

The White Left—Serious or Not?

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Editors' Note: William Leach is a member of the Detroit Black Panther Party and a staff member of the *Inner City Voice* and *The South End* newspapers.

"Look, we ain't going to work with white people...they aren't serious...why do we have to work with those honkies?"

This is an attitude expressed by many black people. The question is why? The answer: they feel white folks (revolutionaries) are bullshitting.

In a Fifth Estate paper dated Dec. 26-Jan. 8, a girl wrote an open letter to Julius Lester replying to his recent articles. I am not going to deal with their discussion right now, but she said something that was very interesting. Interesting and untrue.

I quote: "For Cleaver was the first to create a meaningful working alliance between revolutionaries—black, brown, and white." What meaningful working alliance? How can there be a meaningful working alliance between black, brown and white? What have white revolutionaries organized? Do they organize? What do they accomplish? Do they get down with the nitty-gritty action? They are bullshitting—I shall elaborate on this.

There are mainly three types of organizing white folks are doing, if one wishes to call it organizing. The three types are found in individuals and organizations.

I will start from bad and go to the worst. Starting with the disciplined to the undisciplined, to the silly. The Disciplined—a good example of a white revolutionary organization is the Young Socialist Alliance, or something in the same vein. Strong rhetoric; no action. (When I say action, I do not mean the way it operates, but the actually deep organizing in the vein of Southern Student Organizing Committee or SNCC in the early 1960s—living with poor whites, associating with them, etc. Also, I'm not including defense committees or individual action.)

Besides supporting the SWP, the YSA's main form of work is educating. Good, but some of them are workers, or people who work in Detroit. What are they doing in the unions or on their jobs?

Do the ones who work in the factories try to have better unions or try to educate their fellow workers to the false treachery of the union officials? Are they organizing the powerful workers or the powerless students?

(I believe working people are the blade of the revolution and the students the handle. No matter how hard the thrust is, the action will be useless unless the blade is sharp).

Do they reach into their community to organize and teach? Did they initiate rent strikes among the poor whites to better their conditions? YSA's only virtue is that they have a good library.

The main gripes of black activists are against the undisciplined and silly white organizations.

The Undisciplined—let's look at, according to J. Edgar Hoover, the threat to the nation, SDS, Students for a Democratic Society—what are they doing as an organization?

This is probably the largest undisciplined so-called revolutionary organization that exists. They are the group which says to their members, "Everyone do your own thing," and so nothing gets done.

On November 5 they held a teach-in. It didn't start on time, the people conducting it were unprepared, the program was sloppy. If it wasn't for Ken Cockrel's appearance it would have been a complete flop.

SDS sits around talking about revolution; sitting on their asses. Many of them need to get a job, a real job, for example in the factories, just to get the feel of working.

A lot of them are merely suburban children who act and react like spoiled suburban children. How can they possibly help the factory workers if they don't even know how a factory worker thinks? What are his particular wants and needs.

It's absurd for SDS to say what factory workers want as it is for white people to say what black people want. You'll never know unless you live, work, and socialize with the workers, or the poor whites.

Don't let J. Edgar Hoover fool you into thinking you're a threat to the nation.

The last (silly) organizing force is the hippy types, the Yippies, and organizations like the White 'Panther Party.

Why do black radicals scorn them? Because they make a joke out of the revolution. They make it look silly, stupid, crazy and foolish.

Look at the White Panther party program and statement reported in the *Fifth Estate* #66, Nov. 14-27, 1968 issue. They are worse than SDS 'with the "do your own thing" attitude.

Not only do the White Panthers do their thing, but they are literally perverting the movement.

Music ain't revolution. Black folks have been singing, dancing, and blowing instruments, and we still ain't free.

Look at some of the White Panther quotes taken from the *Fifth Estate*: "Our way is the best—don't ever forget it...We have the most fun...we breathe revolution (probably a dragon in your mouth)...we are LSD-driven total maniacs in the universe. We will do anything to drive people crazy..."

A Yippie says "revolution for the hell of it." He must think this is just something to do. Another fool (and that's what they are) says "First we have the revolution, then we will see what we do."

The White Panther program consists of realistic actions (No. 1 as an example) and silly shit (No. 2 as an example). (As a member of the Black Panther Party I resent the action of the White Panthers copying our name because of the action they produce behind it.) White Panthers, Yippies, they all think this is one big silly joke. A giant love-in, a be-in, a freak party—something to do.

The White Panthers say "We are the solution." No—you are our (the movement's) biggest headache. You do have a problem. No—you're not helping, you're hindering us (the movement). You give the oppressor a chance to show how dopey you are and to get people to think we're all crazy. So don't expect a "meaningful working alliance" between black, brown and white revolutionaries until you get off your ass.

To all the so-called, or potential, revolutionaries: there are plenty of poor whites around Wayne University. Go live with them. White people are more brainwashed than black people. At least we can see through it. White folks have to be educated by those dirty niggers. This is your job, not mine.

White folks living right next door to you are racists. You should talk to them. Part of your job is to eliminate racism where it exists, in the white community. This summer get a job in the factory, alright? (I'll even say please.) Go to church. Yeah, I know this hurts you. But that's where your honky trick-ass cousin is—go to him.

We don't expect much of you. Just to create a revolution. In 3-1/2 years it makes a big difference if Wallace people become revolutionaries or greater reactionaries. This is your job.

If you don't start doing something to get results, there will never be an alliance. Black folks are fighting for their survival; their lives. White so-called revolutionaries act like it is a joke. We do not appreciate this.

Brother Malcolm said: "There can be no black-white unity until there is first some black unity." In the same breath he could have said, "There won't be any black-white unity until there is first some white unity or white folks starting to change the decadence in a revolutionary manner. We have no time for liberals.

But does one get angry at the puppet or the puppeteer? Does one get indignant over the White Panthers or the news media that prints it? A revolutionary paper doesn't deal with sex, etc., but with political issues, like the *Militant*, the *Guardian*, or Detroit's *Inner City Voice* do.

What black folks want to see is militant whites who, following the example of John Brown, are ready to do more than talk about fighting racial injustice and social inequality.

fifth Estate

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