

Letters

Various Authors

1968

Editors:

In regard to the events of Chicago during the convention week, I would like to submit the following information:

On August 26, 10:30pm, a friend and I went to Lincoln Park. At this time a large group of people, mostly young, was gathered in the park listening to different speakers, chanting and sitting near fires talking. Soon some of the people began "antagonizing" the present police with name calling.

Not too interested or happy at what was happening at that point, my friend and I decided to leave. We stopped near the edge of the park at the lagoon to talk. After a few minutes I turned around to see 10 to 12 police running toward us. Not fearing them, as we were committing no crime, we began to walk away from the lagoon, believing that the police were chasing the "antagonizers."

Instead, they came at us as our backs were turned screaming, "Get the fuckin' bastards." They threw my friend into the water and then 4 or 5 police attacked me. They knocked me down and began kicking me in the back.

When I tried to get up and grab for my belongings and money they began hitting and kicking me as I fell again. My friend got out of the water to help me, and the same police began beating both of us until he succeeded in pulling me into the lagoon to safety. (They would not go into the water after us.)

As a result of the beatings, I received a 2-inch gash on my forehead, needing 7 stitches. My left eye was black and swollen and my body bruised all over from being kicked and clubbed with nightsticks. My clothes and shoes were ruined from being dragged back and forth along the concrete shore of the lagoon by the police.

As if this were not bad enough, I had to wait at least 15 minutes in Chicago's Henrotin Hospital holding my bleeding head while all the doctors and nurses in the emergency ward rushed to help 2 "injured" police who came in after me. (One had cut a small finger while the other had been kicked in the back.)

Elain E. Edford
Livonia

Dear Sir:

Is it really necessary that we have the semi-imbecilic burlblings of Mr. name]fe_author&taxo[0] [opt] &taxo[0][term]=wilson-lindsey][Wilson Lindsey in your newspaper? We all know by now how much he hates British music, so why must each of his "music reviews" be merely a re-hash of his preceding attempt, with only the titles of the albums changed?

His columns would perhaps be justified if they were well written, but I regret to say that even the literary aspect of his biweekly ravings is very similar to that of any seventh grader. I'm sure that there are many people in the area who, even if they are just average writers, at least know something of the international music scene, and could write

a music critique from their own minds rather than merely scrabbling the liner notes of the album to be reviewed and ruining even the copy by using inferior, childish language.

I should like to conclude that both B.B. and Albert King, who must truly be two of Mr. Lindsey's gods, regard the majority of British blues bands as being far superior in all aspects to their young American counterparts.

Tony Reay
Music Editor

Gentlemen:

This is not a usual "letter to the editor," rather this is a letter to "air" my thoughts. I am thoroughly disgusted with our materialistic, puritanic, war hungry society. I am fed up with the people who accept this sick way of life—those who accept poverty and war as a part of life.

But I am equally dissatisfied with those who "drop out" of this society. Dropping out is not helping to end wars; it does not help educate the illiterate; it does not feed the hungry. I am equally guilty in a sense...I have a Nuclear disarmament sticker on my VW, I voice my opinions on a realistic morality. I condemn commercialism, I send small contributions to help the peace movement. But I am still dissatisfied! To stand up and be counted is not enough. We must ACT. We must DO something in order to accomplish our goal—to make this "great society" really GREAT! But what exactly can we do? What can be done to end wars? What can we do to help others? I am terribly disturbed over this. Sending in contributions and displaying a N.D. decal helps a cause...but somehow I feel as though I am buying off my conscience. I want to do something that will help.

I suppose this is a plea: I want to know what I can do. Perhaps there are others who share my unrest. I would appreciate using the *Fifth Estate* as a means for communicating with those who have some ideas to offer, or just to find someone who agrees that we must do more than "Drop Out."

Many thanks,
A disturbed individual.

To the Editors:

Along with everyone else in the world, I have just witnessed a week of Chicago-style hypocrisy and brutality. In three years of civil rights and end-the-war participation, I've seen a lot of the brutality thing, but I guess this just hit harder. The whole thing was an innocence-stripping process, complete with everything from a shameful use of "democracy" to a bludgeoning of all ideals, interspersed with commercials using Walt Disney characters to sell petroleum products.

We've certainly progressed! Since the riots, everyone has a fear-inspired concern for the ghetto residents. Businessmen are deciding that it is a miserable war now that it is affecting their pocketbooks. The news media is on our side today—not because of what happened to our people in Chicago, but because of what happened to their people. Finally they know what tear gas and blackjacks are all about, but how long will they remember?

So, what now? Do we don gas masks and go armed to pro-peace, pro-love demonstrations? I always felt that we who protest hatred, war and discrimination should attempt to get ideas across in a peaceful way. But after watching Chicago at work, I'm not so sure. So, what do we do now?

Candi Buckheit
Highland Park

Dear Editors,

Some convention, I caught the "clap"! Chicago women, Hah!
Fifth Estate subscriber

Dear Sir:

I second C.J. Semon's reflections on John Sinclair (September 5–18). And not to scorn him but to upgrade his attitude, which is increasingly irresponsible and detrimental to the Movement. He spoils even the most swinging issue of the *Fifth Estate* with sloppy writing, sloppy thinking, redundant moralizing and a general hostility which, if contracted by all the Fifth Estate's readers, could only corrode and further divide the entire Movement.

Right now he is a drag and I just do not understand why a full page is devoted to his orations. Right now we need greater constructive effort than ever before. Because the fall of Chicago is such a bitter disappointment to so many that many are ready to give up—when they've barely gotten started.

The McCarthy dream activated people who would still be sleeping now. And many of them feel like running and hiding and getting away from it all once and for all now. Now is the time for unity and the most fantastic momentum ever created. That's why it's so sad to have an organization like LNS split up and warring on its own people. Why it's sad to see someone like Sinclair "so busy being free" and so busy promoting the MC5 that it becomes really quite an anal situation. I have the feeling that if he were needed to deliver desperately needed shoes to freedom fighters stranded somewhere he'd take his time out along the way to blow pot or anything else handy while they died. And I strongly suspect him of liking to exhibit hip credentials. but when it comes to accommodations he's not the one to go to. Or if you should need something from him, as new Movement inductees do, he would sneer at you because you had socks on or something.

The Movement needs strengthening and reinforcing and everyone has to be able to do their own things, but on a nation-wide hook-up. There are other groups besides the MC5, too, and though where there's advertising there's life, I just wonder, is this the way to treat it?

Right now, after another page of Sinclair promotion, the very thought of the MC5 wears me out and turns me off. Which distresses me, because the rest of my favorite newspaper is such a gas.

And if John Sinclair thinks WABX is improving, why did he pull a no-show recently? Expected at 1, he still hadn't shown by after 2. He let the people down. Timing is of great importance in war and love. It's really a natural instinct, I think, not a clock-thing at all. But when you're expected somewhere that wants you because it thinks it needs what you have to say, it's self-defeating to not take pains to get there.

It doesn't behoove someone like John Sinclair to operate carelessly. That's why he is even so useful to the MC5 right now because he pushed so hard one would think he didn't trust his own people's ability. And trust is crucial to making music, making poems, making friends, making peace, making it period.

Chicago woke more people up—people desperate to place their trust in the Movement. John Sinclair in the pages of the Fifth Estate in his present condition is not helping.

Cella Alderson

Rochester, Mich.

P.S. Yes! The calendars are great! They must never go. You should sell Christmas calendars for the whole year, for fundraising purposes.

fifth Estate

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/62-sept-19-oct-2-1968/letters>
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