

# On Having Nothing to Say

reprinted from FE #297, April 18, 1979

Fifth Estate Collective

2005

The long delay between this issue and the last resulted from a bout of cerebral paralysis which left us feeling empty of words and ideas. We mostly articulated this feeling to one another by stating rather aimlessly that perhaps “we no longer had anything to say,” which carried with it the vague suggestion that maybe we should even close up shop.

It’s not that we were bereft of the concepts or desires that had motivated us in the past, but rather that we wanted to continue to meet the criteria we have somewhat rigorously always demanded of ourselves. We’ve always felt that if we aren’t involved in continually turning over new ground and challenging our old assumptions, maybe we should pack it in and leave the propaganda work and political glad-handing to others.

It would be easy to see these current doldrums as just episodic, since we have published some real stinkers in the past without ever having come to the conclusion that we had run entirely out of steam. What is different at this juncture is that we have reached a critical period; one which we are just beginning to realize has been developing for a long time.

To even think about creating a social infrastructure of rebellion, a language of resistance has to be maintained and nurtured. Suffice it to say that we are faced with a real, not simply theoretical, question of our survival as humans in the face of the destruction of the individual as an historical subject. Nothing, at this moment announces itself as a way to regain our humanity, but if we truly have “nothing to say,” we are as lost as those we have so vividly described. If we have only momentarily lost our voice, we had better find it.

# fifth Estate

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