

Press Censorship

Fifth Estate Collective

1968

Subtle and more unsubtle pressure has caused Detroit's three up front papers to experience difficulties in the last few weeks in getting their papers printed.

The *Inner-City Voice*, a black revolutionary paper, the *Warren-Forest Sun*, a freek paper, and this newspaper all have been victims of attempted suppression.

The *Inner-City Voice* (ICV) lost its original printer after friendly local FBI visited their printer and advised him that it would be better not to print the paper.

The *Voice* then turned to Cy Aaron Printers, who ran one issue but then the all-white lithographers union threatened to go on sick strike if Aaron printed the paper. Faced with this, Aaron relented.

Although John Watson, editor of the ICV, has found another printer for his paper he doesn't see this as the solution.

"It has become apparent that this is the pattern, Watson said. "We don't have control of the facilities."

"In the long run, the only solution is to control our own press. Radicals—both black and white—may have to pool their resources to get a press of their own or exert concerted economic pressure. We must have self-determination and independence."

"In addition, we are considering suing the union."

Gary Grimshaw and John Sinclair of the *Warren-Forest Sun* were turned down by seven printers before finding their current one.

The printers, it seems, dislike hippies and disapprove of the Sun's editorial policy, which reads in part:

"We have found that there are essential human activities of the greatest importance to all persons, and that people are well and healthy in proportion to their involvement in these activities: rock and roll, dope, and fucking in the streets...WE ARE NOT AFRAID. We will warn those who may try to stomp out our newspaper.

In this spirit, Sinclair is determined, despite all obstacles, to continue to put out the paper. Yet he will no longer put it out from the city. Sinclair and the Trans-Love commune of 30 will be settled in a small farm just outside of Ann Arbor by May 1.

"We're getting the fuck out of here," Sinclair told the South End. "We've had hassles ever since we've been here."

"Our work is too important to get fucked up now. When the city burns down, it's going to have to be re-built. We won't stick around and be destroyed. This police state and police terrorism is too much. The people in charge are just totally crazy. And we've gotten almost no support from the community.

"We'll be doing what we're doing now, but we'll be doing it there. Out there, we won't have that pressure. We won't have to cower in the corner all the time.

"We've tried to extend ourselves and tell them—but they refuse to take any kind of cognizance of reality. And these people control the machinery.

"We just don't get any support here. Out there we'll be twice as productive."

The *Fifth Estate* has lost its printer of nearly two years because of the pressures put on him by the Board of Education, Police, and other elements in the community.

Although our printer and his staff are wonderful people who have bent over backward to assist this paper, the pressure was just too great for him to bear in a small community.

Fortunately, we have secured the services of another printer and will continue publishing uninterrupted.

Editor's Note: Much of this article was originally done by Larry Katz for the *South End*.

The South End, the student newspaper at Wayne State University, ran an article on the pre-censorship of several up-front Detroit papers and found itself a victim of the same forces that were trying to silence the other papers.

Their fatal mistake was to use the word "fuck" in quoting the editors of the *Warren-Forest Sun* and the *Fifth Estate*.

Although the offending sentences were set ready for printing, Stan Rysyki, head of Fireside Printers took it upon himself to wield the censor's pen.

Art Johnston, editor of the *South End*, said, "We are going to be the sole judge of what goes in our paper, not the goddamn printer. If we want to have the word 'fuck' in our paper you better believe it's going to be in there."



Fifth Estate Collective
Press Censorship
1968

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/53-may-1-15-1968/press-censorship>
Fifth Estate #53, May 1-15, 1968

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net