

Detroit Seen

Fifth Estate Collective

1988

We can tell when it's been a long time between issues when we start getting letters from subscribers asking if they've missed an issue or if we've stopped publishing. This issue is the third we've published this year, which doesn't meet our official status as a quarterly, but this should not be taken as a measure of our enthusiasm for our project. While this past year has seen both personal and other commitments interrupt our plans for publishing more issues, 1989 could be an improvement. We are simultaneously preparing a special issue along with this one which will feature a further investigation by George Bradford into the philosophy of deep ecology, the grounding of environmental ethics and concepts of wilderness. This will come out hopefully early in February.

We hope people will take advantage of the unusual spate of new books available through our bookstore. Most of them are ones we have read and offering them usually implies an endorsement of sorts by at least one of us.

Things must really be popping on the anti-authoritarian scene. We've received an unusually large volume of mail and publications over the last few months plus reports of anarchist activity from around the world. We have always prided ourselves on answering every piece of mail which arrives. However we are presently backlogged on correspondence and are just not able to answer all letters. We would like to keep our project on the personal level it has always been and not allow it to become a bureaucratic structure merely processing communication. So, please, patience, and we'll try to get an answer to that letter you sent three months ago.

The Detroit Free Press, our hometown's second largest newspaper has been threatening for months to shut down if it can't get a court-approved Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) with its rival, the Detroit News, merging into a Godzillaclass megacorporation.

Permit us to throw a few rocks onto a sinking ship: Sink, baby, sink! The *Free Press*, taking its cue from McDonald's and other successes of this disservice economy, is nothing but a drive-thru window of the mind. Like the News, it offers us nothing but corporate ideology, the two-party system and a glorification of everything that is elite in culture.

We must admit conclusively that MASS MEDIA is, to cite William F. Burroughs, an alien mind-screen keeping us from reality. In the 1990s when wars may be fought over available landfill space, as the Greenhouse effect becomes the Outhouse effect amid steaming piles of decay, we must abandon not only the consumer fetish of production, but also these media monstrosities who comprise the processed food of the spirit.

Always, editorialists who bemoan the potential demise of the *Free Press* say that the public will miss their media-fix and most published letters have similar laments. Media fix? Indeed, and good riddance!

Detroit's Wayne State University was the scene in early September of the circulation of a counterfeit student newspaper which appeared while the faculty and a service workers' union were on strike. [See *The South End* insert in this issue.]

The fake paper [see copy in this issue] announced that the hated president of the university, one David Adamany, had resigned and that the campus cops had been fired. Also included was an excerpt from Bob Black's "The Abolition of Work," plus a few raves against universities in general and their role in capitalist society. Five thousand copies of the fraud hit the campus on September 4 and were received with great acclaim. Adamany

is a particularly nasty scumbag who had set the campus cops on the strikers and was attempting everything he could to break the unions. Interestingly, virtually none of the strikers thought the paper was authentic, while it was almost universally believed by the student body. The authorities screamed that they would bring the culprits to justice, but so far their investigative methods seem to have failed them. The “perpetrators” (in the lingo of the cops), have given us copies for distribution which we will send for postage or in book orders.

It's rare when King Coleman I (Detroit Mayor Coleman Young) has his will thwarted, but he has given up (at least for the time being) on his plans to turn Belle Isle, the city's island park, into a track for next year's Gran Prix Formula I auto race. There is nothing to indicate that his lordship was deterred by either ecological concerns or the effect it would have on the park's ambiance. Rather, the downtown construction which would have disrupted the present course will not occur. Also, the traffic nightmare which would have been created by Belle Isle's single bridge access must have finally sunk in. Still, the mayor's desire to turn everything natural into concrete should not be overlooked, so vigilance is the word with the father of the incinerator.

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