

Now More Than Ever

Issue intro

Fifth Estate Collective

2025

The Fifth Estate is in its 60th year of continuous publication and for the last 40, our front-page usually bears artist Stephen Goodfellow's graphic assault on power accompanied by the Latin phrase, *Non Serviam*. Its translation is "I will not serve." This statement of rebellion is taken from John Milton's 1667 poem, *Paradise Lost*. It is the ultimate statement of the refusal to serve authority as it is Lucifer's rejection of obedience to the Christian god for which he is expelled from Heaven.

But his rebellion was born of arrogance. However, our decades-long encouragement of refusal, resistance, and indiscipline when confronting authority's demand to obey is based on a vision of a world without rulers or the ruled. Since the emergence of the State, rebels have repeated the Latin phrase in different ways in many languages at many times. Casualties have been great, but the vision remains.

It appears today that we are at a critical juncture in this nation's commitment to bourgeois democracy with the federal government under Trump pushing increasingly towards authoritarianism. The challenge, however, to those who refuse this society is no different than in other eras. The Red Scare after the World Wars, Roosevelt's internment of Japanese in concentration camps, 1.5 million Mexicans expelled from the U.S. during the 1950s, are examples of some of the most egregious policies of U.S. presidents in the modern era. But, the American presidency itself is a history of land grabs, genocide, slavery, wars, and repression.

The institutions of power are mighty and our forces small, but the task at hand is to not allow the idea of a world without rulers and classes to disappear. We are committed to this ideal and know that you are as well.

Thank you to all those, too numerous to name, who made this issue possible.

Related

See Zapping the Pyramid: Notes on the history of an anti-authoritarian symbol, FE #368–369, Spring-Summer, 2005



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