

Other Scenes

John Wilcock

1968

Hostility to the Beatles is building up in the underground press, exacerbated by the release of their recent record "Revolution," whose lyrics (comments *Rolling Stone*) "really swing in that brand of political naivete for which the Beatles have long been known and castigated."

Contrasted with the current Rolling Stones single, "Street Fighting Man," and the celebrated battle over its album cover, the Beatles' entry really seems to be an Establishment-oriented message. *Rolling Stone's* Catherine Manfredi adds. "Conservatism is a British trend; they have been responsible for bringing back Jazz which they called 'trad'; jug bands which they called 'skiffle'; and rock and roll which they call the Beatles.

Other criticisms have popped up in various quarters, mainly along the lines that the Fab Four have revolutionized music but what have they done to help the movement? Even their much-publicized Apple venture has passed out money only to, as one paper puts it, "their old Liverpool friends," and as for the first four "discoveries" on their own record label: one is the Beatles themselves, another is a 50-year-old brass band and the other two are discoveries recommended by Twiggy off an amateur talent show.

Most of the objections to George Wallace is based on the argument, "Better the devil you know than the devil you don't" which is the same safe conservative argument as "things could be worse" or "out of the frying pan into the fire." The function of all devils is to threaten you that they are saving you from a worse fate. George Wallace is a confessed racist, reasonably illiterate, obviously pretty stupid; but he's more honest than Horseshit or Tricky Dick and would serve the very purpose of unifying the opposition. A major power shift at the top would throw our enemies into confusion. Can you imagine how uptight all those good liberals who sanction the war (it's good for business) would get at the thought of a Wallace administration meddling with them? Why, even the Ford Foundation might start handing out guns as well as grants...

The militant SF paper, *The Movement*, goes further and describes "Revolution" as "actually counter-revolutionary... really a shame because of the tremendous influence the Beatles have on thousands of young people. Many young people know better as the Beatles would if they... weren't buried behind their sea of bread."

When LBJ returns to private life as a director of his Texas holding company, Brazos-10th Street Inc., he'll "have a direct personal economic interest in several firms whose financial fortunes his administration greatly advanced through the Vietnam War," reports the *Guardian*. That figures...

Chelsea House plans to publish "The Collected Speeches of Spiro Agnew"...

"All of the problems we face today can be traced to an unenlightened immigration policy on the part of the American Indian." (Pat Paulsen)...

NY Times finally ran a story pointing out how ridiculously inflated were the monetary estimates given by local narcs when they confiscated grass and acid. In a recent story, police had evaluated a cache as worth \$8 million when a figure of \$50,000 would be more accurate...

The Living Theatre's "Frankenstein," sad to say, is pretentious. A great set with lots of things going on (most of them not very absorbing) and love and commitment from the whole company. But this is for educated college audiences; exactly what it will get and breaks no new ground in bringing revolution, or revolutionary theatre for

that matter, to the unconverted. "Paradise Now" (not seen by this writer) is said to be much superior. Judith & Julian, we love you; but please get back into the movement and the streets...

"For New Yorkers there are three kinds of people, New Yorkers, ex-New Yorkers, and hicks. It's xenophobia of hate. New Yorkers hate their city, hate themselves, hate everyone else." (Paul Samberg, Letter from Fun City, LNS)...

Esquire plans a story on black agent Ron Hobbs whose clients include LeRoi Jones, Julius Lester, Robert L. Allen, Rap Brown...

Distributors of a one dollar poster of a rifle-toting figure bearing a superimposed LBJ head with the caption, "Gun Control Begins in the White House," have been having censorship problems. Poster available from GPO Box 2923, NYC 10001...

Art Kleps' Neo-American church, still pushing for psychedelics as a holy sacrament, has moved to South Hero, Vt, 05486, from whence can be obtained the "History of the *Psychedelic Movement Cartoon & Coloring Book* for \$2 per copy...

Promising Publications: *Mindfucke* (50 cents from War Babies Unltd., 2010 P St. NW, Washington D.C. 20036), present mimeograph book, prose & poetry with subtitle "the magazine of mental fornication"; Preform (four issues for \$1 from Box 5116, Santa Monica, Calif. 90405), mimeographed "exchange of ideas & information among libertarian nomads." *Abas* (25 cents from 420 Summer Avenue, Newark, NJ 07104), mimeo-ed mag, anarchy, satire, sex, etc.; *Where It's At* (published in Berlin as "a newspaper of common sense and survival for GIs", 1. Berlin 12, Postfach 65. W. Germany.

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