there are neither "good" nor "bad" therapists, please take the time and energy to show me where I am mistaken.

## **To The Fifth Estate:**

Into a \$337 million birdbath. With apologies to the brilliant architects that created this masterpiece, this is the way I see the Renaissance Center. Glorious winding stairways, plus growth all around and no decent entertainment or anywhere young people can go in order to meet members of the opposite sex.

The people in the center can't have any fun because they're busy walking round looking to "weed out" characters that just don't belong there; non-conformists; people who don't work eight to five at either The County Building or the GM Building; you know...trouble makers.

These certain "concerned individuals" have a sort of subtle and sophisticated eye-contact communication going with various security guards situated in key spots at the center; clever, very clever.

In the event that some one should disturb the peace by questioning the possibility that the entertainment at the "Celebration Room" is not the finest in the world; the security guards are ready to escort out with or without handcuffs, anyone who would dare represent him self as such. Just because the "Celebration Room" charges \$2.50 for a small glass of third-rate orange juice and has a group that does nothing but sing aspirin and cola commercials doesn't mean that the place leaves anything to be desired.

Don't get me wrong. I'm just saying that for 20 cents more I can sit home, enjoy four large cans of Minute Maid orange juice and watch the "Gong Show" instead.

"There is nothing, nothing, nothing, we can't do together, do together, take another look at Detroit" ...before it sinks into the river.

Lenny Glantz

## **Dear Fifth Estate:**

I became a Bakuninist last year, when I was fourteen, and became a "contemporary" anarchist this year.

In your April, 1977 issue, Letters Larry Cohen talked of your "revolutionary one-up-manship" which discourages people with a low level of revolutionary consciousness (such as myself) from participating. There are many articles and debates in the Fifth Estate which are quite above my head (case in point: your slavish criticism of Ted Lopez' "positive content of [anarchist] communism").

Could you in layman's terms please tell me what was so wrong with what he was saying?

Yours for a New Day,

Gus K. Pseudonym

Newton, Mass.

*Staff Reply:* Thought we had, but in any event there's no room here. See Joe Jacob's piece in this issue on organization about levels of consciousness.

## **To The Fifth Estate:**

I recently read the Abel Paz book on the life of Durruti and I too would have wanted to read the deleted section since the anarchist militia leader's death was left unexplained.

However, I was also reading the *Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review*, No. 2, which carried a review of the French edition of the Paz and it took up the question of Durruti's death.

Frank Mintz, the reviewer who is a Spain “expert,” writes, “It has been known for some time (and recently confirmed by witnesses in Spain) that Durruti was killed accidentally in his car by one of his comrades, Manzana, when his gun went off. (Incidentally, Manzana tried to commit suicide on the spot when he realized what he had done.) It was Garcia Oliver who invented the version which was accepted until quite recently that Durruti had been killed by a Francoist bullet—a ploy to stimulate morale (a typical bluff).

“However, the gun had gone off at such close range that the area around the wound was charred. This in turn, gave rise to the Francoist, Communist and Trotskyist version of Durruti’s death that he had been killed by one of his own men in a ‘settling of accounts.’”

So says Mintz. Still, I would like to see the missing section and make up my own mind.

Aaron Baron

# fifth Estate

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