

# ***Inner City Voice* hit by Censorship**

Fifth Estate Collective

1968

“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom...of the press.”

—First Amendment, United States Constitution

“It’s a free country, but it’s their thing.”

—John Sinclair, Detroit House of Correction, July, 1966

Once again censorship has reared its ugly head in the Detroit area. The latest chapter in the campaign of the city’s self-appointed moral guardians to destroy what vestiges of a free press that still exist here was at the *Inner City Voice*, Detroit’s black revolutionary newspaper.

Since its inception following the insurrection last summer the *Voice* has been constantly plagued by a situation that all of Detroit’s radical or “underground” papers have had to deal with at one time or another.

Due to severely limited financial resources, publications like the *Fifth Estate*, the *Sun*, and the *Inner City Voice* must rely upon the outside help of independent printers to get their papers out. Because the content of these revolutionary papers often proves offensive to the sensibilities of uptight establishment, honkie type printers, a situation is created that at best leads to de facto censorship of editorial content and at worst the curtailing of publication altogether.

The problems of the *Voice* in this area are particularly acute.

Since August of 1967 the *Voice* has been forced to use five different printing companies in order to continue publication. Of these, one, arbitrarily refused to print the paper out of personal bigotry; another quit printing after four issues, bowing to pressure from other accounts; A third printer backed out when pressmen threatened to strike if he continued to print the paper; And a fourth, after charging almost \$200.00 above regular printing costs for the April issue, quit with the claim that the *Voice* was a smut sheet.

The current situation is so bad that the *Voice* had to go outside the state of Michigan to obtain the services of their present printer. This only underscores what we have always maintained: that the source of the “problems of the black ghetto” is white racism and the only solution to this “problem” is black self-determination.

Unquestionably this is the answer to the problems of the *Inner City Voice*. There are no black printers in Michigan with the type of facilities needed to print the paper and white printers have been unwilling to do so.

The June issue of the *Voice* commented as follows: “As long as the white ruling class holds a monopoly on ownership and control of printing equipment, the literary works of radicals will be published only at the whim of the ruling class...Black people are denied jobs in the printing trades, and denied credit to purchase the kind of equipment necessary to publish a large newspaper or magazine. Then the bigoted, segregated printers union and printing companies also impose their own brand of censorship on the ghetto. THEY decide what black people can or cannot read; and naturally they generally decide black folks should read Uncle Tom papers like the *Chronicle* and not revolutionary papers like the *Inner City Voice*.”

In order to bring an end to this insidious form of censorship, The Fifth Estate is joining The *Inner City Voice* and many other organizations, black and white in an attempt to raise \$200,000 to set up a community owned print shop in the ghetto.

Persons interested in working on the project to secure a press for the black community should contact Luke Trip at 361-2899. Send donations to Black Community Print Shop, 8661 Grand River, Detroit, Michigan, 48204.

Subscriptions to the *Voice* are available through the order blank elsewhere in this issue.

## ***Ramparts* staff busted**

Robert Scheer, Editor-in-Chief of *Ramparts* Magazine, was served with a subpoena to appear before a New York Grand Jury June 13. Warren Hinckle, publisher of *Ramparts*, has also been subpoenaed.

Both men are expected to be indicted under federal statutes providing five years' imprisonment for destruction of a draft card. The December issue of *Ramparts* carried a picture on its cover showing Scheer and Hinckle, among others, burning their draft cards. Informed sources indicate that the photographer, Carl Fischer, will testify against Scheer and Hinckle.

—S.F. *Express-Times*



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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/57-july-4-18-1968/inner-city-voice-hit-by-censorship>  
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